



Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

Bennekerry National School is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023) and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of Bennekerry National 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 (revised (2023))* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
 2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Julie Fitzmaurice
 3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Lourda Griffin
4. The Relevant Person is Julie Fitzmaurice
(The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. In a school setting the relevant person shall be the designated liaison person.)
5. The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:
The school will:
 - recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
 - fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
 - fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;

- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

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

6. The following procedures/measures are in place:

- In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the gov.ie website.
- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Acts 2012 to 2016](http://gov.ie) and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the Department of Education and available on the gov.ie website.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
 - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
 - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school.

Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

7. This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association (if any) and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.
8. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 20th January 2023

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on February 26th 2024

Signed: Shylas Dady
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Julie Fitzgerald
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 28/02/24

Date: 28-02-24

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Bennekerry N.S.

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 (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Bennekerry National School

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
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	Risk of harm not being recognised or reported promptly	<p>The school ensures that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures are provided to all school personnel ○ All new members of staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement ○ School personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary School (revised 2023) and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the Children First Act 2015 ○ Staff and BOM members are required to complete Children First training yearly and encouraged to avail of any other relevant training ○ Maintains records of all staff and board member training <p>DLP & DDLP attended PDST face to face training All Staff to complete Túsla training module (Introduction to Children's First) BOM records all records of staff and board training</p>
Classroom teaching	Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel or other student	<p>The school has codes of conduct for school personnel and pupils as part of the Code of Behaviour The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting</p>

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 Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel while receiving intimate care	The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
Toilet areas	Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child	Toilets in classroom so only one pupil is permitted in waiting area or cubicles at a time. Glass in doors of waiting area in Junior Classrooms Only the toilet near the office should be used at lunch-time, before school or during after-school activities in the hall and only one pupil may go in at a time. Infant pupils may use their classroom toilets.
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationships/communications between child and another child or adult not being recognised or reported.	The school implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Risk of child being harmed by other pupils or unknown adults in the school grounds.	The school ensures that arrival and dismissal, including lining up in the yard, is adequately supervised by teachers and SNAs. Parents are informed that supervision begins at 9:05am every morning and finishes at 2:50pm in the evenings. If pupils are not collected and feel worried, they are told to come back down to the Secretary's Office and parents will be contacted.
Sports Coaches/coaching sessions	Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school	The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda Vetting. Class teachers supervise all coaching sessions within school hours.

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
Recreation breaks for pupils	<p>Risk of child being harmed if access to the yard was gained by strangers and other adults.</p> <p>Risk of child being harmed by another child/children due to bullying.</p>	<p>The school has in place an Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour</p> <p>The school ensures that there is adequate supervision by teachers and SNAs in the yard and that the gates are closed.</p> <p>Fencing is in place for added security</p>
Outdoor teaching activities	<p>Risk of child being harmed if access to the yard was gained by strangers and other adults.</p> <p>Risk of child being harmed by another child/children due to bullying</p>	<p>The school has in place an Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour</p> <p>The school ensures that there is adequate supervision by teachers and SNAs in the yard and that the gates are closed.</p> <p>Fencing is in place for added security.</p> <p>All access for visitors is through the Front Office door during school hours.</p>
Sporting Activities away from school	<p>Risk of child being harmed to access to pupils by strangers and other adults</p> <p>Risk of child being harmed by pupils/other children</p>	<p>The school ensures there is adequate supervision by teachers/SNAs.</p> <p>Some parents may be asked to undergo Garda Vetting to help with supervision.</p> <p>There will be adequate planning and preparation by accompanying staff member.</p> <p>Pupils will be transported to sporting events by bus under supervision of teachers or home from games by bus under supervision of teachers or with their own parents.</p> <p>The school has a checklist for supervising adults when taking pupils on an excursion from Bennekerry N.S. (Appendix B of Health and Safety Statement)</p>

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
Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies external to the school	Risk of child being harmed by a member of another organisation or other person while participating in out of school activities	Pupils are supervised by teachers and or SNAs on the way to the ceremonies and while there except in the case of serving at funerals. Servers stick together and return together promptly to the school after funerals.
School outings	<p>Risk of child being harmed due to access to pupils by strangers and other adults</p> <p>Risk of child being harmed by pupils/other children</p> <p>Risk of child being harmed due to the selection of an activity or venue</p>	<p>The school ensures that there is adequate supervision (extra SEN teachers or SNAs travel to help with supervision).</p> <p>There will be adequate planning, research and preparation by staff before all school tours are booked</p> <p>Age appropriate and reputable venues will be chosen. The school has a checklist for supervising adults when taking pupils on an excursion from Bennekerry N.S. (Appendix B of Health and Safety Statement).</p>
School transport arrangements	Risk of child being harmed by bus personnel or other pupils	<p>The bus driver is Garda Vetted</p> <p>The bus driver/ teachers have arrangements in place on the bus whereby pupils, as far as is practicable, sit with their class grouping</p> <p>Designated bus zone outside school gates.</p>
Care of any vulnerable students, including intimate care where needed	<p>Risk of harm to children with special vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Risk of harm to a child while receiving intimate care</p>	The school has an Intimate Care policy/plan in place though at present no student requires such care. A new plan will be drawn up if a pupil/pupils present with such needs.

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
<p>Administration of Medicine</p> <p>Administration of First Aid</p>	<p>Risk of child being harmed in school by a member of school personnel</p>	<p>The school has in place a clear policy and procedures for Administration of Medicines and the administration of First Aid</p> <p>Trained personnel, Glass in door of office, pupils who may be cut can check themselves by going to the bathroom near the office, pupils go to the first aid post in pairs, screen in office for privacy</p>
<p>Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum</p>	<p>Risk of child being harmed by volunteer or visitor to the school</p>	<p>Visiting external personnel who help with implementation of the curriculum are Garda Vetted and teacher supervision is always in place.</p> <p>Regular visiting personnel have completed TUSLA e-learning "Introduction to Children First"</p> <p>Every effort is made by the Principal and the Board of Management to employ reputable people in the school.</p>
<p>Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as</p> <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 	<p>Risk of harm due to bullying of child</p>	<p>The school has an Anti-bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i></p> <p>The school has a yard/playground supervision rota in place to ensure appropriate supervision of pupils during assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets. Both teachers and SNAs are rostered on the supervision rota.</p> <p>The school has in place a Code of Behaviour</p>

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
<p>Recruitment of school personnel including -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • SNA's • Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners • Sports coaches • External Tutors/Guest Speakers • Volunteers/Parents in school activities <p>Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours/after school hours</p> <p>Use of video/photography/other media to record school events</p>	<p>Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel, a volunteer or visitor to the school</p>	<p>The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting</p> <p>Pupils are never alone when delivering messages etc.(at least in pairs</p> <p>Teachers are always present with visiting coaches or guest speakers</p> <p>Access to building is limited and visitors must check in at the office. In this way visitors and contractors can be easily monitored. Contractors wear lanyards so that pupils know who has permission to be on the premises</p>
<p>Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school</p>	<p>Risk of harm in the event of inappropriate material being recorded/photographed</p> <p>Risk of harm due to inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school</p>	<p>The school has in place an Acceptable Usage Policy. At time of enrolment Parents have the option of opting in or out of having their child's photo taken during school related activities.</p> <p>The school has in place an ICT and Acceptable Usage Policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils</p> <p>The school ensures that pupils are taught about responsible use of ICT through the SPHE curriculum</p> <p>The school has in place definite guidelines about the non-use of mobile phones in the school as part of our Code of Behaviour</p>
<p>Student teachers undertaking training placement in school</p>	<p>Risk of harm to child by a visitor to the school</p>	<p>The school ensures that Garda vetting is in place in respect of all student teachers</p> <p>Student teachers are supervised by class teachers</p>

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
After school use of school premises by other organisations	Risk of child being harmed by volunteers or visitors to the school	The school ensures that all visiting coaches, teachers, mentors involved in after-school activities are Garda vetted in line with Garda vetting legislation
Swimming	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 swimming lessons or at the pool	The school ensures that there is adequate supervision by teachers and/or SNAs The school has in place a Swimming Policy
Transition Year students on work experience in school	Risk of harm to child by a visitor to the school	The school ensures that Garda vetting is in place in respect of all TY student teachers Any contact with pupils by TY students is supervised by class teachers, SEN teachers or SNAs
Child Absconding	Risk of harm to child by strangers/other adults	The school has in place procedures in the case of a child absconding as part of our Code of Behaviour (Appendix 2)
Management of challenging Behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required	Risk of harm to child by another pupil. Risk of harm to child by school personnel	The school has in place an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools</i> . The school also has in place a Code of Conduct which includes Appendix 3 Procedures To Be Followed In The Event Of Serious Incidents of Aggression or Violence and Appendix 4 Care and Control
Prevention of and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Risk of harm due to bullying of child	The school has in place a Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's <i>Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools</i>

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
Older pupils and younger pupils 'buddy system' on wet day breaks	Risk of harm to pupils by other pupils	Definite guidelines given by teachers to participating pupils Supervision by teachers
One to one teaching or counselling	Risk of harm to child by a member of school personnel	The school has a Code of Behaviour which includes a section on expectations of staff members. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. All rooms where one to one teaching or counselling is likely to take place have glass panels in the door and doors are left open if possible when a pupil is alone with a member of staff.
Online teaching and learning	Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platforms	The school has an Acceptable Usage Policy in place, which includes provision for online teaching and learning remotely. The contents of this policy are communicated to all members of staff and parents.
Use of tablet devices and smartphones in the classroom and in the course of the school day	Risk of harm associated with misuse, abuse of devices and the various associated technologies	The school Code of Behaviour and AUP policies have sections which cover the use of mobile phones and tablet devices in the classroom and in the course of the school day as outlined in circular 0038/2018. Review of access permission regularly
Risk of harm due to lack of supervision owing to staff absences	Risk of harm to pupils	Every effort is made by the schools In-school Management team to re-arrange supervision rotas when required.
Fundraising events arranged by Parents Association involving pupils outside of school hours	Risk of harm to pupils	Potential hazards are outlined by Principal before the event. Parents are reminded that they are responsible for their children outside of school hours at organised events e.g Palatine GAA/School fun day

Principal attends Parents' Association meeting to communicate possible risks of event
Every effort is made by Parents Association to ensure appropriate measures are taken to mitigate risk

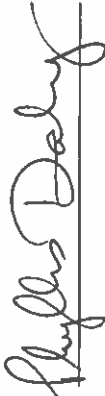
Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of "harm" as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in Chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary*

Schools (revised 2023)

In undertaking this risk assessment, the board of management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to this school and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, the school has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on January 20th 2023. It was reviewed and updated on February 26th 2024. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed



Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 26th February 2024

Signed:



Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date : 26th February 2024

Bennekerry N.S.

Child Safeguarding Statement

Appendix 2:

Protocol authorising immediate action

The following protocol authorises immediate action under section 7.2 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)

Primary schools other than primary schools under the patronage of an ETB

In the context of these procedures, where circumstances warrant it, as an essential precautionary

measure in order to protect the children in the school, the chairperson of the Board of Management is authorised by the school authority to direct an employee to immediately absent himself or herself from

the school without loss of pay until the matter has been considered by the employer. It is very important to note that the action under the protocol is intended to be precautionary and not disciplinary. The action under this protocol is an interim measure pending the employer's consideration of the matter.

The employee will be invited to a meeting with the chairperson of the board of management, the purpose of which is to inform the employee of the allegation and the action being taken. The employee may be accompanied by an appropriate person of his or her choice and will be so advised.

In any event, the employee will also be advised of the matter, in writing.

The chairperson of the board of management shall also make a record of the meeting which shall be retained on the relevant case file.

Appendix 1 " Protocol authorising immediate action" was added to our Child Safeguarding Statement and ratified by the Board of Management on 12th - 6th - 2018 and updated when our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment were reviewed and changed to the mandatory template on March 26th 2019.

Signed: *Paula Dwyer*
Date: February 26th 2024

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: *Paula Fitzmaurice*
Date: February 26th 2024

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management