

Scoil Mhuire U.R. 11894 i

Child Safeguarding Statement

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, practices and activities. This responsibility is now greatly expanded with the introduction of Children First and the added duty of 'safeguarding'. All recognised schools fall within the definition of a "provider" of a relevant service under the Children First Act, 2015.

Accordingly, and in accordance with the legal requirements of

- the Children First Act of 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 Child Care Act 1991
- Protection for persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- Criminal Justice Act 2006 – Reckless Endangerment
- Criminal Law (Sexual offences) Act 2017
- Criminal Justice (withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- National Vetting Persons (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 and 2016
- Freedom of Information Acts 1997, 2003 and 2014
- The Data Protection Acts, 1998 and 2003

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

- 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
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mary E Price
- The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Breda Nugent

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.
- 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.

The following procedures/measures are in place in our school:

- If any member of staff becomes the subject of an allegation or investigation of any sort in relation to any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending Scoil Mhuire, the school will adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017. The relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the website of the Department of Education & Skills will be used. (The Board should inform the School Insurance Company and seek authorisation for legal advice)
- Confidentiality will be assured and this is for the protection of the child and the provision of due process for the staff member.
- The following school policies, practices and activities are relevant to child protection and safeguarding:
 - Code of Behaviour/Anti-bullying Policy,
 - Pupil Attendance Strategy,
 - Supervision of Pupils Policy
 - Intimate care and Toileting
 - Sporting Activities and School Outings

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-

- Will provide each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- Ensure all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- Encourage staff to avail of relevant training
- Encourage Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
- The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training commencing September 2017, to ensure that the optimum number of staff and if possible all staff, receive adequate training in this area.
- When a child leaves Scoil Mhuire for another Primary School or to progress to Secondary school and where the DLP is aware of a Child Protection Report relating to that child has been made to Tusla in the past or present, the DLP should inform TUSLA of the child's transfer or move but Confidential Child Protection files should not be transferred by school authorities.

- 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.
All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- Teachers, as mandated persons, will be named and may be required to sign the report with the DLP when in the role of witness in such cases. They may be contacted by TUSLA for assistance in their investigations of a case.
- In this school the Board has appointed the above named 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 and in the absence of the DLP, the DDLP must act according to procedures.
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Board has carried out a Risk Assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. Parents and Staff were consulted in the compilation of the Risk assessment. 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 these procedures.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school’s website, or will be made available on request by the school.
- This statement has been published on the school’s website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents’ Association Committee 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.
- 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.
Review date: March 2019

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 08 – 03- 2018

Signed: *Josephine Henry*
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Mary E Price*
Principal