

Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Sinneach's N.S., Colehill is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class/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 \(revised 2023\)](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of [insert school name] 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 **Ms. Brenda Lavelle**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Mrs. Una Carrigy**
- 4 The Relevant Person is **Ms. Brenda Lavelle**
(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; 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 9th September, 2024

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 9th September, 2024.

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Sinneach's N.S., Colehill

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 [name of school].

1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Online teaching and learning remotely
- 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 toilet/changing/shower areas in the school
- Swimming
- Sports Activities
- Coaches
- Transition Year and Work Placement students
- Parent volunteers
- Tours
- Drama
- One-to-One tuition and/or Counselling
- Practice for Religious ceremonies
- Bus transport
- Display of photographs in school
- Display of photographs of children receiving sacraments in the Church
- Requests for photographs of children for various publications
- Use of mobile phones, laptops, Chromebooks, tablets and Internet Safety risks

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

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils: Potential for unsupervised access to others
- Recreation breaks for pupils: Inappropriate behaviour and/or language being used
- Online teaching and learning remotely: Risk of inappropriate online behaviour and infringement of privacy of pupil and/or pupil and/or their family
- Administration of First Aid: potential for allegation against staff member
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe: Pupil 'shocked' or 'upset' by content of class, Potential disclosure by pupil
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils: Inappropriate behaviour by pupil and potential hurt caused to pupil.
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters: potential for staff members being unaware of current Child safeguarding legislation and requirements.
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum: Potential for non-adherence to Child safeguarding procedures.
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in the school: Inappropriate behaviour and/or language being used

- Swimming: Changing Rooms. Swimming instructors, Members of the public having access to children while swimming and changing, Older pupils treating younger pupils inappropriately, phone /video, etc recording of children
- Sports Activities: Coaches, children changing for P.E. and sport activities, members of the public, parents and adults from other schools having access to changing rooms, adults speaking inappropriately to children as they play, transport to and from sporting activities
- In-School Coaches: speaking inappropriately to children, making comments about their performance and ability, choosing certain pupils over others, inappropriate touches, inappropriate relationships with our children
- Transition Year and Work Placement students: inappropriate relationships with our children, students not following school protocol.
- Parent volunteers: Inappropriate relationships and language with our children.
- Tours: Members of the public having access to our children,
- Nativity Drama: Recording of children, access of school to past pupils, supervision of children
- One-to-One Tuition and/or Counselling: Potential allegations concerning the teacher
- Practice for Religious Ceremonies: Potential allegations concerning the priest or other members of the public
- Bus Transport: General road-safety concerns, access to the public, potential allegation against driver
- Display of photographs in school: Photographs could be copied or uploaded or information obtained from them.
- Display of photographs of children receiving sacraments in the Church: Photographs could be copied or uploaded or information obtained from them.
- Use of mobile phones, laptops, Chromebooks, tablets and Internet Safety risks: Access and exposure to inappropriate material and websites.

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

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils: Strict arrival and dismissal routine with supervision in operation in the school.
- Recreation breaks for pupils: Strict supervision routine in operation in the school. Misdemeanours dealt with in line with Code of Behaviour.
- Online teaching and learning remotely: Online teaching and remote learning conducted through See-Saw platform, in the event of online teaching and learning being reintroduced.
- Administration of First Aid: Teachers deal with the injured pupil in a calm, reassuring and sensitive manner. Teacher informs parents /guardians and records incident in Incident Book.
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe: Stay Safe Programme covered by class teachers annually. Guest Speaker for 5th and 6th classes to cover the sensitive issues. Appropriate communication regarding the content of the Personal Development Programme by Samantha Teather to parents/guardians in advance of the day. In case of upset or worry, teacher will talk to pupil in calm, reassuring manner. In case of s disclosure, Child Safeguarding guidelines will be followed.
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils: Strict supervision and reporting procedures in school, pupils aware of Anti-Bullying policy and procedures. Pupils encouraged to disclose in a variety of school settings.
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters: Staff members are involved in preparation of Child Safeguarding Policy. Staff members undertake Children first online training annually and as required.
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum: External personnel are subject to garda-vetting prior to commencement of work in this school.

- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in the school: Strict rule of only one pupil in a toilet area at any time, Permission to leave class /yard to go to the toilet must be sought from the class teacher or teacher on yard duty.
- Swimming: 2 teachers accompany the children to pool. Two teachers supervise the children during the lesson. The pool is not open to the public for the duration of the lesson. The children change in cubicles; only siblings or children from the same class and gender are allowed to share a cubicle. As per swimming pool policy, instructors are vetted and recording is prohibited
- Sports Activities: A schedule is drawn up to ensure that each child who is changing for P.E or Sports activities, has the privacy of changing in a particular toilet area. Coaches are vetted. Only team members are allowed into changing rooms in Sports Clubs. All parents are encouraged to support their children in a positive manner from the sideline. It is the parents' responsibility to arrange transport for their children to and from sporting activities
- In-School Coaches: Coaches are observed by the class teacher during all coaching sessions. They are made aware of school policy regarding professionalism. If a complaint is made, it is brought to their attention.
- Transition Year and Work Placement students: Transition Year and Work Placement students are made aware of school policy regarding professionalism.
- Parent volunteers: Parent volunteers are vetted through the Diocesan Office and are made aware of school policy regarding professionalism
- Tours: Strict supervision of children on tour by class teachers. High expectation of compliance by children with our Code of Behaviour
- Nativity Drama: It is arranged that a professional videographer record each drama on DVD for sale to the parents. We request that no other recording takes place. Access to the remainder of the school will be restricted to the public; classroom doors will be locked. Participating children are requested to return to their parents immediately after their performance on the night.
- One-to-One Tuition and/or Counselling: In so far as is practicable, in the case of children receiving Special Education teaching, pupils are taught in small groups. For individualised programmes, pupils are taken individually, with prior consent from their parents / guardians, with classroom door ajar at all times
- Practice for Religious ceremonies: The children are always accompanied by a teacher.
- Bus transport: Children must follow road safety rules, wear their seatbelts and remain seated at all times when the bus is travelling. A teacher always accompanies the children on the bus; Children must follow teacher's instructions.
- Display of photographs in school: Individual names are not displayed on photographs. The main front door is kept locked at all times. Visitors to the school gain admittance by appointment only, therefore the school corridor is not accessible to members of the public.
- Display of photographs of children receiving sacraments in the Church: Photographs are on display for the duration of the Sacrament Mass only and are immediately removed from the Church after the ceremony.
- Use of mobile phones, laptops, Chromebooks, tablets and Internet Safety risks: Children's usage of laptops and Chromebooks is supervised by the class teacher. We have a security filter on our internet access. Pupil's mobile phones are banned within the school grounds. We arrange professional talks for children in Senior classes on responsible usage of phones and Internet Safety.
- 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* and its Addendum (2019)
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme.

- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum.
- 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 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 code 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 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 tablet devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan

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 tablet 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