

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment



St. Declan's National School

Bourne Avenue, Ashbourne, Co. Meath - A84KT02

Charity Number: 20201057

Phone: 01-8350594



Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

This school is a primary school.

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) and 2025, Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 and Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2nd ed. (Tusla, 2024), the board of management has adopted the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment 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.

Name of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP):

Cian Kearins

Name of the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP/DDLP):

Cathy Collier

In the absence of the DLP, the Deputy DLP shall assume responsibilities of the DLP

Name of Relevant Person

Cian Kearins

(In schools this person is the DLP)

Relevant Person can be contacted on:

01-8350594

info@decsash.ie

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.

Name of Chairperson of the board of management, or in an ETB school the Chief Executive or their delegate:

Geraldine Boylan

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, or in an ETB school the chief executive or their delegate, assumes the role of DLP.

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

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 all of these, 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.
- 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

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

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.

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

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 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 an 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.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
1.	Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff. All staff personnel made aware of the DLP & DDLP. - Child Protection procedures will be available on school share drive and all staff members will have access to a hard copy. - DLP & DDLP have attended face-to-face training - All Staff have undertaken OIDE training module & completed Tusla E-Learning course. - Board Members have completed Child Protection training with CPSMA - BOM maintains records of staff and board training.
2.	Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe, Walk Tall	Non-teaching of same	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School implements SPHE Curriculum including RSE/Stay Safe in full. - Training/support is provided for staff on a regular basis for areas of the SPHE Programme. - A timetable of the yearly SPHE Programme is distributed to class teachers in September and each stream collaborates when planning for all subjects including SPHE. - Relevant staff attend training when available/as appropriate

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
3.	One-to-one teaching/supervision	Harm by school personnel	- Window in classroom doors where one-to-one teaching occurs (if no window, the teacher/SNA leaves the door open). One-to-one teaching is only used in specific cases where deemed necessary.
4.	Outdoor teaching activities	Harm to pupil	- Supervision by staff member
5.	Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	Harm by school personnel	- Intimate Care Policy in place to address concerns
6.	Toilet areas	Inappropriate behaviour	- Supervision policy in place to address concerns
7.	LGBT Children/Pupils perceived to be LGBT Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants Pupils of minority religions Members of the travelling community Children in care	Bullying	- Bí Cineálta Policy and Code of Behaviour - SPHE Programme - Bí Cineálta and Friendship Notice boards - CPD - Special-themed weeks - Diverse range of books in new library collection
8.	Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where necessary	Injury to pupils and staff	- School has complied with the Department's "Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations". A policy has been developed and training provided to relevant staff. - Safety, Health & Welfare Policy; Code Of Behaviour; Behaviours of Concern policy
9.	Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Harm from older pupils, unknown	- Arrival and dismissal of pupils supervised by staff

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
		adults on the playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents are requested to drop children at the gate and not to enter school grounds for morning drop-off - Supervision Policy - Children are signed in/out by parents who arrive late to school or leave early. - Exterior classroom doors of the main building closed during school hours.
10.	Administration of Medicine/ First Aid	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administration of Medicine policy including Indemnity form for specific administration of medicine to be completed by parents. - Teacher/SNAs to receive training/instruction if children have specific medical conditions, e.g. diabetics, nut allergies. - Photographs of children who may require administration of medicine to be displayed on the teacher's noticeboard and all photos are on display in the staffroom. - First Aid training to be carried out by all staff members every two/three years. - Medical supplies will be checked on a regular basis.
11.	Sporting Activities - Team Sports	Injury to pupils Safe transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No changing into playing gear in GP - Two staff members go to matches and remain with children until they are collected after matches. - Only teachers have access to changing rooms. - Sports' Day - additional supervision including all SET teachers.
12.	Swimming	Harm to pupils Inappropriate behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher walks to the pool with an adult who is Garda Vetted. - Only teachers and vetted adults supervise children in changing rooms. - Pool staff are required to ensure an area in changing rooms is designated for children only, with appropriate signage alerting members - issues reported to pool staff and escalated to the principal/deputy principal if there are ongoing concerns.
13.	School outings - e.g. school tours, trips to library, church....etc	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School Outings policy - Volunteers (including parents etc.) who assist with supervision of pupils on a regular basis are Garda Vetted

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
14.	School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher to be present on the bus at all times. - Children are not left unsupervised with the bus driver.
15.	External tutors (GAA coaches, Music Generation tutors, Rugby coaches, Foróige, Play Therapists etc.)	Harm to pupils.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All external tutors will be Garda Vetted. 2. External tutors will be supervised by a staff member while teaching children, unless they are required to work one-to-one with a child e.g. Play Therapist, Foróige worker
16.	Visitors (guest speakers, external professionals such as psychologists, speech and language therapists etc.)	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors must sign in on arrival. - Visitor ID badge must be worn on site, if the visitor is having direct access to children (e.g. a parent who is meeting a teacher only is not required to wear a visitor badge) - Visitors do not have unsupervised access to children - In some situations, a visitor such as a psychologist who is carrying out an assessment may need to work one-to-one with a child. Same arrangements as per staff for one-to-one teaching apply i.e. leave the door open if there is no window in the room
17.	Parental Volunteers for supervision	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteers (including parents etc.) who assist with supervision of pupils on a regular basis are Garda Vetted - Volunteers always assist in conjunction and under the supervision of a staff member
18.	Cleaners	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cleaners have no direct contact with children - Cleaners will be Garda Vetted
19.	Contractors	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hot Meal scheme staff who are regularly delivering meals to classrooms will be garda vetted and receive specific instruction regarding presence in school. - Otherwise, contractors will only be on site outside school hours, unless in exceptional circumstances where deemed necessary. If contractors are on site during school hours they will be accompanied by a staff member (generally the caretaker) or specific arrangements will be put in place to minimise contact between children and contractors while on site and they will be required to follow clear procedures

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
20.	School use of school premises by other organisations	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual insurance to be provided - All personnel to be informed of their obligation to ensure all personnel are Garda Vetted - All personnel to receive Child Safeguarding Statement
21.	Students participating in work experience, teacher placement and substitute teachers.	Harm by adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work experience and Teacher Placement Policy in place - Child Safeguarding Statement given to all along with Information pack identifying DLP and procedures. - All work experience students, work placement teachers and substitute teachers must be over the age of 16 and garda vetted.
22.	Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Harm to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bí Cineálta Policy; Code of Behaviour - Bí Cineálta records; Behaviour Incident records - Worry Boxes; Special-themed weeks as required; Pupil Surveys - Friendship and Bí Cineálta notice boards - Guest Speakers/Workshops are utilised as available
23.	Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school	Bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital Learning Plan; - Bí Cineálta Policy; - Code of Behaviour; - Data Protection Policy; - Acceptable Use Policy; - In general, casual substitute teachers will not use ipads/chromebooks
24.	Use of video/ photography/other media to record school events e.g. concerts, sports day, sacraments.....etc.	Harm to pupils	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents will be informed of their responsibility towards the use of devices to photograph/video children at school events 2. Data protection policy 3. Adequate supervision will be provided. 4. Staff may use personal devices to take photographs/videos of children at school events. When this happens, staff will delete photos/videos after uploading to school's shared drive or school's social media

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
25.	Recreation breaks for pupils	Harm/Injury to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision Policy, Code of Behaviour - Pedestrian access gates locked during breaks; fence installed around junior yards
26.	Online teaching and remote learning	Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, which has been communicated to parents and staff
27.	Use of tablet devices and smartphones in the classroom and in the course of the school day	Risk of harm associated with misuse, abuse of devices and the various associated technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school has in place a whole school policy covering the use of smartphones and devices in the classroom and during the school day - Code of Behaviour and Bí Cineálta Policy
28.	Video Conferencing with pupils at home during periods of non-attendance at school due to Covid 19	Harm to pupils, meetings hacked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acceptable Use Policy in place - Video Conference meetings are set up through school emails/platform and with all default security settings unchanged. Meetings will be password protected. Parents are required to supervise video conferencing with school personnel.

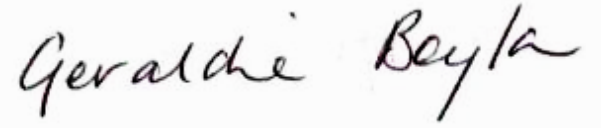

In accordance with Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Chapter 9 of the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025, the following is the written Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

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 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.

St. Declan's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed by the board of management on 3rd February 2026 and is expected to be reviewed again in January 2027.

Signed and dated:

	
Ms. Geraldine Boylan	Mr. Cian Kearins
Chairperson of Board of Management	Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management
Date: 3/2/2026	Date: 3/2/2026

Location of copies of the Child Protection Procedures and Children First Guidance

The procedures are available on the Department of Education and Youth website www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools and can be accessed by scanning the QR code link here.

A link to the Children First National Guidance 2017 [Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf](#) can be found here.

The procedures are also saved on the school's shared drive for staff to access.

Hard copies of these procedures are available in the school staffroom and principal's office.

