

GAELSCOIL MHC AODHA



Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment 2023

Child Safeguarding Statement

Gaelscoil Mhic Aodha is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

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 Gaelscoil Mhic Aodha 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 _____ Norma Ní Chonchúir _____
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is _____ Niamh Ní Dhuinn _____
- 4 The Relevant Person is _____ Norma Ní Chonchúir _____
(*The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. In a school setting the relevant person shall be the designated liaison person.*)
- 5 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

- 6 The following procedures/measures are in place:
 - In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for*



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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 25.09.2023.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 25.09.2023.

Signed: Laura Mhic Eochaidh

Signed: Norma Ní Chonchúir

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 25.09.23

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Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Gaelscoil Mhic Aodha

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 Gaelscoil Mhic Aodha.

1. List of school activities

1. The arrival and departure of students each day
2. Recreational breaks for students
3. Teaching in the classroom
4. One-on-one teaching
5. Taught outdoor activities
6. Sports Activities
7. Swimming
8. Use of toilet / exchange / shower in schools
9. Use off-site facilities for school activities
10. Care of children with special educational needs, intimate care where necessary
11. Administration of Medicines
12. First Aid Administration
13. Curricular provision for SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
14. Prevent bullying and dealing with bullying among students
15. Training of school staff in child protection matters
16. Use of outside of school staff to supplement the curriculum
17. Use of outdoor teams to support sports and other extra-curricular activities
18. Care of students with specific vulnerabilities / needs
 - a. Students of ethnic minority / migrant origin
 - b. Members of the Traveler Community
 - c. Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender
 - d. Students considered to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender
 - e. Students belonging to minority religious beliefs
 - f. Children in care
 - g. Children on the Child Protection Notification System
19. Recruitment of school staff including -
 - a. Teachers / SNAs
 - b. Caretaker / Secretary / Cleaners
 - c. Sports Coaches
 - d. External Tutors / Guest Speakers
 - e. Volunteers / Parents engaged in school activities
 - f. Visitors / contractors present at the school during school hours
 - g. Visitors / contractors present in the school after school activities
20. Participation by students in religious ceremonies / teaching outside of school
21. Pupils' use of Information and Communication Technology in school
22. Enforcement of penalties under the school's Code of Behaviour including pupil detention confiscation of telephone etc.
23. Students participating in work experience in school
24. Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere
25. Trainee teacher in school
26. Use video / photography / other media to record school events
27. Use of school premises by other organizations after school hours
28. Online teaching and learning.

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

- The risk of harm to a child due to inadequate supervision of children in school
- The risk of harming a child from bullying
- The risk of another child harming a child at school
- The risk of an unknown adult harming a child around the school
- The risk of a child being harmed in school by a member of school staff
- The risk of a child or school being harmed by a volunteer or visitor
- The risk of injury not being specified by school staff
- The risk of injury not being properly and promptly reported by school staff
- The risk of harm to a child due to a child accessing or using computers, social media, phones and other appliances while at school
- The risk of harm to a child due to inappropriate relationships / communications between the child and another child or adult
- The risk of harming your child over a Seesaw or Zoom call

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

- A copy of the school's Child Protection Statement is provided to all school personnel
- The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 are made available to all school personnel
- Personnel are required to comply with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and all registered staff are required to comply with the Children First Act 2015 and its Appendix (2019)
- The school fully implements the Stay Safe Program
- The school fully implements the SPHE curriculum
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully meets the requirements of the Department's Policies on Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools
- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives - Equality Policy
- The school has competitive yard / playground supervision practices to ensure appropriate supervision of children during gatherings, separations and breaks and in relation to specific areas such as toilets changing rooms etc.
- The school has clear procedures for school trips
- The school has a health and safety policy
- The school complies with the requirements of the legislation on Garda vetting and relevant DES circulars in relation to Garda recruitment and vetting
- The school has codes of conduct for school personnel - Teachers' Council
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for the teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has an intensive personal care policy / plan for pupils who require such care as part of the Special Education Policy
- The school has a policy and procedures in place for administering medication to pupils
- About the school:
 - Provided a copy of the school's Child Protection Statement to all school staff
 - Ensures that all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Protection Statement
 - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training.
 - Encourages members of the board of management to avail of relevant training
 - Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- The school has a policy and procedures in place for administering First Aid as part of the Safe Policy
- The school has a code of behaviour for pupils
- The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, including the provision of online teaching and learning on a remote basis, and this policy has been communicated to parents

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- The school has a policy governing the use of smartphones and tablet devices in the school by pupil in accordance with circular 38/2018
- The school has a Critical Incident Management Plan in place
- Coaches and school visitors have procedures in place.
- Supervising by the class teacher of student teachers or students on work experience
- Other organizations are asked to provide the school with their Child Protection Statement.
- The school has a data protection policy

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.