

Headfort School

Safeguarding Statement

Reviewed August 2025, Next Review August 2026

Context

Headfort School is a school providing pre-primary and primary education to pupils from age 4 to 14 years of age, including pupil boarding onsite.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children's First Act 2015, Addendum Children's First Act 2019, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Headfort Trust DAC has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

1. Headfort Trust DAC 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: Ms. Lucy Gowdie
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) is Mrs Denise Svensson;
4. The Board of Headfort Trust DAC recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school and boarding 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

5. The school will:

- Recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- Fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- Fully cooperate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm 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;
- 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 (however 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 2023 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff as stated in the company handbook
- 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. <https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/d7be05-child-protection/>
- 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 members of the Headfort Trust DAC to avail of relevant training;
- the Headfort Trust DAC maintains records of all staff and Board member training.

- In relation to reporting of child protection concern 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 2023, 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 above named DLP as the “relevant Person” (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the child safeguarding statement.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015. **The school maintains a register of all mandated persons, including, but not limited to registered teachers.**
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, First **and the Addendum to the Children Act (2019)**, the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school, **boarding** or participating in school **/boarding activities**. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school’s procedures for managing those risks is available as an appendix to this statement.
- 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.

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.

7. This statement has been published on the school’s website and has been provided to all members of school personnel. 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.

For queries, please contact Ms Mary Maher, at office@headfortschool.ie , the Relevant Person under the Child First Act 2015.

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

1. The school maintains a list of all employees who are mandated persons which is available on request, and which includes registered teachers and staff employed by the Trust
2. All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement and Safeguarding Policy

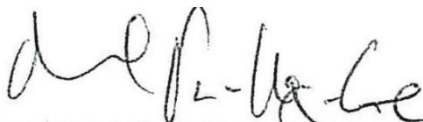
3. The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools are made available to all school personnel
4. School personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023, and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the Children First Act 2015 and its Addendum (2019).
5. The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum,
6. The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour for Learning Policy
7. The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
8. The school has a supervision policy in place to ensure appropriate supervision of children during class time and outside of class time in boarding areas of the school, and in respect of specific areas such as the common rooms, toilets, changing rooms, showers etc.
9. The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school trips.
10. The school has a Health and Safety policy.
11. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting.
12. The school has a code of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff).
13. The school complies with the disciplinary procedures for teaching and non-teaching staff in the Staff Handbook.
14. The school has a Whole School Inclusion policy in place.
15. The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to students.
16. The school has in place a policy and procedures on the administration of First Aid.
17. The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils.
18. The school has in place policies in respect of acceptable usage of ICT by pupils, including provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and this has been communicated to parents.

19. The school has a Critical Incident Management plan.
20. The school has in place a policy and procedures on the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum.
21. The school has in place a policy on the use of external sports coaches.
22. The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one teaching activities.
23. Staff members receive annual training regarding not communicating with pupils in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner.
24. Staff members receive annual training regarding accessing/ circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner.
25. Staff use of school communications platforms is monitored and discoverable.
26. Staff are aware that the inappropriate use of social media and digital communications platforms is subject to the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching and non-teaching staff.

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 of 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 2023.

In undertaking this risk assessment, the Headfort Trust DAC 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 was adopted by the Headfort Trust DAC on 14th August 2025



Mark Pery-Knox-Gore
Chair of the Headfort Trust



Lucy Gowdie
Head of School