



St. Tola's N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Tola's N.S. is a primary school with special classes 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 St. Tola's N.S. 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 **Eileen Smyth**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Anne Stenson/ Laura Kelleghan (Acting DDLP)**
- 4 The Relevant Person is **Eileen Smyth**
(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](#) 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.

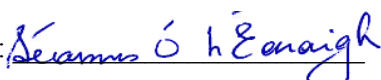
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school.


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 in March 2019.

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

Signed: 
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: 
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 26th September 2024

Date: 26th September 2024



Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Tola's 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 PostPrimary Schools (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Tola's N.S.

1. List of school activities	2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities –	3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily arrivals to school too early & drop off procedures ● Dismissal from school in the evenings ● Break time supervision ● Swimming Lessons & changing facilities (Male/ Female & supervisors) ● Educational field trips/ tours (Ratio of adults to pupils) ● School Tours 	<p>Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel 2. Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel 3. Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child 4. Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school 5. 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 6. Risk of harm due to bullying of child 	<p><u>Current Good Practice Outline:</u> The 'Child Safeguarding Statement' has been in operation since March 11th 2018 and is reviewed in September of each year (2024). All school personnel and the Board of Management take part in this review and are aware of their roles of responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Designated Liaison Person: <i>The DLP is Eileen Smyth</i> and notices are placed around the school with this information ● All staff are Garda Vetted. ● All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's <i>Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment</i>. This is displayed in all rooms of the school, at the entrances of the school and the school website. ● The <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023</i> are made available to all school personnel. These are available in hard copy, stored digitally online on the school drive and in PDF form circulated by email to all staff. ● School Personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023</i> and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i> ● Appended Policies to the Child Safeguarding Policy are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Intimate Care Needs Policy a. Code of Behaviour b. Administration of Medicines Policy c. Physical Intervention with Pupils Policy d. Supervision Policy e. Students on Work Placements & Work Experience

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attending events outside the school (School mobile needed) ● Attending sporting events outside of school – GAA & other ● Engaging in sport’s events / training on school grounds ● Visiting school’s/ holding sport’s events on site ● School Picnic Day ● School Sport’s Day ● Patricia Smyth Memorial Blitz Day ● Visit to the school by the Parish NET Team for Religious preparation/ support ● Confessions in School ● School Concert – Seachtain na Gaeilge & Christmas Concert (General Admittance – and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school 8. Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities 9. Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult 10. Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school 11. Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities 12. Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care 13. Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour 14. Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation 15. Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in appropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner 16. Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner 17. Dismissal from school in the evenings – a minority of children may be collected late by parents 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> f. Internet Safety & Acceptable Use Policy g. Remote Learning Policy h. Anti-Bullying Policy i. SEN Policy j. Critical Incident Management Plan k. Health & Safety Statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yard Supervision Rota is devised and supervised by Ms. Wilkinson and Ms. Smyth ● Pupils are not allowed to have mobile phones in school. ● The school organises Internet Safety Workshops for pupils and parents annually (March/ April of each year) ● 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. ● Sign In/ Sign Out Book for pupils leaving for appointments at the exit door. ● Access to school only by Bell/Buzzer. ● Classes given by outside coaches are supervised by the class teacher at all times and a copy of the coach’s Garda Vetting is given to the Principal/ DLP ● One-to-one teaching: SEN and other teachers are careful to ensure that another member of staff is present in the room during one-to-one teaching and if another member of staff is not available, then the classroom door will remain open during the teaching lesson. <p><u>Procedures to Address Risks of Harm Identified in Section 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk of harm not being recognised All teachers have received child protection training. Teachers and staff are encouraged to continuously monitor and report to the DLP any concern no matter how insignificant they feel it may be. ● Risk of harm from school personnel All teachers, staff, volunteers, work experience students and outside coaches are all Garda Vetted to ensure safety for children ● Risk of harm by another child Children have separate toilets and changing areas. Areas for break times are designated for junior and senior pupils separately. Children are not allowed to move around the school unsupervised during class time or break times. Teachers and SNA staff supervise the yard each day and in the classrooms on wet days. ● Risk of harm with children SEN, vulnerable children with intimate care needs and others
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<p>access by the children to parents & others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visiting Coaches – sports/ other (Tennis, Rugby, GAA) ● TY Students (must be Garda Vetted) ● Transport – use of staff & parent’s cars ● Preparation for Religious Ceremonies – lifts to the church/ Bus ● Early entry to school on wet days ● Horse Riding Lessons ● Supervision during wet days for break times (Gym/classes) ● Accidents on yard – roles of responsibility ● Administration of Medicine 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Awareness of Yard Supervision & Toilet Usage by pupils during break times (Front door locked to general public) 19. Changing into P.E. gear for 2nd – 6th daily 20. Attending events outside school 21. Visiting school’s/ holding sport’s events on site e.g. – Patricia Smyth Memorial Blitz Day 22. School Picnic Day, Sport’s Day & other days where general public gain admittance 23. Visiting Coaches – sports/ other – Garda vetting (Must see copy of the vetting) 24. TY Students/ Trainee SNA’s/Teacher Trainees – Garda vetting 25. Bus Escort/Secretary/Cleaners – Garda Vetting 26. Preparation for Religious Ceremonies (Transport) 27. Visitors to the school 28. Children arriving late: Must be signed in. 29. Children leaving for Appointments: Must be signed out 30. Pupil Absences – A phone calls, letter or an email from parent’s is mandatory 	<p>All teachers and staff follow policies and procedures which lays out very clearly ‘good practice’ and appropriate interactions with children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk of harm due to exposure to inappropriate images via the internet <p>The school’s Acceptable Use Policy is followed correctly at all times. Internet access is limited to appropriate sites (Blocks in place) and is always monitored by teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arrival of Children in the morning: <p>A stop, drop & go system is established, children line up on the yard and they sanitize their hands on entry to the building, they then proceed directly to their classrooms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dismissal from school in the evenings <p>SNA supervision of children with SEN needs Designated collection zones for cars and buses (Depart at 2.40pm) - Children who have not been collected will be brought into school and parents telephoned by a member of staff. Parents are regularly informed that no supervision is provided after 2.50pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changing into P.E. gear (Pupils from 2nd– 6th daily) <p>Children must change inside the classroom area. Toilets and Store room can be used as the designated areas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Children change singly – 2 toilets a. Lists of pupils for changing are devised by the class teacher and pupils designated to each area for changing during class time and with Teacher supervision of the whole class b. Pupils may not change in pairs or groups c. A younger & an older child should NEVER change in the same area d. The class teacher must supervise the full class group until all children have changed and have left the classroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Toileting & Accidents <p>Intimate Care Needs Policy in place and will be followed accordingly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Junior classes toilet areas are outside the classroom <p>Teachers ensure that only one child uses the toilet at any given time In cases of emergency SNA staff support pupils with care needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yard supervision & Toilet Usage by pupils <p>Teachers & SNA staff must ensure that they are on the yard before the children Use of a toilets at break time are restricted to the childrens’ own class toilets. Teacher on yard to monitor the number of children accessing toilets at any one time (restricted to 1 toilet pass per class) The SNA staff will hold/ give out the Toilet pass. Front door has turn knob mechanism fitted (i.e. prevents entry by unknown persons)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attending events outside of the school premises –
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administration of First Aid. ● 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. ● Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe. ● Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils. ● Students participating in work experience in the school. ● Use of video/photography/other media to record school events. ● Student teachers undertaking training placement in school. ● Use of digital technologies in school ● Access to phone through the school (Some areas no coverage) 	<p>31. Further Policies Required are listed in Appendix to the 'Child Safeguarding Statement'</p>	<p>Children will not attend events where there are large crowds of people attending & where it is challenging to maintain safe levels of supervision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visiting school's/ holding sport's events on site e.g. – Patricia Smyth Memorial Blitz Day <p>List to include all adults who will be attending with schools (these persons must be Garda Vetted if school volunteers and must supply Garda Vetting letters to their own school prior to attending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School Picnic Day/sport's Day & Patricia Smyth Memorial Blitz Day <p>Letter to clarify to parents that same rules apply regarding safety & discipline Supervision to be provided by teachers & staff due to access by general public (largely relatives & family friends of pupils)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visiting Coaches – sports/ other <p>A copy of Garda Vetting must be given to the school Principal/DLP) Class teachers will remain with the class at all times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TY Students <p>Must be Garda Vetted from their own school as per guidelines and must be over 16yrs of age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teaching Practice Students <p>Must be Garda Vetted from Colleges of Education and have all documentation before they can commence TP Practice in the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preparation for Religious Ceremonies – <p>Lifts/ Bus (Letter to parents regarding safety and child protection in terms of transport to the Church or other venue. Parents are encouraged to bring their own child where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children leaving for Appointments – <p>Parents must sign their child out in the 'Sign-Out' book located at the exit door.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel <p>Teachers will record all minor incidents and these are to be reviewed with the DLP regularly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel <p>Teachers must report all signs of possible abuse (no matter how minor they may deem it to be) to the DLP. The DLP will report all such disclosures to the BOM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel <p>child protection is addressed at all staff meetings and staff are made aware of what constitutes as inappropriate behaviour and or child abuse. Each staff member has access to a copy of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools, 2023'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child
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<p>for landline & mobile coverage is non-existent inside school building)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents entering the school building without a valid reason – appointments are essential. • Access to Secretary’s office – phone calls to parents (Storage of key) • Discipline monitoring on CIE school transport (Liaison role for the school) • Synchronizing of watches by teachers. Home time/ children leaving the classroom • Use of the internet for research projects and educational lesson <p><i>Areas of the School to include safeguarding procedures:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing areas – ensure single sex and same age peers change in their classrooms • Changing areas inside of the class rooms for 3rd – 6th classes 		<p>Consistent and vigilant supervision by teachers and staff will minimise the opportunities whereby a child can be harmed by another child. Should such harm take place, the disclosure of harm will be dealt with by following child protection procedures fully and may warrant a referral or mandated report to TUSLA.</p> <p><u>Gladioli & Blossoms (ASD Classes 1 & 2):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNAs will not be left on their own within ASD setting • Doors within the classes will have a double lock system to prevent flight risk • PE Hall is monitored by SNA and teacher, in particular around emergency exit • Arrival/Home Time: Pupils are guided by holding hand for bus and car safety departure • Classroom press has locks to prevent access when teacher is otherwise engaged • Internal sensory room allows only one pupil/adult, door left open. • Yard duty is supervised and pupils remain amongst peers • Toilets within Gladioli are not lockable to prevent possible harm • All events and tours will be 1:1 ratio where the pupils needs are of flight risk • Pupils are encouraged to partake in school concerts, Religious events and supervision and SET/SNA support is given priority • Where a pupil is at a high level of emotion or a risk to other pupils/staff, it may be necessary to evacuate the room for the safety of pupils, one staff member best equipped will help to calm the situations.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pupils from Infants – 1st class do not change their clothes for sports <p>Gladioli & Blossoms (ASD Class 1 & 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use of PE. Hall● Yard Duty● Toileting● Entry & Exit of the Building● Entry & Exit of Classroom● Emotional Regulation Issues● General toilet areas & toilet breaks for children from SEN with-drawl lessons● Designated areas such as Sensory Room <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Toilet usage at break times (Maximum number of pupils)● Toilet Pass system in operation. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● School boundary, hedges, front wall etc.		
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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, 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)*.