



## Child Safeguarding Statement

**STRATFORD COLLEGE** is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to pupils from First Year to Leaving Certificate Year.

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 STRATFORD COLLEGE** 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 **Mr Nathan Barrett (PRINCIPAL)**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Ms Delia Donohoe (DEPUTY PRINCIPAL)**
- 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 schools 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 18 September 2023**

**This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 23 September 2024**

**Signed John Rafter**

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

**Signed Nathan Barrett**

**Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management**

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024



## Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment Written Assessment of Risk of STRATFORD COLLEGE

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

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 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of [name of school].

#### 1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
  - Recreation breaks for pupils
  - Classroom teaching
  - One-to-one teaching
  - One-to-one counselling
  - Outdoor teaching activities
  - Sporting Activities
  - School outings
  - School trips involving overnight stay
  - School trips involving foreign travel
  - Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
  - Annual Sports Day
  - Fundraising events involving pupils
  - 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 pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
  - Administration of Medicine
  - Administration of First Aid
  - Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
  - Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
  - 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
- Practical classes.#
- No access to specialist rooms.
- After hours teaching
  - Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as
  - Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants
  - Members of the Traveller community
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
  - Pupils perceived to be LGBT
  - Pupils of minority religious faiths



- Children in care
- Recruitment of school personnel including -
- Teachers/SNA's
- Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
- Sports coaches
- External Tutors/Guest Speakers/Performers
- Volunteers/Parents in school activities
- Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours
- Visitors/contractors present during after school activities
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils 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
- Use of school premises by other organisation during school day
- Homework/club/evening/study

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

(insert risks of harm identified in this section)

- 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, swimming lessons
- 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 to children with SEN 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 pupils 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

**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 2017* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* 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/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.
- The school has in place a policy and clear 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 pupils
- 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 pupils



- The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils
- The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations

4.

The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking experience in external organisations 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 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 procedure 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.

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

Child Protection Policies and Procedures



The Board of Management of Stratford College recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, practices and activities. In accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills' *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023* the Board of Management has agreed the following child protection policy:

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 2023* as part of this overall Child Protection Policy.
2. The Board will 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. However, the BOM recognises the primary responsibility for student activities outside of school hours rests with parents.
3. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is the Principal, Mr Nathan Barrett
4. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is the Deputy Principal, Ms Delia Donohoe

Stratford College, recognises the right of parents/pupils, granted under the Freedom of Information Act 1997/2003, of access to records of personal information and the right to make personal corrections where there are inaccuracies. Stratford College also ensures the protection of anyone making a report of child abuse as provided under the "Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998".

This policy is not a stand-alone document but part of a whole school response to child protection. Other policies and guidelines which ensure the safety and protection of the child at all times include:

1. Code of Behaviour.
2. Anti – bullying policy.
3. RSE Policy.





4. Professional Codes and Best Practice Guidelines for Teachers as set out by the Teaching Council, ASTI/TUI and JMB.

### Relevant Policies

- Stratford College Acceptable User Policy
- Stratford College Admissions Policy
- Stratford College Anti Bullying Policy
- Stratford College Attendance Strategy
- Stratford College Administration of Medicine
- Stratford College Code of Behaviour and Discipline
- CONDITIONS SPECIFIED BY THE School Manager GOVERNING THE USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES BY COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER NON-SCHOOL BODIES OR AGENCIES
- Stratford College Employment Policy
- Stratford College E-Learning Roadmap
- Stratford College Covid Policy and Response Plan
- Stratford College Vetting Policy
- Garda Vetting of School Transport Bus Drivers
- Garda Vetting of Contract cleaners
- Stratford College Pastoral Care Policy
- Stratford College Placement of Student Teachers Policy
- DES Guidelines on the Use of School Buildings outside of school hours
- Stratford College Relationships and Sexual Education Policy
- Stratford College Safety Statement
- Stratford College Social Media Guidelines & Acceptable User Policy ('AUP') for Staff & Board Members
- Stratford College Substance Abuse Policy
- Stratford College Whole School Inclusion Policy
- Stratford College Trips and Tours Policy
- Stratford College Visitors Policy
- Irish Sports Council: Code of Ethics: Best Practice for Children's Sports

In its policies, practices and activities, Stratford College 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 cooperate 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 all staff from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect
- The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.
- The school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to child protection include the Code of Behaviour, Anti-bullying Policy, School Attendance Policy, Supervision of Students, One to One meetings, Sporting activities, School Outings/Tours, Work Placements etc.

The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above and that our Professional Behaviour for School Personnel comprises part of this policy.

This Policy applies to all members of the school community and has been made available and is accessible to all.

### **Strategy**

1. All personnel are informed of the Child Protection Guidelines and our policy on Child Protection.
2. All new staff members are vetted so that we may ensure the safety of our students.
3. A copy of the Child Protection Guidelines is permanently available on our website.
4. The Principal is the Designated Liaison Person for the purpose of this policy and this has been ratified by the BOM.
5. The Deputy Principal has also been ratified as Deputy DLP in the absence of the Principal.
6. All relevant staff will be provided with the opportunity to attend any in-service pertaining to Child Protection.
7. All Board of Management members have and will be provided with a copy of the Guidelines and access to training.
8. The Guidelines will be available on our school website to all parents and in hard copy on request.

### **Professional Behaviour for School Personnel**

It is our intention to ensure that all school personnel adhere to what constitutes good and safe practice in staff/student interactions. While it is impossible to cover all situations it is expected that all staff members will at all times exercise professional judgement. As teachers are in a position of trust, their behaviour when interacting with students must be above reproach at all times and the



boundary between adult and child cannot be breached in any circumstances. Fundamentally staff student relationships must always be conducted in a manner which is respectful, professional and appropriate. It is to be remembered that responsibility for the welfare of children lies with the adults who work with these children and not with the children themselves.

Our ethos encourages and fosters a caring and friendly relationship with students but staff must always maintain an arms-length professional relationship and this is applicable to in-school and out-of-school situations. This applies not only to all teachers but also to other school personnel such as volunteers and non-teaching personnel who interact with students when carrying out their day to day roles.

### **Physical Boundaries**

As a guiding principle, any physical contact which is likely to be misinterpreted by the student, parent or another person should be avoided. Everyone must respect the personal space and privacy of individuals. Clearly in an emergency situation and possibly, in other situations where a student is very distressed, for example bereavement, there may be need for physical contact but it should only take place when it is acceptable to all concerned.

Any relationship of a romantic or sexual nature is never permissible between any staff member and a student in the school. Such relationships breach the principles of trust and professionalism and are both unethical and unacceptable.

### **Child Protection Protocols**

#### **Physical Education**

1. Changing rooms, toilet areas and shower areas require great sensitivity.

Members of the P.E. Department will remain outside the changing rooms at the beginning and at the end of each P.E. class while students are getting ready for P.E. Staff will remain outside of these areas and will intervene only when required e.g. in emergency situations or for disciplinary or safety reasons. In addition, staff may enter changing rooms to access equipment.

Members of the P.E. department assisting students in extracurricular activities will do so in the presence of more than one student at all times. If a student requires

First Aid, it will be administered in the presence of others. However, no member of the Department will hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency even if another person is not present.



### **One to one meetings**

There are occasions when confidential meetings must take place.

1. As far as possible, staff should conduct such meetings in a room with visual access or with the door ajar.
2. Doors to such a room should never be locked or entry or exit be prohibited.
3. If a class teacher wishes to speak to a student in private this should be done on the corridor where other individuals may be passing if possible or in a room which has visual access or the door is ajar.

Teachers should never detain a student alone in a classroom without visual access or keeping the door ajar or in an isolated part of the school.

### **Residential settings e.g. school tours/trips etc.**

1. On all trips involving overnight stays school authorities will ensure that there is a gender balance of school trip supervisors or all female supervisors.
2. In overnight accommodation students will be assigned rooms by the tour leader who will ensure that there is a minimum of two students per room where possible.

Two school trip supervisors, at least one of which will be female, will check periodically on the students in their rooms.

3. Teachers should knock on the door prior to entry except in cases of Health and Safety.
4. Students will be provided with the contact details of a female member of staff.
5. Students requiring medical care will be accompanied by a female teacher where possible.
6. Insurance requirements will dictate the ratio of staff to students on such trips.
7. All aspects of this policy apply to school trips.

### **First Aid Policy and Procedure**



On our school's application form parents are requested to inform the school of any medical condition or allergy from which the child may suffer eg asthma

Relevant information is retained in the office and by the Class Tutor (see also policy on administration of medicine).

Parents should notify the school of any details of any medical conditions the student may have or changes in an existing condition

### **Basic First Aid**

Only the very basic first aid is administered by the school.

No prescription or over the counter medicines will be administered in school by any staff members or by the student.

Staff are advised to wear disposable surgical gloves when administering first aid.

### **Arrangements for First Aid**

The School will provide materials and equipment and facilities to provide First Aid. The location of the First Aid Kits in the School are:-

### **Transport to hospital or home**

The Principal will determine the appropriate action to be taken in each case. Where the injury requires urgent medical attention an ambulance will be called and the pupil's parent or guardian will be notified. If hospital treatment is required, then the pupil's parent/guardian will be called for them to take over responsibility. If no contact can be made with parent/guardian or other designated emergency contacts then the Principal may decide to transport the pupil to the hospital.

Where the Principal makes arrangements for transporting a child then the following points will be adhered to:-

- Only staff cars insured to cover such transportation will be used;
- No individual member of staff will be alone with the pupil in a vehicle;
- A second member of staff will be present to provide supervision of the injured pupil.

### **Reporting of Accidents**

Accidents will be reported on an Accident **Report Form by the Teacher in charge.**

### **Training of Staff in First Aid**



Basic First aid training and use of the cardiac defibrillator will be provided and/or facilitated by the school.

**A standard First Aid Kit will contain the following items:**

Leaflet giving general advice on First Aid

- 20 individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings assorted sizes triangular bandages
- 2 sterile eye pads
- 6 safety pins
- 6 medium wound dressings
- 2 large wound dressings
- 3 extra large wound dressings
- 1 pair of disposable gloves

**Work Placements**

All students attending work placements will be informed of our Child Protection Policy. Child protection pertaining to work experience will be explained to all Transition Year students in a class during their module on the World of Work.

**Searches**

- A student may be asked to empty her pockets or the contents of her bag where there is a reasonable belief that the student is in possession of stolen goods, illegal substances, weapons or any inappropriate material. Reasonable belief might be established through an informant or by observation of an event or because someone is acting suspiciously.
- Given the above where there is a need to search a student's property the student will be invited to have present her parent or a teacher of her choice or a student of her choice.



- The search will be carried out in the presence of Principal or Deputy Principal with another
- teacher to act as witness to the event. In the absence of the Principal or Deputy Principal
- It will be carried out in the presence of a Year Head.
- There should never be physical contact with the student or the student's clothing nor should the student's coat or jacket or school bag or gear bag be searched except with the express permission of the student.
- If a student refuses to turn out their pockets etc. They may be prompted to do so by their parents but, in circumstances where there is suspicion of a crime, the assistance of the Gardai will be sought.

### **Lockers:**

Lockers are school property and management reserves the right to search lockers in

circumstances such as when there is reasonable belief that the student is in possession of stolen goods, illegal substances, weapons or any inappropriate material.

When a locker is being searched it should take place in the presence of Principal or Deputy Principal as above and where possible, in the presence of the student to whom the locker has been assigned.

### **Photography**

The use of cameras or a camera on phones or any recording device is prohibited as per the School's Code of Behaviour.

- Photographing and/or recording of staff by students without express permission is prohibited.
- Photographing and/or recording of students by students is prohibited unless with the permission of teachers and the agreement of the student being photographed and/or recorded.
- Photographing and/or recording of students who give consent by staff is allowed as part of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Teachers will handle and store all such photographs/recordings/digital files in a professional manner, as for all school data, and used for school purposes only.



Cameras and/or recording devices of any sort must never be used in Toilets, Changing Areas or Sleeping Areas.

Parental permission for use of student photos and videos will be sought on enrolment to the school.

### **Communication**

Staff will ensure that any communication with pupils/students, colleagues, parents, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as e-mail, texting and social network sites.

Texting students, particularly outside school hours should be avoided, unless it is absolutely necessary and for a stated school purpose.

Staff members must never have students as “friends” on social network sites. Cf Social Media Guidelines for Teachers Teaching Council of Ireland