Abbey Community College
Child Safeguarding Statement

Abbey Community 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 Abbey Community 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)* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement.

2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Ms. Michelle Jefford (Principal)**

3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Persons (DDLPs) is **Ms. Helen O'Connor (Deputy Principal)**

4. The Relevant Person is **Ms. Michelle Jefford (Principal and DLP)**

   (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. In a school setting the relevant person shall be the designated liaison person.)

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 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 **Thursday 11th September, 2025**.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on **Thursday 11th September, 2025**.

Signed: C. O'Reilly

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 11-09-2025

Signed: Michelle Tafford

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 11/09/2025

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Abbey Community College

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 Abbey Community College.

1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils, and recreation breaks for pupils.
- Classroom teaching.
- One-to-one teaching, one-to-one learning support and one-to-one counselling.
- Online learning and teaching remotely.
- Curricular provision, in particular, SPHE and RSE.
- Co-curricular activities including clubs, sports, after-school study, work experience, fundraising events, school outings and school trips including foreign travel.
- Use of toilet/changing areas in school.
- Use of external personnel and facilities to support curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Care of children with additional educational needs, including intimate care where needed and care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs.
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required.
- School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts.
- Administration of First Aid.
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils etc.
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils.
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters.
- Recruitment of school personnel, in consultation with KCETB.
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school.
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school.
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events.

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

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel and/or 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 curricular or co-curricular activities.
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child including bullying behaviour and racism.
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school or on school activities.
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications (including inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices) between child and another child or adult.
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as an uninvited person accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time in breakout rooms.
- Risk of harm to children with AEN who have particular vulnerabilities.

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

- All school personnel, Board of management, Parents' Association and patron are provided with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement* and all relevant documentation including *Circular 0036/2023*
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* are made available to all school personnel and training has been provided for all school personnel.
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023) and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015* and it's Addendum (2019).
- All teachers are provided with The Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers as published by the Teaching Council in accordance with section 7(2) (b) of the Teaching Council Acts, 2001-2015. **Updated 2nd edition 2016**
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. (in consultation with KCETB)
- Staff are reminded of their responsibilities under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 at the beginning of each academic year.
- The school has formulated a bank of policies **which are reviewed periodically** to provide for a safe structured learning environment. These can be found at www.abbeycommunitycollege.com
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Bí Cineálta Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools and Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying.
- Appropriate supervision of children during assembly, dismissal, breaks and co-curricular activities including clubs, sports, after-school study, work experience, fundraising events, school outings and school trips.
- The school has in place a Code of Behaviour inclusive of a Mobile Phone and Personal Electronic Device Acceptable Use Policy for pupils.
- The school undertakes respect awareness initiatives
- The school has a Positive Behaviour programme in place.
- The school implements in full the SPHE and RSE curriculum and has ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school.
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management 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 (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.

M J
11/09/2025

M.O'R
11-09-2025

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