

*Ballyheada N.S.  
Ballinhassig  
Co. Cork*

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## **Child Safeguarding Statement**

Ballyheada N.S., Ballinhassig 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 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 Ballyheada N.S., Ballinhassig 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 of Education & Skills' 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 Jerry Coakley, Principal
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Jacqui McCarthy, Deputy Principal
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 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 this 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 these procedures.
- 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 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

Signed:

Signed:

*Chairperson of Board of Management*

*Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management*

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Date of next review: March 2020

# Appendix 1: Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

## Written Assessment of Risk of Ballyheada N.S., Ballinhassig

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 Ballyheada N.S., Ballinhassig.

### 1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one Teaching
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting Activities
- Swimming lessons in Leisureworld, Bishopstown (2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Class)
- School outings
- Use of toilet areas in schools
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements (to matches, swimming, tours etc.)
- 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
- 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, confiscation of phones etc.
- 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
- Green School Committee Meetings / Other meetings involving students, staff and other visiting adults / parents
- Movement of pupils around the school e.g. Pupils walking to the office, pupils walking to SEN rooms, pupils walking to another classroom / yard etc.

**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 / 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:**

- All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's ***Child Safeguarding Statement***. This is displayed in all rooms of the school, at the reception of the school and on the school website.
- 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*
- 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 supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings. *See School Tour Policy*
- The school has a *Health and Safety Statement & 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 codes 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 has an *Intimate Care Policy* 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
  - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
  - Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
  - 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 / Acceptable Usage Policy* in respect of usage of ICT by pupils.
- The school has in place a *Mobile Phone Policy* in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils
- The school has in place a *Critical Incident Management Plan*.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements and 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 review risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed: Date 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Date 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

## **Appendix 2: Programmes with relevance to Child Protection**

The following programmes are taught in Ballyheada N.S. in order to increase awareness around child protection issues and for the prevention of abuse in any form:

- Relationship & Sexuality Programme (RSE) – *Mandatory*
- Stay Safe Programme New edition January 2017 – *Mandatory*
- Walk Tall Programme
- SPHE Curriculum & Making the Links (A useful manual which links the first 3 programmes to the content objectives of the SPHE curriculum.



## **Appendix 3: School Policies with Regards to Child Protection**

The following school policies have relevance for child protection and are available for viewing in the school office.

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Health & Safety Statement, including Accident & Injury Policy & Administration of Medicines Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- School Attendance Policy
- Access Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Intimate Care Needs Policy
- School Tour Policy
- Guidelines for working with external partners
- Swimming Policy
- SEN Policy
- Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy (ICT) / Mobile Phone Policy
- Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures
- Data Protection Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Work Experience Placement Policy

## **Appendix 4: Summary of Codes of Best Practice**

### **Recruitment and selection of volunteers**

All staff employed (or volunteering) must be Garda Vetted through the National Vetting Bureau (NVB) and will not be allowed work with children unless they provide a copy of this to the school.

The Teaching Council arranges vetting for teachers newly appointed to the school before commencement of employment. New Garda Vetting Procedures apply for all employees / volunteers from 29<sup>th</sup> April 2016 – See Circular 0031/2016

In addition, the child protection-related Statutory Declaration must be provided by all persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions of any duration. The school must obtain and view the original statutory declaration and retain a copy for its own records.

### **Supervision of children**

School routines and procedures will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of school at all breaks and on all trips and tours. See *Supervision Policy*.

### **Early withdrawal of pupils**

Any child leaving the school before the end of the school day must be signed out by a parent / guardian in the office. The parent / guardian should enter the school via the door near the office. If they are not known to the Principal / secretary they should be asked for identification. (If another adult is collecting the child, the school must be informed either by phone or in writing by the parent / guardian, as to the identity of the adult collecting their child.) The child is collected from the classroom by the secretary or another member of staff and brought to the office. Parents and children then exit the school again through reception.

### **Collection of children at home time**

Infants are collected at 2.00pm and are released into the care of parents / guardians or adults identified to the school (by parents / guardians) at the beginning of the school year e.g. child minder etc. If a person outside of these named adults is to collect an infant pupil on a given day, the school must be informed of the identity of this other adult either verbally in person, or by phone, or in writing. Equally if a child is to be collected by a classmate's parent etc., the school should be informed in advance, again either verbally, or by phone, or in writing. If the school has not been informed of a change as above, the school will not release the pupil into the care of another adult. The school will attempt to contact the parents / guardians to confirm the collection details.

Children from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class are walked by their class teacher to the school gates where they either are met by an adult etc. The school provides supervision at the school gate until 3.10pm (usually the teacher rostered for early morning/post school supervision). Any child remaining at this point / unsure of who is collecting them etc. is brought to the office, where a call is made to their parent / guardian. If there is a change to the collection plans

made with the child, parents / guardians should contact the school so that they can update the child.

### **Changes in Family Circumstances**

If there are any changes in family circumstances (separation of parents etc.), the school will continue to release the child into the care of either parent (assuming both have guardianship).

In the event of a court order, furnished to the school by a parent, the school will only release the child into the care of the adult with access, as directed by the court. In such circumstances, the school has internal systems in place to ensure communication with relevant staff members, so that they are aware of these changes.

### **General Conduct**

Children are to be encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our *Code of Behaviour* and *Anti-Bullying Policy*.

If an incident occurs which is considered to be of a sexualised nature, the reporting procedures outlined in Chapter 5 of the *DES Child Protection Procedures* will be followed.

### **Visibility**

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the school yard. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms where they would not be under adult supervision. They are allowed to leave the school yard only to go to the bathroom with the permission of an adult on yard duty.

### **One-To-Teaching / Activities**

Any activity which involves a child to staff member (teacher or SNA) ratio of 1:1, should take place in a room with a glass panel window on the door for visibility. Otherwise the door of the room in which they are working should be left open for the duration. Only staff members (who are all vetted appropriately), should engage in 1:1 activities.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that any visitors who are to work with children on a 1:1 basis are appropriately vetted (e.g. HSE nurse, Psychologist, Photographer etc.). The procedure outlined above will be followed in these cases also.

## **Access**

All school entrances are secured after the children enter the school at 9.20am and after each break. A code is required by staff members to gain access. All others seeking access must do so through the main door, where the access is granted only once identity and purpose of visit has been established.

## **Visitors/ Guest Speakers**

Teachers on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the school yard and will re-direct them to the office etc. as necessary. All external tutors/ trades people/ visitors report to the office.

Guest speakers or External Teachers (even if appropriately vetted) are never left unsupervised with pupils. The class teacher or supervising teacher is responsible for the pupils at all times. The school has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the speaker and to ensure that the materials in use by guests are appropriate.

## **Relationships and Attitudes**

Teachers should ensure that their relationships with students are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the children and that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought when dealing with older children.

## **Physical Contact with Children**

Teachers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children. However, a distressed child may need reassurance involving physical comforting such as a parent might provide. Physical punishment is illegal as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of restraint using the minimum force necessary to ensure the safety of the children / adults involved.

Whenever possible this should be done in the presence of others. First-aid to a pupil should also be administered whenever possible in the presence of others.

## **Swimming**

Children travel to the pool in Leisureworld in a bus accompanied by two teachers and one SNA. The teacher/adult stands at the door of the changing room which is slightly

ajar. The teacher can then keep an eye on the children lining up on the corridor and the children in the changing room. Two teachers / SNAs are allowed access the changing room at a time. The role of the adult is supervisory only, and is not to assist.

If a child needs to go to the toilet during the pool time, he / she is accompanied from the pool area to the bathroom door by the teacher and escorted back to the pool when finished.

### **Travelling Arrangements**

Teachers / staff member will not carry children alone in their cars. At least two children must travel with the member of staff in the car or another adult and child. Necessary insurance to transport children in a private vehicle should be in place.

### **Induction of Teachers and Ancillary Staff**

The DLP, Jerry Coakley, will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of this Child Safeguarding Statement, DES Child Protection Procedures and the *Children First Guidelines*.

### **Attendance**

We monitor trends in non-attendance in terms of possible neglect, physical or emotional abuse. See *Attendance Policy*

### **Toileting / Intimate Care Needs**

If a child requires assistance with toileting (regularly or as a once off due to illness etc.), two members of staff should assist the child in this instance.

### **DVDs**

Staff will always ensure that any DVD shown or video footage shown through services such as RTE Player / Netflix or similar, to the children is age appropriate and is educational in content.

### **Internet Safety**

Children will only have access to websites deemed age-appropriate. All other sites are blocked using the NCTE filters.

Internet Safety talks are provided for both parents and pupils of senior classes. We attempt to make our pupils and staff aware of any dangers, to the best of our ability, especially those dangers linked with child protection concerns. See *Acceptable Usage / ICT Policy*.

## **Notification regarding Board of Management's Review of Child Safeguarding Statement**

To: All School Personnel, Ballyheada Parents' Association and all members of  
Ballyheada N.S. wider school community:

The Board of Management of Ballyheada N.S 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 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on the Department of Education's 'website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

Signed

Date: 25/02/2019

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed

Date 25/02/2019

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management