



# Child Protection Policy 2023 - 2024

## Scoil Bhríde

### Roll Number 13910N

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## Introduction

## Introduction

This policy recognised the commencement of all sections of Children First Act 2015, on 11 December 2017. All staff members of Scoil Bhride and members of the board of management took an active role in revising the previous version of this policy as well as undertaking the training to familiarise themselves with the procedures outline below.

## Relationship to School Ethos

The school promotes positive home-school contacts, not only in relation to the welfare of children, but in relation to all aspects of school life. This policy is in keeping with the school ethos through the provision of a safe, secure and caring school environment and the furthering of positive home-school links. Scoil Bhride is a girl's Primary School founded on the Presentation philosophy of Education and Catholic faith. We strive to proactively nurture and educate each child to her fullest potential and at every stage of her development. We believe in striking balance and we encourage the cultivation of strong relationships within the school and community.

## What are the implications of this policy for Scoil Bhride?

### Mandated Persons

All teachers are now 'mandated persons'. There are two areas of responsibility which will apply to mandated persons in a primary school:

- Where a mandated person knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information that he or she has received, acquired or becomes aware of that a child:
    - has been harmed
    - is being harmed
    - is at risk of being harmed
  - Where a child believes that he or she:
    - has been harmed
    - is being harmed
    - is at risk of being harmed
- He or she must report that knowledge, belief or suspicion, to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) as soon as practicable.
- and discloses that belief to a mandated person, the mandated person must report that disclosure to Tusla as soon as practicable.

### Child Safeguarding Statement

The Board of Management (BoM) of each school must produce a Child Safeguarding Statement on or before 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

### **Risk Assessment of potential harm to children**

The BoM of each school must produce a *Risk Assessment of all potential harm to children* on or before 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018, in conjunction with the *Child Safeguarding Statement*. (Revisited April 2019)

### **Child Protection Oversight Report**

A new child Protection Oversight Report must be provided to the BoM as part of the Principal's Report at every meeting - to ensure oversight by the BoM of the school's compliance with child safeguarding requirements.

The following templates are available below. These can be customised to your school.

9. Scoil Bhride Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment.
10. Scoil Bhride Child Safeguarding Statement
11. Scoil Bhride Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement
12. Notification regarding the Board of Management of Scoil Bhride's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement.



LGBT Children/Pupils perceived to be LGBT	Med	Bullying by students	Anti-Bullying Policy. Code of Behaviour. Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff. SPHE lessons. Training to be organised where necessary.
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Med	Harm from older pupils, unknown adults on the way in or out of school grounds. Traffic concerns	Arrival and dismissal supervised by Teachers+SNAs. Consistent reminder to school community re local collection arrangements. Site monitoring via CCTV (Scoil Bhríde CCTV Policy).
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint	High	Injury to pupils and staff	SNA Policy. Health & Safety Policy. Code of Behaviour. Board of Management to coordinate with Principal re appropriate personal intervention training, leading to a formal policy
Sports Coaches	Med	Harm to pupils	Visitors and Volunteers Policy & Procedures in place. (eg Garda Vetting, references where required)
Students participating in work experience	Low	Harm to student. Harm not recognised or reported promptly.	Visitors and Volunteers Policy & Procedures in place. DP supervises timetable. Child Safeguarding Statement.
Recreation breaks for pupils	High	Harm by students	Code of Behaviour. Adequate supervision at all times. Plan for substitution when teachers/SNAs are absent.
Classroom teaching	Low	Harm by student/teacher/non school personnel	Code of behaviour. Adequate supervision at all times. Principal ensures teachers are appropriately qualified and fully aware of school procedures. Child Safeguarding statement.
Outdoor teaching activities	Med	Harm by students/facilitators	All activities must be sanctioned by Principal. Health and Safety policy. Supervision Policy. Principal ensures teachers/ancillary staff are fully aware of school procedures. Record Keeping/Incident Reports. Child Safeguarding statement.
Sporting Activities	Low	Harm by Student/facilitators	All activities must be sanctioned by Principal. Health and Safety policy. Supervision Policy. Principal ensures teachers/ancillary staff are fully aware of school procedures. Record Keeping/Incident Reports. Child Safeguarding statement.

			Garda Vetting. Supervision Policy. Principal ensures teachers/ancillary staff are fully aware of school procedures. Child Safeguarding statement.
Fundraising events involving pupils	Low	Harm by students/parents/non-school personnel	All activities must be sanctioned by Principal and/or BOM. Ensure those involved with helping the school are Garda Vetted and fully aware of school procedures. Child Safeguarding statement.
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts (potential future initiative)	Med	Harm by students/parents/non-school personnel,	Supervision Policy. Health and Safety Policy. Auxiliary Staff/SNA policy. Adequate supervision at all times. Principal ensures employees of Scoil Bhride are appropriately qualified and fully aware of school procedures. Child Safeguarding statement.
Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required	High	Harm by students/teachers/SNAs	SNA Policy. Principal to coordinate regular training/policy updates for staff involved. BOM and Principal to aid the providing of Personal Intervention training to all staff. Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff.
Administration of Medicine	Low	Harm to self	SNA Policy. Administration of Medicine Policy. Principal to coordinate regular training for staff involved. Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff.
Administration of First Aid	Low	Harm by teachers/SNAs/non-school personnel	Health and Safety Policy. Administration of First Aid Policy. Supervision Policy. Keeping records. Principal providing regular training. SNA Policy. Child Safeguarding Statement & school procedures made available to all staff/substitutes.
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Low	Harm by students/teachers. Failure to recognise and report promptly.	Code of Behaviour. Anti-Bullying Policy (children). Keeping records. SNA Policy. Principal providing regular updates on procedures to all staff members. BOM mandatorily completing a report at each meeting. Principal to review policy/provide training. Child Safeguarding Statement & school procedures made available to all staff/substitutes.
Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum	Low	Harm by students/teachers/ non-school personnel. Failure to follow procedures	Visitors and Volunteer's Policy. Supervision Policy. Garda Vetting. Visitors Log. Principal providing



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours</li> <li>• Visitors/contractors present during after school activities</li> </ul>			procedures. Principal insures of adequate insurance provision. Child Safeguarding statement.
Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.	Low	Harm to students/reputation of school	Code of Behaviour. Supervision Policy. Electronic Devices and Mobile Phone Policy. Anti-bullying Policy (Children). Record Keeping. All actions must be sanctioned by BOM. Principal ensures teachers/ancillary staff are fully aware of school procedures. BOM ensures all mandatory items are completed on the agenda for each meeting. Child Safeguarding statement.
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	Low	Harm to students/reputation of school/by non-school community members	Acceptable Usage Policy. Enrolment Policy. Digital Technology and Social Media Policy. Supervision Policy. Anti-bullying Policy (Children). Record Keeping. All actions must be sanctioned by BOM. Principal ensures teachers/ancillary staff are fully aware of school procedures. Child Safeguarding statement.

**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 policy is also strongly linked with the Scoil Bhride Safety Policy.

This risk assessment has been completed/ratified by the Board of Management on Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 2023. It will be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed: Ms Marie Wheel Chairperson of BOM 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Signed: Jane Ryan Principal/Secretary to the BOM 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023

- 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.

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) Scoil Bhride will:
  - Provide 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 BoM members to avail of relevant training
  - The BoM 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 above named DLP as the 'relevant person' (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the 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 BoM 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.



### Checklist for Reviewing the Scoil Bhride Child Safeguarding Statement

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* require the Board of Management (BoM) to undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and that the following checklist shall be used for this purpose. The review must be completed every year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers. Undertaking an annual review will also ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the *Children First Act 2015*, to review its Child Safeguarding Statement every two years.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list of the issues to be considered. Individual BoM shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, BoM should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities vis-a-vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the *Children First Act 2015* and the *Child Protection Procedures Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

	Yes/No
1. Has the BoM formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the ' <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017</i> '?	Y
2. As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the BoM formally adopted, without modification, the ' <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017</i> '?	Y
3. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015?	Y
4. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	Y
5. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	Y
6. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	Y



18. Is the BoM satisfied that, since the last review, all appropriate actions are being or have been taken in respect of any member of school personnel against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made?*	Y
19. Were child protection matters reported to the BoM appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	Y
20. Is the BoM satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	Y
21. Has the BoM been notified by any parent in relation to that parent not receiving the standard notification required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	Y
22. In relation to any cases identified at question 21 above, has the BoM ensured that any notifications required section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' were subsequently issued by the DLP?	Y
23. Has the BoM ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Y
24. Has the BoM ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Y
25. Has the BoM ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	Y
26. Has the BoM ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	Y
27. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	Y

Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement?	
37. Has the BoM ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	Y

\*In schools where the ETB, is the employer the responsibility for meeting the employer's requirements rests with the ETB concerned. In such cases, this question should be completed following consultation with the ETB.

Signed: Dr. Maire Wall Chairperson of BoM September 12<sup>th</sup> 2023

Signed: Kate Ryan Principal/Secretary to the BoM September 12<sup>th</sup> 2023



## **Reasonable Grounds for Concern/Threshold of Harm**

The Reasonable Grounds for Concern are:

### **Neglect**

The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child's needs have been neglected, are being neglected, or are at risk of being neglected to the point where the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

### **Emotional Abuse/Ill-Treatment**

The threshold of harm at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

### **Physical Abuse**

The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being assaulted and that as a result the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

## **Scoil Bhríde Crosshaven**

### **Child Protection Reporting Procedures for DLP**

- DLP receives report of a child protection concern
- DLP checks with Children First Guidelines for initial clarification regarding the nature of the concern
- DLP records the report – date/time/context. Child's registration number is used for recording purposes
- DLP makes informed decision on how to proceed based on information received and the urgency of the situation presented.
- DLP informs Chairperson of Board of Management that initial contact is being made with Tusla for advice if appropriate.
- DLP makes contact with Tusla seeking advice (Do not give name of child at this point. Be very clear that you are seeking advice).  
Take the name of the person you spoke to and record conversation
- Duty Social Worker makes recommendation. This may involve school continuing to monitor the situation in school. Record this decision and send written record of this decision to Tusla. Alternatively a formal referral made on standard reporting form may be recommended by Social Worker (Keep a copy of completed form on file in a secure place)
- If Tusla is not available for advice/ referral and case warrants immediate response – Gardaí are informed
- Decision must be made on informing/not informing parents - taking safety of the child into consideration as number one priority.  
A decision NOT to inform parent/s should only be made where there is a genuine concern for the safety of the child. Be transparent with parent/s and ensure that they are aware that you have a non-negotiable responsibility as DLP to act in the best interests of the child (Refer to Children First)
- If DLP decides not to contact Tusla in relation to the case – person who made original report must be informed of this decision in writing
- Continued monitoring of child should be recommended
- The number of Child Protection concerns that have been discussed/ reported to Tusla should be included in the Principal's Report to Board of Management Meeting – Children's names must never be used.
- Referral Form - <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/>



**Section 3.4.5** requires that all records created shall be regarded as highly confidential and placed in a secure location

**Section 3.4.6** requires that to allow for the effective recording and tracking of relevant records and actions, child protection case files and any parties referenced in such files shall be assigned a unique code or serial number by the DLP. In this context 'parties' means any party whose identity, if disclosed, might lead to the identification of a child or a person against whom an allegation has been made

**Section 9.4** requires that a Child Protection Oversight Report must be provided to the Board of Management (BoM), as part of the principal's report to the board, at every BoM meeting. The information that will be provided in this report is set out at sections 9.5 to 9.8 of these procedures

**Sections 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7** provide that the minutes of BoM meetings will record child protection matters by reference to the unique code or serial number assigned to the case/parties concerned

**Section 5.3.6** requires that where the DLP informs a parent/carer that a report concerning his or her child is being made, a record will be made of the information communicated by the DLP to the parent/carer. It also requires that a decision by the DLP not to inform a parent/carer shall be recorded together with the reasons for not doing so

**Section 5.3.8** requires that if the DLP decides that the concern of the member of school personnel, including that of a mandated person should not be reported to Tusla, the DLP shall give the member of the school staff a clear statement, in writing, as to the reasons why action is not being taken. A copy of this statement shall be retained by the DLP. Where that member of the school staff decides to make a report to Tusla, he or she must provide the DLP with a copy of that report

**Section 5.6** requires that where the DLP issues a notification to a parent in accordance with that section, a copy of that notification shall be retained by the DLP

**Section 3.5.4** requires the BoM to ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that the DDLP can access relevant records when required

- Anti-Bullying (Adult).
- Safety Statement.
- Parental and Staff Grievance Procedures
- Acceptable Usage Policy

### **What are "Relevant Wrongdoings"?**

*Relevant Wrongdoings* include but are not limited to the following:

- The commission of an offence.
- Non-compliance with a legal obligation
- Danger to Health & Safety of an individual.
- Improper use of public funds.

The relevant wrongdoings may already have taken place, be happening or be likely to happen.

### **Who is a *Worker* as far as a school is concerned?**

- All current and former employees (including permanent, temporary, fixed-term, casual and substitute);
- Contractors and consultants engaged to carry out work or services for the school;
- Agency workers;
- Individuals on work experience pursuant to a training course and trainees of/with the school.

### **To whom do you make the Disclosure?**

The vast majority of disclosures should be made, orally or in writing, to the school Principal or to the Chairperson of the Board of Management (BOM). Where this is inappropriate or impossible there is provided a list of "*Prescribed Persons*". In relation to schools the Prescribed Person is the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

### **What protections are available to whistle blowers (Disclosers)?**

Among the protections are:

- Protection from dismissal.
- Up to 5 years' remuneration for unfair dismissal.
- Protection of identity (subject to certain exceptions)