Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Francis 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 St. Francis 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   Marie Ring

3   The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Liam Ó Murchú.

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 DE 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 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 abovenamed DLP as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the schools 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 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 DE website or will be made available on request by the school.

6   This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.

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 25th January 2022 and will be reviewed annually.

Signed: *Fr Seán Donohoe OFM Cap*   Signed: *Marie Ring*

Chairperson of Board of Management   *Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management*

Date: 25/1/'22.   Date: 25/1/2022

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Francis College

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 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Francis College.

1. **List of school activities**

   - Daily arrival and dismissal of students.
   - Recreation breaks for students.
   - Classroom teaching.
   - One-to-one teaching/learning support.
   - One-to-one counselling.
   - In-house exams, mock practicals and orals, CBAs.
   - 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.
   - Annual Sports Day.
   - Fundraising events involving students.
   - Use of off-site facilities for school activities.
   - School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts.
   - Care of students with additional educational needs.
   - Management of challenging behaviour among students including appropriate intervention by staff where required.
   - Administration of Medicine.
   - Administration of First Aid.
   - Management of provision of food and drink.
   - Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE.
   - Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst students.
   - 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 students with specific vulnerabilities / needs such as
     - students from ethnic minorities/migrants.
     - members of the Traveller community.
     - lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) students.
     - students perceived to be LGBT.
     - students of minority religious faiths.
     - students in care.
     - students on CPNS.
     - students with medical needs.
   - Recruitment of school personnel including
     - Teachers / SNA's.

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- 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 students in religious ceremonies.
- Participation by students in Student Council and the Meitheal Team.
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by students in school.
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of students 'on report', 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.
- Use of student survey / questionnaires.
- After school use of school premises by other organisations.
- Use of school premises by other organisations during school day.
- After-school study.
- Parent Teacher Meetings.

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

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel.
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel.
- Risk of student being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel.
- Risk of student being harmed in the school by another student.
- Risk of student being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
- Risk of student being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in school organised activities e.g., school trip
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as 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 a student.
- Risk of harm due to racism/prejudice.
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of students in school.
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of students while attending school organised activities.
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship / communications between a student and another student or adult.
- Risk of harm due to students inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school.
- Risk of harm to students with AEN who have particular vulnerabilities, including medial vulnerabilities.
- 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.

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 RSE 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/inclusion awareness initiatives.
- The school has yard supervision procedures 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 procedures in respect of school outings.
- The school has a health and safety statement.
- 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 teaching staff through the Teaching Council. Non-teaching staff adhere to school policies.
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff.
- The school has an Additional Educational Needs policy.
- The school is developing a Guidance Plan.
- The school has in place 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 mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by students.
- The school has in place procedures for the administration of First Aid.
- The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for students.
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Policy.
- The school has in place an Internet Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning, and has communicated this policy to parents.
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum.
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan.
- The school has practices in place for home school visits.
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external sports coaches.
- The school has in place procedures for one-to-one teaching activities.

- The school has in place procedures for one-to-one counselling.
- The school has in place procedures for the support of the Student Council, Meitheal team, Green Schools and World Wise Global Schools Student Committees.
- The school has in place procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school.
- The school has in place procedures in respect of student teacher placements.
- The school has in place procedures in respect of parent teacher meetings.
- The school has in place sign-out procedures for students.
- All visitors must sign-in at reception.
- School attendance is monitored carefully. Attendance reports are made regularly to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB). Students who miss twenty days or more are reported to the NEWB.
- All students are aware that they must comply fully with the school Code of Behaviour and Acceptable Usage Policy on trips/outings. The organising teacher has access though VSWare to the contact details of participants' parents in case of an emergency. All parents must make arrangements (if necessary) for students to be collected or to get home when a group returns to the school outside of normal school hours. Adequate staff to student ratios will be observed commensurate with the level of supervision required and the nature of the trip/venue.
- In rare and exceptional instances where a staff car must be used to transport a student, then students will never be taken alone. They will be accompanied by two students where possible or another staff member. The students will be instructed to sit in the back seat of the vehicle. It is strongly advised that staff members would only carry students in very exceptional circumstances.

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.