



Saplings School Mullingar Child Safeguarding Statement

Saplings School Mullingar is a special school providing primary/post-primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Leaving Certificate Year.

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 Saplings Mullingar 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 Lisa Burke
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Debbie Leech
- 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 28th Sept 21.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 28th Sept 21.

Signed: Matt Shaw

Signed: Lisa Burke

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 28th Sept 21

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Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment
Written Assessment of Risk of Saplings Mullingar

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

1. List of school activities

Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters
One to one teaching
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs
Toilet areas
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.
LGBT Children/Pupils perceived to be LGBT
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint
Students participating in work experience
Recreation breaks for pupils
Classroom teaching
One-to-one teaching
Outdoor teaching activities
School outings
Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
Annual Sports Day
Use of off-site facilities for school activities
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
Administration of Medicine
Administration of First Aid
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
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 • Visitors/contractors present during after school activities

Use of school premises by other organisation during school day
Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
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
On line teaching

2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities –

List of School Activities	Risk Level	The school has identified the following Risk of Harm
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	Medium	Harm not recognised or reported promptly
One to one teaching	Low High	Harm by school personnel Harm by student
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	Low	Harm by school personnel
Toilet areas	Medium	Inappropriate behaviour
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Low	Non-teaching of same
LGBT Children/Pupils perceived to be LGBT	Low	Bullying
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Low	Harm from older pupils, bus drivers, escorts. Accidents including 'bolting' after exiting the bus.
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint	High	Injury to pupils and staff
Students participating in work experience	Low	Harm by student
Recreation breaks for pupils	High	Harm by other students

Classroom teaching	Low /Medium	Harm by staff
	Medium / High	Harm by student
One-to-one teaching	High	Harm by Student
	Low	Harm by staff
Outdoor teaching activities	High	Harm by student
School outings	Low	Harm by staff
	High	Harm by student
Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools	High	In appropriate behaviour by students
Annual Sports Day	High	Harm by student Accidents
	Low	Harm by staff Accidents
Use of off-site facilities for school activities	High	Harm by student Accident
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	High	Harm by Escorts
Administration of Medicine	High	Harm by staff
Administration of First Aid		Risk of another pupil accessing medications
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Low	Harm by student
Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum	Low	Harm by staff
		Harm by student
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 • Visitors/contractors present during after school activities 	Med / High	Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported

Use of school premises by other organisation during school day	N/A	N/A in current premises
Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school	Low / Medium	Accessing inappropriate sites.
Students participating in work experience in the school	Medium / high	Harm by person
	Medium to high	Harm by student
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Medium to high	Harm by student
	Medium to high	Harm by teacher
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	High	Risk by Parents during the following Communion, Confirmation, fundraising events, visitors to the school (e.g. Nathan Carter)
		By School staff
After school use of school premises by other organisations	Low	N/A in current premises
On line teaching	Low	Accessing on line lesson/meetings (during covid closures)

3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this 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	Medium	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff.</p> <p>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 are made available to all school personnel.</p> <p>School personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and all registered teachers are required to adhere to the Child First Act 2015.</p> <p>DLP (Lisa Burke) & DDLP (Debbie Leech) to attend PDST face to face training.</p> <p>All Staff to view Tulsa training module & any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>BOM records all records of staff and board training.</p>
One to one teaching	Low	Harm by school personnel	<p>Parents are advised if their child is being taught in a 1:1 teaching situation</p>
	High	Harm by student	<p>Intimate Care policy in place</p> <p>Open doors</p> <p>Table between teacher and pupil</p>

			Behaviour Support Plan in place Camera in Principals office of all classrooms operated from 9.30am until 3.10pm
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	Low	Harm by school personnel	Codes of conducts for school personnel as part of the school's code of Behaviour in place and in line with the ethos and culture and core values of the school; Understanding, Respect, Care and trust. Policy on intimate care adhered to by all staff. All materials including visual supports , communication systems , reinforcement systems etc in place and adhered to by all staff
Toilet areas	Medium	Inappropriate behaviour	The school has a policy in place in relation to supervision which includes toilet areas. Intimate Care Policy in place which applies to some of our students.
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Low	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE, and Stay Safe in full. Some targets form part of IEP goals but SPHE is included as a mandatory curricular subject and includes RSE and Stay Safe objectives for all students.
LGBT Children/Pupils perceived to be LGBT	Low	Bullying	Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour

Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Low	Harm from older pupils, bus drivers, escorts. Accidents including 'bolting' after exiting the bus.	Arrival and dismissal supervised by all teachers and support staff.
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint	High	Injury to pupils and staff	Code Of Behaviour Health & Safety Policy Crisis prevention training of all staff Clear guidelines on use of appropriate restraint as last resort measure.
Students participating in work experience	Low	Harm by student	Work experience Policy Child Safeguarding Statement. Student not allowed to be on their own with students at any stage. Work experience are only permitted to observe.
Recreation breaks for pupils	High	Harm by other students	Supervision policy in place
Classroom teaching	Low /Medium	Harm by staff	Best Practice is promoted and adhered to. Teaching Council Guidelines are adhered to by all teaching staff. School ethos and culture based on core values of understanding , respect and dignity , trust and care is

	Medium / High	Harm by student	<p>reinforced by management to all staff and must be adhered to at all times.</p> <p>Individualised Behaviour Support Plans in place. Relevant policies in place.</p> <p>Camera system in place in the school.</p> <p>Always at least two staff in the classroom at all times.</p>
One-to-one teaching	High Low	Harm by Student Harm by staff	<p>Advise Parents</p> <p>Intimate Care Policy in place</p> <p>Behaviour Support Plan in place</p> <p>CPI training in place</p> <p>Classroom door to be open at all times.</p> <p>Staff to seek help immediately from staff in other rooms if required</p> <p>Camera system in place in the school.</p>
Outdoor teaching activities	High	Harm by student	<p>Procedures outlined to be followed in the case of all outdoor activities e.g. swimming, shop, and library tennis club.</p> <p>Adequate supervision in place.</p> <p>Clear reporting/ recording procedures of ant incidents.</p>

			Review/ discussion students engaging of all outdoor activities prior to participating in them ,dependent on stability of the students behaviour
School outings	Low	Harm by staff	Pre planning meeting to take place in advance of school tours and trips on buses
	High	Harm by student	Resource checklist in place :communications, visual supports , medications checklist etc
			Risk Assessment to be conducted by BA in consultation with teachers.
			Risk Assessment to be discussed with Principal in advance of such activities.
Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools	High	In appropriate behaviour by students	Intimate Care Policy in place
Annual Sports Day	High	Harm by student Accidents	Supervision Policy in Place. Pre planning meeting to take place in advance of sports day.
	Low	Harm by staff Accidents	Resource checklist in place :communication systems, Visual supports , medications checklist etc
			Risk Assessment to be conducted by BA in consultation with Principals.
			Risk Assessment to be discussed with Principal in advance of such activities

Use of off-site facilities for school activities	High	Harm by student Accident	<p>Risk Assessment to be undertaken by teacher and BA Clear Plan in place of activities to be undertaken. Discussed with Principal.</p> <p>Travel arrangements to be reviewed in advanced</p> <p>Staffing arrangements to be reviewed in advance.</p>
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	High	Harm by Escorts	Garda Vetting Procedures in place
Administration of Medicine Administration of First Aid	High	Harm by staff Risk of another pupil accessing medications	<p>Administration of medicine policy in place.</p> <p>Forms to be completed by parents.</p> <p>Medical book in office to be completed.</p> <p>All medicines locked in filing cabinet in the Principals office.</p> <p>No medicines allowed in the classrooms.</p> <p>All students bags for RESPITE (containing medications or not) must be left in caretakers room downstairs (which is not accessible to students) and Principals office upstairs.</p> <p>Log of all medications to be maintained.</p> <p>Epilepsy training to be undertaken and updated .</p>

			Staff trained in First Aid completed and up to date— certified. Staff training to be updated on a regular basis
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Low	Harm by student	Stay Safe Programme (adapted) implemented. Supervision of students across all environments. Garda Vetting Procedures in place for all school personnel including external staff. Teacher must be present when any external staff are supplementing the curriculum e.g. Music generation Swimming instructors Occupational Therapy sessions classroom support staff must be present during all these sessions N.B. No external staff left with pupils on their own.
Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum	Low	Harm by staff Harm by student	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff. All new personnel to present certificate of Child Protection training undertaken. Vetting Procedures Policy of Parents / Volunteers Visitor sign in book at reception
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 • Visitors/contractors present during after school activities 	Med / High	Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported	

			Work undertaken during after school hours. School to be opened and closed by caretaker. Access only to work specific areas. All documentation re students locked away in a classroom press. Principal's office locked to be locked and all filing cabinets to be locked in the office.
Use of school premises by other organisation during school day	N/A	N/A in current premises	N/A
Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school	Low / Medium	Accessing inappropriate sites.	ICT policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Staff supervision at all times.
Students participating in work experience in the school	Medium / high	Harm by person	Vetting Students only work in an observation capacity. Students not permitted to work alone with any student.
	Medium to high	Harm by student	Student not permitted to work! 1 1 with any students.
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Medium to high	Harm by student	As Above. When engaging in teaching activities this is to be done alongside the classroom teacher (supporting and guiding them).
	Medium to high	Harm by teacher	Student teachers are not permitted to work in a room on their own with any of the students.

Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	High	<p>Risk by Parents during the following Communion, Confirmation, fundraising events, visitors to the school (e.g. Nathan Carter)</p> <p>By School staff</p>	<p>Procedures in place – parents informed that no footage / photos etc to be put on social media involving any other child with the prior permission of the parents if the other children</p> <p>Consent / permission procedures in place by school prior to any form of media being recorded and circulated.</p> <p>Staffs are not permitted under any circumstance to use their phones to record any school events or student activities.</p> <p>School iPods / cameras may be used for this.</p>
After school use of school premises by other organisations	Low	N/A in current premises	N/A
On line teaching	Low	Accessing on line lesson/meetings (during covid closures)	<p>ICT policy</p> <p>Seesaw all parents of the children have been provided with their own personal log in code.</p> <p>Zoom details only go out 24 hrs before meetings.</p> <p>Teacher and SNA to sit in on 1:1 zoom sessions (during covid closures)</p> <p>Teachers/principal to set up zoom meetings, therefore only letting the correct people into the meeting.</p>