St. Mary’s National School, Crosserlough, is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the 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 Crosserlough National School, Crosserlough, has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department of Education & Skills’s **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017** as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement.

**The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is** Teresa Galligan, Principal

**The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP)** is Siobhán Clarke

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.

**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 DES 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 DES and available on the DES 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 this 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, 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 attached as an appendix to these procedures.

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

This statement has been published on the school’s website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents’ Association 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.

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 updated by the Board of Management on 3rd December 2020.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Principal) (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: 2021

Reviewed by the Board Of Management on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: Rev Peter Mc Kiernan

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(Principal) (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Appendix 1: Child SafeGuarding Risk Assessment

Appendix 2: Programmes with relevance to Child Protection

The following programmes are taught in St Mary’s NS in order to increase awareness around child protection issues and for the prevention of abuse in any form:

* Relationship & Sexuality Programme (RSE) – Mandatory – Completed March / April each year
* Stay Safe Programme New edition January 2017 – Mandatory
* Walk Tall Programme
* SPHE Curriculum & Making the Links (A useful manual which links the first 3 programmes to the content objectives of the SPHE curriculum.
* Crosserlough National School Code of Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy

Appendix 3: School Policies with Regards to Child Protection

The following school policies have relevance for child protection and are available for viewing in the school office.

* Child Safeguarding Statement
* Health & Safety Statement, including Accident & Injury Policy & Administration of Medicines Policy
* Code of Behaviour
* Anti-Bullying Policy
* School Attendance Policy
* Intimate Care Needs Policy
* Swimming Policy
* SEN Policy
* Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy (ICT)
* Data Protection Policy
* Critical Incident Policy

Appendix 4: Summary of Codes of Best Practice

**Recruitment and selection of volunteers**

All staff employed (or volunteering) must be Garda Vetted through the National Vetting Bureau (NVB) and will not be allowed work with children unless they provide a copy of this to the school.

The Teaching Council arranges vetting for teachers newly appointed to the school before commencement of employment. Staff will be asked for copies of their vetting forms and these will be kept in the Principal’s office. New Garda Vetting Procedures apply for all employees / volunteers from 29th April 2016 – See Circular 0031/2016

In addition, the child protection-related Statutory Declaration must be provided by all persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions of any duration. The school must obtain and view the original statutory declaration and retain a copy for its own records.

**Supervision of children**

School routines and procedures will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of school at all breaks and on all trips and tours. See Health and Safety Policy.

**Early withdrawal of pupils**

Any child leaving the school before the end of the school day must report to the office. The parent / guardian should enter the school via the door near the office. If they are not known to the Principal / secretary they should be asked for identification. (If another adult is collecting the child, the school much be informed either by phone or in writing by the parent / guardian, as to the identity of the adult collecting their child.) The school secretary will inform the class teacher that the parent has arrived.

**Collection of children at home time**

Infants going home at 2 p.m. are collected at the front door of the shool by a parent/guardian. If a person outside of these named adults is to collect an infant pupil on a given day, the school must be informed of the identity of this other adult either verbally in person, or by phone, or in writing. Equally if a child is to be collected by a classmate’s parent etc., the school should be informed in advance, again either verbally, or by phone, or in writing. If the school has not been informed of a change as above, the school will not release the pupil into the care of another adult. The school will attempt to contact the parents / guardians to confirm the collection details.

Children from 1st to 6th Class walk up to the buses that are parked at the main gate of the school. Children going home by car are met by a parent/guardian at the front of the church. Any child remaining at this point / unsure of who is collecting them etc. reports to the office, where a call is made to their parent / guardian. If there is a change to the collection plans made with the child, parents / guardians should contact the school so that they can update the child.

**Changes in Family Circumstances**

If there any changes in family circumstances (separation of parents etc.), the school will continue to release the child into the care of either parent (assuming both have guardianship).

In the event of a court order, furnished to the school by a parent, the school will only release the child into the care of the adult / provide access as directed by the court. In such circumstances, the school has internal systems in place to ensure communication with relevant staff members, so that they are aware of these changes.

**General Conduct**

Children are to be encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

If an incident occurs which is considered to be of a sexualised nature, the reporting procedures outlined in Chapter 5 of the DES Child Protection Procedures will be followed.

**Visibility**

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the school yard. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms where they would not be under adult supervision. They are allowed to leave the school yard to go to the bathroom. They must ask the teacher on yard duty for permission to leave the yard.

**One-To-Teaching / Activities**

Any activity which involves a child to staff member (teacher or SNA) ratio of 1:1, should take place in a room with a glass panel window on the door for visibility. Otherwise the door of the room in which they are working should be left open for the duration. Any blinds etc, on the glass panel on the door, should be opened for the duration also. Only staff members (who are all vetted appropriately), should engage in 1:1 activities.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that any visitors who are to work with children on a 1:1 basis are appropriately vetted (e.g. HSE nurse, Psychologist, Photographer etc.). The procedure outlined above will be followed in these cases also.

**Visitors/ Guest Speakers**

Teachers on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the school yard and will re-direct them to the office etc. as necessary . All external tutors/ trades people/ visitors must go to the school office.

Guest speakers or External Teachers (even if appropriately vetted) are never left unsupervised with pupils. The class teacher or supervising teacher is responsible for the pupils at all times. The school has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the speaker and to ensure that the materials in use by guests are appropriate.

**Relationships and Attitudes**

Teachers should ensure that their relationships with students are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the children and that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought when dealing with older children.

**Physical Contact with Children**

Teachers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children. However, a distressed child may need reassurance involving physical comforting such as a parent might provide.

Whenever possible this should be done in the presence of others. First-aid to a pupil should also be administered whenever possible in the presence of others. Following any incident where a Teacher feels that his / her actions may be misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Principal.

**Swimming**

Children travel to the pool in Cavan Leisure Complex in a bus accompanied by two staff members.

The teacher stands at the door of the changing room which is slightly ajar. The teacher can then keep an eye on the children lining up on the corridor and the children in the changing room. The role of the teacher is supervisory only, and is not to assist. On no account should a teacher be left alone in the changing room with the children.

If a child needs to go to the toilet during the pool time, he / she is accompanied from the pool area to the bathroom door by the teacher and escorted back to the pool when finished.

**Travelling Arrangements**

Teachers / staff member will not carry children alone in their cars. At least two children must travel with the member of staff in the car or another adult and child. Necessary insurance to transport children in a private vehicle should be in place.

**Induction of Teachers and Ancillary Staff**

The DLP, Teresa Galligan, will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of this Child Safeguarding Statement, DES Child Protection Procedures and and the Children First Guidelines.

**Attendance**

We monitor trends in non-attendance in terms of possible neglect, physical or emotional abuse. See Attendance Policy

**Toileting / Intimate Care Needs**

If a child requires assistance with toileting (regularly or as a once off due to illness etc.), two members of staff should assist the child in this instance. See Intimate Care Policy.

**DVDs**

Staff will always ensure that any DVD shown or video footage shown through services such as RTE Player / Netflix or similar, to the children is age appropriate and is educational in content.

**Internet Safety**

Children will only have access to websites deemed age-appropriate. All other sites are blocked using the NCTE filters.

Photographs of children are only placed on the school website / other sites deemed appropriate by the school with parental permission.

Internet Safety talks are provided for both parents and pupils. St Mary’s NS is pro-technology and we attempt to make our pupils and staff aware of any dangers, to the best of our ability, especially those dangers linked with child protection concerns. See Acceptable Usage / ICT Policy.

Crosserlough National School

Crosserlough.

Re: Notification regarding Board of Management’s Review of Child Safeguarding Statement

To: All School Personnel, Parents’ Association and all members of wider school community:

The Board of Management of St. Mary’s NS wishes to inform you that:

The Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The Child Safe Guarding Statement is published on the school website under Policies. If a hardcopy is requested please contact the school secretary.

This review was conducted in accordance with the “Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement” published on the Department of Education’s ‘website www.education.ie

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal