

## **Holy Family GNS, Askea, Carlow**

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

Holy Family GNS, Askea, Carlow is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of Holy family GNS, Askea, Carlow has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

1. The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ms. Anne Fitzpatrick.  

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3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ms. June Farrell.  

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4. The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

5. The following procedures/measures are in place:
  - In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DES website.

- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the DES and available on the DES website.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
  - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
  - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
  - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- In this school the Board has appointed the abovenamed DLP as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the school's child safeguarding statement.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is attached as an appendix to these procedures.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DES website or will be made available on request by the school.

**Note:** The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

6. This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.
7. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 19/05/2020

Signed: *Fr. Thomas Little*  
Fr. Thomas Little  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Anne Fitzpatrick*  
Anne Fitzpatrick  
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: *19 May 2020.*

Date: *19/05/2020*

## **Appendix to Child Safeguarding Statement**

### **One - to - One Teaching**

One-to-one teaching is not the norm in this school; however, in certain circumstances where one-to-one teaching is deemed necessary, every effort will be made to ensure that this takes place in an open environment, for example, a glass panel in the door or an open door. Work carried out by SNAs will take place under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

### **Behaviour**

Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Behaviour. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature, or where it is deemed that the child may be at risk, we will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately in line with the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

### **Bullying**

Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying Policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive, then the matter will be referred to the DLP. This will be dealt with in accordance with our Anti-bullying policy which is in accordance with the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

### **Changing for PE/Swimming**

Children will be brought by bus to the swimming pool. Children will line up in an orderly manner for the bus as stated in our dismissal policy in the school's Health and Safety Statement. Teachers and SNAs will assist with supervision in the changing rooms in order to ensure the safety of the children. Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves. Where assistance is needed this will be done in the communal areas with the consent of parents. Under no circumstances will members of staff/volunteers be allowed or be expected to dress/undress a child in a cubicle/private area.

### **Visitors**

Teachers /SNAs on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the schoolyard and will ascertain their intentions. They will be supervised in the discharge of their business.

# **Appendix to Child Safeguarding Statement**

## **Physical Contact**

Physical contact between school personnel and the child will always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child the following should be factors in determining it's appropriateness: -

- It is acceptable to the child
- It is open and not secretive
- The age and development stage of the child

School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for the children that they can do for themselves.

## **Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs**

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care, a meeting will be convened after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/guardians, class teacher, special needs assistant (SNA), principal and if appropriate, the pupil, and/or relevant professionals such as occupational therapists or physiotherapists. This meeting will be held on an annual basis with the relevant personnel dealing with the pupil. The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the specific needs of the child and to determine how the school can best meet those needs. The staff involved in this care will be identified. A meeting will then take place before commencing each new school year for these purposes.

Two members of staff will be present when dealing with toileting/intimate care needs. Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the DLP and the parents/ guardians.

## **Toileting accidents**

In the event of a toileting accident, parents will be contacted in the first instance. Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a child has an 'accident' of this nature, and her parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the child will be offered fresh clothing into which to change.

If the pupil, for whatever reason, cannot clean or change themselves and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to her. In all such situations, two members of staff should be present.

A record of all such incidents will be kept in the child's file, the principal and parents will be notified.

File on each pupil to be passed on to new class teacher each year. Retention of files is in compliance with school's Record Keeping and Data Protection policies.

## **Appendix to Child Safeguarding Statement**

coaches/students on teaching practice/work experience students must be vetted prior too commencing placement in accordance with DES circular 0031/2016. Work experience students from secondary schools, between the ages of 16-18 may only be vetted with parental permission. These students who may not be vetted will complete “Guidelines for students on work experience” form and form for “Volunteers”

### **After school activities**

**It is the policy of the school that, pupils who participate in after school activities must:**

1. Have the written consent of parent/guardian
2. Be collected by a named adult at school’s main door on completion of the activity. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils may walk home from school following an after school activity where written permission has been given. In all other circumstances the child must be collected as aforesaid.
3. It is a prerequisite for the pupil/s participation in after school activities that parents/guardians have signed documentation to the effect that they will adhere to the rules re: dismissal and collection of pupils.

## Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template

### Written Assessment of Risk of Holy Family Girl's National School

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirement of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Holy Family GNS, Askea, Carlow.

#### 1. List of school activities

- ✚ Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- ✚ Recreation breaks for pupils
- ✚ Classroom teaching
- ✚ One-to-one teaching
- ✚ One-to-one counselling
- ✚ Outdoor teaching activities
- ✚ Sporting activities
- ✚ Annual Sports Day
- ✚ School trips
- ✚ Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- ✚ School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- ✚ Use of toilet facilities in school
- ✚ Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
- ✚ Care of any vulnerable adult students, including intimate care where needed
- ✚ Administration of medicine
- ✚ Administration of First Aid
- ✚ Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe Programme
- ✚ Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils including appropriate use of restraint where required
- ✚ Applications of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones, etc
- ✚ Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
- ✚ Use of photography/video/any media to record school events
- ✚ Homework club/evening study
- ✚ Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- ✚ Use of external personnel to supplement the curriculum
- ✚ Use of extra personnel to support sports + other extra-curricular activities
- ✚ Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- ✚ Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs eg.
  - Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants
  - Members of the Traveller Community
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
  - Pupils perceived to be LGTB
  - Pupils of minority religious faiths
  - Children who are in care
- ✚ Recruitment of school personnel including -
  - Teachers and SNAs
  - Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaning personnel
  - Sports coaches
  - External tutors and Guest speakers
  - Volunteers/Parents in school activities
  - Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours
  - Visitors/contractors present during after-school activities
  - Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to school
  - Use of ICT by pupils in school

- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in the school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After-school use of school premises by other organisations
- Homework club/evening study

## **2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities -**

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child is participating in out of school activities eg. a school trip, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of child in school
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of child while attending out of school activities
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
- Risk of harm due to child inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child while child is receiving intimate care
- Risk of harm due to inadequate Code of Behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- Risk of harm caused by a member of school personnel communicating with pupils in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of harm caused by a member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk posed to children because of the Covid-19 pandemic

## **3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -**

- ❖ All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- ❖ The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 are made available to all school personnel
- ❖ School personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the Children First Act 2015
- ❖ The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- ❖ The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- ❖ The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the DES Anti-Bullying procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools
- ❖ The school has a playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during assembly dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms, etc
- ❖ The school has in place clear procedures in respect of school outings
- ❖ The school has a Health and Safety Policy



- ❖ The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- ❖ The school has a code of conduct for school personnel
- ❖ The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- ❖ The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- ❖ The school has an Intimate Care policy in respect of pupils who require such care
- ❖ The school has in place procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- ❖ The school –
- ❖ Has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- ❖ Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- ❖ Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
- ❖ Encourages Board of management members to avail of relevant training
- ❖ Maintains records of staff and board member training
- ❖ The school has in place procedures for the administration of First Aid
- ❖ The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils
- ❖ The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils
- ❖ The school has in place a Critical Incident management Plan
- ❖ The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures
- ❖ The school has in place procedures on external visitors including the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- ❖ The school has in place clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- ❖ The school has in place clear procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- ❖ The school has in place clear procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- ❖ The school has a Covid-19 Risk Assessment
- ❖ The School has a Covid-19 Response Plan

**Important Note:** It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of "harm" as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in Chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*

In undertaking this risk assessment, the board of management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to this school and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, the school has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on ..... [date]. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

### **Examples of activities, risks and procedures**

The examples listed in this document are provided to assist schools in undertaking their risk assessment under the Children First Act, 2015. Schools should note that this list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure, as far as possible, that any other risks and procedures that are relevant to its own particular circumstances are identified and specified in the written risk assessment and that adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

It is acknowledged that schools already have in place a range of policies, practices and procedures to mitigate the risk of harm to children while they are participating in the activities of the school and that some school activities will carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. In the context of the risk assessment that must be undertaken by schools, the Children First Act, 2015 refers to risk as “any potential for harm”. Therefore, it is important that, as part of its risk assessment process, each school lists and reviews all of its various activities (which shall include identifying those that may carry low risk of harm as well as those that carry higher risks of harm). Doing so will help the school to (1) identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school’s activities, (2) identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm and (3) identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.

Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of “harm” as defined in the Children First Act, 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in chapter 4 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.

### **Examples of School Activities**

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Provision of residential facilities for boarders
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed,
- Care of any vulnerable adult students, including intimate care where needed
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
- Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities
- Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as
  - Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants
  - Members of the Traveller community
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
  - Pupils perceived to be LGBT
  - Pupils of minority religious faiths
  - Children in care
  - Children on CPNS
- Recruitment of school personnel including -

- Teachers/SNA's
- Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
- Sports coaches
- External Tutors/Guest Speakers
- Volunteers/Parents in school activities
- Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours
- Visitors/contractors present during after school activities
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- Use of school premises by other organisation during school day
- Breakfast club
- Homework club/evening study

## **Examples of Risks of Harm**

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
- Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
- Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in appropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner

## Examples of Procedures to address risks of harm

- All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement*
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015*
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*
- The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings
- The school has a Health and safety policy
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school has a codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school –
  - Has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
  - Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
  - Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils
- The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils

- The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations