



Foxfield Special School

Child Safeguarding Statement 2024 -2025

St. Michael's House Special School Foxfield is a Special School catering for students from (currently) aged 5-18 who have a dual diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and a Moderate or Severe and Profound General Learning Difficulty. Our students have complex needs associated with this diagnosis such as communication difficulties and sensory processing difficulties. Foxfield is currently bi-located in both Kilbarrack, Dublin 5, and Swords, Co. Dublin. Both locations are under the same School Roll Number, have the same In-School Management, and are under the governance of the same Board of Management. This means that all school policies and procedures are the same across both locations unless otherwise specified. In relation to this Child Safeguarding statement, the two locations will have two separate Deputy Designated Liaison Persons.

In accordance with the requirements of the [Children First Act 2015](#), [Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017](#), [the Addendum to Children First \(2019\)](#), [the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools \(Revised 2023\)](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of St. Michael's House Special School Foxfield is a Special School has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.



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- 1 The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised (2023))* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Kari Bray-Kelly.
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DDLP) for the Kilbarrack location is Anita Gralek, and the Deputy DLP for the Swords location is Susan Byrne.
- 4 The Relevant Person is Kari Bray-Kelly
(The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. This person can also be the DLP).
- 5 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:
 - recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
 - fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
 - fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;



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- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

6 The following procedures/measures are in place:

- In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the [GOV.ie](#) website.
- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Acts 2012 to 2016](#) and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the Department of Education and available on the [GOV.ie](#) website.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement



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- Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
- Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
- The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school.

Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.



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7 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association (if any) and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.

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

9 This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 19 September 2024 and ratified from

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 19th September 2024.

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: 

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 15/10/24

Date: 15.10.24



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Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Foxfield Special School

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirement of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of [name of school].

1. List of school activities	2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities	3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment
Arrival/Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of the public in immediate environment - pupils removing clothes - SIB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff to greet each pupil off the buses. - Use of blankets to cover if needed.
Group Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bullying from other pupils - CB from other pupils - Pupils observing distressing behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow Behaviour Support Plans. - Adequate space between pupils. - Adequate staff in room. - Clear pathways to exit/break rooms. - Use of visual supports.



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1:1 Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1:1 time spent with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other staff members are aware of activity taking place. - Table/space between staff and pupil. - Window present teaching rooms.
1:1 Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1:1 time spent with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other staff members are aware of activity taking place. - Windows in doors. - Curtains not to be pulled if there is one staff member present. - Scheduled return planned with class.
Toileting/Personal Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1:1 time spent with staff - Enclosed space - Exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 2 members of staff must be present for pad and clothes changes. - More independent pupils should be supervised to the toilet door and be aware of who is in there. - Follow the school's Intimate and Personal Care Policy.
Movement Breaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1:1 time spent with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other staff members are aware of the activity taking place. - Windows in doors.



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curtains are not to be pulled if there is one staff member present. - Scheduled return planned with class.
School Outings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protecting dignity - Members of the public present - pupils removing clothes - SIB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have an "outings bag/pack" prepared with blankets, reinforcements, change of clothes, etc. - Risk Assessments completed before each outing
Special Occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of the public present - Family members present - pupils removing clothes - SIB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate staffing. - Have emergency supplies ready (blankets etc.)
Unfamiliar persons in the school building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of the public present - pupils removing clothes - SIB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Codes on doors. - Secretary to meet visitors at the door. - Visitor sign-in book. - Staff to alert management of unaccompanied unfamiliar persons.
Administration of Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students gaining access to medication - Adults administering Medication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SAM trained staff available - Medication is locked in the office, signed in and signed out.



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Use of Video/Photography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students' dignity - Exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Records kept of all medication administered. - Photos/Videos or pupils should to be taken by school cameras/phones ONLY. - They should be uploaded to the school's central hard drive and deleted before school outings.
Use of CALM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential injury to pupils - Restraint of pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document the use of CALM. - Behaviour Support Plans in place for pupils. - CALM to be used only in incidents of extreme danger.
Use of Soft Rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential restraint of pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Windows in each soft room. - Document the use of a soft room. - Have adequate lighting in each soft room.
Staff communicating to pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offence to pupils - Bullying from staff - Lack of understanding of ASD and GLD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School-wide low-arousal approach. - Staff members use visuals and reduce language. - Staff are issued with Professional Conduct Guidelines for Foxfield



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Swimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students' dignity - Exposure of students' bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching appropriate skills- cover self with a towel. - Talk to staff at the pool about privacy within changing rooms. - Pupils go swimming at the St. Michael's House pool with familiar, trained, Garda Vetted staff members.
Circus Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protecting dignity - Members of the public present - pupils removing clothes - SIB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have an "outings bag/pack" prepared with blankets, reinforcements, change of clothes, etc. - Pupils are not left in the care of instructors - 1:1 staffing
Use of technology by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessing dangerous content photographing/videoing other children or staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No phone policy for students
Online Distance Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessing dangerous content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Links to online content are delivered to families through the school's secure Google for Education Platform - At home, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure other online



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		safety measures on personal devices outside of school
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Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of "harm" as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in Chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*

In undertaking this risk assessment, the board of management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to this school and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, the school has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

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.



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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 (revised 2023)*.



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