

Bennettsbridge N.S.

Child Safeguarding Statement

Bennettsbridge N.S. is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, 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 Bennettsbridge N.S. 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 **Sheila Aylward (Principal)**.
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Olivia Selmon (Deputy Principal)**.
- 4 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

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

- 5 The following procedures/measures are in place:
 - In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DES 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 DES and available on the DES 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, 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 attached as an appendix to these procedures.
 - The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school’s website, the DES 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 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 _____

Signed: Fr. Patrick Dalton

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: Sheila Aylward

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Bennettsbridge Mixed NS.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

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 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Bennettsbridge N.S.

1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- Use of toilet areas
- Annual Sports Day
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- 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
- 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
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- **Remote teaching and learning**

Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as:

- Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants
- Members of the Traveller community
- Children with Special Educational Needs
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
- Pupils perceived to be LGBT
- Pupils of minority religious faiths
- Children in care
- Children on CPNS (Child Protection Notification System)

Recruitment of school personnel including:

- Teachers/SNAs
- 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

2. 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 school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
- Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
- Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in 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
- Risk of harm caused by inappropriate online behaviour when engaged in remote learning and teaching

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

<p>All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's <i>Child Safeguarding Statement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Yes</i>
<p>The <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> are made available to all school personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Downloaded to all desktops on 18/12/17.</i> • <i>New personnel are instructed to do likewise</i>
<p>School Personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adopted by BMNS on 11/12/17</i>
<p>The School implements the <i>Revised Stay Safe Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>See Policy on the Revised Stay Safe Programme (Adopted by BMNS 12/03/19)</i> • <i>The Stay Safe programme is implemented in its entirety on a whole school basis</i> • <i>Programmes are devised/organised between shared-class teachers to ensure implementation</i>
<p>The School implements in full the SPHE curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SPHE Whole School Plan is currently being revised and updated</i> • <i>SPHE is included in all short and long term planning</i> • <i>Sensitive RSE modules are delivered by an external instructor to 6th Class Pupils annually</i>
<p>The School adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda-vetting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Yes</i>
<p>The School has a code of conduct for school personnel as follows; (Teaching and non-teaching staff)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>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</i> • <i>BMNS personnel also adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers published by the Teaching Council in accordance with section 7(2)(b) of the Teaching Council Acts, 2001-2015</i>
<p>The School complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Yes. Ref. Circular 60/2009</i>
<p>The School has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's <i>Child Safeguarding Statement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Yes</i>
<p>The School ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's <i>Child Safeguarding Statement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Yes</i>
<p>The School encourages staff to avail of relevant training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Yes</i>

The School encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training

- Yes

The School maintains records of all staff and board member training

- Yes
 - a) DLP & DDLP: PDST Child Protection Seminar (31/05/18)
 - b) All Staff and some Board Members: Tusla 'Introduction to Children First' ELearning programme
 - c) PDST Online Course for all school personnel
 - d) Seminar for Principals: Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections (4/2/19)

The School has in place a Code of Behaviour for pupils

- Yes

The School has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan

- Yes Revised 20/09/20

The School has in place a Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

- Yes

The School has in place a yard / playground supervision procedures to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.

Assembly:

- Assembly 9:20am Dismissal: 3:00pm
- Jnr. & Snr. Infant Dismissal: 2:00pm
- The first two weeks of school are from 9:20am to 12:30pm for Junior Infants
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Morning Supervision

- School staff provide supervision from 9:10am to 9:20am. A short bell indicates that staff supervision has commenced.
- No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before 9:10am. Parents are respectfully asked not to leave their children unsupervised in the yard before this time.
- Children proceed unaccompanied from the side green gate to their respective lines. Adults cannot be accommodated in the school yard from 9:10am onwards.
- Running and games are not allowed at this time for insurance, health and safety reasons
- Inclement Weather. Parents/child-minders may accompany their child/children safely to the front door. Children leave their schoolbags in their classroom and proceed to the gym. Children line up in their class groupings and are supervised by the principal from 9:10am until 9:20am.
- Parents are informed about morning assembly procedures in the School Prospectus, notices on the front and gym doors, in Bulletin 1 at the start of each year and regularly throughout the year via school bulletins
- September is a 'settling in period' for Junior Infants and arrangements for morning assembly for Junior Infants only will be communicated directly to Junior Infant parents at the induction meeting in May and via email bulletins in September.

Dismissal:

- Jnr. & Sen. Infants: 2:00 pm sharp.

- a) *Parents wait at the front school gates. The children are dismissed individually from inside the black gates once the class Teachers have established that the parent/guardian has arrived.*
- b) *On wet days parents wait inside the black gates and the infants are dismissed from the main front door.*
- c) *Early School Dismissal (Staff meetings etc): For safety reasons infants are dismissed 10mins prior to the rest of the school*
- d) *After school clubs/ crèche providers: Parents sign an authorisation form at the beginning of the school year giving permission to designated personnel from afterschool clubs and crèche to collect their child.*
- e) *After school clubs: Infants assemble in the courtyard (behind black gates) or in the gym during inclement weather. They are then accompanied off the premises by the club leaders*
- *1st to 6th Class: 3:00pm sharp*
Parents of pupils in classes from 1st to 6th class must ensure they have satisfactory arrangements in place for the prompt collection of pupils once they leave the school grounds at the end of the school day
 - a) *The children are supervised to and at the exit doors as they exit the building*
 - b) *Early leavers for Sports Events: Parents sign an authorisation form for each event giving permission for their child to leave school, travel to and from venue with designated club personnel /parents and compete at event. All authorisation forms are stored in the secretary's office*
 - c) *After school clubs: Children wait in the courtyard (behind black gates) or in the gym during inclement weather. They are then accompanied off the premises by the club leaders.*

Breaks:

- *The school yard is enclosed and access to outsiders is denied by way of padlocked gates. These gates are locked immediately after the children have entered the school building following morning assembly*
- *All external doors are also locked at this time. Access to the building is controlled via a remote and keypad controlled security door. Only school personnel have access to the door's keypad code*
- *There is a 10 minute break at 11:00am and a 30 minute break at 12:30pm*
- *The pupils are supervised as they exit their classrooms and enter the yard in single file*
- *There is one school yard with one Teacher and one SNA on duty*
- *There is a rota in place for teacher supervision which is displayed daily in the staff room*
- *Once the bell rings signifying the end of break children walk to their assigned lines. Children re-enter the school under the supervision of their class teacher.*
- *Retrieving footballs: Two 6th class pupils request permission from supervising teacher to collect key for gate from office. Under supervision they collect footballs from adjoining field and behind school wall. They return key to office. This is done on a rotational basis and organised in class by the 6th class teacher.*
- *Wet day supervision is in the classrooms and involves three Teachers on duty in the Senior, Middle and Junior rooms*

Toilets:

- *The children's toilets are in the classrooms. This enables constant supervision and monitoring.*
- *Classroom rules apply to access and to use of the toilets in each room*
- *At break times children are discouraged from re-entering the building except when necessary*
- *Children who wish to use the toilets during break-times can only do so with permission from the Teacher or SNA on yard duty. This ensures that s/he knows who has left the yard. Numbers are kept to a minimum and children use their own classroom toilet only*

See Covid 19 Response Plan for changes to Arrival, Dismissal and Breaks for the Covid 19 period

The School has in place a School Outings Policy

- *Tours usually occur in late May or early June*
- *In keeping with DES rules and guidelines, the Junior Classes remain at home on the day of the Senior Tours when such a decision is warranted*
- *The School Tour is a school day and all children are expected to attend*
- *Full attendance helps reduce costs for parents*
- *Children do not bring money as shopping is not allowed for insurance, health and safety reasons*
- *Mobile phones, cameras or electronic games are not permitted, as per school policy*
- *All relevant school policies apply throughout the day e.g. Behaviour, Bullying etc*
- *Dismissal is from the classrooms and not from the coaches, for safety reasons*
- *Parent Volunteers who are garda vetted may assist the teacher in the supervision of pupils*

The School has in place a Health and Safety policy

- *Yes*
- **Refer to Covid 19 Risk Assessment**

Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs

- *Bennettsbridge N.S. is welcoming and caring towards the needs of pupils with specific vulnerabilities*
- *Practices and procedures in this regard are detailed in various school policies and school prospectus such as :*
 - a) Code of Behaviour*
 - b) Anti- Bullying Policy*
 - c) S.P.H.E Policy*
 - d) Supervision policy*
 - e) Mobile Phones Policy*
 - f) Acceptable Usage Policy*

Procedures regarding participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school

- *Parents sign an authorisation form giving permission for their child to participate in religious ceremonies*
- *School personnel will ensure there is effective supervision at all times to, from and in the church.*

Special Educational Needs Policy

- **Yes: Learning Support Policy**
- **Yes Special Educational Needs Policy Jan 21**

Intimate Care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care

- *New policy ratified on 12/03/19*

Administration of Medication to pupils

- *New policy ratified on 12/03/19*
- *In keeping with CPSMA advice the administration of medicines by staff will only happen in emergency situations. This policy is also published in the School Prospectus*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicines (e.g. Jext Pens / Epipens/Inhalers) are kept in a locked drawer in the Secretary's office. All children requiring medication are highlighted on the Aladdin school system. All teachers have a master copy of children requiring access to their medication during the school day. A master copy also kept in medicine drawer in the secretary's office. All teachers have access to keys. Substitute teachers are also informed of any children under their care requiring access to medication. •
<p>Administration of First Aid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only Basic first Aid is administered by school staff i.e. Teachers, Secretary, SNA All staff completed a basic First Aid Awareness training Course on 4/12/19 • Parents are summoned immediately when basic First Aid is considered inadequate or when uncertainty arises. All parents' contact details are to hand in each child's file in a filing cabinet in the Secretary's office • When warranted, facts relating to injuries are recorded in the Incident Book which is kept in a filing cabinet in the Secretary's office. Details are recorded by the Teacher on yard duty at the time of the incident • Injuries/illness and dealing with a suspected case of Covid 19 Please refer to Bennettsbridge Response Plan and Covid 19 Risk Assessment
<p>ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) 13/10/20 2. Data Protection 13/10/20 • Loaning School Devices: Technology Agreement signed by parents when borrowing a school device
<p>Use of photography/video/other media to record school events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: Policy for the Safe Use of Photographs and Videos • Consent/Non consent information stored in individual files and highlighted on the school Aladdin system
<p>Mobile Phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes Personal Mobile Phone and Electronic Games policy (ratified by BoM 13/10/20)
<p>Home School Liaison policy and related procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMNS does not have a Home/School liaison teacher • The School/Home Liaison Form is sometimes used to inform parents about: Homework; Attendance; Conduct; Punctuality; Progress; Other issues. The form is signed by parents and kept in the child's file. A duplicate form remains in the School/Home Liaison booklet which is kept in the filing cabinet in the Principal's Office • Home School Liaison is mostly via the telephone
<p>Policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Such external persons will be under Teacher Supervision at all times • Evidence of Garda Vetting must be presented when applicable • Persons administering external programmes (e.g. GAA Rugby coaches etc.) through another body will provide the school with confirmation of vetting from their relevant organization ((sanctioned by BoM 16/10/18) and a copy of any appropriate insurance.
<p>Policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches (both in school and off site)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Such external persons will be under Teacher Supervision at all times • Evidence of Garda Vetting must be presented when applicable

- *When using external coaches/instructors for off-site activities (school tours etc) the school must receive confirmation in writing form the host organisation that their coaches/instructors have suitable vetting*

Policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities

- *For the most part, one to one teaching occurs during Special Education Teaching. When one to one teaching is deemed appropriate at Bennettsbridge N.S., the following options only are utilised:*
 - Two children will be taken together*
 - Two teachers will take a single child each in the same room at the same time*
 - One to one teaching will take place in the corridor opposite the Principal's office . Office door has a glass panel.*
 - One to one teaching will take place in the open-doored Resource room adjoining the Principal's office*
 - If a child needs one-to-one teaching parents will be advised of any arrangements in place*
 - f) Remote Teaching and Learning: Two staff members present for video calls**
- *Teachers are required to adhere to The Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers published by the Teaching Council in accordance with section 7(2)(b) of the Teaching Council Acts, 2001-2015*

Policy and procedures for Visitors/ Contractors

- *Yes: Health and Safety Policy*
- *All parents & visitors can only access the school via the main front door and must use the intercom system. Upon being granted access they must then report to the secretary's office. Instructions are posted on the front door*
- **See Covid 19 Response Plan**

Policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements

- *The student will be under Teacher Supervision at all times*
- *Students must produce evidence of Garda Vetting*
- *Students must produce evidence of insurance from their education institution*

Policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school

- *The student will be under Teacher Supervision at all times*
- *Students must produce evidence of Garda Vetting*
- *Students must produce evidence of insurance from their secondary school*
- *The student must be a past-pupil, must be taking Honours Irish for the Leaving Cert*
- *Only one work-experience student is accommodated in the school at a time, so first-come first-in*

Policies and procedures in respect of Covid -19

- **Yes:**
 - Covid 19 Response Plan**
 - Covid 19 Risk Assessment**
 - Acceptable Usage Policy**
 - Smart Devices/Mobile Phone**
 - Data Protection**
 - Code of Behaviour**
 - Remote Teaching and Learning Plan**

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.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management in April. It shall be reviewed as part of the school’s annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed: Fr. Patrick Dalton Date: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Sheila Aylward Date: _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management