St. Mel's College, Longford

Child Safeguarding Statement

September 2026

School Roll No: 63750B

Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise



St. Mel's College is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to pupils from 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 St. Mel's College 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)* and the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities with Recognised Schools 2023* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement.

2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Malachy Flanagan (Principal)**

3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Regina Dolan (Deputy Principal)**

4. The Relevant Person is Malachy Flanagan, who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request.

5. The Board of Management of St. Mel's College 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 Board of Management will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The board of management 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 Board of Management adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, the relevant procedures set out in the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities 2023* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school/boarding facility staff which are published on the gov.ie.

In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the Board of Management 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 gov.ie.

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 Board of Management-

- 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*) and the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023* including, in the case of registered teachers and any boarding facility staff who are mandated persons, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.

There is a procedure in place for maintaining a list of mandated persons. 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, gov.ie or will be made available on request by the school.

7. 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.

8. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually at the beginning of each school year 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 reviewed by the Board of Management in September 2026 and adopted by the Board of Management on the 16th September 2026.

Signed: Fr Seán Murray Date: 16/09/26

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: M. Flanagan Date: 16/09/26

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

For information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed or to request a copy of the statement, please contact the relevant person at the beginning of this child safeguarding statement.

Phone: 0433346469 or email: stmels@stmelscollege.ie

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Mel's College, Longford

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 (revised 2023)* and the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Mel's College, Longford.

1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one learning support
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning remotely
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- 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 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
- 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 Tusla's Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
    - Children with medical needs

- Recruitment of school personnel including:
    - Teachers/SNAs
    - 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 students in school, including social media
- 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
- 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 participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as uninvited person accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time in breakout rooms
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to racism
- 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 or facility

- Risk of harm to children with AEN who have particular vulnerabilities, including medical 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

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 revised 2023* and the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools revised 2023* and the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015* and its Addendum (2019).
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle
- The school has a Bí Cineálta Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's new *Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools for preventing and addressing bullying.*
- 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 DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school has a code of conduct for school personnel teaching staff and non-teaching staff)
- The school has an Additional Educational Needs policy
- 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 Medication and Intimate Care
- The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for pupils
- The school has in place an Acceptable Use Policy
- 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 Covid-19 Response Plan & a Covid-19 Policy Statement.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for Sports and Trips/Tours.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for Guidance.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations

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.

Child Safeguarding Statement

The Board of Management reviewed and ratified this policy on the 16th September 2026.

It will be reviewed in November/December 2026.

Signed: _____ Date: 16/09/26

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: 16/09/26

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023) require that the Board of Management must 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 Boards of Management shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management 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, the Addendum to Children First (2019) and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023).*

	Yes/No
1. Has the Board formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*?	Y
2. Is the Board satisfied that the Child Safeguarding Statement is displayed in a prominent place near the main entrance to the school?	Y
3. As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*?	Y
4. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015? (This includes considering the specific issue of online safety as required by the Addendum to Children First)	Y
5. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	Y
6. Has the Risk Assessment taken account of the risk of harm relevant to online teaching and learning remotely?	Y
7. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	Y
8. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	Y
9. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	Y
10. Has the school appointed a DLP and a Deputy DLP?	Y
11. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	Y

12. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?	Y
13. Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* and the Children First Act 2015?	Y
14. Has the Board received a Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR) at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	Y
15. Since the Board's last review, did each CPOR contain all of the information required under each of the 4 headings set out in sections 9.5 to 9.8 inclusive of the procedures?	Y
16. Since the Board's last review, has the Board been provided with and reviewed all records relevant to the CPOR?	Y
17. Is the Board satisfied that the records provided are anonymised and redacted as necessary to ensure that the identities of children and any other parties, including school personnel, to whom the concern or report relates are not disclosed?	Y
18. Since the Board's last review, have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the records provided to the Board as part of CPOR?	Y
19. Have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the CPOR?	Y
20. Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed in each case reviewed?	Y
21. Is the Board 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
22. Where applicable, were unique identifiers used to record child protection matters in the Board minutes?	Y
23. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	Y
24. Has the Board 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 (revised 2023)*?	NO
25. In relation to any cases identified at question 20 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required under section 5.6 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* were subsequently issued by the DLP?	Y
26. Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Y
27. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Y
28. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	Y
29. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	N/A
30. Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (applies to post-primary schools)	Y
31. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	Y
32. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	Y
33. Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?*	Y
34. Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	Y
35. Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Y

36. Has the Board sought the feedback of parents in relation to the school's compliance with the requirements of the child safeguarding requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*?	Y
37. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	Y
38. Is the Board satisfied that the '*Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	Y
39. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	NO
40. Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement?	N/A
41. Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	N/A

Signed _____ Date 16/09/26

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date 16/09/26

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

To: Parents, Students, Teachers, Patron and all Stakeholders.

The Board of Management of St. Mel's College wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of 16th of September 2026.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on the gov.ie website

Signed _____ Date 16/09/26

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date 16/09/26

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management