



St. Michael's House
Special National School, Ballymun
Child Safeguarding Statement – September 2024

Ballymun Road, Dublin 9. D09 R297 Roll Number: 18763F Tel: 884 0326

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Child Safeguarding Statement

St Michael's Houses SNS, Ballymun is a special school providing primary/post-primary education to pupils from aged 5 to 18 years.

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 2023 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of SMH SNS Ballymun 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 **Caroline Sheill**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Noelle Shanley**
- 4 The relevant person is **Caroline Sheill**
(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.
- In line with the school's Admissions Policy, the school will cater to the abilities and needs of pupils up to eighteen years of age who have been assessed as having a Moderate, Severe or Profound General Learning Disability. Safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons is central to the planning, implementation and review of all school activities. St. Michael's House Nursing, Household Staff and clinicians who work with our students adhere to their employer's [St. Michael's House organisation] Safeguarding policy and procedures.

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](http://gov.ie) 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.
 - 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 school'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 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.
- 7 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel 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 25th September, 2024

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Date: _____

Our School's Mission Statement

Our school is a stimulating centre of education where each person is cherished as an individual whose ability, potential and needs are recognised and nurtured. The teachers, staff and multidisciplinary clinical teams provide a challenging, sensitive and caring environment which fosters personal, social, academic development, independence and achievement.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written assessment of risk of St. Michael's House Special National School, Ballymun

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services.

In accordance with section 11 of the *Children First Act 2015* and the requirement of chapter 8 of the *Child Protection procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* (revised 2023) the following is the written Risk Assessment of SMH SNS Ballymun:

| List of School Activities | Risk Level | The School has identified the following Risk of Harm | The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment |
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| Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters | Med | Harm not recognised or reported promptly Procedure not followed correctly School profile indicates that some students are at risk of neglect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Safeguarding Statement, Risk Assessment and Reporting procedures made available to all staff. Staff Induction highlights Child Safeguarding Statement, Risk Assessment and Reporting procedures DLP & DDLP keeps up to date with Child Protection training. All current Staff have completed Tusla training module & any other relevant online training offered by PDST and refresher every 3 to 4 years. New staff to complete Tusla online course BOM records all records of staff and board training Access to SMH and PDS Clinical personnel for additional advice and guidance |
| Classroom Teaching & supervision | Med | Harm by school personnel Harm by school students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate staffing, supplemented (where possible) with support from other classes when required |

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| | | Physical abuse, Bullying | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where no teacher can be employed to cover a teacher absence, the teaching colleague in an adjoining class and/or the Principal/Deputy Principal assume Duty of Care for that class on a day-by-day basis. If a class or bus transport cannot be adequately staffed, the Principal may, for safety reasons, close the class or classes or cancel the bus run until sufficient suitably qualified and Garda Vetted staff are available. Awareness that other staff members can/will enter the room at any time. Glass in door of classroom to allow other school staff to observe what adults and students are doing. Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policies are in place Behaviour recording and reporting procedures in place Crisis Intervention Training and annual re-accreditation Teaching Council Code of Practice in place Positive Working Together document in place |
| One to one (1:1) teaching/classroom activities | Med | Harm by school personnel Harm by school students Harm by visiting clinicians, therapists or teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy access to room/workspace by other members of staff Glass in door of classroom to allow other school staff to observe what adults and students are doing. Teacher or other staff member to be informed/aware that a child is having a 1:1 session |
| Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs | High | Harm by school personnel Harm by student | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy on Intimate Care is in place Other staff to be made aware that the staff member is toileting/showering a pupil All understand that another staff member may discreetly check on staff and pupil at any time |
| Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe. | Med | Non-teaching of same | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe curriculum, differentiated as appropriate to the needs of the students. |
| Daily arrival and dismissal of | High | Harm from other pupils, unknown adults in the immediate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrival and dismissal supervised by Teachers, SNAs and Bus |

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| pupils | | environment/school grounds area mindful of the fact that transitions like this can provide opportunities for absconding by vulnerable pupils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Escorts. Procedures, which change regularly, due to building works, are documented in School Health & Safety Risk Assessment. |
| Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils | High | Injury to pupils and staff including injury to pupils who abscond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of Behaviours that challenge Recording and Reporting of challenging Behaviours Crisis Intervention training for staff-reaccredited annually when assigned to work with pupils deemed to be high risk Health & Safety Policy & Risk Assessment in place Code Of Behaviour in place Positive Behaviour Support Plans in place for some students School has access to SMH Clinical Supports regarding cause and management of behaviours that challenge. |
| Sports Coaches | Med | Harm to pupils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils are never left alone or in a group without school staff present Ensuring vetting of coach by the swimming pool or other relevant centre/affiliate body. PE Policy currently being re-formulated and Child Safeguarding will be referenced in this Policy |
| Students participating in work experience/College Observation | Med/High | Harm by work-experience/ College student Harm to work-experience/ College student | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Experience/Student Protocol reviewed annually Child Safeguarding Statement highlighted to all School checks that Garda Vetting in place by work-exp <i>own</i> college/school, if over 16 years of age. All students and visitors must sign-in and sign-out on sheets at school entrance. Students deployed to rooms with low risk of harm if possible. if deployed to high risk area and they must be fully briefed and work with a staff member at all times It is a condition of the school agreeing to facilitate student-placements/ observations by students under the care of SMH |

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| | | | <p>personnel (e.g. nursing, physio, O/T disciplines), SMH organisation is required to ensure that all Safeguarding requirements have been met. The school Principal must have advance notice of such proposed placements to that they do not overlap with other education-based (Teacher/SNA) placements.</p> |
| Recreation/movement breaks for pupils | High | <p>Harm to student by staff</p> <p>Harm to staff by student</p> <p>Harm by student to student</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate staffing • Awareness that other staff members can/will enter the room/area at any time. • Glass in door of classroom/activity area to allow other school staff to observe. Current building configuration does not allow for this in all cases; to be revisited as part of Phase II of building programme. • Fencing and gates to be kept intact and in good repair. There is a risk associated with gaps in fencing during school building project which the Board will endeavour to minimise by liaising with contractors. • Code of Behaviour Policy, incorporating Anti-Bullying Policy • Positive Behaviour Support Plans in place for some students • Crisis Intervention Training and annual re-accreditation • Teaching Council Code of Practice in place • Positive Working Together document in place |
| School Outings | High | <p>Harm from pupils</p> <p>Harm from staff</p> <p>Harm from unknown persons in the community</p> <p>Harm from traffic</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate supervision throughout school outing • All school policies apply when off campus, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Intimate Care, Anti Bullying, Supervision, • Appropriate vetting for any volunteers or 2nd/3rd level students assisting • Bus drivers vetted by own contractor. Drivers not to be left alone with pupils |
| Travel Training | Med | <p>Harm by staff</p> <p>Harm by member(s) of public</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient staffing for all trips • Parental sign-off for 1:1 travel training programmes for senior pupils preparing for transition to adult services |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Training Policy to be finalised |
| e.g. Annual Sports Day; Graduation; Christmas Show; Annual Arts' Week events; | high | Harm from students Harm from staff Harm from visitors/unknown personnel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate staffing – ensure that there is always a staff member with student(s) • Vetting for all volunteers • Parent helpers are accompanied by school staff • Staff to be with pupils if cars are passing up the driveway <p>All school policies apply when off campus, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Intimate Care, Anti Bullying, Supervision</p> |
| Use of off-site facilities for school activities | High | Harm by school staff Harm by Volunteers Harm by unknown persons in the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate personnel so that no pupil is left .unattended • Volunteers/TY/3rd level students never left unaccompanied with school pupils • All school policies apply when off campus, e.g. Code of Behaviour, Intimate Care, Anti Bullying, Supervision, • Staff authorised to use personal phones to contact school when off-site |
| School transport arrangements including bus escorts | high | Harm by Bus Driver Harm by Bus Escorts Harm by Students Harm not recognised or promptly/properly reported Persons collecting pupils unknown to Escorts appear unfit to collect pupil | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vetting of Bus Driver by Contractor • Garda Vetting of Bus Escorts by school prior to commencement of employment • Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment in place • Bus Escort Protocol in place re: handover of students, recording and reporting of incidents, pupil sickness/seizures etc |
| Administration of Medication | High | Harm by nurse Harm by Staff Harm by students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Nurses abide by SMH and Bord Altnaais policies and procedures • SMH Patron Body is responsible for vetting and oversight of nurses and student nurses but such placements must be arranged in consultation with the school Principal. • Specific school staff trained in safe administration of rescue medication to give emergency medication when indicated (SAM Training) • MAS Sheets/Scripts for all medications must be given to Nurse |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by parents/doctor before it can be administered in school Occasional OTC (over the Counter) medication that is required by pupil should be administered by nurse All staff to be aware of medication protocols for pupils with whom they work. All medications to be double-locked in presses to prevent access by students. Staff's personal prescribed medication should not be brought on the premises. All OTC medication must be locked away, safe from student access. Any PRN (when required medication) should be prescribed by a doctor, be part of a student support plan and only be administered by nurses after consultation with class teacher and with the consent of the parents. |
| Administration of First Aid | | Harm by staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid Training generally provided to SNAs every two years. (completed Sept 22). Nursing staff also carry out First Aid All bangs to the head notified to parents/guardians All to be aware of those students in their care who are allergic to certain preparations and/or types of wound dressing/plaster Differentiate the programme to the needs of the child and understand the risk and vulnerability of the children. Parent/guardian permission sought before RSE programme (or elements of it) are undertaken Heightened awareness of the need to care for the pupils when on outings or in public places or if visitors come to the school |
| Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe | high | Harm from staff, volunteers, visiting teams if they are not aware of protection issues for children – risk for our pupils who are more vulnerable because they do not understand the risk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff have undertaken Tusla e-learning programme Staff have participated in the review of the Safety Statement and Risk Assessment; Staff will be required to participate in future Child Safeguarding training/reviews; DLP & DDLP to participate in DES Child Safeguarding |
| Training of school personnel in child protection matters | high | Staff not being fully aware of child protection guidelines thus not recognising or promptly/properly reporting concerns | |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training, as available • DLP to ensure that staff are advised of Child Safeguarding updates • Board of Management is aware of Board's obligations in this regard |
| Recruitment of school personnel including - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • SNA's • Secretarial Staff • Sports coaches & Sessional Services • Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours • Performers during Arts Week | high | Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff • Staff to complete Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST • Vetting Procedures in place for staff and volunteers • Memorandum of Understanding is in place between school and Patron Body regarding SMH Staff visiting and working in school • Induction documentation for new personnel to include copy of Child Safeguarding documentation • Condition of Contract with cleaning contractor that all personnel are Garda Vetted. • Contractors/artists/performers/students observing or present during school hours are accompanied by/supervised by member of school staff; pupil(s) never left alone with any non-school person |
| Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school | low | Bullying, exposure to inappropriate content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) reviewed in November 2023. The schools Digital Committee are in the process of updating all communication platforms used and putting in place new SMH emails for each staff member only to be used for school work. This is part of the development of a Digital strategy outlined in the School Plan. • Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy in place • Adequate firewall and encryption of computers- To be upgraded this school year. • Pupils always supervised while on computer/tablet and never |

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| Communicating children/pupils in school with | high | Pupils cannot disclose any incidence of abuse or any incidence relating to child protection because of their inability to communicate or because of their level of intellectual disability | <p>left alone while engaging in online school-work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained in total communication. Staff use appropriate method of communication for each child. AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) devices have been introduced to some students and this form of communication will be increased over time with the support of SMH clinicians. Heightened awareness by staff and vigilance when participating in personal care. Reporting any concerns (e.g. unusual or repeated bruising, burns, cuts etc) to teacher and recording on body-mapping charts. Reporting to DLP/DLP if it is felt there are child protection issues. |
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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 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. In addition while every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practicable, a full recorded of the incident should be made and reports to the principal or parents.

Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017), and Tusla’s *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. 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 workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service; per DES “Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023 (blue book). This book is integral to this Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children: per DES Governance Manual for Board of Management 2023-2027
 - Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
 - Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla; per DES "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023 (blue book).
 - Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons; List of Teachers is updated annually and filed in the "School Plan" file in the Principal/DLP's office.
 - Procedure for appointing a relevant person: this will be the School Principal (Designated Liaison Person – DLP) or Deputy Principal (D-DLP) in his/her absence.
- All procedures listed are listed above.

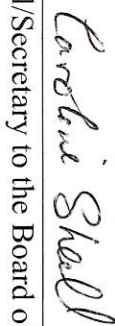
3. Implementation

Our service is committed to the continued implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually at the first Board of Management Meeting of the school year (September each year) or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Statement refers.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on 25th September, 2024. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed: 
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: 
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 25/9/24

Date: 25/9/24