

## Child Protection Policy

This document is formulated in response to recent changes in Guidance and Procedures in relation to Child Protection matters and takes account of the provisions of each of the following important pieces of legislation:

- Freedom of Information Act 1997
- The Education Act 1998
- The Child Welfare Act 2000
- Circular 81/2017
- Children First Act 2015
- Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.

The new procedures are based on the recently published *Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*.

### References

- 'Children First' (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2017)
- 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (Department of Education and Skills 2017)

The Board of Management (BoM) recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in each school policy, school practices and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills, Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the BoM of [Insert School Name] has approved this Child Protection Policy.

The BoM has adopted and will fully implement without modification the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017. These procedures will therefore underpin the content of this policy.

The following key personnel have been identified and ratified by the BoM:

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mark Loftus

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ciara Casey

In its policies, practices and activities, Claremorris BNS will adhere to the following principles of best practice in Child Protection and Welfare. Our school recognises that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations and will therefore;

- 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
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters
- Adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability

Specific policies named hereunder are key elements of this overall document and must be referred to in the context of this policy:

- Attendance
- Enrolment
- Code of Behaviour
- Bullying
- Health & Safety
- Record Keeping
- ICT
- Supervision
- Special Ed
- Induction of Staff
- Tours/Trips
- Critical Incidents

This policy will also be considered with reference to the participation by pupils in sporting activities, other extra-curricular activities and school outings. Other practices and activities, where child protection might have particular relevance, will consider the procedures outlined within this policy. The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.

This policy is available to all school personnel and the Parent Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. It is also available in hard copy in each classroom. A copy of this policy is available for the attention of the DES and the patron if requested.

#### **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)**

In Claremorris BNS the Principal, Mark Loftus appointed by the BoM, is the DLP. Ciara Casey, acts as Deputy DLP. Both teachers will undertake training from the Child Abuse Prevention Programme at the earliest opportunity. **CAPP** provides training to the whole school community (staff, parents and Boards of Management) on the stay Safe Programme.

The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection Procedures and will represent the school in all correspondence with Health Boards, An Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations of abuse. All matters pertaining to child abuse concerns should be processed through the DLP.

The DLP acts appropriately where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion or where an allegation has been made.

#### **Confidentiality**

All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the interests of the child. The giving of information to those who need to have that information is not a breach of confidentiality. This procedure exists for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused. The DLP who is submitting a report to the Health Board or An Garda Síochána should inform a parent/guardian, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place that child at further risk. A decision not to inform a parent/guardian should be briefly recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

In emergency situations, where the Health Board cannot be contacted, and the child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, An Garda Síochána should be contacted. A child should not be left in a dangerous situation where Health Board intervention is not forthcoming.

### **Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse**

The protection for persons reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports a child protection concern 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of Health Boards or any member of an Garda Síochána

### **Qualified Privilege**

People making a report to the DLP in good faith have 'qualified privilege' under common law. Reports made to Health Boards may be subject to provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997. This act enables members of the public to obtain access to personal information relating to them which is in the possession of public bodies. However, the act also provides that public bodies may refuse access to information obtained by them in confidence

### **Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse**

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types:

- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

**Neglect** can be defined in terms of an *omission*, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.

### **Guidelines for Recognition of Child Abuse**

A list of child neglect indicators is contained in Chapter 2:2 of Children First, 2017. This policy draws particular attention to 'persistent evidence' of neglect, including indicators such as no lunch, lack of uniform, no homework, poor attendance, persistent health problems, lack of sleep indicating inappropriate television viewing late at night and other evidence that would indicate lack of supervision in the home. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances.

There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse:

1. Considering the possibility
2. Looking out for signs of abuse
3. Recording of information

### **Handling Disclosures from Children**

DES Procedures gives comprehensive details of how disclosures should be approached. Staffs are advised to deal with each situation sensitively, reassure the child but not to make promises that cannot be fulfilled.

The adult should not ask leading questions or make suggestions. They should explain that further help may have to be sought. The discussion should then be recorded accurately.

The record should include reference to what was observed with sketches of physical injury where necessary. It should also record when the alleged incident took place. Records should be kept in a secure place. The information should then be conveyed to the school DLP.

If the reporting person and the DLP are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion/allegation, the procedures outlined in 'Children First' must be adhered to.

Standardised reporting forms should be used (DES Procedures Appendix 4). The content of the report should follow the guidelines in 'Children First'.

### **Allegations or Suspicions in relation to School Employees (DES Procedures Chapter 5)**

The Chairperson and the DLP are concerned with the protection of the children in their care in the first instance. However, employees must be protected against false and malicious claims. Due process must be observed in relation to allegations against employees. Legal Advice should be sought by the BoM in relation to an allegation in relation to an employee. If the allegation is against the DLP, the BoM Chairperson will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board.

### **Reporting**

When an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee, the DLP should act in accordance with the procedures outlined in Children First. A written statement of the allegation should be sought from the person/agency making the report. A parent/guardian may make a statement on behalf of a child. The DLP should always inform the Chairperson of the BoM and is responsible for liaising with the HSE. The Chairperson assumes responsibility for dealing with the employee.

School employees, other than the DLP, who receive allegations against another school employee, should immediately report the matter to the DLP. School employees who form suspicions regarding conduct of another school employee should consult with the DLP.

The employee should be informed by the Chairperson (Employer) that:

- a. An allegation has been made against him/her
- b. The nature of the allegation
- c. Whether or not the Health Board or Gardaí has been informed.

The employee should be given a copy of the written allegation and any other relevant documentation. The employee should be requested to respond to the allegation in writing to the BoM within a specified period and told that this may be passed to the Gardaí, Health Board and legal advisers.

The Chairperson must take the necessary steps to protect the child and may consult the BoM in this matter. The BoM may direct that the employee take administrative leave with pay and avoid suspension, thus removing any implication of guilt. The DES should be immediately informed.

### **School Measures Taken to Protect the Children in Our Care**

There are a number of areas where common sense in our school should prevail in order to protect the children in the school and the staff who care for them. In relation to this, certain points should be noted:

1. Claremorris BNS shall fully implement the Stay Safe programme
2. A copy of the school's child protection policy, which includes the names of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP, will be made available to all school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request
3. The name of the DLP and other relevant support services are displayed in a prominent position near the main entrance to the school
4. In addition to informing the school authority of those cases where a report involving a child in the school has been submitted to the HSE, the DLP shall also inform the school authority of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made. At each BoM meeting, the Principal's Report shall include

the number of all such cases and this shall be recorded in the minutes of the BOM meeting.

5. Claremorris BNS will undertake an annual review of its Child Protection Policy and its implementation by the school. A checklist, to be used in undertaking the review (included at **Appendix 1**). The school has put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement which might be identified in the annual review. The Board of Management shall make arrangements to inform school personnel that the review has been undertaken. Written notification that the review has been undertaken shall be provided to the Parent Association. A record of the review and its outcome shall be made available, if requested, to the patron and the DES.

- Staff who take classes swimming should make sure that there are two adults in attendance at all times. The dressing rooms and pool area should be well supervised
- Staff should make every effort not be alone in a classroom with one child or detain a child on their own after school. In the case of special needs pupils where resource hours and assistance are sanctioned on an individual basis, it is school policy that staff in such a situation should work with the classroom door open, thus rendering the occupants visible at all times.
- When possible children should work in groups
- Children with physical disabilities who may require assistance in toileting will be aided by a Special Needs Assistant who has met the necessary screening requirements when being employed by the school.

It should be noted that children with disabilities may be more at risk of abuse due to a number of reasons Parents, teachers and all staff involved in services for children with disabilities need to be familiar with the indicators of abuse and to be alert for signs of abuse.

### **Mandated Persons**

All teachers are now 'mandated persons'. There are two areas of responsibility which will apply to mandated persons in a primary school:

- Where a mandated person knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information that he or she has received, acquired or becomes aware of that a child:
  - has been harmed
  - is being harmed
  - is at risk of being harmedHe or she must report that knowledge, belief or suspicion, to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) as soon as practicable.
- Where a child believes that he or she:
  - has been harmed
  - is being harmed
  - is at risk of being harmedand discloses that belief to a mandated person, the mandated person must report that disclosure to Tusla as soon as practicable.

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

The Board of Management (BoM) of each school must produce a Child Safeguarding Statement on or before 11 March 2018.

### **Risk Assessment of potential harm to children**

The BoM of each school must produce a *Risk Assessment of all potential harm to children* on or before 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018, in conjunction with the *Child Safeguarding Statement*.

**Child Protection Oversight Report**

A new child Protection Oversight Report must be provided to the BoM as part of the Principal's Report at every meeting - to ensure oversight by the BoM of the school's compliance with child safeguarding requirements.

The following templates are available below. These can be customised to your school.

1. Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template
2. Child Safeguarding Statement Template
3. Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement
4. Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement.

### Appendix 1: Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy

The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of its Child Protection Policy and the following checklist shall be used for this purpose.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. The BoM may wish to include other items in the checklist that are of particular relevance to [Insert School Name] and reserves the right to do so if/when the need occurs.

|     |  |     |    |
|-----|--|-----|----|
| 1.  | As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess other school policies, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Protection policy | YES | NO |
| 2.  | Has the Board formally adopted a child protection policy in accordance with the Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?   | YES | NO |
| 3.  | As part of the school's child protection policy, has the Board formally adopted, with modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?  | YES | NO |
| 4.  | Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?   | YES | NO |
| 5.  | Are the relevant contact details (HSE and An Garda Síochána) to hand?  | YES | NO |
| 6.  | Has the DLP attended available child protection training?  | YES | NO |
| 7.  | Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?   | YES | NO |
| 8.  | Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?  | YES | NO |
| 9.  | Has the school's child protection policy identified other school policies, practices or activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance?  | YES | NO |
| 10. | Has the Board ensured that the Department's 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' are available to all school personnel?  | YES | NO |
| 11. | Does the Board have arrangements in place to communicate the school's child protection policy to new school personnel?   | YES | NO |
| 12. | Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?  | YES | NO |
| 13. | Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to the HSE/An Garda Síochána by the DLP?   | YES | NO |
| 14. | Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made?  | YES | NO |
| 15. | Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to the HSE/ An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed?  | YES | NO |
| 16. | Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?   | YES | NO |
| 17. | Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?  | YES | NO |
| 18. | Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association has been provided with the school's child protection policy?   | YES | NO |

**Ratification of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2018

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of Board of Management

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

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

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

Date of next review: February 2021

The Board further endorses the Principal, [Insert Name] as the school DLP and [Insert Name] as Deputy DLP.

On behalf of the Board of Management:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Child Protection Practices**

The staff and BoM of this school have identified the following as areas of specific concern in relation to Child Protection. Following discussion and consultation, the staff and BoM have agreed that the following practices be adopted:

- Physical contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult

While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child, the following should be factors in determining its appropriateness:

- It is acceptable to the child
- It is open and not secretive
- The age and developmental stage of the child

School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

School personnel should never engage in or allow:

- The use of inappropriate language or behaviours
- Physical punishment of any kind
- Sexually provocative games or suggestive comments about or to a child
- The use of sexually explicit or pornographic material

All media products (CDs, DVDs etc.) should be checked for their appropriateness with regard to age and suitability.

### **Visitors/Guest Speakers**

Appropriately appointed and screened visiting teachers of varying disciplines, engaged by the BoM of [Insert School Name] to perform specific duties, will be left work with a class alone at the Principal's discretion

Visitors/Guest speakers should never be left alone with pupils. The school (Principal/teachers) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the material in use is appropriate.

### **Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs**

- In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care, a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/guardians, class teacher, special needs assistant, Principal and if appropriate the pupil. The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the specific needs of the child and to determine how the school can best meet those needs
- The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file
- Two members of staff will be present when dealing with intimate care/toileting needs. Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the DLP and the parents/guardians.

### **Toileting accidents**

Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a pupil has an 'accident' of this nature, they will in the first instance be offered fresh clothing into which they can change.

If the pupil for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to the child. In all such situations, two members of staff should be present. A record of all such incidents will be kept and Principal and parents will be notified.

### **Accidents**

While every precaution will be taken under our Health and Safety Statement to ensure the safety of children, we realise that accidents will happen. Accidents will be noted in our Incident book and will be addressed under our Accident Policy as part of Health and Safety.

### **On-to-one teaching**

- It is the policy in this school that one-to-one teaching can sometimes be in the best interest of the child
- Every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment
- Parents of children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought
- Work being carried out by Special Needs Assistants will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

### **Changing for games/PE/Swimming**

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for Games/PE/Swimming. Where assistance is needed, this will be done in the communal area and with the consent of parents. Under no circumstances will members of staff/volunteers be expected to or allowed to dress/undress a child unsupervised in a cubicle/private area. In such situations where privacy is required, the parents/guardians of the child will be asked to assist the child. [Insert School Name] will endeavour to have two male volunteers/member of staff in the male changing area and two female members of staff/volunteers in the female changing area.

The BoM of [Insert School Name] has requested that all swimming volunteers apply to be vetted. In the interim, a Volunteer Form approved by the CPSMA will be in use. At all times there must be adequate supervision of pupils. While every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practicable, a full record of the incident should be made and reported to the Principal and parents.

### **Attendance**

Our school attendance will be monitored as per our attendance policy. With regards to child protection, we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse.

### **Behaviour**

Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Behaviour. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature, we will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

### **Bullying**

Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive, then the matter will be referred to the DLP.

### **Children travelling in staff cars**

Members of the school staff will not carry children alone in their cars at any time.

### **Communication**

Every effort will be made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. The SPHE/Oral Language/RE programmes allow for open pupil-teacher communication, which is hoped will aid the pupil-teacher relationship. If teachers have to communicate with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they are requested to leave the classroom door open or request a colleague to attend. Further details on communications are found in the school's Communication Policy.

### **Induction of Staff**

The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Child Protection Procedures (DES, 2017) and Children First Guidelines (2017), but particularly the recently published Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017). All new teachers are expected to teach the appropriate SPHE objectives for their class. A member of staff, once trained, will be responsible for the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers as they implement the SPHE objectives.

### **Induction of Pupils**

All parents and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000). All parents will be informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development e.g. RSE, Walk Tall, Stay Safe and SPHE. All new parents will be given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. All parents will be given a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

### **Internet Safety**

It is the intention of the Principal and Staff at Claremorris BNS to ensure that child protection concerns will be addressed in the school's Acceptable Use Policy as part of its Information and Communication Technology policy. The Stay Safe lessons in each classroom may be supplemented with appropriate resources. There will also be annual meetings during which parents will be invited to attend a session with an invited speaker to stay abreast of the ever-changing situation regarding internet access.

### **Record Keeping**

Teachers will keep records on each child's reports using [Insert School Name] Record Keeping Sheets. These records are kept in the drawer of each teacher's desk. Roll books will be updated daily. Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a need-to-know basis. All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in the filing cabinet in the office. Further details on record keeping will be found in the school's Record Keeping Policy.

### **Supervision**

The school's supervision policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks. A rota will be displayed to cover 11 o'clock and lunchtime breaks. See Supervision Policy for agreed rules around break-times and procedures around teacher absences.

### **Visibility**

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the school playground. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms, toilets or sheds where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not to leave the school playground or to engage with adults who are outside of the school playground.

## Appendix C

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In recent years, as a society, we have become very aware of the problem of child abuse through neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

Each one of us has a duty to protect children and Children First, the National Guidelines, for the Protection and Welfare of Children noted that teachers, who are the main care givers to children outside the family, are particularly well placed to observe and monitor children for signs of abuse.

In response to this, the Department of Education and Skills published procedures for all schools in relation to child protection and welfare. These guidelines promote the safety and welfare of all children and are to be welcomed.

The Board of Management of [Insert School Name] has adopted these guidelines as school policy. Consequently, if school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse, they are obliged to refer this matter to the Health Service Executive (HSE). The HSE will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned.

Children First, the National Guidelines for the Protection of Children may be assessed on the website of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. ([www.dcyu.ie](http://www.dcyu.ie)) and the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures can be read on the Department's website ([www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)). Parents/Guardians are also welcome to look through the guidelines here at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

## **Child Protection Contacts**

### **Designated Liaison Person**

**Mark Loftus**

### **Deputy DLP**

**Ciara Casey**

### **Garda Station**

**Telephone: 0949372080**

### **Local Contact For**

**'The Children and Family Social Services of the HSE'**

**Child and Family Agency,**

**1st Floor, Mill Lane,**

**Bridge Street,**

**Castlebar,**

**Mayo**

**094 9049137**

**Or**

**Swinford Social Work Team, Swinford Health Centre, Aras Attracta, Swinford,  
Co. Mayo (094) 905 0133**

## **Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment**

### **Written Assessment of Risk of [Claremorris Boys National School]**

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirement of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of [Claremorris B.N.S.].

#### **1. List of school activities**

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- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- 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,
  - Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
  - 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 CPNS
  - Recruitment of school personnel including -
    - 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
- 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
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils,
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- 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

**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 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 bullying of child
- 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
- 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 appropriate 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 -**

Claremorris BNS will follow the advice of The Department of Education and Skills and TUSLA as it issues, regarding its committed attempt to address the risk of harm identified above by using a common sense approach. The following suggestions are examples of a non- exhaustive list of procedures in place by the School:

1. School Teachers as mandated persons will remain actively vigilant for signs of 'harm' as defined by Children First Act 2015, Section 2. These will be reported to the DLP/ DDLP as necessary, or if a disclosure has to be made in a joint capacity or directly to TUSLA and Gardaí.
2. The Board of Management has procedures and policy links in place regarding vetting of All staff both Teacher and Ancillary staff through the relevant bodies responsible for Vetting of individuals working with children or vulnerable persons.
3. The school will help to create a positive, calm and supportive atmosphere where pupils feel safe and comfortable to confide in trusted staff to make a disclosure of situations of harm.
4. Teachers will personally ensure they are ofay with requirements and onus on them by keeping informed of CPD in the area and suggested training or courses as necessarily suggested by school management, the Dept. of Education & Skills, Tusla and other professional bodies.

5. Teachers who have visiting coaches or instructors will accompany and remain with their class for the duration of that visitor's time with pupils as is practicable.
  6. Special Education Teachers will not withdraw pupils in one to one settings for the protection of all concerned. Rather they will re-arrange timetables insofar as is practical and possible to take groups with common learning needs together. Where all parties are agreeable to team teaching situations and in-class support, this will from time to time be utilised if required.
  7. The school will endeavour to ensure insofar as is practical, that no situation arises where Pupils remain unsupervised or are in a 1:1 situation, particularly with adults or with peers, while in the care of the School in School time.
  8. School personnel will not use their personal vehicles to transport pupils to any school related events.
  9. Policy updates mentioned and linked to the Risk Assessment will be updated and monitored Regularly by the In-school Management personnel and communicated to relevant parties as required.
  10. External Coaches/ Visitors including Substitute teachers etc. delivering instruction to pupils will be asked to provide advance evidence of Garda Vetting.
  11. Events where pupils are involved outside of normal school hours representing the school, will have suitably supervisory personnel, e.g. the pupil's own parents or guardians.
- 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 Stay Safe Programme taught in 2 year cycles with RSE

- 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 care of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas of need such as toileting, etc. insofar as is practicable.

- 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 DES 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 will introduce as required, 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.

- o Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
- o Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
- o 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 in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils
- The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phone by pupils
  
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
  - The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for
  - one-to-one teaching activities and counselling or assessments.
- 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.

**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 completed by the Board of Management on 26/02/2018 and 09/03/2018. It shall be reviewed as part of the school’s annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

[Claremorris Boys National School] is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from 2<sup>nd</sup> Class 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 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 [Claremorris BNS] 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 Mark Loftus
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ciara Casey

- 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 DES 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 DES and available on the DES 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 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, 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 attached as an appendix to this statement.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DES 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 26/02/2018

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

\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management  
Management

Signed:

Principal/Secretary to the Board of

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

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

## **Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement**

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* require the Board of Management must undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and that the following checklist shall be used for this purpose. The review must be completed every year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers. Undertaking an annual review will also ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the Children First Act 2015, to review its Child Safeguarding Statement every two years.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list of the issues to be considered. Individual Boards of Management shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the Children First Act 2015 and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

|  | Yes/No |
|--|--------|
| 1. Has the Board formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?   |        |
| 2. As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?                            |        |
| 3. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015?  |        |
| 4. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?   |        |
| 5. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?   |        |
| 6. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?  |        |
| 7. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?   |        |
| 8. Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?  |        |
| 9. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?   |        |
| 10. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?  |        |
| 11. Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' and the Children First Act 2015? |        |
| 12. Has the Board received a Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?  |        |
| 13. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to Tusla/An Garda Síochána by the DLP?  |        |
| 14. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla/and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made?   |        |
| 15. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any cases where an allegation of abuse or neglect was made against any member of school personnel?  |        |
| 16. Has the Board been provided with and reviewed all documents relevant to the Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report?   |        |
| 17. Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed in each case reviewed?                                     |        |

|  | Yes/No |
|--|--------|
| 18. Is the Board satisfied that, since the last review, all appropriate actions are being or have been taken in respect of any member of school personnel against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made?*   |        |
| 19. Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?   |        |
| 20. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?  |        |
| 21. Has the Board been notified by any parent in relation to that parent not receiving the standard notification required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?  |        |
| 22. In relation to any cases identified at question 21 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' were subsequently issued by the DLP?                      |        |
| 23. Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?  |        |
| 24. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?  |        |
| 25. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?   |        |
| 26. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)  |        |
| 27. Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (applies to post- primary schools)  |        |
| 28. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?   |        |
| 29. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *  |        |
| 30. Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?* |        |
| 31. Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the   |        |

|  | Yes/No |
|--|--------|
| school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*  |        |
| 32.Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement?  |        |
| 33.Has the Board sought the feedback of parents in relation to the school’s compliance with the requirements of the child safeguarding requirements of the ‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017’         |        |
| 34.Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school’s child safeguarding arrangements?  |        |
| 35.Is the Board satisfied that the ‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017’ are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?   |        |
| 36.Has the Board identified any aspects of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?   |        |
| 37.Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement ? |        |
| 38.Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?  |        |

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Reviewed

on

16/02/2021

**Notification regarding the Board of Management’s review of the Child Safeguarding Statement**

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ [16/02/2021].
- This review was conducted in accordance with the “Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement” published on the Department’s ‘website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management