

# Child Safeguarding Statement

Scoil Iósaf 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 Addendum to Children First (2019), 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 Scoil Iósaf 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 **Emily Stack White**
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Ann Marie White**
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 DE 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 Department of Education and available on the DE 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 schools 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 and the Addendum to Children First (2019), 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 included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DE 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 (if any) 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 **12<sup>th</sup> October 2022**.

Signed: Agnus O'Sullivan

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 12/10/2022

Signed: Emily Jack White

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 12/10/2022

# **Scoil Iósaf Child Protection Policy**

The Board of Management of Scoil Iósaf has adopted the Department of Education and Science Guidelines and Procedures in relation to Child Protection and Welfare. This policy clarifies how our school proposes to implement these guidelines in order to ensure the protection and welfare of all children attending our school.

## **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND ETHOS**

Children enrolled in Scoil Iósaf will be supported in reaching their full potential: intellectually, physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially. This support will be differentiated in an atmosphere and environment in which children feel safe, valued and secure and in which respect for self and others is the norm.

## **AIMS**

1. To promote the safety, protection and welfare of all the pupils in the care of the school.
2. To inform all members of the school community and those who use the school premises of the procedures in place in this school for dealing with all aspects of child protection.

## **CONTENT**

It is the policy of our school to follow the procedures as laid down in Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures DES 2011 in any case where we suspect, or are alerted to, child abuse, including where a child discloses abuse. All disclosures will be documented, dated and kept on file by the Principal Teacher. All disclosures will be treated in a highly confidential manner.

The Board of Management has appointed the Principal Teacher (Emily Stack –White) as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in our school to have specific responsibility for child protection.

The Deputy Principal (Anne Marie White) has been appointed as Deputy DLP to take the place of the DLP if unavailable.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- The Board of Management has primary responsibility for the care and welfare of all pupils.
- The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection in the school.
- All staff has a duty of care to ensure that arrangements are in place to protect children from harm.

## PROCEDURES

1. The procedures for dealing with allegations /suspicions/disclosures of Child Abuse are set down in *Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures* (Department of Education and Science, 2011) and *Children First* (Department of Health and Children, 2011) and will be followed. The following is our method of recording concerns:

- Each teacher will receive a copy of this policy, including Chapter 2: Responsibilities of All School Personnel (DES, 2011), Chapter 3: Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse (DHC, 2011) and Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms of Abuse (DHC, 2011), which gives some suggestions for monitoring the situation in cases where there is a concern about a child in the class.
- Any concerns under any of the headings listed in Appendix 1 will be recorded in a notebook which will be kept in a secure place in the Principal's Office.
- In order to ensure confidentiality the registration number of the child, the date on which the observation was recorded, the observation and the teacher's signature will be entered in the notebook.
- When making the entry the teacher will inform the D.L.P. of her concern.

2. We contribute to the prevention of child abuse through the SPHE curriculum, particularly through the strand unit, Safety and Protection. The content of this strand unit enables the pupils to develop personal safety skills for situations, which they might find threatening or unsafe, including dealing with inappropriate touches. We teach this unit using the following resources:

- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Grow in Love/Alive O Religion Programme
- R.S.E Programme

3. The D.L.P. and the D.D.L.P. in our school has received one-day's training in relation to Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures. It is the responsibility of the D.L.P. to inform all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Children First Guidelines.

4. Vetting of Staff: In the case of new appointments of permanent, temporary substitute and ancillary staff, vetting will be carried out in accordance with Dept. of Ed. and Science appointment procedures.

5. It is the policy of this school to follow the procedures as laid down in the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES 2011, in any case where allegations are received against school employees.

6. Attendance: Our school attendance will be monitored as per our attendance policy. With regards to child protection we will pay particular attention to trends in non attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse

7. Every effort will be made to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children throughout the school day. A roster of staff on schoolyard duty is displayed in the staff room. Teachers will ensure that the children are visible in the schoolyard. Children will

not leave the schoolyard or engage with adults outside of the schoolyard. Children are not permitted to spend break times in the classrooms.

8. All unscheduled visitors to the school are expected to report to the office on arrival. Staff on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the schoolyard and direct them to the school office. The drop-off/pick-up of children throughout the teaching day will be processed through the school office.

9. Special Needs: If any pupil in the school requires intimate care, procedures involved in such care will be agreed in consultation with the pupil, her parents/guardians and any other personnel involved in the care of the pupil. This will be in keeping with best practice and the best interests of the child and with due consideration to maintaining the child's personal dignity. Such procedures, when agreed will be communicated to all parties involved and recorded.

10. Toileting accidents: If a child has a wetting accident during the school day, a staff member will assist them change into dry clothes. Before assisting the child the staff member will inform a second staff member and the second person will remain in the room adjoining the toilet area. Alternatively, the child may be taken to the administration area. It is school policy to call a Parent/Guardian if a child soils themselves in school and requires intimate care. In the unlikely event of failing to make contact staff will follow the procedures as above. All accidents of this nature will be reported to Parents/Guardians.

11. Lámh Cúnta Card: Each staff member is provided with this card for use in a situation where the staff member needs cover, and needs to give immediate attention to an issue. When a staff member receives this card it is a signal to immediately come to the aid of the staff member who sent it.

12. All classrooms where one to one teaching takes place (Learning Support, Resource and Language teaching) have easy visibility from outside the room through the glass panels which have been fitted on the doors.

13. School Photographs. Every effort is made to protect the identity of children in school photographs (local paper, school website). Photographs of children taken by outside agencies (i.e. school class photos, Communion, Confirmation, local newspaper) are taken under the supervision of a staff member.

14. Internet use: internet use is considered a school resource and privilege. Procedures are outlined in our Acceptable Use Policy.

15. In rare instances where a staff car must be used to transport a child, children will never be taken alone.

16. School staff accompanying children on school tours/trips (including after school sporting events) will deliver a duty of care commensurate with the trip/venue. The higher the risk factor the higher the number of teachers/responsible adults involved. As per School Tour Policy, hired buses/vehicles must provide safe transportation and a functioning seatbelt for every child/adult.

This statement will be given to all staff, B.O.M. and all adults who use the school premises after school hours. All new staff will receive a copy.

**Review:**

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **12<sup>th</sup> October 2022** and will be reviewed as deemed necessary and/or in line with any change in legislation.

**Appendices**

- Signs and Symptoms of Abuse (DHC, 2004)
- Responsibilities of All School Personnel (DES, 2001)
- Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse (DHC, 2004)
- Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse by School Employees (DES, 2001)

Ratified by Board of Management on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Date

Signed Agnes O'Sullivan

Chairperson, Board of Management