



**Sacred Heart Secondary School
Clonakilty**

**Child Safeguarding Statement
& Risk Assessment 2023-2024.**



Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment **Template**

Child Safeguarding Statement

Sacred Heart Secondary School is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to First Year to Leaving Certificate Year.

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 \(revised 2023\)](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of Sacred Heart Secondary School 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 (revised 2023)* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Ann Marie Brosnan**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Brendan Walsh**
- 4 The Relevant Person is **Ann Marie Brosnan**
(The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. This person can also be the DLP)
- 5 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.

- 6 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 (revised 2023)* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the gov.ie website.

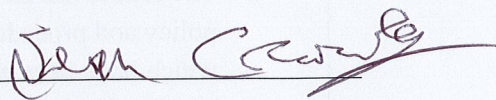
- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Acts 2012 to 2016](#) and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the Department of Education and available on the gov.ie 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 (revised 2023)*, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- 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 gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school.

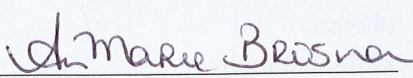
Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

- 7 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.
- 8 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 **5th December 2023**.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on **5th December 2023** [most recent review date].

Signed: 
 Chairperson of Board of Management
 Date: 5/12/23

Signed: 
 Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management
 Date: 5/12/23

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of [name of school]

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Sacred Heart Secondary School.

1. General Daily Activities

List of School Activities	The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities	The School has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Early Arrival ● Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils ● Mid-morning Break ● Lunchtime for students who remain on the premises ● Lunchtime for students who leave the premises ● Use of school canteen ● Use of Toilet facilities ● School Transport ● Use of Technology in areas other than the classroom ● Congregation in locker areas eg mobile phone ● Supervised after school study ● Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils and confiscation of phones ● Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to school. ● Use of video/photography/o 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel ➤ Risk of student being harmed by a member of school personnel ➤ Risk of student being harmed by a member of the public ➤ Risk of student being harmed in the school by another child ➤ Risk of harm due to bullying of student ➤ Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of student in school ➤ Risk of harm where student finds herself last/first in the school building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has a corridor/grounds supervision protocol to ensure appropriate supervision of students during arrival and break times and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc. ✓ The school has a Health and Safety policy ✓ The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for students ✓ All staff are Garda Vetted ✓ All staff have been provided with the Child Safeguarding Statement and have had appropriate training. ✓ Only 6th Year students have permission to leave school at lunch time ✓ The school has a policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by students. ✓ The DLP & DDLP have received appropriate training. ✓ The name of the DLP & the Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment are prominently displayed in the reception area ✓ The school has an Anti-bullying policy and procedures in place, which have been explained to the whole school community. ✓ Comprehensive induction programme for all year group and regular class and year groups assemblies.

ther social media to record school events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After school use of school premises 		
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2. Teaching & Learning Activities

List of School Activities	The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities	The School has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom interactions • One-to-one teaching • Outdoor teaching activities • Use of off-site facilities for school activities • Guidance/counselling one-to-one sessions • Curricular Content and/or presentation SPHE/RSE/Wellbeing • Use of substitute teachers • Meetings with Senior Leadership Team members on one-to-one basis • Use of Technology in the classroom. • Students participating in work experience placement. • Supervised Study • SNA's providing additional support before and after school. • Student Teachers on placement. • Transition Year Activities e.g. Digital one to one, School Bank, Literacy lift off, Community awareness • The use of external personnel to support teaching and learning. • Remote Teaching and Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of student being harmed in the classroom by another student ➤ Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of students in classroom ➤ Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities ➤ Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm due to bullying of student in classroom ➤ Risk of student being harmed in the classroom by teacher or substitute teacher ➤ Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching ➤ Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school ➤ Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other ➤ Risk of harm while carrying out work experience ➤ Risk of harm caused by personnel not differentiating for the needs of students with Special Needs ➤ Risk of unauthorised access by non-school personal to an online class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum ✓ The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle ✓ All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's <i>Child Safeguarding Statement</i> ✓ The <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)</i> are made available to all school personnel ✓ School Personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)</i> and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i> ✓ 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 codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) ✓ 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 code of behaviour for students ✓ The school has protocols in place for work experience in an external organisation ✓ The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements ✓ The school has a policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by students. ✓ The school has in place an Acceptable Use policy in respect of usage of all Computers, Internet and Social Media

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has a Special Educational Needs policy. ✓ The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience and or community work in external organisations or attending external educational events. ✓ Every member of the school community has a unique log in credentials for our Google platform.
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3. Pastoral Care

List of School Activities	The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities	The School has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One-to-one counselling ● School outings ● School trips involving overnight stay ● School trips involving foreign travel ● Care of students with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed, ● Management of challenging behaviour amongst students. ● Administration of Medicine ● Administration of First Aid ● Curricular provision in respect of SPHE and RSE. ● Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst students. ● Training of school personnel in child protection matters. ● Children with medical needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of harm in one-to-one counselling situation ➤ Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm to students through bullying when away from home on school trips ➤ Risk of mishandling of students with challenging behaviour ➤ Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of student ➤ Risk of harm to students through lack of understanding of specific needs, including sexual identity, religious and ethnic background ➤ Risk of harm to student ➤ Risk of harm caused by one student to another via inappropriate social media contact, texting, digital device or other ➤ Risk of harm to students by the use of inappropriate or over-harsh sanctions for bullying/misuse of social media ➤ Risk of harm due to racism ➤ Risk of harm to due to inadequate code of behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has a Health and Safety policy ✓ Risk assessment to be conducted in advance of school trips ✓ The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for students ➤ The child safeguarding statement is reviewed annually ➤ All staff have been provided with the Child Safeguarding Statement and have had appropriate training. ➤ A copy of the child safeguarding statement has been provided to the patron and is available on the school website. ➤ The school has an Anti-bullying policy and procedures in place which have been explained to the whole school community. ✓ The school has in place a Student Care policy. ✓ The school has procedures in place for the administration of First Aid ✓ The school has in place a care team that meets every week. ✓ The school has in place a Peer mentoring programme for 1st year students. ✓ School Personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)</i> and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Care of students with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students from ethnic /racial minorities/migrants ▪ Members of the Traveller community ▪ Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBTQ+) students ▪ Students perceived to be LGBTQ+ ▪ Students of minority religious faiths ▪ Students in care ▪ Children on Tusla's Child Protection Notification System (CPNS) ➤ Supporting students involved in misuse of Social Media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has in place a policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by students. ✓ The school undertakes anti- racism awareness initiatives ✓ The school has in place an Acceptable Use policy in respect of usage of all Computers, Internet and Social Media ✓ The school has a code of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) ✓ The school has appointed qualified Guidance teachers ✓ The school has recruited teachers with Special Education Needs training and qualifications ✓ The school appoints qualified SNA's where deemed necessary and funded by the DES ✓ The school has a Tour policy which covers protocols for overnight stays ✓ The school has a Special Educational Needs policy ✓ The school has an active Pastoral Team with particular understanding of the needs of the students in its care, including their background ✓ The school has a set of procedures in relation to the administration of medicines ✓ The Child Protection Oversight Report is presented at each BOM meeting ✓ The board of management has arrangements in place to ensure that all members of the board of management have the necessary familiarity with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (<i>revised 2023</i>) to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities ✓ The school implements in full the RSE & SPHE curricula ✓ The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
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4. Extra-Curricular & Trips

List of School Activities	The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities	The School has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Travelling to matches ● Changing in school's changing room ● Changing in the changing rooms of other schools ● Annual Sports Day ● School trips involving overnight stay ● Administration of First Aid following a sports injury ● Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities ● Sports coaches ● School Musical ● Open night. ● Fund raising events involving pupils and Parents' Association ● Volunteers/Parents in sports activities ● Student PE teachers ● Use of social media to record and comment on sporting events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of a student being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while participating in sporting activities ➤ Risk of harm to student while student is receiving First Aid treatment ➤ Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour ➤ Risk of harm in one-to-one coaching situation ➤ Risk of harm to student due to lack of experience of Student PE teachers ➤ Risk of harm caused by 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 member of school personnel or a student circulating inappropriate material in relation to sporting activities via social media, texting, digital device or other manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All staff and volunteers are Garda Vetted ✓ All staff have been provided with the Child Safeguarding Statement and have had appropriate training. ✓ School sports personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)</i> and also are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i> ✓ The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle, incorporating PE ✓ The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in relation to the use of digital media ✓ The School has a Code of Behaviour, drafted in consultation with all stakeholders. ✓ The School has a supervision protocol for all major events. ✓ The school has a supervision protocol for transport to and from sporting activities ✓ Coaching Staff are trained in First Aid ✓ The school has a Tour policy which covers protocols for overnight stays ✓ The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements ✓ The school has in place procedures and guidelines in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils ✓ The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for students ✓ The school has a Health and safety policy. ✓ Changing room guidelines and protocols are in place.

5. Recruitment

List of School Activities	The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities	The School has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal ● Deputy Principal(s) ● Teachers ● Student Teachers ● SNA's ● Sports coaches ● Volunteers/Parents in school activities ● External Tutors/Guest Speakers ● Administration staff ● Caretaking Staff ● Housekeeping Staff ● Cleaning Staff ● Short or long-term Contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of harm to students by personnel who are not qualified ➤ Risk of harm to students from personnel who have a history of unacceptable practices in previous employment ➤ Risk of harm to students from a member of personnel with a history of abuse ➤ Risk of harm to a student by a member of personnel unwilling to commit to the expected standards of the school ➤ Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school ➤ Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel ➤ 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 inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult ➤ Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 an Employee Handbook and Induction programme for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) ✓ When appointing, detailed references are sought ✓ The school has a rigorous interview process. ✓ 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 (<i>revised 2023</i>) are made available to all school personnel ✓ The school has a code of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) ✓ 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 ✓ All staff have completed online Child Protection training by TUSLA and Legal Island ✓ The school provide annual Child Protection training for staff at the commencement of the school year.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All members of school personnel have been made aware of the action to take if they receive an allegation or have a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected or is at risk of abuse or neglect. ✓ All registered teachers have been made aware of their responsibilities as a mandated person. ✓ The school complies with agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff.
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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 (revised 2023)*

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.

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.

The Addendum to *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* published in January 2019 clarifies that organisations providing relevant services to children

should consider the specific issue of online safety when carrying out their risk assessment and preparing their Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for primary and post-primary schools (April 2020) advises of the importance of teachers maintaining the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assisting parents and guardians to be aware of their role also. Schools should ensure that their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) informs and guides remote or distance learning activity.

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 (revised 2023)*.