

Scoil Phobail Béal Átha N-Ámhnaí

BALLYHAUNIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL



Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment

Ballyhaunis Community School



Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment 26-27

This Student Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed by the board of management on N/A

Signed:	<i>Ann Hosty</i>	Date:	<i>16/06/26</i>
Chairperson of the board of management			

Signed:	<i>David McDonnell</i>	Date:	<i>16/06/26</i>
Principal/Secretary to the board of management			

This Student Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is expected to be reviewed again on June 2027 (expected review date)

Student Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

For:	Ballyhaunis Community School
At:	Knock Road, Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo

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

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

Name of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP):

Mr. David McDonagh

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

Ms. Orla Macken

In the absence of the DLP, the Deputy DLP shall assume responsibilities of the DLP

Name of Relevant Person

Mr. David McDonagh

(In schools this person is the DLP)

Relevant Person can be contacted on:

Phone: 0949630235

Email: principal@ballyhauniscs.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 Student Safeguarding Statement. This person is nominated by the board of management to manage and provide oversight of student protection concerns/allegations of student abuse.

Name of Chairperson of the board of management:

Ms. Ann Hosty

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, assumes the role of DLP.

The board of management of Ballyhaunis Community School recognises that student 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 student 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 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 Student Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 in dealing with student protection matters.
- Adhere to the above principles in relation to any vulnerable adult.

Procedures and Measures in Place

Our Student 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 *Student Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2nd ed. (Tusla, 2024)*, and the *Student Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard students while they are availing of our service:

Procedure for the Management of Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct against School Personnel Relating to a Student 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 student attending the school, the school is required to adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Student 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 Students

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 students, 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 student safeguarding reasons.

Procedure for Provision of and Access to Student 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 Student Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.
- The school ensures that members of school personnel have availed of relevant training and completed student protection training.
- The school encourages board of management members to avail of any relevant training and complete student protection training.
- The board of management ensures that records of all staff and board member student protection training are maintained.

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

All members of school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the *Student Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, in relation to reporting of student 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 Student 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 *Student Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, the board of management carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a student 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 Student Safeguarding Statement.

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 Student 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.

Student Safeguarding Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
1.	Daily arrival/dismissal	Inadequate supervision; contact with unknown adults; peer conflict	Supervision policy; Code of Behaviour; Student Safeguarding Statement, Bí Cineálta procedures
2.	Breaks/recreation	Bullying; peer conflict; inadequate supervision	Bí Cineálta procedures; supervision rota, Supervision policy; Code of Behaviour
3.	Classroom teaching	Harm by staff/student; inappropriate relationships	Code of Behaviour; Student Protection Procedures; SPHE
4.	One-to-one teaching	Boundary issues; inappropriate communication	One-to-one teaching policy
5.	Learning support	Vulnerability of SEN students	SEN policy
6.	Counselling	Disclosure risks; one-to-one setting	Counselling policy; Student Protection Procedures
7.	Outdoor activities	Injury; inadequate supervision	Health & Safety policy
8.	Online learning	Cyber risk; unauthorised access; inappropriate contact	Acceptable Use Policy
9.	Sporting activities	Injury; inappropriate adult conduct	Coaches policy; Garda vetting
10.	Day trips	Off-site safeguarding risks	Trips policy; risk assessments
11.	Overnight trips	Increased vulnerability; supervision	Trips policy; staff ratios
12.	Foreign trips	Safeguarding abroad	Risk assessments; parental consent

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
13.	Toilets/changing areas	Privacy risks; peer misconduct	Supervision policy, Code of Behaviour
14.	Sports Day	Injury; supervision gaps	Health & Safety policy
15.	Fundraising	Public interaction; supervision	Code of Behaviour
16.	Off-site facilities	External environment risks	Risk assessment
17.	Transport	Behaviour issues; supervision	Transport procedures
18.	SEN students	Increased vulnerability	SEN policy
19.	Vulnerable adult students	Safeguarding risks	Intimate Care policy
20.	Behaviour management	Risk of harm; restraint	Code of Behaviour; Behaviour guidelines
21.	Food provision	Allergies; medical risks	Health & Safety policy
22.	Medication	Incorrect administration	Medication policy
23.	First Aid	Improper response	First Aid procedures
24.	SPHE/RSE	Sensitive disclosures	SPHE/RSE policy
25.	Bullying	Peer harm; cyberbullying	Bí Cineálta policy
26.	Staff training	Lack of awareness/reporting	Training records; CPD

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
27.	External speakers	Inappropriate content	External personnel policy
28.	Sports coaches	Conduct risk	Coaches policy; vetting
29.	Vulnerable students	Increased safeguarding needs	SEN/safeguarding supports
30.	Ethnic minorities	Racism	Anti-racism initiatives
31.	Traveller students	Discrimination	Inclusion policy
32.	LGBT+ students	Bullying; exclusion	Bí Cineálta policy
33.	Minority faith	Discrimination	Inclusion policy
34.	Students in care	Increased vulnerability	Tusla liaison
35.	Student Protection Notification System (CPNS) students	Known safeguarding concerns	Student Protection Procedures
36.	Medical needs	Emergencies	Care plans
37.	Recruitment	Unvetted staff risk	Garda vetting
38.	Guest speakers	External adult risk	Supervision
39.	Volunteers/parents	Boundary issues	Vetting

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
40.	Visitors (school hours)	Access to students	Visitor procedures
41.	Visitors (after school)	Reduced supervision	Supervision
42.	Religious activities	Off-site risk	Risk assessment
43.	ICT use & social media	Cyber risk; misuse	Acceptable Use Policy Code of Behaviour Mobile Phone Policy Bí Cineálta Policy Monitoring Software, Firewalls
44.	Sanctions under the school's COB including detention of students, confiscation of phones etc.	Inappropriate discipline	Code of Behaviour Mobile Phone Policy
45.	Work experience (in school)	Supervision risks	Work experience policy
46.	Work experience (external)	Workplace risk	Employer checks
47.	Student teachers	Inexperience	Placement policy
48.	Photography/video	Privacy/data risk	Consent procedures
49.	After-school use of premises	External group risk	Lettings policy
50.	Use during school day	External access	Supervision
51.	Breakfast club	Supervision	Supervision policy

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
52.	Evening study	Reduced supervision	Supervision
53.	Students living away from home	Increased vulnerability	Safeguarding supports

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 otherwise.

List of School Activities

1. Daily arrival and dismissal of students.
2. Recreation breaks for students.
3. Classroom teaching.
4. One-to-one teaching.
5. One-to-one learning support.
6. One-to-one counselling.
7. Outdoor teaching activities.
8. Online teaching and learning remotely.
9. Sporting activities.
10. School outings.
11. School trips involving overnight stay.
12. School trips involving foreign travel.
13. Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools.
14. Annual Sports Day.
15. Fundraising events involving students.
16. Use of off-site facilities for school activities.
17. School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts.
18. Care of student with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed.
19. Care of any vulnerable adult student, including intimate care where needed.
20. Management of challenging behaviour amongst students, including appropriate use of restraint where required.
21. Management of provision of food and drink.
22. Administration of medicine.
23. Administration of First Aid.
24. Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE.
25. Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst students.
26. Training of school personnel in student protection matters.
27. Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum.
28. Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities.
29. Care of student with specific vulnerabilities/needs.
30. Students from ethnic minorities/migrants.

31. Members of the Traveller community.
32. Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) students.
33. Students perceived to be LGBT.
34. Students of minority religious faiths.
35. Student in care.
36. Student on Tusla's Student Protection Notification System (CPNS).
37. Student with medical needs.
38. Recruitment of school personnel including teachers/SNAs, caretakers/secretaries/cleaners and sport coaches.
39. External Tutors/Guest Speakers.
40. Volunteers/Parents in school activities.
41. Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours.
42. Visitors/contractors present during after-school activities.
43. Participation by students in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school.
44. Use of Information and Communication Technology by students in school, including social media.
45. Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of students, confiscation of phones etc.
46. Students participating in work experience in the school.
47. Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere.
48. Student teachers undertaking training placement in school.
49. Use of video/photography/other media to record school events.
50. After-school use of school premises by other organisations.
51. Use of school premises by other organisations during school day.
52. Breakfast club.
53. Evening study.
54. Student living away from home.

Examples of Risks of Harm

1. Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel.
2. Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by members of school personnel.
3. Risk of harm where members of school personnel have not received appropriate training.
4. Risk of student being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel.
5. Risk of student being harmed in the school by another student.
6. Risk of student being harmed in the school by a volunteer or visitor to the school.
7. Risk of student being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while a student is participating in out-of-school activities, e.g. school trip, swimming lessons.
8. 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
9. Risk of harm due to bullying of a student.
10. Risk of harm due to racism.
11. Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of student in school.
12. Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of student while attending out-of-school activities.
13. Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between a student and another student or adult.
14. Risk of harm due to student inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school.
15. Risk of harm to student with special educational needs who have particular vulnerabilities, including medical vulnerabilities.
16. Risk of harm to student while a student is receiving intimate care.
17. Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour.
18. Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situations.
19. Risk of harm caused by a member of school personnel communicating with students in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device, or other manner.
20. Risk of harm caused by a member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner.
21. Risks where student are living away from home.

Policies and procedures that may be used to address Risks of Harm

1. All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Student Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.
2. The Student Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 are made available to all school personnel.
3. School personnel are required to adhere to the Student Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the Children First Act 2015 as well as supporting the continued implementation of the best practice guidance set out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children's 2017 and its addenda, including the Addendum to Children First 2019 and 2025.
4. A written protocol is in place authorising immediate action for cases which require an employee to be immediately absented from school for student safeguarding reasons.
5. The school implements in full the Social, Personal, and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum.
6. The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle.
7. School authorities have a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy in place in accordance with the department's 'Bí Cineálta' procedures to prevent and address bullying in schools and as outlined in Circular 55/2024.
8. The school has complied with the Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations developed by the Department of Education and Youth to address uncertainty for staff on how to respond when facing crisis situations where there are concerns regarding physical safety.
9. The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives.
10. The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of students during assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.
11. The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings.
12. The school has a health and safety policy.
13. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation.
14. The school adheres to the relevant Department of Education and Youth circulars in respect of recruitment.
15. The school has a code of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff).
16. The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff.
17. The school has a special educational needs policy.
18. The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care.
19. The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to students.

20. The school has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's Student Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.
21. The school ensures all new personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Student Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.
22. The school encourages personnel to avail of relevant training.
23. The school encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training.
24. The school maintains records of all personnel and board member training.
25. The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid.
26. The school has in place a code of behaviour for students.
27. 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.
28. The school has in place a policy governing the use of smartphones and tablet devices in the school by students as per Circular 38/2018 and the national guidelines.
29. The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan.
30. The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures.
31. The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum.
32. The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches.
33. The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities.
34. The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling.
35. The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements.
36. The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school.
37. The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations.
38. The school has in place a policy in relation to assisting members of school personnel in respect of disclosures of retrospective abuse.

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

In undertaking this Student Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, the board of management of Ballyhaunis Community School 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.

Appendix 1 - Location of copies of the Student Protection Procedures and Children First Guidance

Copies of Ballyhaunis Community School Student Protection Statement and Risk Assessment are available on the school's website www.ballyhauniscs.ie
Hard copies may also be requested from the school's main office.

Further information:

Department of Education and Youth website

www.gov.ie/studentprotectionschools

Children First National Guidance 2017

[Children First National Guidance 2017.pdf](#)