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Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

For:	Meelickmore National School
At:	Meelickmore, Claremorris, Co. Mayo, F12EK20.

This school is a: (tick appropriate) primary post-primary special 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):

Liam Horkan

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

Colette Whelan

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

Name of Relevant Person

Liam Horkan

(In schools this person is the DLP)

Relevant Person can be contacted on:

Phone: 094-9362424 or 085-2528273	Email: meelickmorens@gmail.com
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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, or in an ETB school the Chief Executive or their delegate:

Fr. Peter Gannon

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 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 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 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. Individual boards of management shall also include in this section such other procedures and measures that are of relevance to the school.

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 (if any), 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 of Meelickmore NS

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

1. List of school activities

- Daily Arrival and dismissal of Pupils (Medium Risk)
- Classroom Teaching (Low Risk)
- One to One Teaching (High Risk)
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by Pupils in School (Low Risk)
- Online teaching and learning remotely (Low Risk)
- Use of External Personnel to Supplement Curriculum (Low Risk)
- Student Teachers undertaking Training Placement in School (Medium Risk)
- Second level Students Participating in Work Experience (Medium Risk)
- Care of Children with Special Educational Needs (High Risk)
- Care of Pupils with Specific Vulnerabilities/Needs such as: (Low Risk)
 - Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants
 - Members of the Traveller community
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
 - Pupils perceived to be LGBT
 - Pupils of minority religious faiths
 - Children in care
 - Children on Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
- Use of Video/Photography/Other Media to record school events (Low Risk)
- Use of School Premises by Other Groups after School (Low Risk)
- Administration of First Aid & Medicine (Medium Risk)
- Use of toilet areas in the school (High Risk)
- Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE/RSE/Stay Safe (Low Risk)
- Managing of Challenging Behaviour amongst Pupils, including appropriate use of Restraint (High Risk)
- Outdoor Teaching Activities (Medium Risk)
- Sporting Activities/Outings (Medium Risk)
- Recruitment of School Personnel including: (Medium Risk)
 - Teachers
 - SNA's
 - Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaner
 - Sports coaches
- External tutors/Guest speakers (Low Risk)
- Volunteers/Parents in school activities (Low Risk)
- Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours (Low Risk)
- Visitors/contractors present during/after school activities (Low Risk)
- Use of Off-site Facilities for School Activities (Low Risk)
- Prevention and Dealing with Bullying amongst Pupils (Low Risk)
- Training of School Personnel in Child Protection Matters (Low Risk)
- Annual Sports Day (Medium Risk)
- Recreation Breaks for Pupils (Medium Risk)
- Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities (Low Risk)

- Swimming lessons (Medium Risk)
- Fundraising events involving pupils (Low Risk)
- School transport arrangements (Low Risk)
- Management of provision of food and drink (Low Risk)
- After school use of school premises by other organisations (Low Risk)
- School tours or trips (Medium Risk)

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

- Risk of harm entering and leaving premises from other pupils, unknown adults on the playground/school environs
- 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 in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- Risk of harm to pupils or school personnel in one-to-one teaching or mentoring
- Risk of cyber-bullying to pupils by pupils
- Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, Phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of another organisation or other external visitor while child is participating in out of school activities
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child is participating in after school activities
- Risk of harm due to bullying
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child with SEN or vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm due to racism
- 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 to pupils and staff while a child is receiving first aid
- Risk of a child being harmed in the school by a student on work experience
- Risk of harm by non-teaching of SPHE/RSE/Stay Safe
- 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 inadequate Code of Behaviour
- Risk of harm caused by pupils communicating in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital devices or other manner
- Risk of harm to children with SEN by school personnel
- Risk of injury to pupils
- 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 due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult

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

Meelickmore NS has put 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. We recognise that some school activities carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. We have identified the level of risk which we feel pertains to each school activity as listed in Section 1 above. Below is a list of the policies, practices and procedures in place in our school which we know will address the risks of harm we have identified.

- 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 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 2017 and its addenda, including the Addendum to Children First 2019 and 2025
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- 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
- 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
- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets.
- Authorised school access via the main front door
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school tours and 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
- Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
- Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
- Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils
- The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this policy to parents
- The school has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones and tablet devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has CCTV in operation for the school exterior.

Online Safety

The *Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017* 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 and Risk Assessment.

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.

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.

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 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 Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed by the board of management on: 12th June 2025

Signed:*	<i>Fr. Peter Gannon</i>	Date: 12/06/2025
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Chairperson of the board of management

Signed:*	<i>Liam Horkan</i>	Date: 12/06/2025
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Principal/Secretary to the board of management

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is expected to be reviewed again on: June 2026

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

This may be in the form of specifying the online location for the procedures (Department of Education and Youth website www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools and/or the school website), providing a link to the Children First National Guidance 2017 [Children First National Guidance 2017.pdf](#), and stating the number and location of hard copies of these procedures available in the school.

- School Office
- Each member of staff yearly planning folder
- School Website www.meelickmorens.ie
- Department of Education and Youth website www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools