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## **Child Safeguarding Statement and risk assessment 2021/2022**

Stepping Stones is a Special School providing education to pupils with Autism and Complex needs from 5 to 18 years of age. 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 Stepping Stones Special School 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 Dolores Cullinane
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Orla Murphy (Sandra McGrath acting 21/22)
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.

**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 01/03/201.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 02/09/2021.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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### Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

List of School Activities	Risk Level	The School has identified the following Risk of Harm	The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	High	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff  DLP& DDLP have attended PDST face to face training All Staff to view Túsla training module & any other online training offered by PDST  BOM records all records of staff and board training
One to one teaching	Med	Harm by school personnel	Open doors Table between teacher and pupil Glass in window
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	High	Harm by school personnel	Policy on intimate care
Toilet areas	High	Inappropriate behaviour	Supervised at all times by teachers and/or SNA s Class toilets – door ajar and informing colleagues that you are toileting
Isolation/Covid room	High	Harm by school personnel	CCTV Procedure for use of room Window in room with open blind
Sensory room/OT room/Computer room	High	Harm by school personnel	CCTV Glass in Sensory room door

1:1 room	High	Harm by school personnel	CCTV Glass in door Windows in room with blinds open at all times
Life Skills room	High	Harm by school personnel	CCTV Door open at all times Window in room with blind open at all times
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Med	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full
LGBT Children/Pupils perceived to be LGBT	Low	Bullying	Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Med	Harm from other pupils	Arrival and dismissal supervised by Teachers /SNAs and bus escorts.
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint	High	Injury to pupils and staff	PCM Policy Health & Safety Policy Code Of Behaviour
Students participating in work experience (on hold 2021/2022)	Low	Harm by student	Work experience Policy Child Safeguarding Statement. 1:1 supervision Community outing policy
Recreation breaks for pupils	High	Harm by student Harm by adult	CCTV cameras Supervision by Teachers and SNAs
Classroom teaching	Low	Harm by student Harm by adult	PCM Policy H&S Policy Code of behaviour CC TV cameras
One-to-one teaching	Low	Harm by student Harm by adult	PCM Policy H&S Policy Code of behaviour CC TV cameras

Outdoor teaching activities	Low	Harm by student Harm by adult	PCM Policy H&S Policy Code of behaviour CC TV cameras
Swimming sessions (on hold 2021/2022)	Med	Harm by student Harm by adult	Teacher/SNA supervision Behaviour plans Risk Assessment PCM Policy H&S Policy Code of behaviour CC TV cameras Community outing policy
Yoga class (on hold 2021/2022)	Low	Harm by student Harm by adult	PCM Policy H&S Policy Code of behaviour CC TV cameras
Speech and Language Therapist – <b>Public and private</b>	High	Harm by adult	CC TV cameras H&S policy Teacher/SNA supervision Garda vetting completed by Speech therapist
Occupational therapist – <b>Public and private</b>	High	Harm by adult	CC TV cameras H&S policy Teacher/SNA supervision Garda vetting waiting on completion for Private therapist-OT will not be left alone with students until Garda vetting has been completed
Integration into mainstream (on hold 2021/2022)	Med	Harm by student Harm by adult	Risk assessment H&S Policy Code of behaviour hosting school Parental consent Teacher/SNA supervision Behaviour plan
<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>

School outings	high	Harm by student Harm by adult	Risk assessment H&S Policy PCM Behaviour plans Supervision on a 1:1 or 2:1 if necessary Code of behaviour Parental consent Teacher/SNA supervision Community/school outings policy
Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools	High	Harm by adult	Intimate care policy 2:1 ratio at all times Parental consent for approval of showering programme.
Annual Sports Day	Med	Harm by student Harm by adult	Pre-visit risk assessment Teacher and SNA s supervision PCM policy Code of behaviour Policy H&S policy Community/school outings policy
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	High	Harm by student Harm by adult	Training Garda vetting Code of behaviour H & S PCM training and policy if applicable School support from management, Director of Education and teaching staff.
<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Administration of Medicine Administration of First Aid	Med	Harm by adult	Stored in a locked first aid cabinet in reception Training Fist Aiders –all staff trained in basic first aid and there is <b>1 first aid responder (FAR) staff member</b> Board’s permission Parental request in writing Administration of medication policy

			Indemnity form completed and signed Doctor's protocol completed and signed In date medication provided H&S policy Identified and appropriate training to be provided
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Low	Harm by student	Anti-bullying policy Code of behaviour CCTV cameras
Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum	Low	Harm by adult	Supervision by teachers and SNAs CCTV cameras
<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants</li> <li>• Members of the Traveller community</li> <li>• Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children</li> <li>• Pupils perceived to be LGBT</li> <li>• Pupils of minority religious faiths</li> <li>• Children in care</li> <li>• Children on CPNS</li> </ul>	Low	Harm by adult Harm by pupil	Code of Behaviour Anti-bullying policy Dignity at work Policy Supervision by teachers and SNAs Adhesion to school Ethos
Recruitment of school personnel including - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• SNA's</li> <li>• Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners</li> <li>• Sports coaches</li> <li>• External Tutors/Guest Speakers</li> <li>• Volunteers/Parents in school activities</li> <li>• Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours</li> </ul>	High	Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff  Staff to view Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST  Vetting Procedures  Supervision and mentoring from experienced teaching staff



List of School Activities		The School has identified the following Risk of Harm	The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment
Students participating in work experience in the school	High	Harm to pupils	Supervision by the class teacher At no point students can be left without being supervised by a staff member on their own with a pupil. CCTV cameras Child protection Statement available to them Code of Behaviour Garda vetting form the College
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	High	Harm to pupils	Supervision by class teacher At no point students can be left without being supervised by a staff member on their own with a pupil. CCTV cameras Child protection Statement available to them Code of Behaviour Garda vetting form the College
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	High	Harm to pupils	Permission from parents

**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.

This risk assessment has been reviewed by the Board of Management on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021. It will be reviewed annually as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

