Child Safeguarding Statement 2025/2026

John the Baptist Community School

John the Baptist Community School is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to students 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), Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements the Board of Management of John the Baptist Community School has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

The board of management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the department's Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

1 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Rachel Hayes**

2 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person(s) (Deputy DLP) Ita **Browne**
In the absence of the DLP, the DDLP shall assume responsibilities of the DLP.

3 The Relevant Person is **Rachel Hayes (DLP)**
Relevant person can be contacted on: rhayes@johnthebaptistcs.ie / 061-383283

Under the Children First Act 2015 Relevant Person means a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the Child Safeguarding Statement. This person is nominated by the board of management to manage and provide oversight of child protection concerns/allegations of child abuse.

4 Name of Chairperson of the Board of Management: **Mr Jim Twohig**
In the event that both DLP and DDLP are absent and unavailable, and where there is no staff member formally acting in their role, the chairperson of the board of management, assumes the role of DLP.

5 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and safeguarding 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 happening to children and protect members of school personnel from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of child abuse;

- Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children;

- Fully respect confidentiality requirements as set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 in dealing with child protection matters.

- The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any vulnerable adult.

Procedures and Measures in Place:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance 2017, and Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2nd ed. (Tusla, 2024), and the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

> **Procedure for the Management of Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct against School Personnel Relating to a Child Availing of Our Service**

~ Where any member of school personnel is the subject of any investigation in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in relation to a child attending the school, the school is required to adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the gov.ie website.

> **Procedure for the Safe Recruitment and Selection of School Personnel to Work with Children**

~ The school is required to adhere to the requirements of the Vetting Act. The selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, requires the school to adhere 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 Youth and available on the gov.ie website and as outlined in Chapter 10 of the procedures.

~ A written protocol is in place authorising immediate action for cases which require an employee to be immediately absented from school for child safeguarding reasons.

> Procedure for Provision of and Access to Child Safeguarding Training and Information, Including the Identification of the Occurrence of Harm

~ The school provides information and training to members of school personnel in relation to the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) as follows:

~ The school has provided each member of school personnel, including any new members of school personnel, (employees and volunteers, board of management members, student teachers and those on work experience) with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

~ The school ensures that members of school personnel have availed of relevant training and completed child protection training.

~ The school encourages board of management members to avail of any relevant training and complete child protection training.

~ The board of management ensures that records of all staff and board member child protection training are maintained.

> Procedure for the Reporting of Child Protection or Welfare Concerns to Tusla

~ All members of school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025, in relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla. Mandated reporting applies to all registered teachers and any other mandated person who may be employed by the school, for example a chaplain or nurse. A full list of those people who are mandated persons is set out in Appendix 1 procedures.

Procedure for Maintaining a List of the Persons (if any) in the Relevant Service Who Are Mandated Persons

~ There is a procedure in place to maintain a list of mandated persons. Schools may on occasion employ additional staff who are mandated by virtue of their profession. This list will include all registered teachers and identify additional employees that are not registered teachers.

Procedure for Appointing a Relevant Person (In schools this person is the DLP)

~ There is a procedure in place for appointing a relevant person.

The various procedures referred to in this Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment can be accessed via the school's website, the gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school.

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Addendum to Children First 2019 and 2025, and the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025, the board of management 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.

Note: The procedures and measures in place outlined above, are not intended as exhaustive list. Individual boards of management shall also include in this section such other procedures and measures that are of relevance to the school.

This statement has been published on the school's website or will be made available on request by the school. It has been provided to all members of school personnel, the parents' association (if any), the patron and parents. A copy of this statement and risk assessment will be made available to Tusla and the department if requested.

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment 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 November 24th 2025.

Signed: Jim Gwarley

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 24/11/2025

Signed: Rachel Hayes

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 24/11/2025

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment 2025/2026

Written Assessment of Risk of

John the Baptist Community School, Hospital, Co. Limerick.

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Chapter 9 of the *Child Protection Procedures Schools 2025* the following is the written Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment of John the Baptist Community School.

1. List of school activities

Daily Life

- Daily arrival and dismissal of students
- Recreation breaks for students
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- Use of school premises by other organisations during the school day
- Break-times/lunch times/before and after school supervision
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School facilities being used by outside organisations after the school day and open competitions
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including reflection time of students, confiscation of phones, etc.

Learning and Teaching

- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching/learning-support
- Online teaching and learning remotely
- Outdoor teaching activities/off campus activities
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- Evening study

Pastoral Care, Wellbeing and Support

- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including lunch time reflection for students, confiscation of phones etc.
- One-to-one counselling – guidance and support
- Care of children with special educational needs
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst students
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools, including disabled toilets
- Internal school counselling/chaplaincy/career guidance
- Visiting counselling service
- Annual Health and Wellbeing Week
- Annual Sports Day
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst students

- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Care of students with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as those with specific learning difficulties
- Students from ethnic minorities/migrants
- Members of the Traveller community
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBTQI+) children
- Students perceived to be LGBTQI+
- Students of minority religious faiths
- Children in care
- Children on Tusla Child Protection Notification System
- Children with medical needs
- Lunchtime / Homework club(s)
- Recruitment of school personnel including –
  -Teachers/SNA's
  -Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
  -Sports coaches
  -External Tutors/Guest Speakers
  -Volunteers/Parents in school activities
  -Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours and/or after school activities

School Events
- Fundraising events involving students
- School transport arrangements including procedures for accompanying adults/bus escorts
- Open days and community-based events e.g. Arts and Culture Week
- School concerts/presentation nights e.g. registration night, Third Year, Senior Options Night

Extra-curricular/Co-Curricular Activities
- Student Council
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities
- Participation by students in religious ceremonies/retreats/religious instruction external to the school (e.g. Seinn)
- Extra-curricular Sports
- Young Scientist/Young Entrepreneur/Junk Couture & other TY competitions
- Green Schools
- School plays/musicals
- Various workshops held by visiting speakers (e.g. substance abuse/mental health/careers)
- Public speaking and debating competitions (within and outside school time)
- Activities associated with promotion of mental health e.g. Cycle Against Suicide

Use of Technology
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by students in school, including social media.
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events or as assessment requirements (e.g. LCVP, CBAs Junior Cycle)

Work Experience
- 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
- Homework club/evening study

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

Physical Abuse: Is that which results in actual or potential harm from an interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent/guardian or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust.
Emotional Abuse: When a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.
Neglect: in relation to a child, to deprive the child of adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, supervision, safety or medical care.
Sexual Abuse: Includes when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others including rape, exposure to pornography, sexual activity in the presence of the child and child trafficking for the purpose of exploitation.
Bullying: Bullying, whether physical, verbal or cyber may also be considered serious grounds for concern.

The following are identified as risks of harm:

- Risk of harm not being identified by school personnel
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel
- Risk of harm where school personnel have not received appropriate training
- Risk of child being harmed in school by a member of school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in school by another child
- Risk of child being harmed in 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 a child is participating in out of school activities
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to racism
- 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 for long periods of time unsupervised in break out rooms.
- Risk of harm due to cyberbullying of child
- 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 or on a trip
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
- Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing IT services/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of harm to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) 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 due to one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situations
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with students in an inappropriate 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.
- Risk of self-harm.
- Risk of harm due to substance abuse/exposure to substance abuse
- Risk of harm/injury due to medical intervention

- Risk of harm due to the recording of school events/assessments etc. and subsequent poor storage, distribution and/or misuse of such materials

3. The school has the following policies and procedures in place that may be used to address

- The Board of Management of John the Baptist Community School (JTBCS) has adopted, without amendment, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023 and 2025).
- All school personnel are provided with a copy of John the Baptist Community School's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment and The Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025.
- School personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the Children First Act 2015 as well as supporting the continued implementation of the best practice guidance set out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and its addenda, including the Addendum to Children First 2019 and 2025
- A written protocol is in place authorising immediate action for cases which require an employee to be immediately absented from school for child safeguarding reasons.
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Rachel Hayes.**
- The Deputy Designated Liaison Person(s) (Deputy DLPs) is **Ita Browne.**
- The names of our DLP and DDLP are prominently displayed on the wall outside the main secretaries' office, inside our front door.
- JTBCS is implementing in full the SPHE curriculum, building on the Stay Safe Programme from Primary School.
- JTBCS implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle and in Transition Year and the RSE programme at Senior level, including areas to address anxiety and issues of wellbeing connected to the pandemic.
- School authorities have a Code of Behaviour and an Anti-Bulling Policy in place in accordance with the departments "Bí Cineálta" procedures to prevent and address bulling in schools and as outlines in Circular 55/2024.
- JTBCS undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives – Inclusion Week
  - JTBCS ensures adequate supervision of corridors/yards etc.
- JTBCS has a supervision system to ensure appropriate supervision of children during assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms, bus bay etc. and ensures adequate supervision of corridors/yards etc.
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings.
- JTBCS has a Health & Safety Policy in place, and it is regularly updated.
- JTBCS has Policy in place to deal with Local and National Health Emergencies.
- All visitors must report to the main entrance, installed with a buzzer and keypad, thus no individual is on the premises without authorisation.
- JTBCS adheres fully to the requirements of Garda Vetting legislation and the relevant DES circulars in relation to same.
- The school adheres to the relevant Department of Education and Youth circulars in respect of recruitment.
- The school has codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) and adheres to the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct
- JTBCS complies with agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- JTBCS has a Special Educational Needs Policy
- JTBCS has a Substance Abuse Policy and procedures, which is reviewed annually in line with best practice and legislation
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to students
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid/medications, including First responders (good Samaritan intervention)

- JTBCS will
  - ensure each member of staff will get a copy of our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
  - ensure all new staff will get a copy of our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
  - encourage all personnel and Board of Management members avail of relevant training
  - maintain records of all personnel and board member training
- JTBCS has in place a Code of Behaviour for students to be signed by the Parent/Guardian and the student.
- JTBCS has in place an Acceptable Use Policy, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this to parents.
- JTBCS has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones smart watches and tablet devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018 and the national guidelines.
- JTBCS has in place clear procedures for one-to-one teaching and support, distance teaching and blended learning which are continuously reviewed.
- JTBCS has a Critical Incident Policy and team in place and is updated regularly.
- The Pastoral Care Support Team, Cabhair, which consists of one Deputy Principal, three Guidance Counsellors, an SEN representative and staff representatives, meet on a weekly basis to discuss any concerns or referrals of concern regarding student welfare and to discuss support strategies for relevant students
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school and in external organisations (See Health and Safety Policy)

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 Child Safeguarding Statement and 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 pace 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 risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on 24/11/2025. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed _____ Date 24/11/2025

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Rachel Hayes Date 24/11/2025