



Child Safeguarding Statement – St. Vincent de Paul GNS

St Vincent de Paul Girls' School is a primary girls' school providing primary education to pupils from 2nd Class to 6th 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 Vincent de Paul Girls' 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 Alison Clinton.**
- 3 **The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Catherine Anne Dooley.**
- 4 **The Relevant Person is Alison Clinton**
(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
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- 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 www.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 October 4th, 2023.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management in March 2024

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Date: _____



Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St Vincent de Paul Girls' 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 St Vincent de Paul Girls' 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 -
<p>School Personnel</p> <p>Child Protection Training of School Personnel</p>	<p>Indicators of harm /abuse not being recognised by school personnel</p> <p>Harm / Abuse not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel</p> <p>Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel</p>	<p>The Board of Management –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides all school personnel with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment ○ Reference to the policy is included in Welcome Pack ○ Requires that all personnel sign the 'Acceptance of St Vincent de Paul GNS Child Protection Safeguarding and Risk Assessment Statement' form and return a signed copy to the DLP



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensures the DES Child Protection Procedures are made available to all school personnel ○ Requires that all school personnel, mandated and non-mandated, adhere to DES <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> ○ Ensures staff avail of relevant training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All school personnel are required to do online TUSLA training. Certificate to be provided to BoM ➤ All school personnel are required to do training provided by a professional organisation (e.g. PDST) on a regular basis ➤ DLP/DDLP will avail of further training provided by a professional organisation (e.g. PDST) on a regular basis ○ Encourage Board of Management members to avail of relevant training ○ Maintains records of all staff and Board training
<p>School Personnel Recruitment of school personnel including - Teachers/SNA's Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners</p>	<p>Risk of recruiting unsuitable personnel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All school personnel are required to be Garda vetted and the relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting are adhered to.



	<p>Indicators of harm /abuse not being recognised by school personnel</p> <p>Harm / Abuse not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel</p> <p>Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Best practice procedures with regard to interviewing and checking references are followed ○ All school personnel are provided with the school's Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment Statement ○ All school personnel are required to sign the 'Acceptance of St Vincent de Paul GNS Child Protection Safeguarding and Risk Assessment Statement' form and return a signed copy to the DLP
<p>Volunteers/External Personnel/Work Experience/ Student Placement</p> <p>Sports coaches</p> <p>External Tutors/Guest Speakers</p> <p>Volunteers/Parents in school activities</p> <p>Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours</p> <p>Visitors/contractors present during after school activities</p> <p>Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum</p>	<p>Risk of recruiting unsuitable personnel</p> <p>Indicators of harm /abuse not being recognised by school personnel/volunteers/parents/person(s) from another organisation</p> <p>Harm / Abuse not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel/volunteers/parents/person(s) from another organisation</p> <p>Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel by</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In accordance with Circular No. 0042/2018 'Best practice guidance for primary schools in the use of programmes and/or external facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the Department of Education and Skills' Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice' a member of the teaching staff will always be present when external personnel are working with students. ○ External coaches/external personnel/volunteers will be Garda vetted. ○ A copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment will be made available to all external coaches/personnel/volunteers/student teachers



<p>Students participating in work experience in the school</p> <p>Student teachers undertaking training placement in school</p>	<p>/volunteers/parents/person(s) from another organisation while the child is participating in school activities</p>	<p>who shall be required to sign the 'Acceptance of St Vincent de Paul GNS Child Protection Safeguarding and Risk Assessment Statement' document and return the signed copy to the DLP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In the event that external personnel/volunteers/students have a child protection concern or that a child makes a disclosure to them they must report the matter to the DLP. ○ The class teacher will remain in the class/hall/yard etc. at all times during talks/visits/activities provided by visitors/external personnel ○ A teacher/s will always accompany pupils travelling to sports events.
<p>Record Keeping</p>	<p>Risk of sensitive information not being shared with the DLP/DDLP as required</p> <p>Risk of records of a sensitive manner not being properly secured and treated in confidence</p> <p>Risk of loss of records of a sensitive nature</p>	<p>All school personnel are required to ensure that the DLP/DDLP is aware of any sensitive records e.g. child protection monitoring records they are maintaining and to ensure all records are kept in a secure location and are treated with strictest confidence.</p> <p>All such records form part of the school record keeping system and must be filed with the central school's records at the end of the school year (currently in the Principal's office)</p>



		<p>Pupil SS/SSP files to be maintained in SET central location and files can only be released to class teachers by SENCO/Principal and must be returned within the same working day.</p>
<p>Curriculum Implementation of SPHE and the Stay Safe programme</p>	<p>Risk of inadequate implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the Stay Safe Programme</p> <p>Risk of pupils not learning the skills and strategies necessary to protect themselves</p>	<p>Planning for and the implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the Stay Safe programme:</p> <p>The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum as outlined in the school plan for SPHE which can be found in shared Google Drive.</p> <p>Relevant SPHE programme for each year level and timetable of plan for the year can be found in purple SPHE folder. Timetable displayed in each classroom.</p> <p>The Stay Safe programme will be taught in its entirety in 2nd, 4th, 6th class in Term 2 of the school year.</p> <p>The topics of Touches and Secrets and Telling will also be covered in 3rd & 5th class (revising the content of 2nd & 4th class, respectively)</p> <p>Anti-bullying lessons will be covered by all classes twice a year</p> <p>On completion of the Stay Safe programme all class teachers are required to sign the 'Completion of the</p>



		<p>Stay Safe Programme' document (distributed by the school's SPHE coordinator)</p> <p>Individual teacher planning documents indicate when specific objectives of the SPHE curriculum, including the Stay Safe programme will be taught (timetabled for) and what specific objectives of SPHE, Stay Safe and RSE will be taught in that period of time. The Cuntas Míosúil of individual teachers will highlight the Stay Safe lessons covered in that month</p>
<p>Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils</p>	<p>Risk of harm due to bullying of child</p> <p>Risk of serious incidents of bullying not being recognised as being a child protection concern</p> <p>Risk of pupils not having the strategies/skills to report bullying/inappropriate behaviour</p>	<p>In addition to specific teaching on the prevention and dealing with bullying as part of the SPHE programme (timetabled for twice a 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. The school also has an AUP Policy, Code of Behaviour and Remote Teaching and Learning Policy. A copy of the school's policies can be found on the school website and on the shared staff drive.</p> <p>All personnel are required to act in accordance with the requirements of the Department's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.</p>



		<p>Child protection concerns that arise from serious instances of bullying amongst pupils amongst must be reported to the DLP in accordance with the DES Child Protection Procedures 2017</p>
<p>Use of Information Technology by pupils in school</p> <p>Online Safety</p>	<p>Risk of harm to pupils by school personnel, other adults and children</p> <p>Risk of pupils accessing inappropriate online material</p> <p>Risk of pupils not having the strategies/skills to report bullying/inappropriate behaviour</p>	<p>The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place for school personnel and pupils.</p> <p>As part of the SPHE curriculum targeted age-appropriate lessons addressing online safety are provided for all pupils</p> <p>Pupils learn appropriate strategies ad skills for dealing with situations where they feel unsafe in the online community</p> <p>Appropriate filtering level is implemented by PDST. Acceptable usage Policy is implemented. Parents must sign to indicate acceptance of this policy upon enrolment. Parents and pupils must sign to indicate acceptance of the AUP policy at the start of each school year (homework journal).</p> <p>Code of Behaviour is implemented.</p> <p>Anti-Bullying policy is implemented</p>



		Teacher supervision- use of ICT is always under direct school staff supervision.
Remote Teaching and Learning (Online)	Risk of inappropriate behaviours/conversations between pupils and/or school personnel	<p>The school has an Acceptable Use Policy and Remote Learning Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely (shared drive), and has communicated this policy to parents (website)</p> <p>Pupils, parents and school personnel must adhere to the policy adopted by the BoM for online teaching and learning remotely.</p>
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	<p>Risk of pupils' identity being inappropriately shared</p> <p>Risk of harm to a child through inappropriately sharing of information</p>	<p>Pupil names are never used with pupil photos.</p> <p>Prior to enrolment parents give written permission for children to appear in print or online media (School Enrolment Form)</p> <p>School personnel will use, where feasible, school devices when photographing, recording or videoing pupils and school events</p> <p>In the event that staff use personal devices to photograph, record or video pupils and school events the data must be deleted from the personal device</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caretaker (Infant School) to check doors are closed after morning arrival and at end of day dismissal
<p>Collection of Pupils during the school day</p>	<p>Risk of pupil being harmed by being allowed to leave school with an unsuitable adult or child</p> <p>Risk of harm to a child by an adult or child</p> <p>Risk of an allegation being made against another child/children or member of school personnel</p>	<p>Prior to the enrolment of a child and on an annual basis thereafter parents/ carers will be asked to supply the school with the names and contact details of any adult that may be collecting a pupil during the course of the year.</p> <p>Outside of normal dismissal times, school staff will only release pupils to those nominated by the parent/carer or where advance notice of another adult collecting the pupil is given by the parent / carer.</p> <p>In the event that another person arrives to collect a child the school will endeavour to contact the parent/carer to get their permission. Under no circumstance will staff allow a child to leave the school</p>



		<p>with another person that does not have permission to collect them.</p> <p>Person/nominated person must check in with the office, where they must sign the child out and wait at the office while a member of staff (admin) organises for the child to come to the office.</p> <p>At normal dismissal time all classes are accompanied by school personnel to the school gates</p> <p>Procedures for late arrival, the intercom system will be used for a child to gain access to the school. The child will be met by a member of the school personnel and accompanied to class.</p>
<p>One to one teaching</p>	<p>Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel</p> <p>Risk of allegation being made against a member of staff</p>	<p>One-to-one teaching sessions are provided where it is deemed necessary in the best interest of the child. In such situations written parental consent must be given.</p> <p>Parental consent will be sought on enrolment.</p> <p>One-to-one sessions are clearly timetabled, with appropriate arrangements in place with regard to the physical environment, e.g. glass panel in the door, open door policy, table between teacher and pupil</p>



<p>Toileting Issues</p>	<p>Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel or another child/children</p> <p>Risk of allegation being made against a member of staff/child/children</p>	<p>Pupils with specific toileting needs:</p> <p>The individual needs of pupils with specific toileting needs are addressed as part of the school's Intimate Care Policy, which can be found on the website and the school's shared Google drive.</p> <p>SNAs assisting pupils with toileting/changing must act in accordance with that child's plan as agreed with parents/carers and school personnel</p> <p>Dealing with toileting accidents:</p> <p>The school has a supply of clean clothing available for use in such situations</p> <p>If the child can tend to themselves, they will be offered clean clothing. Parents/guardians will be informed by the class teacher</p> <p>In any situation where a child cannot attend to themselves the parents/guardians will be notified by phone of the incident. Prior to enrolment consent for staff to attend to the child in this instance will have been given, as part of the school's enrolment procedures.</p> <p>Staff attending to the child will do so in as 'open' an environment as possible with due regard to the privacy of the child</p>



		A record of such an incident to be kept in Accident/Incident Report log
Changing for Games/PE/Swimming	<p>Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel or another child/children</p> <p>Risk of allegation being made against a member of staff/child/children</p>	<p>In all activities that require children to change clothing staff must ensure that a balance is struck between the child's right to privacy and adequate supervision.</p> <p>Pupils will be expected to dress / undress themselves. Teachers will always be present in a supervisory capacity.</p> <p>School staff will not take any responsibility for the dressing / undressing of pupils – except where that child's intimate care policy requires staff assistance. The needs of pupils who require assistance will be addressed under the schools Intimate Care policy.</p>
<p>Sporting Activities</p> <p>School tours/trips</p> <p>Annual Sports Day</p> <p>Use of off-site facilities for school activities</p> <p>External personnel to support sports and other</p>	<p>Indicators of harm/abuse not being recognised by school personnel</p> <p>Risk of harm to a child by an adult or child</p> <p>Risk of Harm / Abuse not being reported correctly and appropriately</p>	<p>All school trips, outings and tours will be sanctioned by the Principal.</p> <p>Written parental consent must be given for all outings and tours, prior to enrolment (Enrolment form).</p> <p>Administration staff must ensure that activity centres / adventure centres where pupils are being brought to have in place their own Child Safeguarding Statement and that all supervising staff in activity centres / adventure centres have been Garda vetted.</p>



	<p>Risk of allegation being made against a member of staff/child/children/ external personnel</p>	<p>In accordance with Circular No. 0042/2018 'Best practice guidance for primary schools in the use of programmes and/or external facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the Department of Education and Skills' Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice' a member of the teaching staff will always be present when external personnel are working with students.</p> <p>All external coaches/external personnel/volunteers working with pupils under the supervision of the class teacher will be Garda vetted.</p> <p>A copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment will be made available to all external coaches/personnel/volunteers/student teachers who shall be required to sign the 'Acceptance of St Vincent de Paul GNS Child Protection Safeguarding and Risk Assessment Statement' document and return the signed copy to the DLP.</p> <p>External coaches will be required to report child protection concerns to the DLP.</p> <p>A teacher/s will always accompany pupils travelling to sports events/school outings, etc.</p>
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<p>Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as</p> <p>Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants</p> <p>Members of the Traveller community</p> <p>Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children</p> <p>Pupils perceived to be LGBT</p> <p>Pupils of minority religious faiths</p> <p>Children in care</p> <p>Children on CPNS</p> <p>Children with medical needs</p>	<p>Risk of harm to a child by an adult or child</p> <p>Risk of harm not being recognised and/or reported correctly and appropriately</p>	<p>All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and are required to adhere to the Child protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017.</p> <p>The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum</p> <p>The school implements in full the Stay Safe programme. The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which is implemented in full.</p> <p>School will liaise with TUSLA re children in care and children on CPNS.</p> <p>Principal/Deputy Principal will inform staff of relevant child safeguarding issues on a need to know basis.</p>
<p>Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed</p>	<p>Risk of harm to a child by an adult or child</p> <p>Risk of school personnel not acting in accordance with agreed school protocols and procedures</p>	<p>Prior to their enrolment in the school a meeting will take place with parents, relevant teachers and special needs assistants and the pupil, if appropriate, to discuss needs and draw up Student Support File/Student Support Plus including Intimate Care/Toileting plan</p>



	Risk of allegation being made against school personnel	The School has a Special Educational Needs Policy which is available to staff (shared drive) and parents on the school website
<p>Other policies and procedures</p> <p>SPHE Curriculum, including the Stay Safe Programme Implementation Plan</p> <p>Use of ICT/ cameras/ Mobile Phones as per Acceptable Use Policy</p> <p>Administration of Medicine</p> <p>Anti-bullying Policy</p> <p>Remote teaching and learning policy</p>	<p>Risk of harm to a child by an adult or child</p> <p>Risk of school personnel not acting in accordance with agreed school protocols and procedures</p> <p>Risk of allegation being made against school personnel</p>	<p>The school has developed policies and procedures in the following related areas. All school policies are available to access on the school drive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety policy. • Agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff • Special Educational Needs policy. • Intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care. • Administration of medication to pupils • A code of behaviour for pupils • An AUP policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils, including use of mobile phones • Critical Incident Management Plan • Remote teaching and learning (online)



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 risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on 22nd April, 2024. It shall be reviewed as part of the school’s annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed _____ Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management