

Scoil Mhuire, Coolcotts, Wexford

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Child Safeguarding Statement

Scoil Mhuire, Coolcotts is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

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 Scoil Mhuire, Coolcotts 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 Karina McKiernan.
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Mr Dermot McDermott.
- 4 The Relevant Person is Karina McKiernan
(*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. This person can also be the DLP*)

- 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.
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

- 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.
- 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 24 September 2024.

Signed: Monsignor Denis Lennon
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Karina McKiernan
Principal & Secretary to Board of Management

Date: 24 September 2024

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Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

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 Scoil Mhuire, Coolcotts.

	List of School Activities	Risk Level	The School has identified the following Risks of Harm in respect of its activities	The School has the following procedures in place to address the Risks of Harm identified in this assessment
1	Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	High	Harm to pupils not recognised or reported promptly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement, DES Procedures & National Guidance made available to all staff ▪ DLP & DDLP attended PDST face-to-face training ▪ Staff view online training offered by Tusla and PDST ▪ Staff complete in-house verification re Child Protection & Welfare for Board of Management ▪ Regular child protection professional development and key reminders by DLP at staff meetings ▪ BoM maintains record of staff and board training
2	Recruitment of school personnel	High	Harm to pupils not recognised or properly or promptly reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures & interview process ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement, DES Procedures & National Guidance made available to all staff, including new & substitute staff ▪ Staff view online training offered by Tusla and PDST ▪ Staff complete in-house verification re Child Protection & Welfare for Board of Management ▪ Regular child protection professional development and key reminders by DLP at staff meetings
3	Visitors to the school and contractors at work	High	Harm by visitors/uninvited guests Harm and/or injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All visitors must report to the secretary's office ▪ Record of visitors is maintained ▪ Visitors/contractors during school time are restricted to essential visitors/contractors only ▪ Full implementation of Closed Door Policy by staff and pupils ▪ Use of fob security system ▪ Full implementation of Stay Safe Programme
4	Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Medium	Harm from older pupils or unknown adults on the yard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arrival supervised by Principal, Deputy Principal and Assistant Principals from 8.35am ▪ Dismissal supervised by Principal and Deputy Principal and class teachers at 1.30pm and 2.30pm ▪ One-to-one handover of infant pupils, 1st/2nd class pupils & Rainbow Unit pupils to Parent/guardian or designated collector

	List of School Activities	Risk Level	The School has identified the following Risks of Harm in respect of its activities	The School has the following procedures in place to address the Risks of Harm identified in this assessment
5	Late arrival and early departure of pupils	Medium	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils who arrive late/depart early signed in/out by Parent/guardian at secretary's office, including reason for same Phone verification with Parent/guardian where child is being collected by unknown adult/adolescent Late arrivals and early departures recorded on Aladdin and monitored by Principal and Attendance Monitoring Group
6	Recreation breaks for pupils	High	Harm and/or injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External gates locked Pupils not permitted to re-enter school building unless accompanied by a school adult/designated supervisor First aid administered on yard SNA access for designated pupils Reduced recreation time and specific activities for designated pupils Supervision Policy Code of Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy Record keeping systems, including Aladdin
7	Breakfast Club Homework Club	Low Medium	Harm by Breakfast Club/Homework Club personnel Harm and/or injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vetting Procedures Child Safeguarding Statement Appropriate supervision Maintenance of Attendance Records & follow-up by HSCL as required
8	Classroom & one-to-one teaching	Medium	Harm by school personnel Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole-school timetabling Glass in classroom doors Appropriate seating arrangements Special Educational Needs Policy
9	Sensory Room & OT Room	Medium	Harm by school personnel Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Educational Needs Policy Whole-school timetabling Glass in OT room door Cushion in sensory room door and adult visible in doorway
10	Movement Breaks	Medium	Harm by school personnel Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Educational Needs Policy Whole-school timetabling Movement Breaks hosted in public and circulation areas
11	Care of children with special needs, including intimate care needs	High	Harm by school personnel Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Educational Needs Policy Intimate Care Policy

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12	Use of toilet areas in school	Medium	Harm by school personnel/other pupils Harm and/or injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rota system for pupil use of toilets implemented by school staff ▪ Separate classroom-based toilets for girls and boys ▪ Pupils not permitted to re-enter school building from recreation break etc. unless accompanied by a school adult/designated supervisor
13	Administration of First Aid & Medication	Low	Harm by school personnel Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administration of First Aid & Medication Policy ▪ First aid & medication administered by trained school personnel in public areas
14	Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils	High	Injury to pupils and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA) training for staff & regular refresher training ▪ Behaviour Reductions Plans ▪ Counselling & Play Therapy ▪ Nurture Room ▪ Incredible Years & FRIENDS Programmes ▪ Immediate access to Principal, Deputy Principal & other key personnel ▪ Pupil Support Team ▪ Liaison with external agencies – NEPS, CAMHS, Tusla ▪ Supervision Policy ▪ Code of Behaviour & Restorative Practice ▪ Health & Safety Policy
15	Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils, including during classroom teaching LGBT children/pupils perceived to be LGBT	High High	Harm by fellow pupils Bullying Harm by fellow pupils Bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anti-Bullying Policy ▪ Code of Behaviour ▪ Full implementation of Stay Safe Programme ▪ Engagement of external speakers, including Community Gardaí ▪ Regular review of bullying incident records ▪ Reporting of instances of bullying at each Board of Management meeting
16	Nurture Room	Medium	Injury to pupils and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tailored professional development for staff via Nurture Group Network (NGN) ▪ Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA) training for staff ▪ Pairing & timetabling of pupils ▪ Room layout, facilities & resources ▪ Immediate access to Principal & other key personnel

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16	Nurture Room (continued)	Medium	Injury to pupils and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pupil Support Team ▪ Liaison with external agencies – NEPS, CAMHS, Tusla ▪ Code of Behaviour & Restorative Practice ▪ Health & Safety Policy
17	Sports Coaches	Medium	Harm by sports coaches Harm and/or to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Sports Coaches work under the direct supervision of the designated teacher
18	Sporting Activities, including swimming	Medium	Harm by school personnel/sports coaches Harm and/or injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Sporting activities take place in designated areas of school building/grounds and sport facilities at specified times ▪ Supervision Policy ▪ School personnel supervision in swimming changing area ▪ School personnel assistance for individual children with significant additional needs in swimming cubicle area, if needed
19	Participation in Inter-School Matches	Medium	Harm by school personnel/referees/other attendees Harm and/or injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Use of designated sport facilities at specified times ▪ Supervision Policy ▪ Two Scoil Mhuire personnel present at all times ▪ Bus system to transport pupils to/from inter-school matches
20	Sports Day	Medium	Harm by current pupils, school personnel, older past pupils or unknown adults on the school premises Harm and/or injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Sporting activities take place in designated areas of school building/grounds and sport facilities at specified times ▪ Supervision Policy ▪ Whole-school timetabling & record of attendance
21	Outdoor teaching activities & school outings	High	Harm by school personnel/outing venue personnel Harm and/or injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Selection of accessible & visible outdoor areas on school grounds for outdoor teaching ▪ Whole-school timetabling for PE & Daily Mile ▪ Careful selection of venues & grouping of pupils for onsite and offsite learning ▪ School Tours/Outings Policy & Pupil mobile phone protocol

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22	Counselling in small group & one-to-one settings	High	Harm by counsellors Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of accredited and supervised counsellors only ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Use of Parent/guardian consent forms & review meetings ▪ Regular liaison with Principal and Pupil Support Team ▪ Whole-school timetabling & record of attendance ▪ Glass in meeting room doors ▪ Appropriate seating arrangements
23	Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum	Low	Harm by external personnel Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ External personnel work under the direct supervision of the designated teacher ▪ Appropriate seating arrangements
24	Parents/guardians participating in in-class activities	Low	Harm by Parents/guardians at school Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Induction provided for parents/guardians by HSCL ▪ Scoil Mhuire Code of Practice for Parents/Guardian Volunteers ▪ Parents/guardians work under the direct supervision of the designated teacher
25	Post-Primary students participating in work experience in the school	Low	Harm by post-primary students Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Post-Primary students work under the direct supervision of the designated teacher
26	Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Low	Harm by student teachers Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Student teachers work under the direct supervision of the designated teacher
27	Volunteers or third level students participating in special educational needs (SEN) work placement	Medium	Harm by volunteers/third level students Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Scoil Mhuire Code of Practice for SNA Volunteers & SNA Work Placement Students

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28	Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school	Medium	Harm by fellow pupils Bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Firewall system & non-access to social media by pupils at school ▪ Internet Acceptable Usage Policy ▪ Smartphone, Smartwatch & Tablet Device Policy ▪ ICT Policy ▪ Cyber Bullying Awareness sessions for middle & senior pupils & parents/guardians ▪ Liaison with Community Gardaí ▪ Anti-Bullying Policy ▪ Code of Behaviour
29	Use of social media & online platforms outside of school	High	Exposure to age-inappropriate online content Harm by fellow pupils Cyber bullying Harm by persons known & unknown Grooming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SPHE Curriculum & Stay Safe Programme ▪ Cyber Bullying Awareness & Digital Health education for middle & senior pupils & parents/guardians ▪ Address via School Assemblies & Class Talks ▪ Anti-Bullying Policy ▪ Code of Behaviour ▪ Liaison with Community Gardaí
30	Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	Medium	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written parent/guardian consent for images of his/her child to be taken and how they may be used ▪ Photography/videography of school activities and events undertaken by school personnel and used in compliance with school policy ▪ Pupil images and names do not co-appear on school website, other media ▪ Parents/guardians not permitted to take photographs/videos at school activities and events of children other than their own, without the consent of the other parent(s)/guardian(s)
31	After school use of school premises by other organisations	High	Harm by personnel from external organisations Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement
32	School-based and Church-based religious ceremonies/religious instruction & celebration of the sacraments	Low	Harm by Church and/or House of Brigid personnel Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Church and/or House of Brigid personnel work under the direct supervision of the designated teacher ▪ Whole-school timetabling ▪ Appropriate seating arrangements

	List of School Activities	Risk Level	The School has identified the following Risks of Harm in respect of its activities	The School has the following procedures in place to address the Risks of Harm identified in this assessment
33	<p>Hosting of annual Summer Camp Programme to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Summer Education Programme for Pupils on the Autism Spectrum ▪ Summer Camps for Pupils with Complex Educational Needs & Pupils at Risk of Educational Disadvantage ▪ Literacy & Numeracy Summer Camps ▪ Summer Camps operating on school premises under the auspices of Wexford School Completion Programme ▪ Summer Camps operating on school premises under the auspices of an independent provider 	High	<p>Harm by school personnel Harm by personnel from external organisations or independent providers Harm and/or injury to pupils Bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vetting Procedures ▪ Child Safeguarding Statement ▪ Health & Safety Statement ▪ Code of Behaviour ▪ Anti-Bullying Policy ▪ Critical Incident Policy ▪ Healthy Eating Policy ▪ Timetabling, planning and evaluation of suite of Summer Camp activities ▪ Appropriate supervision and seating arrangements, both indoors and outdoors ▪ Administration of First Aid & Medication Policy ▪ First aid & medication administered by trained school personnel in public areas ▪ Liaison between individual staff members and the DLP and vice versa ▪ Daily onsite oversight by Overseer re Summer Camps operating under the direction of Scoil Mhuire (excludes Wexford SCP and Independent Provider Summer Camps)
35	<p>Provision of afterschool service (Sherpa Kids Afterschool) for Scoil Mhuire pupils and families</p>	High	<p>Harm by afterschool personnel Harm and/or injury to pupils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sherpa Kids personnel collect Junior & Senior Infant pupils from their classes ▪ All other pupils meet Sherpa Kids Afterschool personnel at a designated meeting point at the main reception ▪ Regular review meetings occur between the Principal and Sherpa Kids personnel ▪ Sherpa Kids Afterschool's Policies & Procedures have been provided to the Board of Management

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.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on 24 September 2024.

Signed: Monsignor Denis Lennon
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Karina McKiernan
Principal & Secretary to Board of Management

Date: 24 September 2024

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