



# Mercy School, John's Road, Wexford

☎ 053-9123294 ✉ officemercy@gmail.com 🏠 17373K

🌐 [www.mercyschoolwexford.ie](http://www.mercyschoolwexford.ie)



## Child Safeguarding Statement

Mercy 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 Mercy 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: Éamonn Codd
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is: Ann Woodbyrne
- 4 The Relevant Person is: Éamonn Codd  
*(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. This person can also be the DLP)*
- 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;



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- 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.

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](#) 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.



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- 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 16/11/24.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 16/11/24.

Signed: Kamran Barrett

Signed: E. Coleman Coold

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 16th January 2024

Date: 16/01/24



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### Child Safeguarding Risk 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	High	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff Induction of new staff and familiarisation with DLP,DDL school policies and procedures re child protection DLP& DDLP to attend PDST face to face training All Staff ( teachers and ancillary staff) to view Túsla training module & any other online training offered by PDST BOM records all records of staff and board training
Visitors to the school	Med	To ensure no one enters the school unvetted and unsupervised.	A fob system has been introduced to the school, only members of staff have fobs to open school doors. For visitors they will be provided with lanyards to show that they have been met by the secretary or principal.
One to one teaching	Med	Harm by school personnel	Glass panel in doors always kept clear Have one to one workstation in view of panel Table between teacher and pupil / teacher awareness of proximity of pupil Parents of children attending SET team are informed and permission is sought SNAS working in one to one situations will do so in an



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Use of Sensory room			open environment under the direction of the class teacher In the sensory room the door is open if possible, sna to remain on the chair while child is on the floor, Verbal communication with class teacher to indicate where sna is going giving an approximate time frame Panic button linked to the office in the sensory room
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	High	Harm by school personnel	Policy on intimate care Communication with parents and written instructions sought where necessary Child Safeguarding Statement Whole staff training child protection training
			Any child who has a toileting accident comes to the office and uses toilets there to change / parents contacted
<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Use of toilets	High	Inappropriate behaviour / harm by school personnel / peers/ older children/ visitors to the school	Designated toilet areas upstairs and downstairs One person pass system in place Code of behaviour Anti-bullying policy Limited visitor access via front door buzz in system / visitor pass from office / visitor sign in /out book Staff vigilance around the school Workers / contractors accompanied by caretaker in so far as is possible or work done outside of school hours
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Med	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full and staff are aware of the 2 year cycle followed



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LGBT Children/Pupils perceived to be LGBT	Low	Bullying	Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Friendship fortnight Amber Flag initiative
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Med	Harm from older pupils, inappropriate behaviour, unknown adults on the school grounds	Arrival / Dismissal - supervised by teachers and snas Designated entry/exit points for different classes Reminders to children to come to the front door if late in the morning Reminders to children to go to the office if not collected Parents required to notify school if someone new collecting a child/ change of arrangements
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils,	Med	Injury to pupils and staff	Red card system to the office / next classroom Panic button in sensory room and one other classroom where needed Early intervention by teacher/SNA where possible to prevent episode – identification of triggers Regular communication with parents / relevant support agencies Child safe guarding statement
<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Sports Coaches / visiting teachers / volunteers	Med	Harm to pupils	Vetting Procedures in place Supervision by teachers Visiting coaches / teachers policy
Students participating in work experience	Med	Harm to pupils	Work experience Policy Child Safeguarding Statement. Vetting Procedures in place Supervision by teachers



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Recreation breaks for pupils	Med	Harm from older pupils/peers/ school personnel Flight risk	Code of behaviour Anti Bullying policy Designated play areas and rotas of equipment use Supervision rota in place SALT programme, RSE, Stay Safe, Walk Tall, SPHE all taught Permission to use toilets sought from a teacher
Classroom teaching	Low	Harm to pupils from peers/ school personnel	Glass panel in classroom doors Code of behaviour Staff child protection training
Outdoor teaching activities in school grounds	Med	Harm from older pupils/peers/school personnel, flight risk	Code of behaviour Safe guarding staff training Supervised by teachers Children allocated an sna due to concerns re flight risk will be accompanied by that sna
After school sporting activities	Med	Harm from older pupils/peers/school personnel	Code of behaviour Safe guarding staff training Supervision by teachers
Homework club	Med	Harm from older pupils/peers/school personnel	Code of behaviour Safe guarding staff training Supervision by teachers One person pass system for toilet use
Wide Awake club	Med	Harm from older pupils/peers/school personnel	Code of behaviour Safe guarding statement Door left open Small group not moving around Whole staff safe guarding training Supervision by snas
<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this</b>



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<b>assessment</b>			
School outings	High	Harm from older pupils/peers/school personnel / stranger/ a person employed at the tour venue A child straying from the group	Code of behaviour Anti bullying policy Staff safe guarding training Adequate supervision ( minimum of 2 adults on a bus, one being the class teacher) Sna accompanying where needed with child allocated same Children and staff adhere to policies and procedures in place at venue
School Community events eg sports day, fun run etc	Med	Harm from older pupils/peers/school personnel / unknown persons	Code of behaviour Anti bullying policy Safe guarding statement Parents/ carers required to check in with teachers when bringing a child home, <b>each teacher must have a clipboard where families sign out that they are collecting the children.</b> Supervision by teachers and snas Children must receive permission from a teacher to use toilets Designated adult toilets Light chains will be put across corridors with signs on them to show that no access is allowed. This will be to clearly denote no access to visitors to the school.
Use of off-site facilities for school activities eg swimming, sports competitions	Med	Harm from older pupils/peers/school personnel / unknown persons	Code of behaviour Anti bullying policy Safe guarding statement





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			<p>Supervision by teachers, snas where applicable and accompanying adults          Adherence to policies and procedures in place at said venue          Staff remain near changing rooms if needed, where possible children change at school before matches/competitions  <b>One child per changing room when getting ready for swimming or getting dressed after swimming. Only one child per cubicle when using the toilet.</b></p>
Credit Union Savings	Med	Harm from peers/ savings operators / older children	<p>Garda Vetting procedures in place          Open doors at both ends of the room          Table between child and adult</p>
<p><b>List of School Activities</b></p> <p>Administration of Medicine          Administration of First Aid</p>	High	<p><b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b></p> <p>Harm from school personnel when child is in a vulnerable situation</p>	<p><b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b></p> <p>Administration of medicines policy          First Aid training for teachers and snas,          Specialised training for snas dealing with severe diabetic children          All medical concerns reported to the office          Storage of medicines in easily accessed area in school office ( all labelled )          Meeting with parents re administration of medicine and written instructions requested re administration of same          Administered in public office area</p>



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Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Med	Bullying behaviour amongst pupils in the school	Anti-bullying policy Code of behaviour Curricular delivery of Stay Safe, RSE, Walk Tall, circle time, Salt Programmes SEN teaching of social skills programmes, Zippy's friends, Fun Friends and intervention programmes to vulnerable children
Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants</li> <li>• Members of the Traveller community</li> <li>• Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children</li> <li>• Pupils perceived to be LGBT</li> <li>• Pupils of minority religious faiths</li> <li>• Children in care</li> <li>• Children on CPNS</li> </ul>	Med	Bullying/ exclusion/ intimidation	Code of behaviour Anti – bullying policy Safe guarding statement Whole staff training in child protection Pt meetings and regular contact with home Contact / support from outside agencies eg NEPS, Tusla, SCP, dep of Justice re refugee settlement in the community
<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Recruitment of school personnel including - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• SNA's</li> <li>• Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners</li> <li>• Sports coaches</li> </ul>	Med	Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff Staff to view Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST Recruitment / interview process



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External Tutors/Guest Speakers</li> <li>• Volunteers/Parents in school activities</li> <li>• Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours</li> <li>• Visitors/contractors present during after school activities</li> </ul>			<p>Vetting Procedures School visitors policy Procedures and practices in place</p>
<p>Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school</p>	Med	Bullying	<p>ICT policy Mobile phone policy ICT used under teacher supervision Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour</p>
<p>Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.</p>	Med	Fair treatment not being afforded to all	<p>Code of behaviour Parental complaints procedure Mobile phone policy</p>
<p>Student teachers undertaking training placement in school</p>	Med	<p>Harm not recognised and reported properly/ reported Lack of knowledge of school procedures / policies</p>	<p>Under teacher supervision Liaison with Teacher Training College Child safe guarding statement Code of behaviour Vetting procedures in place Supervision of class teacher</p>
<p>Use of video/photography/other media to record school events</p>	Med	<p>Videos of children being taken and uploaded</p>	<p>Internet acceptable use policy Reminders at events about social media</p>



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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	Med	That the standard of child protection afforded to children in the care of the outside organisation will not be in keeping with the school standard	Use of premises policy / contract Outside agencies are responsible for ensuring they have their own policies and procedures re child protection place.

### Written Assessment of Risk of Mercy School

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 (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Mercy 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 (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.

### Examples of activities, risks and procedures

The examples listed in this document are provided to assist schools in undertaking their risk assessment under the Children First Act, 2015. Schools should note that this list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure, as far as possible,



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that any other risks and procedures that are relevant to its own particular circumstances are identified and specified in the written risk assessment and that adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

It is acknowledged that schools already have in place a range of policies, practices and procedures to mitigate the risk of harm to children while they are participating in the activities of the school and that some school activities will carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. In the context of the risk assessment that must be undertaken by schools, the Children First Act, 2015 refers to risk as “any potential for harm”. Therefore, it is important that, as part of its risk assessment process, each school lists and reviews all of its various activities (which shall include identifying those that may carry low risk of harm as well as those that carry higher risks of harm). Doing so will help the school to (1) identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school’s activities, (2) identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm and (3) identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.

The Addendum to *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* published in January 2019 clarifies that organisations providing relevant services to children should consider the specific issue of online safety when carrying out their risk assessment and preparing their Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for primary and post-primary schools (April 2020) advises of the importance of teachers maintaining the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assisting parents and guardians to be aware of their role also. Schools should ensure that their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) informs and guides remote or distance learning activity.

**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)*.