

2024/25



Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment

Ó Fiaich College, Hoey's Lane, Dublin Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth, A91WK75

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Child Safeguarding Statement

Ó Fiaich Educational Campus, Dublin Road, Dundalk, Co. Louth comprises Ó Fiaich College and Ó Fiaich Institute of Further Education.

Ó Fiaich College

Is a post primary school providing post primary education to pupils from First Year to Leaving Certificate year.

Ó Fiaich Institute of Further Education

Provides a range of further education and training to students from 16 years upwards.

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 Ó Fiaich College/Institute 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	Padraig Mc Govern
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Persons (DDL) is	Audrey Flood John Caraher Conor Rafferty
4. The Relevant Person is	Padraig Mc Govern

5. The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school/college life and must be reflected in all of the school’s/college’s policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school/college will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school/college 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 accident 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/college 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.

7. This statement has been published on the school's/college's website and has been provided to all members of school/college 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 the statement refers.

Written Assessment of Risk of Ó Fiaich College/Institute

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 Ó Fiaich College.

School Name	Ó Fiaich College/Institute
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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)*.

1. List of School/College Activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one counselling
- One-to-one learning support
- One-to-one behaviour support & mentoring
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Remote teaching using the digital classroom
- Blended learning & online TEACHING
- Sporting activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Annual Sports Day/Active Week
- Fundraising/Charity events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
- Care of any vulnerable adult students, including intimate care where needed
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Management of provision of food & drink
- Administration of Medicine

- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE & RSE
- 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
 - Children on CPNS
 - Children with medical needs
- Recruitment of school personnel including;
 - Teachers/SNAs/PAs
 - 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
- Use of the digital classroom for Teaching & Learning and other activities
- 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
- Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere
- Student teachers/PME students undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- Use of school premises by other organisations during school day
- Breakfast club
- Nurture Group
- Homework club/evening study
- Ó Fiaich Academy and other Clubs & Societies

2. The school/College 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 racism
- 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 due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as an uninvited person accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time in breakout rooms
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities, including medical vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
- Risk of harm due to non-compliance with school code of behaviour
- Risk of harm due to non-compliance with school policies
- Risk of harm due to non-compliance with the school AUP
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in an inappropriate 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/College has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment

- All school/college personnel are provided with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement*
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015* and its Addendum (2019)
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum

- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle
- 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* and runs an annual Anti Bullying week
- The school/college undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives and runs an annual intercultural week
- The school has a yard/playground supervision rota to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.
- The school/college implements the LMETB policy in respect of school outings
- The school/college has a Health and safety statement
- The school/college adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DoES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school/college has a code of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school/college complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school implements the LMETB intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
- The school has in place procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school/college:
 - 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 & receive induction on school procedures
 - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training & CPD
 - Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
 - Maintains records of all staff and board member training
 - Regularly updates staff on Child Protection policies & procedures
- The school has in place procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has in place a code of behaviour/practice for pupils/learners
- The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils
- The school has in place an AUP to promote safe and responsible use of the internet & computer resources for all school stakeholders
- The school has in place procedures in respect of usage of smart phones and tablet devices by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place procedures for one-to-one counselling
- The school has in place procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school

- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations
- The school has in place procedures for remote Teaching & Learning in line with guidance received from DoES, ETBI & LMETB
- The school will develop a policy to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic threat & will review & update existing policies in line with this overall policy
- The school has in place procedures for reporting a concern about a child's safety or welfare during Covid-19 school closures, bearing in mind that the Covid-19 Pandemic;
 - *Signifies the disruption of a support network for many young people in Ireland*
 - *Puts young people and families who are already vulnerable under stress*
 - *Heightens the risk of abuse and neglect*

Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of “harm” as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in Chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*

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

This Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment was adopted by the Board of Management on

11th September 2024

Signed:	Chairperson Board of Management	Date: 11/09/2024
Signed:	Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management	Date: 11/09/2024

This Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment was reviewed by the Board of Management on

11th September 2024

Signed:	Chairperson Board of Management	Date: 11/09/2024
Signed:	Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management	Date: 11/09/2024