

St. Thomas' JNS

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Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Policy Summary Details

Policy Title:	Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment
Written/Reviewed:	October 2025
Ratified by the BOM	7 th of October 2025

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

St Thomas JNS is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Early Start to Second 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 Thomas' JNS 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 Suzanne O'Reilly
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Adrienne Kieran
- 4 The Relevant Person is Suzanne O'Reilly
(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
- 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 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 7th of October 2025

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 7th of October 2025

Signed: Mary Kenny
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 7/10/25

Signed: Suzanne O'Leary
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 7/10/25

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St Thomas' JNS

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 Thomas JNS

1. List of school activities

A.	Daily arrival a dismissal of pupils
B	Yard breaks for pupils
C	Classroom teaching
D	1:1 Teaching and counselling
E	School outings
F	Use of toilet
G	Sports day
H	Intimate care needs of children with SEN
I	First Aid
J	SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe programmes
K	Bullying
L	Specific vulnerabilities
M	Inclusion of children with culturally diverse backgrounds
N	Inclusion of LGBT children and children perceived to be LGBT
O	Inclusion of children in State Care
P	Participation in religious services
Q	Use of internet and other ICT resources
R	Supervision of children not on yard
S	Recruitment of staff and volunteers
T	Working alongside a building site

2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities -

A	Children being left on line alone, door security, custody issues
B	Risk of people coming on to yard or children running off yard and being exposed to the possibility of abuse
C	Risks around adults in classrooms including teaching staff

D	Windows not in all learning support doors doors
E	Bus drivers doing belts, changing at swimming (public area) – male teachers feel particularly vulnerable
F	Children may look for assistance from an adult when using the toilet in the classroom, children sometimes need to return in from yard with an adult to use the toilet
G	Entry and exit paths for sports day and visiting teachers for sports day
H	Staff feel vulnerable if they have to change a child on their own
I	If a child has to remove clothes (eg a girl needs to remove her tights due to a cut knee)
J	Children may be absent and miss lessons, children may not engage with lessons due to content and how it Relates to emotional experience
K	Physical and emotional harm
L	Children showing affection to adults in the school that would only be appropriate for family members
M	Differing cultural norms with regard to physical/corporal punishment / children for whom English is not a first language may have difficulty making a disclosure
N	Exposure to negative language concerning LGBT people
O	They are more vulnerable to abuse (they may not have a consistent adult at home to depend on or confide in)
P	Supervision of children who don't attend religious services / unknown people in the Church/walking to church
Q	Sight of unsuitable images and information / making contact with others on sites
R	Both teacher and child may be alone and are therefore vulnerable
S	Risk of unsuitable person having access to the children
T	Children being exposed to inappropriate behaviour or in the vision of cameras

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

A	Parents are reminded of their responsibility to remain with their children until they are taken into school. AP is at each door every morning. Parents are asked to provide copies/details of relevant documentation to the principal
B	Gate near junior infant yard is closed daily by care taker before each break
C	All teachers are Garda vetted through the teaching council and aware of TUSLA procedures, other adults in classrooms are vetted as is appropriate
D	Windows in most learning support rooms otherwise door to be left open where possible (the nearest teacher should be made aware of one to one lesson being in progress)

E	Children are always accompanied by a teacher on busses. They use individual cubicles for changing. Children change themselves. In the case of children with high level SEN, a parent may accompany them for swimming. The parent will use a separate cubicle with their child.
F	Children should largely manage themselves but when help is needed a second adult should be present. Children need to be accompanied in to the school but should not be accompanied into the toilet. All adults working in this capacity are Garda Vetted and aware of the school policies on child protection.
G	Children will be accompanied on entry and exit paths – the risk around this will be planned for during the planning for sports day. All personnel involved in teaching must provide a copy of their vetting disclosure to the school or their organisation must enter into a vetting agreement with the school.
H	There shall be two staff members present for intimate care needs of children with SEN
I	The child should be asked to do as much as possible on their own. If clothes need to be removed two adults should be present
J	Positive attendance strategies in place, teachers may (where possible) revisit important topics when children are missing
K	Bí Cineálta policy and positive code of behaviour
L	If in a one to one situation the teacher will move immediately out of that situation, if in public the adult shall respond calmly and redirect the child positively to more appropriate behaviour such as a high five
M	All teachers deliver the Safe programme and are updated/trained on current TUSLA guidelines regarding physical abuse / EAL support for children who require it
N	Staff use age appropriate respectful language and convey that the same is expected of the children
O	Stay Safe programme taught to all children
P	Adult supervision of children remaining in school / children accompanied by adults to the church and reminded of rules regarding same
Q	Acceptable Usage Policy regarding internet usage in place
R	Always keep child in public area or room with window panel in door / where possible have two adults or more than one child present / always ensure other relevant staff members are aware of the situation
S	All current procedures including vetting are complied with
T	All site personnel notify principal before entering building. Site security cameras are off during school hours And solid hoarding is used where possible. Site personnel have been informed of the Safeguarding Statement

Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

To: Parents and Guardians

The Board of Management of St Thomas' JNS 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 7th of October 2025.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on the gov.ie website

Signed Mary Kenny Date 7/10/25

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Alice O'Keefe Date 7/10/25

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

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.

Signed: Mary Kenny
Chairperson/Board of Management

Date: 7/10/25

Signed: Suzanne O'Kell
Principal/Secretary Board of Management

Date: 2/10/25