

Child Safeguarding Statement for Newtown School Waterford

Newtown School, Waterford is a coeducational post-primary **boarding and day school**, providing post-primary education to students from First Year to Leaving Certificate Year. The boarders are resident on site during term time including weekends except where the school closes completely approximately every 3rd weekend.

In accordance with the requirements of the [Children First Act 2015](#), [Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children \(Revised 2023\)](#), [the Addendum to Children First \(2019\)](#), the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (Revised 2023), the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of Newtown School has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

- 1 The board of management of Newtown School Waterford has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (Revised 2023)* and the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 **The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is** **Keith Lemon – Principal**
- 3 **The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is** **Aoife Noctor – Deputy Principal**
- 4 **The Relevant Person is** **Keith Lemon – Principal**
(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. This person can also be the DLP)
- 5 The Board of Management of Newtown School recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school and boarding 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 board of management will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The board of management 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 and care of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school/boarding facility 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/boarding facility, the board of management adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Revised 2023)*, the relevant procedures set out in the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school/boarding facility 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 board of management 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 board of management-
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school/boarding facility's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school/boarding facility'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/boarding facility personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Revised 2023)* and the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023* including, in the case of registered teachers and any boarding facility staff who are mandated persons, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- There is a procedure in place for maintaining a list of mandated persons. 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/management authority has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school/boarding facility or participating in school/boarding facility activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school/boarding facility's procedures for managing those risks is included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.

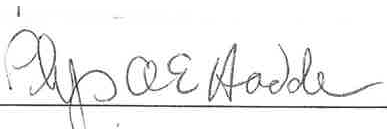
- As a boarding and day school, the Board recognises the importance of ensuring that all aspects of the policy also apply to all aspects of boarding including the residences and to the students and staff therein.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school/boarding facility's website, the DE website or will be made available on request by the school/boarding facility.

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

- 7 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Newtown Association (Parents' Assoc) 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 of Education and Skills 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 11th March 2018 and reviewed as outlined by the dates below:

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 30th September 2024

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 30th September 2024

Signed: 

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 30th September 2024

For information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed or to request a copy of the statement, please contact the relevant person noted at the beginning of this child safeguarding statement

Phone: 051 – 860200 or email: info@newtownschool.ie

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Newtown School Waterford

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)* and the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Boarding Facilities associated with Recognised Schools 2023*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Newtown School Waterford

1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of students
- Recreation breaks for students
- Classroom teaching
- Evening Study / Prep
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting Activities; Hockey, Rugby, Swimming, Gym, Orienteering, etc
- Arts activities; Choir, Orchestra, Drama, Film Making, Debating, ilabs, etc
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Sports Days
- Fundraising events involving students
- 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 students, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE,
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst students
- 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 students with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as
 - Students from ethnic minorities/migrants
 - Members of the Traveller community
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
 - Students exploring their gender identity
 - Students of minority religious faiths
 - Children in care
- Recruitment of school personnel including -
 - Teachers/SNA's
 - 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 students in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school.
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by students in school for (1) Academic use; (2) personal use.
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of students, confiscation of phones etc.
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations including the rental of Hockey and Swimming pool to external groups.
- Use of school premises by other organisations during school day

1.1 List of boarding facility activities

- Management of children and young people as they live away from home
- Provision of residential facilities for boarders (Annamur/ Yard Block / Arnold Marsh) including sleeping and hygiene facilities.
- Use of school premises by other organisations at evenings and weekends
- Town Leave for Boarders
- Weekend activities and trips for boarders
- Use of Medical Centre while ill – (Nest)
- One-to-one mentoring or counselling
- Induction of new boarders
- Children and young people going to accommodation other than their own home at weekends
- Monitoring at mealtimes
- Use of showers
- Management of mobile phones, photography and recording
- Management of prescription medication
- Evening activities and supervision at night
- Evacuation/fire drills outside of school hours
- Managing visits of parents, guardians or agents with boarders
- Escorting and/or transporting individual boarders

2. The school 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, work experience
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- 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 AEN who have particular vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
- Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with students in appropriate 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
- Swimming pool – risk of harm to students in use of changing facilities and in use of the pool.
- Risk of harm in student use of changing rooms for sports activities
- Risk of harm in use of changing rooms while external groups also on site using facilities

2.1 The boarding facility has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities

- Boarding – Risk of harm to students where younger and older students are resident in the same building.
- Risk of harm in using showering / hygiene facilities in residences
- Risk of harm to boarding students whilst on town leave (unsupervised)
- Risk of child being harmed in the boarding residences

3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment

- All school 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*
 - 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*

- The school has a yard/recreational supervision program 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 recognises the limitations of this supervision with respect to student privacy in certain situations.
- The school has in place a structure to provide students with the opportunity to speak with a member of staff to address any difficulties. This structure incorporates class tutors, Year Coordinators, Guidance Counsellor, Pastoral Care person, Nurses and House Staff (Boarding)
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of school outings
- The school has a Health and Safety policy
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school has a codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to students
- The school –
 - 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
 - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
 - Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
 - Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has in place a code of behaviour for students entitled “Living and Working in the School Community”
- The school has in place guidelines in respect of usage of mobile phones by students (on Website)
- The school has a substance abuse policy – The “No” rules.
- The school has a Critical Incident Management Plan as a working document.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations

The school is reviewing its Acceptable use of Technology with particular reference to online learning and sharing platforms, such as Microsoft Teams. From the work during the

pandemic there is ongoing work in this area which needs to be fully reflected in an updated policy.

3.1 The boarding facility has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment

- The school has in place a code of behaviour for students entitled “Living and Working in the School Community”, which also covers the Boarding area. The school also has a Boarding Policy and associated information booklet of procedures and information.
- Residences for boys and girls are in separate buildings:
Girls - Annamaur
Boys - Arnold Marsh & Yard Block
- The school has an induction day for new boarding students each year.
- There is a “shadow” system in place whereby experienced boarding students act as mentors to new students
- Students are assigned to a member of house staff for their day to day welfare.
- There is a set procedure for weekend leave arrangements
- All international students have a designated Guardian and Host Family for closure weekends and in case of illness.
- There is a policy with regard to Town Leave
- In residences – dormitory allocation keeps age / year groups separate in specific year dorms and areas with designated use of allocated hygiene / shower facilities
- There is a supervision schedule in place on a 24 hour basis for the boarding students. There are staff living in the residences who participate in the supervision of the residences.
- Regular Fire Drills in School and residences
- External groups using the pool are required to have their own insurance and Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- External groups using changing rooms use separate designated changing rooms

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/boarding facility 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/boarding facility has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.