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Child Safeguarding Statement and risk assessment 2023/2024

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 (On maternity leave from September 2023)

The acting Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Adele Neale

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 01/03/2017.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 9/11/2023.

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 9/11/23

Signed: 

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 9/11/23



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	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>DLP& DDLP have attended PDST training. All Staff to view Túsla training module & any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>BOM records all records of staff and board training</p> <p>All classrooms have a copy of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools 2017</p>
One to one teaching	Med	Harm by school personnel	<p>Open doors</p> <p>Table between teacher and pupil</p> <p>Glass in door window</p>
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	High	Harm by school personnel	Policy on intimate care
Toilet areas	High	Inappropriate behaviour	<p>Supervised at all times by teachers and/or SNA s</p> <p>Class toilets – door ajar and informing colleagues that you are toileting</p>

Sensory room/OT room/Computer room	High	Harm by school personnel	Glass in doors
1:1/quiet spaces within classrooms	High	Harm by school personnel	Glass in door/s
Life Skills room	High	Harm by school personnel	CCTV Window in room
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
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
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	Low	Harm by student	Work experience Policy Child Safeguarding Statement ad risk assessment 1:1 supervision Community outing policy Garda vetting from college
Recreation breaks for pupils	High	Harm by student Harm by adult	CCTV cameras in classrooms/astro turf and bike track 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
Outdoor teaching activities	Low	Harm by student Harm by adult	PCM Policy H&S Policy Code of behaviour CC TV cameras
Swimming sessions	Med	Harm by student Harm by adult	Teacher/SNA supervision Behaviour plans Risk Assessment PCM Policy H&S Policy Code of behaviour Community outing policy
Speech and Language Therapist – Public and private	High	Harm by adult	H&S policy Teacher/SNA supervision Garda vetting completed by Speech therapist
Occupational therapist – Public and private	High	Harm by adult	H&S policy Teacher/SNA supervision Garda vetting completed by OT
Integration into mainstream	Med	Harm by student Harm by adult	Risk assessment H&S Policy Code of behaviour (hosting school) Parental consent Teacher/SNA supervision Behaviour plan
Reflexologist	High	Harm by adult	CC TV cameras H&S policy Teacher/SNA supervision Garda vetting
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
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 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	Teacher and SNA s supervision PCM policy Code of behaviour Policy H&S policy
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	High	Harm by student Harm by adult	Training Garda vetting Code of behaviour H & S School support from management, Director of Education and 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
Administration of Medicine Administration of First Aid	Med	Harm by adult	Stored in a locked first aid cabinet in secretary office Training First Aiders –all staff trained in basic first aid and there is 1 first aid responder (FAR) staff member 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

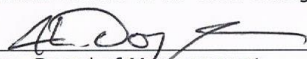
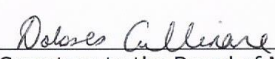
			CCTV cameras
Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum	Low	Harm by adult	Supervision by teachers and SNAs CCTV cameras
List of School Activities		The School has identified the following Risk of Harm	The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment
Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 CPNS 	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"> Teachers SNA's Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners Sports coaches External Tutors/Guest Speakers Volunteers/Parents in school activities Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours 	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 On hold 2023/2024	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 in classrooms

			Child protection Statement available to them Code of Behaviour Garda vetting form the College
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school On hold 2023/2024	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 in classrooms Child protection Statement available to them Code of Behaviour Garda vetting form the College
Use of staff members phones to record photos/video of students	High	Harm to pupils	Permission from parents (recorded on google form) Use of mobile phone 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 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 9th November 2023. It will be reviewed annually as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed  Date 9/11/23 Signed  Date 9/11/23
Chairperson, Board of Management Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management