

## Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

Holy Cross Mercy School a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Early Intervention (ASD Classes,) and 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 2017](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of Holy Cross 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 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (**DLP**) is **Alice Davern**.
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (**Deputy DLP**) is **Anne Lucey**.
- 4 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

5 The following procedures/measures are in place:

- In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DE website.
- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Acts 2012 to 2016](#) and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the Department of Education and available on the DE website.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
  - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
  - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
  - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- In this school the Board has appointed the abovenamed DLP as the “relevant person” (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the school’s child safeguarding statement.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school’s procedures for managing those risks is included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school’s website, the DE website or will be made available on request by the school.

**Note:** The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

- 6 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association (if any) and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.
- 7 This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 24/11/2022

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 16/11/2022

Reviewed 16/11/22 - Away Board Meeting to Ratify. -

Signed: B. McGuire  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Alice Dawern  
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 24th Nov 2022

Date: 24/11/22

## Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

### Written Assessment of Risk of Holy Cross Mercy School

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 Holy Cross Mercy School.

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"> <li>• Arrival and dismissal of pupils</li> <li>• Collection of pupils needs to be considered in light of non-designated adults/siblings collecting children.</li> <li>• Bus escorts</li> <li>• Breaks</li> <li>• Managing Challenging Behaviour</li> <li>• Administration of Medicine</li> <li>• One to One teaching</li> <li>• Curricular provision of SPHE</li> <li>• One-to-One meetings with children</li> <li>• RSE Stay Safe etc., - catering for pupils with specific vulnerabilities. –               <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> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel</li> <li>• Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel</li> <li>• Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child</li> <li>• Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school</li> <li>• 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 trips, swimming lessons</li> <li>• Risk of harm due to bullying of child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school’s <i>Child Safeguarding Statement</i></li> <li>• The <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> are made available to all school personnel</li> <li>• School Personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i></li> <li>• The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme/within each two year teaching cycle. Sensitive</li> </ul>



<p>- Children on CPNS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor teaching activities – e.g., P.E. field trips, trails etc., (particularly involving outside personnel.)</li> <li>• Sporting activities – (outside coaches – Garda vetted etc.,)</li> <li>• School outings</li> <li>• Intimate care policy – including pupils with S.E.N.</li> <li>• Sports Day</li> <li>• Fundraising events</li> <li>• Ant-bullying Policy</li> <li>• Training of Staff in Child Protection</li> <li>• Recruitment of school personnel – following C.P.M.S.A., D.E.S, I.N.T.O procedures.</li> <li>• Facilitators of Extra-curricular activities will provide evidence of Garda Vetting.</li> <li>• Participation of pupils in religious ceremonies external to the school.</li> <li>• A.U.P. document informing ICT Usage. -Internet safety activities.</li> <li>• Application of sanctions in relation to mobile phones.</li> <li>• Students participating in work placements.</li> <li>• Use of digital media to record school events</li> <li>• Use of school premises by outside organisations outside of school hours</li> <li>• Homework Club</li> <li>• Recruitment of school personnel –following C.P.M.S.A., D.E.S , I.N.T.O procedures.</li> <li>• Facilitators of extra-curricular activities will provide evidence of Garda Vetting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school</li> <li>• Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities</li> <li>• Risk of harm due to Inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult</li> <li>• Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school</li> <li>• Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities</li> <li>• Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care</li> <li>• Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour</li> <li>• Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation</li> <li>• Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in appropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner</li> <li>• Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/ circulating inappropriate material</li> </ul>	<p>touches lessons covered annually in all classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school implements the S.P.H.E. curriculum in full.</li> <li>• The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy as part of the school’s Code of Behaviour which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department’s <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i></li> <li>• The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.</li> <li>• The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings</li> <li>• The school has a Health and Safety Statement.</li> <li>• The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting</li> <li>• The school has an Adult Bullying/Sexual Harassment Policy to provide guidance for a supportive workplace where all staff work in an</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation of pupils in religious ceremonies external to the school.</li> <li>• A.U.P. document informing ICT usage. Internet safety activities.</li> <li>• Applications of sanctions in relation to mobile phones</li> <li>• Students participation in work placements.</li> <li>• Use of digital media to record school events</li> <li>• Use of school premises by outside organisations outside of school hours.</li> <li>• After School/Homework Club.</li> </ul>	<p>via social media, texting, digital device or other manner.</p>	<p>environment free from all forms of harassment and bullying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holy Cross Mercy School is committed to creating, maintaining and constantly striving to enhance a positive work environment, where work is done in an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, openness and equality.</li> <li>• Our Respect and Dignity in Our Work –Keeping Our Workplace Positive and Effective Policy informs and guides these principles.</li> <li>• The teaching staff in the school comply with the Teaching Council Professional Code of Conduct for Teachers (2016)</li> <li>• The school has a Special Educational Needs policy</li> <li>• The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care</li> <li>• The school has a policy and procedures in place for the administration of medication to pupils</li> <li>• <b>The school –</b></li> <li>• Has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>• Encourages staff to avail of relevant training</li> <li>• Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training</li> <li>• Maintains records of all staff and board member training (see annual checklist).</li>   <li>• The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils</li> <li>• The school has in place an Acceptable Use Policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils. This has been updated to guide and inform digital homework activities.</li> <li>• The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones and other devices by pupils</li> <li>• The school has a Critical Incident Management Plan in place.</li> <li>• The school has in place procedures for the use of external sports coaches</li> <li>• The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities</li> <li>• The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showering of children with SEN in the ASD Classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>November 2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Intimate Care Policy</u></b></li> <li>• The school's Intimate Care Policy will be updated by L.O'M. Special Class Teacher, before the end of Term 1, 2022, to address this issue.</li> <li>• <b><u>Trauma Informed Practice</u></b></li> </ul> <p>The Principal has engaged with training on Trauma Informed Practice. All staff will engage with training on same in January '23.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Supervision Procedures</u></b></li> </ul> <p>Supervision procedures that were revised as part of our Covid Safety Plan last year, largely remain in place This enhanced supervision has continued to</p>
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		<p>provide the children with a greater sense of wellbeing and security.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Members of the school staff maintain a visible presence at the school gates and designated locations throughout the school and school grounds during collection and drop-off times.</li><li>2. There is supervision for the children from their time of arrival at 08:30 a.m. daily, (fifteen minutes before official opening time).</li><li>3. The number of classes playing together in the outside play areas has been substantially reduced with only two classes playing in each designated area. This has reduced the amount of conflict between pupils and has created a safer, happier environment.</li><li>4. Daily break time supervision is now provided by the relevant class teacher/ S.E.T /S.N.A. associated with each class, in the</li></ol>
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		<p>vast majority of cases. This enables the class teacher/S.E.T. to address any issues that arise in context. It is also felt that the school personnel who work directly with the children are best placed to support the children and their particular needs’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In light of the addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children published in January 2019, the following policies were updated:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Code of Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy was reviewed in April 2022.</li> <li>2. The Attendance Policy was reviewed in September 2022.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <b><u>Child Protection Training</u></b></li> <li>• All staff engaged with annual Child Protection training on 7/11/’22 <a href="#">Child Protection</a></li> </ul>
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		<p><a href="http://pdst.ie">Procedures 2017 all personnel (pdst.ie)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Staff Feedback re; CSS and Risk Assessment</u></b></li> <li>• Our annual CSS and Risk Assessment review was included for discussion at a Staff Meeting on 7/11/22.</li> <li>• <b><u>Pupil Feedback re; CSS and Risk Assessment</u></b></li> <li>• Staff in the senior classes were requested to carry out a pupil survey, using suggested questions provided by the CPSMA to ascertain how safe the children feel in school and how we can make them feel safe in school.</li> <li>• Arising from the findings of this survey, all class teachers will revise safety rules in the yard and reassure the children of staff presence to protect them at all times.</li> </ul>
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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 2017*

