

1. Gortnahoe N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement



Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

For: Gortnahoe National School

At: Gortnahoe, Thurles, Co.Tipperary E41F857

This is a Primary School.

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) and 2025, Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 and Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2nd ed. (Tusla, 2024), the board of management has adopted the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment set out in this document.

The board of management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the department's Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

Name of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP): David O'Dwyer

Name of the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP/DDLP): Ciara Lanigan

Name of Relevant Person: David O'Dwyer

Relevant Person can be contacted on: 087 7919488 or email principal@gortnahoes.ie

Under the Children First Act 2015 Relevant Person means a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the Child Safeguarding Statement. This person is nominated by the board of management to manage and provide oversight of child protection concerns/allegations of child abuse.

Name of Chairperson of the Board of Management: Olivia Maher

In the event that both DLP and DDLP are absent and unavailable, and where there is no staff member formally acting in their role, the chairperson of the board of management, or in an ETB school the chief executive or their delegate, assumes the role of DLP.

The board of management recognises that child protection and safeguarding permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In all of these, 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 cooperate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters.

Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm happening to children and protect members of school personnel from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of child abuse.

Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children.

Fully respect confidentiality requirements as set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 in dealing with child protection matters.

Adhere to the above principles in relation to any vulnerable adult.

Procedures and Measures in Place

Our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance 2017, and Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2nd ed. (Tusla, 2024), and the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

Procedure for the Management of Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct against School Personnel Relating to a Child Availing of Our Service

Where any member of school personnel is the subject of any investigation in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in relation to a child attending the school, the school is required to adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the gov.ie website

Procedure for the Safe Recruitment and Selection of School Personnel to Work With Children

The school is required to adhere to the requirements of the Vetting Act. The selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, requires the school to adhere 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 Youth and available on the gov.ie website and as outlined in Chapter 10 of the procedures.

A written protocol is in place authorising immediate action for cases which require an employee to be immediately absented from school for child safeguarding reasons.

Procedure for Provision of and Access to Child Safeguarding Training and Information, Including the Identification of the Occurrence of Harm

The school provides information and training to members of school personnel in relation to the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) as follows:

The school has provided each member of school personnel, including any new members of school personnel, (employees and volunteers, board of management members, student teachers and those on work experience) with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

The school ensures that members of school personnel have availed of relevant training and completed child protection training.

The school encourages board of management members to avail of any relevant training and complete child protection training.

The board of management ensures that records of all staff and board member child protection training are maintained.

Procedure for the Reporting of Child Protection or Welfare Concerns to Tusla

All members of school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025, in relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla. Mandated reporting applies to all registered teachers and any other mandated person who may be employed by the school, for example a chaplain or nurse. A full list of those people who are mandated persons is set out in Appendix 1 procedures.

Procedure for Maintaining a List of the Persons (if any) in the Relevant Service Who Are Mandated Persons

There is a procedure in place to maintain a list of mandated persons. Schools may on occasion employ additional staff who are mandated by virtue of their profession. This list will include all registered teachers and identify additional employees that are not registered teachers.

Procedure for Appointing a Relevant Person (In schools this person is the DLP)

There is a procedure in place for appointing a relevant person.

The various procedures referred to in this Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment can be accessed via the school's website, the gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school.

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Addendum to Children First 2019 and 2025, and the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025, the board of management 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.

Note: The procedures and measures in place outlined above, are not intended as exhaustive list.

This statement has been published on the school's website or will be made available on request by the school. It has been provided to all members of school personnel, the parents' association, the patron and parents. A copy of this statement and risk assessment will be made available to Tusla and the department if requested.

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Risk in the context of this Child Safeguarding Statement and 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 the Children First Act 2015: "Harm"** means, in relation to a child—
 - (a) **assault, ill-treatment or neglect** of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or
 - (b) **sexual abuse** of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances, or otherwise¹¹.

List 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
- 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
- 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
- Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants
- Members of the Traveller community
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children ⁴⁵
- Pupils perceived to be LGBT
- Pupils of minority religious faiths
- Children in care
- Children on Tusla's Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
- Children with medical needs
- Recruitment of school personnel including teachers/SNAs, caretakers/secretaries/cleaners and sport 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

- 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
- Breakfast club
- Homework club

Risk of Harm

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

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by members of school personnel
- Risk of harm where members of school personnel have not received appropriate training
- 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 a 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 a child is 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 a 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 a 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 special educational needs 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 situations
- Risk of harm caused by a 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 a member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner

Policies & Procedures used to address Risks of Harm

The school has the following procedures in place to address the risk of harm identified in this assessment

- All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- The Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 are made available to all school personnel
- School personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the Children First Act 2015.
- A protocol is in place authorising immediate action for cases which require an employee to be immediately absented from school for child safeguarding reasons
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the Social, Personal, and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum
- The school has a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy in place in accordance with the department's "Bí Cineálta" procedures.
- The school has complied with the *Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations* developed by the Department of Education and Youth.
- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives.
- The school has a supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision.
- The school has in place 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.
- The school adheres to the relevant Department of Education and Youth circulars in respect of recruitment.
- The school has a code 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 and Risk Assessment.
- The school ensures all new personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.
- The school encourages personnel to avail of relevant training.
- The school encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training.
- The school maintains records of all personnel 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.
- 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 procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum.
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities.
- The school has in place clear procedures for one-to-one counselling.
- The school has in place clear procedures in respect of student teacher placements.
- The school has in place clear procedures in respect of pupils undertaking work experience in the school.

In accordance with Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and the requirements of Chapter 9 of the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025, the document concludes the written Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

In undertaking this Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, the board of management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to the 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 procedures in place to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent¹³².

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed by the board of management on 24/11/2025.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 02/12/2024

Signed:

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date:24/11/2025

Signed:

Principal of Gortnahoe N.S.

Date:24/11/2025

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is expected to be reviewed again in September 2026.

CSS 2

Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

The Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 require that the board of management must undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment¹. The following template must be used for this purpose². The review must be completed every calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers³.

Undertaking an annual review will ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the Children First Act 2015, to review its Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment every two years⁴.

As part of the overall review process, boards of management should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities and their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the Children First Act 2015 and Children First National Guidance 2017, the Addendum to Children First (2019) and 2025, and the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025.

Name of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP): David O'Dwyer

Date Appointed: 24/11/2025

Name of the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP/DDLP): Ciara Lanigan

Date Appointed: 24/11/2025

Name of Relevant Person: David O'Dwyer

Date Appointed: 24/11/2025

Contact details for Tusla

Gortnahoe National School

Gortnahoe, Thurles, Co.Tipperary E41F857

087 7919488

Contact details for An Garda Síochána

Gortnahoe National School

Gortnahoe, Thurles, Co.Tipperary E41F857

087 7919488

Checklist for review of the Child Safeguarding Statement (For 2026/2027)

1. When did the board first formally adopt a Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025?

Date first Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment adopted by the school:

24/11/2025

2. (a) Where is the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment displayed in the school?

Main Entrance

2. (b) Is there a student-friendly version, with a photograph of the Designated Liaison Person, displayed beside the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment?

Yes

2. (c) Other than displaying in a prominent place near the main entrance to the school, how have students been made aware of the student-friendly version?

Displayed at all student entrances.

On school website.

Teachers show to their individual class and discuss.

3. Has the board used the most recent Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template and formally adopted, without modification, the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025?

Yes

What is the date of the previous review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment?

Date: 24/11/25

4. Has the Board included a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015?

(This includes considering the specific issue of online safety as required by the Addendum to Children First (2019)).

Yes

5. Is there a written protocol in place authorising immediate action for cases which require an employee to be immediately absented from school for child safeguarding reasons in line with Appendix C of the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025? ¹⁴

Yes

6. Has the Board reviewed and updated the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review Boards should refer to the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template for examples.

Yes

Date of this review:

7. How has the Board ensured that the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is provided to the patron, the parents' association and all parents of children in the school?

Give dates of emails/letters/texts/links provided.

8. How has the Board sought the feedback of parents, students and school personnel (teaching and non-teaching) on the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment?

Has the school engaged with each of the above through, for example, a meeting or survey. The support documents CSS 5, CSS 6 and CSS 7 can be used to support this engagement. Details of how feedback was sought should be outlined below¹⁸.

(a) Parents:

(b) Students:

(c) School Personnel:

9. Outline any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment and/or its implementation that require further improvement, including any complaints or suggestions for improvements, which the Board has identified:

10. Outline details of how areas for improvement have been adequately addressed including whether an action plan with appropriate timelines has been put in place:

11. Has the template for Notification regarding the board of management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment been used to inform the school community and relevant parties that they have fulfilled their statutory obligation to annually review the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment? ¹⁹

Yes

18. Since the Board's last review Child Safeguarding Statement, if there have been cases presented for oversight as part of the CPOR, do the minutes of the board meeting:

(a) specify the anonymised documents provided to the board as part of the CPOR

Yes

No

N/A

(b) use unique codes to record child protection matters?

Yes

No

N/A

19. The board has undertaken the review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment and has issued/published notification confirming same.

Yes

No

N/A

Reporting

20. Where are all records relating to child protection filed and stored in a secure manner? For example, stored securely in the principal's office in such as manner as only the DLP and DDLP and the chairperson when acting as DLP will have access to these records.

21. How does the Board ensure that child protection procedures in relation to reporting to Tusla/An Garda Síochána are followed in full? The Board should indicate that the DLP follows the procedures outlined in the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 for reporting of all child protection concerns.

Curriculum

22. The Board should outline the steps it has taken to ensure that the SPHE, RSE, and Wellbeing curriculum is appropriately planned for and delivered to the children and young people in the school.

For primary schools, it should confirm that

Aspects of all three strands (SPHE, RSE, Wellbeing) are covered each year.

The Stay Safe programme is taught in its entirety in one year – at least once during infants, 1st/2nd class, 3rd/4th class, and 5th/6th class. Schools will be informed if, in the future, the Department approves an alternative or replacement to the Stay Safe Programme.

The school plan outlines provision for RSE across each of the different class levels/stages.

The date of the most recent policy review or curricular implementation is noted.

Vetting and Recruitment

The board should be satisfied that procedures to ensure that all statutory requirements in relation to vetting, statutory declarations and forms of undertaking are met. The board should refer to the school's recruitment procedures about how references of all school personnel are checked and how vetting outcomes are managed before appointment or work in the school is undertaken.

If joint agreements are used for the visiting coaches or for school placement students, this should be included. If the school is part of teacher sharing arrangements (see section 10.2 of the procedures), the vetting oversight actions taken should be included.

23. The Board should indicate how it is satisfied that:

(a) the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting are met.

b) the department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking are met.

(c) thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers).

Statement by the Board

The Board should make an overall statement as to its satisfaction that the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment and child protection procedures are being fully and adequately implemented by the school.

Signed:

Date:

Chairperson of the Board of Management

CSS 3

Notification Regarding the Board of Management's Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

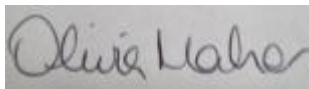
This template must be used by the board of management to inform the school community and relevant parties that they have fulfilled their statutory obligation to annually review the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

To:

The Board of Management of Gortnahoe NS wishes to inform you that:

- (a) The board of management's annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of 24/11/2025.
- (b) This review was conducted in accordance with the board of management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment published on www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools.

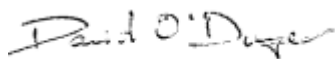
Signed:



Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date:24/11/2025

Signed:



Principal of Gortnahoe N.S.

Date:24/11/2025