

Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template (Landscape Version)

Child Safeguarding Statement

St John of God GNS is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. Included in the school is a special class catering for children with Autism.

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 John of God GNS 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 _____ **Sinéad Feery** _____
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is _____ **Sarah Ryan** _____
- 4 The Relevant Person is _____ **Sinéad Feery** _____
(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 (if any) 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 23rd September 2023

Signed: Brendan Prunty

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 23rd September 2023

Signed: Sinéad Feery

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 25th September 2023

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St John of God GNS

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 PostPrimary Schools (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St John of God GNS.

1. List of School Activities	2. The School has identified the following Risk of Harm in respect of its activities	3. The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff DLP & DDLP to attend PDST face to face training when offered All Staff to view online training by PDST and in-school training Members of BOM to receive training BOM keeps a record of all staff and board training
One to one teaching/counselling/play therapy/in-school confessions	Harm by school personnel	School has policy in place for one to one teaching c.f. Learning Support Policy and Code of Good Practice Vision panels are in place in all rooms where one to one teaching is required All personnel are required to adhere to Children First National Guidance and Child Protection Procedures
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	Harm by school personnel	Code of Good Practice All personnel are required to adhere to Children First National Guidance and Child Protection Procedures
Toilet areas/changing areas	Inappropriate behaviour Bullying	Code of Behaviour Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Good Practice
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full RSE and Stay Safe delivered to all classes during a set period in the year.

		Droichead mentoring to ensure NQT teachers are supported with the implementation of SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe
Classroom teaching/Small group teaching including withdrawal of a group	Harm by school personnel	School has policy in place for one to one teaching c.f. Learning Support Policy and Code of Good Practice Required to adhere to Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection Procedures for Primary Schools
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Harm from older pupils, unknown adults on the playground	At 8.40 the pedestrian gate will be opened for all parents and children to enter via the pedestrian gate and follow the blue footprints Parents to drop child in yard and return out the small yellow gate, following the yellow footprints* The exit route has been secured with pedestrian barriers. An SNA will be on duty daily in the morning from 8:40 to prevent cars from driving in the gate, and to ensure pedestrians don't walk up the exit route Children proceed to the main entrance where they will be met by the Principal, enter and go straight to their room. They will then proceed immediately to their assigned seat. <i>*Parents of infant children may walk their children to the main entrance. They then should leave immediately via the exit route.</i> <i>Classes will be supervised by the principal and deputy principal at the door and 2 teachers – one on the upstairs corridor and 1 on the downstairs corridor.</i> At Home-time, Junior and Senior Infants will be handed over to a known adult at the front door. No child will be permitted to leave alone or with an adult other than that nominated by the parent.

		<p>Parents of children in 1st – 6th classes will be walked to the yard / gate where they will be met by their parents or walk home as arranged.</p> <p>Arrangements for children in the Autism Class</p> <p>The children in the Autism class who arrive by bus will be driven to the back door where they will be met by their teacher and SNAs. The bus escort will assist the children in alighting from the bus and they will be accompanied into the school by their teacher and / or SNA.</p> <p>At home time, the children are accompanied to the bus by teacher and/or SNA where they are met by the bus escort.</p>
Sports Coaches and other external personnel employed by the school to supplement the curriculum	Harm to pupils by personnel	<p>Child Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>Class teacher always present</p> <p>Garda Vetting required</p>
Students participating in work experience (e.g. Transition Year Students)	Harm by student	<p>Work experience students are never left alone with children. They are always supervised.</p> <p>Child Safeguarding Statement.</p>
Recreation breaks for pupils	<p>Bullying</p> <p>Once off injury or harm by another pupil</p> <p>Adults entering the yard during break times</p> <p>Children going in from yard unsupervised to use the toilet</p>	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement</p> <p>Code of Good Practice</p> <p>Code of Behaviour</p> <p>Policies and procedures in place for adults who come to the school – they must report directly to the office.</p> <p>Supervision by teachers on yard, SNAs present on yard also.</p> <p>Children accompanied by SNA if need to use toilets during break.</p>
Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as	<p>Bullying</p> <p>Once off harm by another pupil</p>	<p>Anti-Bullying Policy</p> <p>Code of Behaviour</p>

<p>Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants Members of the Traveller community Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)pupils Pupils perceived to be LGBT Pupils of minority religious faiths Children in care Children on CPNS</p>	<p>Non-attendance or poor attendance at school</p>	<p>DEIS Attendance Plan NEWB HSCL – maintaining good links and communication with home School Completion Programme – targeting vulnerable children and those at risk of early school leaving through participation in a range of before and after school clubs (Breakfast Club, Activity clubs, Cookery Club). Play Therapy – Privately funded therapy with a qualified play therapist for children suffering from trauma, bullying, school refusal, etc as identified by teachers and parents.</p>
<p>Outdoor teaching activities/Sporting Activities</p>	<p>Bullying Inappropriate Behaviour Possibility of children wandering/absconding</p>	<p>All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 Code of Behaviour Anti-bullying Policy Careful supervision and monitoring of children – reduced adult/teacher ratios when away from the school on trips.</p>
<p>Homework club/After school clubs/Summer Camps</p>	<p>Harm by school personnel Bullying</p>	<p>All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 AntiBullying Policy Code of Good Practice All staff Garda vetted</p>
<p>Breakfast club</p>	<p>Harm by school personnel</p>	<p>All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 AntiBullying Policy Code of Good Practice All staff Garda vetted</p>
<p>School outings</p>	<p>Unknown adults Unfamiliar territory Harm by volunteers Harm by school personnel</p>	<p>All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 Code of Good Practice Careful teacher supervision on outings Pupil:Adult ratio of approximately 10:1</p>

	Harm by other children both from our school and from other schools	Choosing outings to places with a good reputation for safety and compliance with Child Protection Standards
Annual Sports Day	Bullying Harm by school personnel Children re-entering school building alone during activities (to use toilet)	All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 Locking back door during events so pupils can only enter through the front door where they are buzzed in and seen by secretary. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Fundraising events involving pupils	Harm by other adults Bullying Children re-entering school building alone during activities (to use toilet)	All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 Locking back door during events so pupils can only enter through the front door where they are buzzed in and seen by secretary. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Use of off-site facilities for school activities, including participation in religious ceremonies external to the school	Unknown adults Unfamiliar territory Harm by volunteers Harm by school personnel Harm by other children both from our school and from other schools	All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 Code of Good Practice Careful teacher supervision on outings Pupil:Adult ratio of approximately 10:1 Choosing outings to places with a good reputation for safety and compliance with Child Protection Standards
School transport arrangements	Bullying Harm by personnel	All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 Pupil:adult ratio is lowered Children have limited interaction due to safety belts
Administration of Medicine Administration of First Aid	Failure to administer Harm by personnel Administering incorrectly	All staff required to adhere to Children First 2015 and Child Protection Procedures 2023 Administration of Medication Policy Code of Good Practice
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Lack of supervision Harm by pupils	Identifying bullying hotspots Anti-Bullying Policy Adequate Supervision of pupils on the yard and in the school

		Code of Behaviour
Recruitment of school personnel including - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff Staff to view online training as and when offered by PDST Vetting Procedures to be followed Policy of Parents / Volunteers Policy on Visiting Contractors Teacher always present when external tutor / speaker visiting.
Use of school premises by other organisation during school day (Association/HSCL Clusters etc.)	Unknown and un-vetted adults in the building	Children are not left unsupervised by their teacher All visitors to the school must sign in at reception Parents' Association activities are mostly conducted in Parents' Room
Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school	Bullying Access to internet	Acceptable Usage Policy Internet restricted by NCTE Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	Bullying	Acceptable Usage Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
After school use of school premises by other organisations	Unknown adults viewing photographs of children displayed in school	After school use of premises is limited to Riverside Drama Circle with whom the school has a long relationship.

	Unknown adults knowing layout of the school	During school hours adults only gain access to the school via the front door, buzzed in by the secretary or other adult. All visitors report to the office.
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Harm by student teacher Risk that they would not be familiar with Child Protection Procedures and Guidance documents	Large group setting Garda Vetting in place for teaching practice students Student teachers given Child Protection Folder with all Child Protection documents pertaining to this school enclosed
Distance Learning Since the COVID19 pandemic, children are engaging in remote learning. This involves children using digital devices to engage with the school.	Risk of harm to child from online sources Risk of harm to child by school personnel Risk that child protection concerns would not be recorded promptly and properly by school personnel. Risk of child engaging in inappropriate or risky behaviour online.	Online interactions between teachers/SNAs/pupils/parents should be cognisant of the same policies and procedures as face to face interactions would require. Anything that occurs online that raises a Child Protection concern should be dealt with immediately and should adhere fully to our Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection procedures. It is impossible to predict all the risks; however, the following is recommended for all parties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children should not be given devices to use unsupervised for the purposes of distance learning or homework. A parent or other caregiver should be in the same room as the child if she is engaging in distance learning/homework. • A staff member should never arrange to speak to a single pupil in an online forum • If arranging an online meeting (e.g. Zoom) the parent/guardian will be sent the link to join the online meeting, not the pupil. The invitation must not be shared with anybody else. • All meetings will be password protected • All screens must be visible for the duration of the meeting. • The child's real name must be used. • All users must be dressed appropriately and age-appropriately.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The background, whether real or virtual, must be appropriate. • Sessions must never be recorded and photos must not be taken. • Pupil behaviour must be in-line with our Code of Behaviour.
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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 (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.

Examples of activities, risks and procedures

The examples listed in this document are provided to assist schools in undertaking their risk assessment under the Children First Act, 2015. Schools should note that this list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure, as far as possible, that any other risks and procedures that are relevant to its own particular circumstances are identified and specified in the written risk assessment and that adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

It is acknowledged that schools already have in place a range of policies, practices and procedures to mitigate the risk of harm to children while they are participating in the activities of the school and that some school activities will carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. In the context of the risk assessment that must be undertaken by schools, the Children First Act, 2015 refers to risk as “any potential for harm”. Therefore, it is important that, as part of its risk assessment process, each school lists and reviews all of its various activities (which shall include identifying those that may carry low risk of harm as well as those that carry higher risks of harm). Doing so will help the school to (1) identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school’s activities, (2) identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm and (3) identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.

The Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children published in January 2019 clarifies that organisations providing relevant services to children should consider the specific issue of online safety when carrying out their risk assessment and preparing their Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for primary and post-primary schools (April 2020) advises of the importance of teachers maintaining the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assisting parents and guardians to be aware of their role also. Schools should ensure that their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) informs and guides remote or distance learning activity.

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)*.

Examples 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
- Provision of residential facilities for boarders
- 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 adult students, including intimate care where needed
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- 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 pupils 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
- Homework club/evening study

Examples of Risks of Harm

- 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 an 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
- Risk of harm to children with 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 in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils 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

Examples of Procedures to address risks of harm

- 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)* 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 all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015* and its Addendum (2019)
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*
- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- 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 codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- 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 First Aid
- The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils

- The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this policy to parents
- The school has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones and tables devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- 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 policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations