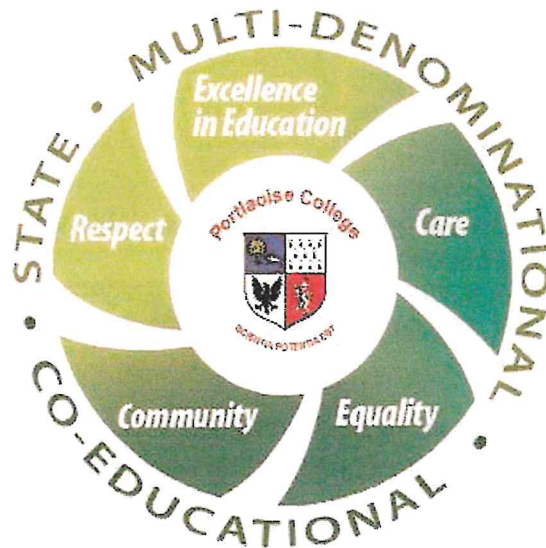


Child Protection

Review of Child Safeguarding Statement & Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment



June 2023

Documents Included:

Mandatory Template 1: CSRA

Mandatory Template 2: CSS

Mandatory Template 3: Checklist BOM

Mandatory Template 4: Notification of Review

Portlaoise College School ETHOS

Just like people have values, so do schools. A school's ethos reflects what is important to it and what type of an environment it wants to create for its students/community. The school's core values inform its ethos. Portlaoise College is a state, co-educational, multi-denominational school underpinned by five core values.

✚ Excellence in Education

✚ Care

✚ Equality

✚ Community

✚ Respect

Our School Ethos helps us to ensure.....

- That all of you reach your potential and that all of you realise your talents
- That you are supported in your learning
- That all of you feel confident in your abilities and enjoy success
- That all of you feel like you belong and are treated fairly and equally
- That you are respected
- That you are cared for
- That you feel part of a community
- That you understand the immense potential that you have

Mission Statement:

Portlaoise College is committed to providing all students with a high quality holistic education that enables them to achieve their maximum potential in an engaging, challenging and student centred environment that celebrates diversity in partnership with all stakeholders.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Portlaoise College

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 Post-Primary Schools 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Portlaoise College.

1. List of school activities

- Extracurricular (including sports)
- Overnight trips
- School trips incl. Foreign Travel
- Visiting schools
- External visitors
- Toilet breaks
- Use of tablets or other handheld devices
- One to one meetings
- Out of bounds areas
- Out of control student
- Walk-ins
- Supervision at the school gate
- Data protection, display of sensitive material on notice boards and over email
- Group projects including facilitators
- Detention
- Inhouse suspension
- Evening study
- Open nights
- Parent teacher meetings
- Student collection from school
- School shows, including rehearsal
- Graduations
- Fundraisers (street collection, bag packing)
- Parent classes (Home-School activities)
- Gender identity
- Work experience
- Special exam centres
- Administration of Medication
- Administration of First Aid
- Use of Social Media
- Student-Parent Mentoring
- Care of children with care needs, including intimate care needs
- Online Events

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

- Use of tablet (inappropriate material- accessed and shared, bullying on social media, grooming, unauthorised recording by students)
- Trips (overnight) Use of illegal substances, other adults, videos & photos, sexual activity, bullying. Overseas trips to countries with different child protection guidelines and laws.
- Clothing of an inappropriate nature.
- Extracurricular – changing rooms, bullying, use of phone, adult access and sexual activity.
- Un-vetted adults at school events and on school grounds, school trips.
- One to one meetings
- Allegations
- Lack of supervision – the risk of abduction.
- Compromise of confidential information and data protection breaches.
- Unauthorised recording of students at school shows and other school events
- Gender identity – stigma, bullying, abuse, toilets, room sharing on trips
- Work experience – placement may not be appropriately supervised, or all staff vetted
- Evening study/ Homework club/detention- students at risk when taking a break from the classroom as there is only one supervisor
- Students with Additional Needs with particular vulnerabilities

3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -

- 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 2017* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015*
- 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 that fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*
- The school has a yard/playground supervision practices 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 separate toilets for junior and senior cycle students
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of School Trips
- The school has a Health and Safety policy
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has an Inclusion Policy (AEN)

- The school –
 - Has provided each member of school staff 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 Code of Behaviour for pupils
- The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils
- The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of the use of mobile phones by pupils (part of the Code of Behaviour Policy)
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) policy and related procedures
- The school has in place a Pastoral Care policy, CARE Team & Pastoral Care system
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling (Guidance Policy)
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements (Windows in doors of all rooms and offices)
- Visitor sign-in book and Badges
- Weekly events calendar
- CCTV
- MDM Software on tablets and PDST Filters
- The school has policies and practices in relation to:
 - Additional Educational Needs (Inclusion Policy)
 - Code of Behaviour
 - Attendance
 - Guidance & Pastoral Care
 - One to One Teaching Activities
 - Work Experience 2nd Level
 - Medication and Administration of Medication
 - Health & Safety
 - SPHE
 - Wellbeing Programme
 - Critical Incident Policy
 - School Tours Policy
 - ICT Acceptable Usage (Internet & Tablet)
 - Staff Induction
 - Home School Community Liaison (HSCL)
 - Anti-Bullying
 - Inclusion (supporting students in our LGBTQ+ community)
- School Completion Programme has a Child Protection Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement for its activities (a copy is available)
- The School Board of Management has also ratified LOETB Policies in the relation to:
 - Health and Safety
 - Data Protection
 - Data Breach Protocol
 - Records Management
 - CCTV
 - Social Media
 - Staff Code of Conduct

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Harassment/Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy
- Members of Staff have completed the Children First E-Learning Programme with Tusla <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/>. Certificate of Completion must be emailed to the Principal, Mr Noel Daly.
- The school has completed a risk assessment to minimise the risk of Covid 19 for all members of the school community.


The following have been identified as a priority for the next academic year, 2023-2024:

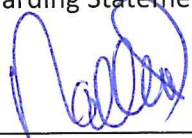
- Review of the Code of Behaviour
- Development of policy and procedures relating to the intimate care of students
- Communication of the Child Protection Statement and Child Risk Assessment with Parents and students
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events

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 2017*.

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.

The Board of Management has completed this risk assessment on 14/6/2023. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed: 
Damian Bowe
 Chairperson, BOM

Signed: 
Noel Daly
 Principal/Secretary to the BOM

Date: 14/6/2023

Date: 14/6/2023

Child Safeguarding Statement

Portlaoise College is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to pupils from First Year to Leaving Certificate Year.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of Portlaoise College 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 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Mr Noel Daly (Principal)**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Ms Patricia Cullen (Deputy Principal)**
- 4 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.

- 5 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 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DES 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 DES and available on the DE 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 2017, 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, 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 attached as an appendix to these procedures.
 - The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DES 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.

- 6 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.
- 7 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 June 14th 2023

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on June 14th 2023

Signed: 
Damian Bowe
Chairperson of BOM

Signed: 
Noel Daly
Principal/Secretary to the BOM

Date: 14/6/2023

Date: 14/6/2023

Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* require that the Board of Management must undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and that the following checklist shall be used for this purpose. The review must be completed every year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers. Undertaking an annual review will also ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the Children First Act 2015 to review its Child Safeguarding Statement every two years.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list of the issues to be considered. Individual Boards of Management shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the Children First Act 2015 and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

	Yes/No
1. Has the Board formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	✓
2. Is the Board satisfied that the Child Safeguarding Statement is displayed in a prominent place near the main entrance to the school?	✓
3. As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	✓
4. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015 ? (This includes considering the specific issue of online safety as required by the Addendum to Children First)	✓
5. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	✓
6. Has the Risk Assessment taken account of the risk of harm relevant to online teaching and learning remotely?	✓
7. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	✓
8. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	✓
9. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	✓
10. Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	✓
11. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	✓
12. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?	✓
13. Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' and the Children First Act 2015?	✓
14. Has the Board received a Principals Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR) at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	✓


15. Since the Board's last review, did each CPOR contain all of the information required under each of the 4 headings set out in sections 9.5 to 9.8 inclusive of the procedures?	✓
16. Since the Board's last review, has the Board been provided with and reviewed all documents relevant to the CPOR?	✓
17. Since the Board's last review, have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the records provided to the Board as part of CPOR report?	✓
18. Have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the CPOR report?	✓
19. Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed in each case reviewed?	✓
20. Is the Board satisfied that, since the last review, all appropriate actions are being or have been taken in respect of any member of school personnel against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made?*	✓
21. Where applicable, were unique identifiers used to record child protection matters in the Board minutes?	✓
22. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	✓
23. Has the Board been notified by any parent in relation to that parent not receiving the standard notification required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	X
24. In relation to any cases identified at question 20 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' were subsequently issued by the DLP?	✓
25. Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	✓
26. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	✓
27. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	✓
28. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	✓
29. Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (applies to post- primary schools)	✓
30. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	✓
31. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	✓
32. Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?*	✓
33. Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	✓
34. Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	✓
35. Has the Board sought the feedback of parents in relation to the school's compliance with the requirements of the child safeguarding requirements of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	✓

36. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	✓
37. Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	✓
38. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	*
39. Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement ?	✓
40. Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	✓

38 * Regularisation of dates for all staff re CP

*In schools where the ETB is the employer, the responsibility for meeting the employer's requirements rests with the ETB concerned. In such cases, this question should be completed following consultation with the ETB.

Signed:



Damian Bowe
Chairperson, BOM

Signed



Noel Daly
Principal/Secretary to the BOM

Date:

14/6/23

Date:

14/6/2023

**Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the
Child Safeguarding Statement**

To: Whom it May Concern:

The Board of Management of Portlaoise College wishes to inform you that:


- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of **date June 14th 2023**
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on the Department's website www.education.ie

Signed:



Damian Bowe
Chairperson, BOM

Signed:



Noel Daly
Principal/Secretary to the BOM

Date:

14/6/2023

Date:

14/6/2023