

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

Saplings Special School for Children with Autism and Complex Needs, Kill, County Kildare (hereafter Saplings), is a special school providing evidence-based holistic education to pupils aged four to eighteen.

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 Saplings 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 Alan Brennan
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Acting Deputy DLP) is Aine Duffy
- 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.
- 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 15/09/2021.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on _____.

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 26 Oct 22

Signed: 

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 26/10/22

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Saplings Special School for Children with Autism and Complex Needs Kill (hereafter Saplings)

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 Saplings.

1. List of school activities

1. In-Class Teaching & Learning
2. Outside Classroom Teaching & Learning
3. Outside School (Inside School Grounds) Teaching & Learning
4. Break and Lunch Times
5. Use of Toilet/ Changing/ Shower Area in School (including intimate care)
6. Transport to/ from school
7. Life Skills-Based Community Visits (Shop, Coffee shop, Supermarket, Swimming etc)
8. Employment of Teaching Staff
9. Employment of Special Needs Assistants
10. Employment of Behaviour Analyst
11. Employment of Ancillary Staff
12. Visiting Speakers/Workshops
13. Visiting HSE Team or Private Professionals (SLTs/ OTs/ Psychologists/ Psychiatrists etc)
14. Use of School For after school activities
15. Parent Association Activities
16. Use of Digital Devices with Internet Connectivity In Class Learning
17. Use of Personal Digital/Mobile Devices in School
18. School Tours and Educational Trips
19. Remote Teaching & Learning (if required due to Covid-19 Pandemic)

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

We recognise that though not specifically listed in all risk area, the risk of harm identified in one area is also possible in other areas listed.

1. In-Class Teaching & Learning

- Member of Staff harms a child in their care
- A Student Teacher/Work Placement Student harms a child in our care
- Another pupil/s harms a child in our care

2. Outside Classroom (Inside School Grounds) Teaching & Learning

- Member of Staff harms a child in our care
- Another pupil/s harm a child in our care
- Member of the public harms a child in our care

3. Outside School Teaching & Learning

- Member of Staff harms a child in our care
- Member of the Public harms a child in our care

- Workshop Instructor/Speaker (Non-Employee) harms a child in our care
4. **Break and Lunch Times**
 - Member of Staff harms a child in their care
 - A Student Teacher/Work Placement Student harms a child in our care
 - Another pupil/s harms a child in our care
 5. **Use of Toilet/ Changing/ Shower Area in School (including intimate care)**
 - Member of Staff harms a child in their care
 - A Student Teacher/Work Placement Student harms a child in our care
 - Another pupil/s harms a child in our care
 6. **Transport to/ from school**
 - Bus driver harms a child in our care
 - Bus escort harms a child in our care
 - Another pupil/s harms a child in our care
 7. **Life Skills-Based Community Visits (Shop, Coffee shop, Supermarket, Swimming etc)**
 - Member of the Public harms a child in our care
 - Swimming Instructors/ Lifeguards harm a child in our care
 - Another pupil/s harms a child in our care
 8. **Employment of Teaching Staff/ 9. Employment of Special Needs Assistants/ 10. Employment of Behaviour Analyst/ 11. Employment of Ancillary Staff**
 - BOM may employ someone who later harms a child in our care
 12. **Visiting Speakers/Workshop Instructors**
 - Visiting speaker/workshop Instructor harms a child in our care
 13. **Visiting HSE Team/ Private Professionals (SLTs/ OTs/ Psychologists/ Psychiatrists etc)**
 - Visiting HSE Team members or private professionals harm a child in our care
 14. **Use of School For after school activities**
 - Children may be harmed by organisers/users of groups using the school after-hours
 15. **Parent Association Activities**
 - Parent harms a child attending a Parent Association Event
 - Member of the public harms a child attending a Parent Association event.
 16. **Use of Digital Devices with Internet Connectivity In Class Learning**
 - Children may be harmed by exposure to inappropriate/harmful material and/or other adults
 17. **Use of Personal Digital/Mobile Devices in School**
 - Children may be harmed by exposure to inappropriate/harmful material
 - Children may have their image/voice recorded and uploaded to the internet
 18. **School Tours and Educational Trips**
 - Staff member, employee or member of the public harms a child in our care

19. Remote Teaching and Learning (if required due to Covid-19 Pandemic)

- Children may be harmed by exposure to inappropriate/harmful material and/or other adults

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

General Procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment :

- All school personnel are provided with, and know where to access, a copy of the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The Child Safeguarding Statement is visible at all times near the entrance to the school (on the noticeboard).
- All school personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017.
- All teachers are required to adhere to the Children First Act 2015.
- The school implements the Stay Safe and SPHE curriculum in an appropriate manner, taking into consideration the categories of assessed disabilities of our students.
- All school personnel are Garda vetted before commencing employment or volunteer work.
- The school has codes of conduct for school personnel and complies with agreed disciplinary procedures as per the relevant circulars.
- There are clear guidelines for students who require assistance with toileting/ personal care skills etc.
- The school has a policy in place for the administration of medication and/ or first aid.
- The school carefully oversees and monitors any external persons brought in for coaching/ training/ to supplement curriculum delivery etc.
- The school carefully oversees and monitors any external persons who wish to volunteer or complete work experience within the school.
- The school has CCTV in all classrooms, common areas and in the playground. (Note: The school does not have CCTV in any bathroom areas).
The school has a clear system of recording safeguarding concerns and all staff members have access to our S/G sheets. These are stored in a secure place for future reference if needed.

Specific Procedures in place to address the risks of harm (identified as 1 to 19) in this assessment:

1. In-Class Teaching & Learning

- Member of Staff harms a child in their care – All teachers (including substitute teachers) must be registered with the Teaching Council, have provided the appropriate Garda Vetting link, Statutory Declaration, Teaching Council Registration, and Proof of Identification and must comply with conditions of employment. All SNAs (Including substitute SNAs) must be Garda vetted and reference checked prior to employment and must comply with conditions of employment. The school's Behaviour Analyst must be Garda vetted and registered with an accreditation body for oversight of conduct and ethics. All teachers will be informed of the school's expectation to follow the

Code of Conduct for Teachers.

All staff must know where to access the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and be informed of the identity of the DLP and Deputy DLP.

- *A Student Teacher/Work Placement Student harms a child in our care – All Student Teachers and Work Placement Students must provide a Joint Agreement from their educational institution, accompanied with the applicable ID and Statutory Declaration.*
U/16's are not permitted in the school as Student Teachers or Work Placement Students.
Where the school has agreed to vet the student and that student is between 16 – 18 years of age a Parental Consent for Vetting will be required.

- *Another pupil(s) harms a child in our care - All teachers will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of their class.*
SNA's will be mindful of changes to student behaviour that may be indicative of an increased likelihood of challenging behaviour.
Positive behaviour programming and positive behaviour support will be used alongside an appropriately tailored individualised curriculum to reduce the likelihood of students engaging in challenging behaviour.
PCM (Professional Crisis Management) strategies will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.
Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.
Students will be taught the Stay Safe Programme, and emotional identification and regulation strategies, in accordance with their abilities.

2. Outside Classroom (Inside School Grounds) Teaching & Learning

- *Member of Staff harms a child in their care – All teachers (including substitute teachers) must be registered with the Teaching Council, have provided the appropriate Garda Vetting link, Statutory Declaration, Teaching Council Registration, and Proof of Identification and must comply with conditions of employment.*
All SNA's (Including substitute SNA's) must be Garda vetted and reference checked prior to employment and must comply with conditions of employment.
The school's Behaviour Analyst must be Garda vetted and registered with an accreditation body for oversight of conduct and ethics.
All teachers will be informed of the school's expectation to follow the Code of Conduct for Teachers.
All staff must know where to access the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and be informed of the identity of the DLP and Deputy DLP.

- *A Student Teacher/Work Placement Student harms a child in our care – All Student Teachers and Work Placement Students must provide a Joint Agreement from their educational institution, accompanied with the applicable ID and Statutory Declaration.*
U/16's are not permitted in the school as Student Teachers or Work Placement Students.
Where the school has agreed to vet the student and that student is between

16 – 18 years of age a Parental Consent for Vetting will be required.

- Another pupil(s) harms a child in our care - All teachers will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of their class.
SNAs will be mindful of changes to student behaviour that may be indicative of an increased likelihood of challenging behaviour.
Positive behaviour programming and positive behaviour support will be used alongside an appropriately tailored individualised curriculum to reduce the likelihood of students engaging in challenging behaviour.
PCM (Professional Crisis Management) strategies will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.
Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.
Students will be taught the Stay Safe Programme, and emotional identification and regulation strategies, in accordance with their abilities.
 - Member of the Public harms a child in our care – Staff will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of the pupils in their care. Staff will ensure that members of the public are approached and escorted to the school administrative office if found inside the school. Staff will approach and direct members of the public to the school office if found on school yard.
- 3. Outside School Teaching & Learning**
- Member of Staff harms a child in their care – All teachers (including substitute teachers) must be registered with the Teaching Council, have provided the appropriate Garda Vetting link, Statutory Declaration, Teaching Council Registration, and Proof of Identification and must comply with conditions of employment.
All SNAs (including substitute SNAs) must be Garda vetted and reference checked prior to employment and must comply with conditions of employment.
The school's Behaviour Analyst must be Garda vetted and registered with an accreditation body for oversight of conduct and ethics.
All teachers will be informed of the school's expectation to follow the Code of Conduct for Teachers.
All staff must know where to access the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and be informed of the identity of the DLP and Deputy DLP.
 - Member of the Public harms a child in our care – Staff will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of the pupils in their care. Staff will inform Principal/ Behaviour Analyst of all details relating to the Outside School Activity and appropriate supervision will be put in place.
Staff member will complete and return a 'Risk Assessment' to Principal/ Behaviour Analyst for all new locations being proposed and appropriate supervision will be put in place.
- Workshop Instructor (Non-Employee) harms a child in our care - Staff member will complete and return a 'Risk Assessment' to Principal/ Behaviour Analyst for all new locations being proposed and appropriate supervision will be put in place.
If the nature and context of the workshop is viewed by the Principal/Deputy-Principal to be sensitive or involves coaching and/or mentoring of a level deemed by the

Principal/ Deputy-Principal to require discrete vetting, then vetting arrangements will be put in place.

- Another pupil(s) harms a child in our care - *All teachers will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of their class. SNAs will be mindful of changes to student behaviour that may be indicative of an increased likelihood of challenging behaviour. Positive behaviour programming and positive behaviour support will be used alongside an appropriately tailored individualised curriculum to reduce the likelihood of students engaging in challenging behaviour. PCM (Professional Crisis Management) strategies will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe. Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe. Students will be taught the Stay Safe Programme, and emotional identification and regulation strategies, in accordance with their abilities.*

4. Break and Lunch Times

- Member of Staff harms a child in their care – *All teachers (including substitute teachers) must be registered with the Teaching Council, have provided the appropriate Garda Vetting link, Statutory Declaration, Teaching Council Registration, and Proof of Identification and must comply with conditions of employment. All SNAs (including substitute SNAs) must be Garda vetted and reference checked prior to employment and must comply with conditions of employment. The school's Behaviour Analyst must be Garda vetted and registered with an accreditation body for oversight of conduct and ethics. All teachers will be informed of the school's expectation to follow the Code of Conduct for Teachers. All staff must know where to access the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and be informed of the identity of the DLP and Deputy DLP.*
- A Student Teacher/Work Placement Student harms a child in our care – *All Student Teachers and Work Placement Students must provide a Joint Agreement from their educational institution, accompanied with the applicable ID and Statutory Declaration. U/16's are not permitted in the school as Student Teachers or Work Placement Students. Where the school has agreed to vet the student and that student is between 16 – 18 years of age a Parental Consent for Vetting will be required.*
- Another pupil(s) harms a child in our care - *All teachers will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of their class. SNAs will be mindful of changes to student behaviour that may be indicative of an increased likelihood of challenging behaviour. Positive behaviour programming and positive behaviour support will be used alongside an appropriately tailored individualised curriculum to reduce the likelihood of students engaging in challenging behaviour. PCM (Professional Crisis Management) strategies will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.*

Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe. Students will be taught the Stay Safe Programme, and emotional identification and regulation strategies, in accordance with their abilities.

5. Use of Toilet/ Changing/ Shower Area in School (including intimate care)

- Member of Staff harms a child in their care – All teachers (including substitute teachers) must be registered with the Teaching Council, have provided the appropriate Garda Vetting link, Statutory Declaration, Teaching Council Registration, and Proof of Identification and must comply with conditions of employment. All SNAs (Including substitute SNAs) must be Garda vetted and reference checked prior to employment and must comply with conditions of employment. The school's Behaviour Analyst must be Garda vetted and registered with an accreditation body for oversight of conduct and ethics. All teachers will be informed of the school's expectation to follow the Code of Conduct for Teachers.

All staff must know where to access the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and be informed of the identity of the DLP and Deputy DLP.

- A Student Teacher/Work Placement Student harms a child in our care –

Student Teachers and Work Placement Students will not provide any assistance during toileting/ intimate care times with the exception of assistance with hand washing and supervising children who are fully independent with their toileting routines, from outside the bathroom.

- Another pupil(s) harms a child in our care - All teachers will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of their class.

SNAs will be mindful of changes to student behaviour that may be indicative of an increased likelihood of challenging behaviour.

Positive behaviour programming and positive behaviour support will be used alongside an appropriately tailored individualised curriculum to reduce the likelihood of students engaging in challenging behaviour.

PCM (Professional Crisis Management) strategies will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.

Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe. Students will be taught the Stay Safe Programme, and emotional identification and regulation strategies, in accordance with their abilities.

6. Transport to/ from school

- All bus drivers and bus escorts must hold current Garda vetting from the relevant agency. References will be checked prior to a bus escort being employed. Bus escort contracts will detail correct communication routes between bus escort and school.

Another pupils harms a child in our care – Bus escorts will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of the bus.

Bus escorts will be mindful of changes to student behaviour that may be indicative of an increased likelihood of challenging behaviour.

Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.

7. Life Skills-Based Community Visits (Shop, Coffee shop, Supermarket, Swimming etc)

- Member of the Public/ Shop assistant harms a child in our care – Staff will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of the pupils in their care. Staff will ensure that a student is never left alone with a member of the public. Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.

- Swimming Instructors/ Lifeguards/ harm a child in our care – Staff will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of the pupils in their care. The provider of the swimming service will be expected to complete and return a joint party agreement form and provide the serial numbers of all instructors working in their service.

- Member of Staff harms a child in their care – All teachers (including substitute teachers) must be registered with the Teaching Council, have provided the appropriate Garda Vetting link, Statutory Declaration, Teaching Council Registration, and Proof of Identification and must comply with conditions of employment. All SNAs (Including substitute SNAs) must be Garda vetted and reference checked prior to employment and must comply with conditions of employment. The school's Behaviour Analyst must be Garda vetted and registered with an accreditation body for oversight of conduct and ethics. All teachers will be informed of the school's expectation to follow the Code of Conduct for Teachers. All staff must know where to access the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and be informed of the identity of the DLP and Deputy DLP.

- A Student Teacher/Work Placement Student harms a child in our care – Student Teachers and Work Placement Students will not be left alone with any children on community outings.

- Another pupil(s) harms a child in our care - All teachers will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of their class. SNAs will be mindful of changes to student behaviour that may be indicative of an increased likelihood of challenging behaviour. Positive behaviour programming and positive behaviour support will be used alongside an appropriately tailored individualised curriculum to reduce the likelihood of students engaging in challenging behaviour. PCM (Professional Crisis Management) strategies will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe. Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe. Students will be taught the Stay Safe Programme, and emotional identification and regulation strategies, in accordance with their abilities.

8. Employment of Teaching Staff/ 9. Employment of Special Needs Assistants/ 10. Employment of Behaviour Analyst/ 11. Employment of Ancillary Staff

All teachers must be registered with the Teaching Council, have provided the

appropriate Garda Vetting link, Statutory Declaration, Teaching Council Registration, and Proof of Identification.

The school's Behaviour Analyst must be Garda vetted and registered with an accreditation body for oversight of conduct and ethics.

All SNAs must be Garda vetted and reference checked prior to employment.

Proposed new members of staff will be thoroughly checked (qualifications and references) before employment is confirmed.

All teachers will be informed of the school's expectation to follow the Code of Conduct for Teachers.

All staff must know where to access the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and be informed of the identity of the DLP and Deputy DLP.

Any concerns raised about staff will be treated seriously and confidentially.

12 Visiting Speakers/Workshop Instructors

- Visiting speaker/workshop instructor harms a child in our care - Staff will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of the pupils in their care. Staff will inform Principal/Deputy Principal of all details relating to their wish to have a visiting speaker/workshop instructor visit the school. The Principal/Deputy Principal will assess the requirement for the visiting teacher/workshop instructor to produce vetting through a joint agreement. One-off visits by a speaker/workshop instructor may be permitted where the Principal/Deputy-Principal is satisfied that there is no personal coaching or mentoring and the visit is of such a context that it is effectively supervised by the staff members at all times.

13 Visiting HSE Team or Private Professionals (SLTs/ OTs/ Psychologists/ Psychiatrists etc)

Staff will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of the pupils in their care. Secretary will inform Principal/Behaviour Analyst and relevant teacher of all details relating to external professionals visiting the school. These visits will always take place under supervision by school staff.

14 Use of School For after school activities

- Children may be harmed by organisers/users of groups using the school after-hours – All users of the school who have children and/or vulnerable adults using their service must produce a Child Safeguarding Statement and identify the Child Safety Officer to the Principal/Deputy-Principal.

15 Parent Association Activities

- Parent harms a child attending a Parent Association Event – The Parent Association must have a designated Child Protection Officer on their Committee as outlined in their Constitution. The CPO will inform the school of any members who will be involved with supervising or assisting PA events which will bring them into contact with pupils from the school. The school will arrange to have such parents vetted through the Garda Central Vetting Unit via the Diocesan Office for Safeguarding Children. Each member will be expected to produce a Statutory Declaration and

proof of Identification

- Member of the public harms a child attending a Parent Association event – All Members of the Parent Association will provide reasonable and effective supervision of all pupils attending Parent Association events. Members of the public, including non-vetted parents will be permitted access to pupils under the direct supervision of the Parent Association.

16 Use of Digital Devices with Internet Connectivity In Class

- Children may be harmed by exposure to inappropriate/harmful material and/or other adults – The Internet Filter operated by the PDST filters websites which have identified as harmful and/or inappropriate. The Principal ensures that devices are set to the highest blocking standard. Devices are regularly checked. Teachers are expected to monitor activity in their classroom. SNAs are expected to monitor children's individual devices. The school has an Acceptable Use Policy which will outline the school's expectations for the use of devices with internet connectivity and/or recording devices.

17 Use of Personal Digital/Mobile Devices in School

- Children may be harmed by exposure to inappropriate/harmful material and/or other adults
- Children may have their image/voice recorded and uploaded to the internet
Many children in our school use phones or other digital devices as communication devices (using apps such as GraceApp or Proloquo2Go) so must have them with them at all times across the school day. Staff should ensure that these devices are only being used for this specified purpose (communication) and not for unsupervised access to the internet or recording of other pupils. The Internet Filter operated by the PDST filters websites which have identified as harmful and/or inappropriate. The Principal ensures that devices are set to highest blocking standard. Devices are regularly checked. Teachers are expected to monitor activity in their classroom. SNAs are expected to monitor children's individual devices. The school has an Acceptable Use Policy which will outline the school's expectations for the use of devices with internet connectivity and/or recording devices.

18 School Tours and Educational Trips

- Member of the Public harms a child in our care – Staff will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of the pupils in their care. Staff will inform Principal/ Behaviour Analyst of all details relating to the Outside School Activity and appropriate supervision will be put in place. Staff member will complete and return a 'Risk Assessment' to Principal/ Behaviour Analyst for all new locations being proposed and appropriate supervision will be put in place.

Workshop Instructor (Non-Employee) harms a child in our care - Staff member will complete and return a 'Risk Assessment' to Principal/ Behaviour Analyst for all

new locations being proposed and appropriate supervision will be put in place. If the nature and context of the workshop is viewed by the Principal/Deputy-Principal to be sensitive or involves coaching and/or mentoring of a level deemed by the Principal/ Deputy-Principal to require discrete vetting, then vetting arrangements will be put in place.

- Another pupil(s) harms a child in our care - All teachers will maintain reasonable and effective supervision of their class.

SNA's will be mindful of changes to student behaviour that may be indicative of an increased likelihood of challenging behaviour.

Positive behaviour programming and positive behaviour support will be used alongside an appropriately tailored individualised curriculum to reduce the likelihood of students engaging in challenging behaviour.

PCM (Professional Crisis Management) strategies will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.

Environmental manipulations will be utilised as necessary to keep all students safe.

Students will be taught the Stay Safe Programme, and emotional identification and regulation strategies, in accordance with their abilities.

19. Remote Teaching and Learning (if required due to Covid-19 Pandemic)

Children may be harmed by exposure to inappropriate/harmful material and/or other adults Teachers and SNA's will only use sharing/ teaching sites pre-approved by the school in the school's Remote Teaching and Learning Policy. Teachers and SNA's will check all weblinks for appropriate content before they are shared with parents. Teachers and SNA's will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that all material sent to children is appropriate and does not contain links to inappropriate content. Parents will be reminded of the necessity for supervision while children have access to internet-enabled devices. The school has an Acceptable Use Policy which will outline the school's expectations for the use of devices with internet connectivity and/or recording devices.

It is essential that risk of harm, as well as harm itself, is recognised by all school personnel. To this end, all staff in Saplings Special School for Children with Autism and Complex Needs, Kill, have completed the Child Safeguarding training Level One and their certificates are kept on file. Staff are encouraged to complete further training in this area. Child protection is made a priority area at all staff meetings and Board of Management meetings, and we strive to ensure that teachers understand their roles as mandated persons and that all staff members are aware of all school policies and practices in relation to Child Protection, and the identity of the DLP and Deputy DLP.

Any concerns should be immediately reported to the DLP or Deputy DLP who can provide advice, or refer the matter on to TUSLA for advice. In the event that any staff member has any concern relating to child protection it is school policy to report it to the DLP or Deputy DLP at the earliest possible time.

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 2017*

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.

Examples of activities, risks and procedures

The examples listed in this document are provided to assist schools in undertaking their risk assessment under the Children First Act, 2015. Schools should note that this list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure, as far as possible, that any other risks and procedures that are relevant to its own particular circumstances are identified and specified in the written risk assessment and that adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

It is acknowledged that schools already have in place a range of policies, practices and procedures to mitigate the risk of harm to children while they are participating in the activities of the school and that some school activities will carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. In the context of the risk assessment that must be undertaken by schools, the Children First Act, 2015 refers to risk as “any potential for harm”. Therefore, it is important that, as part of its risk assessment process, each school lists and reviews all of its various activities (which shall include identifying those that may carry low risk of harm as well as those that carry higher risks of harm). Doing so will help the school to (1) identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school’s activities, (2) identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm and (3) identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.

The Addendum to *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* published in January 2019 clarifies that organisations providing relevant services to children should consider the specific issue of online safety when carrying out their risk assessment and preparing their Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for primary and post-primary schools (April 2020) advises of the importance of teachers maintaining the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assisting parents and guardians to be aware of their role also. Schools should ensure that their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) informs and guides remote or distance learning activity.

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 2017*.

Examples of School Activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one learning support
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning remotely
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Provision of residential facilities for boarders
- 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
- Management of provision of food and drink
- 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
- 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
 - Children on CPNS
 - Children with medical needs
- 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 pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school, including social media
- 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
- Breakfast club
- Homework club/evening study

Examples of Risks of Harm

- 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 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 due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to racism
- 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, including medical 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 an inappropriate 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

Examples of Procedures to address risks of harm

- 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* and its Addendum (2019)
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- 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 undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- 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 DE 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 an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
- 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 an Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this policy to parents
- The school has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones and tablet devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures
- 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