



Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment October 2025

Child Safeguarding Statement

Jonah Special School for Students with Autism and Complex Needs is a special school providing primary and post primary education to students from Junior Infants to Sixth Year.

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 Jonah Special School 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 (revised 2023) as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement.
2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Caitríona Barry, **Principal**
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Carol Deane, **Deputy Principal**
4. The Relevant Persons is Caitríona Barry, **Principal**
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 schools 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 student 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 schools Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the schools 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 Childrens 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.

7. This Statement has been published on the schools website and has been provided to all members of school personnel 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.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 17th October 2025.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 17th October 2025.

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Date: _____



Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Jonah Special School

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Chapter 8 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023), the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Jonah Special School –

List of School Activities	Risk Level	The School has identified the following Risk of Harm in Respect of its Activities	The School has the following Procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	High	• Risk of harm due to it not being recognised or reported promptly by school personnel. • Staff not adhering to the procedures in place. • Training not giving to new staff promptly.	• Child Safeguarding Statement & DE procedures made available to all staff. • The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023) are made available to all school personnel • DLP and DDLP attended PDST face to face Child Protection seminar. • All Staff to view Túsla training module & any other online training offered by PDST. • BOM to complete Tusla training module. • BOM retains a record of all Child Protection training. • School Personnel are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023) and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the Children First Act 2015. • Regular topic for Croke Park Hours/Staff meetings throughout the school year.
One to one/two to one supervision and	Medium	• Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation.	• Students are sometimes taught in a 1:1 setup, however wherever possible, this will be carried



individual programmes by Teacher/SNA		• Staff not adhering to procedures in place. • Behaviours that challenge and complexity of needs. • The School building and environment.	out in the main classroom environment. Where this is not possible, and a student is taught elsewhere with a staff member, doors remain open. Other staff are aware of the tuition taking place. • Glass is installed in doors of all classrooms. • Staff adhering to procedures in place. • Code of Behaviour policy in place. • Student Support Files in place. • Within each of our two classes staffing levels are provided as per DES guidelines; ASD – 1 teacher, 2 SNAs: 6 students. • Panic bells in place and back up support if required. • The environment is constantly being reviewed to promote a safe positive learning environment, as far as possible, for the individual student and supervision of students.
Use of toilet and shower areas in school	High	• Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care.	• The school has a Toileting Policy in respect of students who require such care. • The school has an Intimate Care Policy in respect of students who require such care. • The school has a Showering Policy in respect of students who require such care.
Intimate and personal care of students, including swimming	High	• Harm by school personnel. • Staff not adhering to procedures in place. • Behaviours that challenge and complexity of needs. • Lack of supervision.	• Policy on intimate and personal care in place. • Staff must adhere to the procedures in place. • Individual Positive Behaviour Support Strategies in place in line with the RELATE approach. • Students are supervised by school personnel. • Staff are trained regularly in different areas of caring for students with Autism. • Where a specific allergy/medical need is identified



			for example epilepsy, staff will receive training wherever possible.
Use of toilet/changing areas while on school trips	High	Risk of harm to student while using these facilities.	- The school will use facilities with communal changing areas where students can be adequately supervised by school staff and are not left unattended in changing rooms/toilets. - Where it is necessary for a student to use a toilet in a public place (not a swimming pool), they will be accompanied by 2 staff members. - Wherever possible and available, the wheelchair accessible toilet should be used with the staff member remaining outside the door.
Use of offsite facilities for school activities	Medium	- Risk of child being harmed by a member of another organisation or other person while child is participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, community outing to town, swimming lessons. - Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities.	- The school ensures that students are adequately supervised with staff ratios while on trips. - Students are accompanied by an adult at all times. - Risk Assessments are completed where necessary.
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE and RSE	Medium	Non-teaching of same.	- School implements Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy. - Discussed with parents at IEP meetings to ensure integration of suitable and understandable language, visuals etc. for each individual student, in both home and school settings. - Other professionals such as OT, SLT and psychology are consulted as required by the class teacher, where necessary and feasible. - School implements SPHE and Stay Safe in full. - This is evident by teachers' Cuntas Miosuils.



Daily arrival and dismissal of students	High	• Risk of harm from unknown adults in the carpark/on school premises. • Risk of harm from other students or unknown adult. • Students absconding. • Traffic in school car park.	• Arrival and dismissal is supervised by teachers. • Students are dropped off and collected directly to the playground gate by their parent/person dropping them off. • For students on school transport - staff collects the student from school gate or classroom door and accompanies them directly into the school. • Doors remain open/blinds remain up while students are being dropped off so that teacher/staff members cannot be left alone with a child.
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst students	Low	• Risk of child being harmed by another student	• Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. • Staff to adhere to procedures in place.
Visiting Therapists (Both privately and publicly funded)	Medium	• Risk of harm to students.	• Students are never left alone with visiting therapists and all therapy is carried out in a room where students can be viewed.
Students/Volunteers participating in work experience in our school	Low	• Risk of child being harmed in the school by a person on a work placement.	• Child Safeguarding Statement is implemented. • Volunteer/Work Experience Policy in place which must be adhered to by students/volunteers. • Applications for placements must be accompanied by an application for Garda Vetting or copy of same. • Those on placements/work experience are never left alone directly supervising students and do not carry out intimate care/toileting.
Classroom Teaching	Low	• Risk of harm by teacher. • Injury/harm to student. • Challenging behaviour.	• Classrooms have at least 2 staff members present at all times. • All staff are Garda vetted at recruitment stages and are aware of Child Protection Procedures in the school.



Recruitment of school personnel	Low	• Risk of harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported. • Risk of harm by a member of school personnel.	• The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting • The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for all staff.
Managing challenging behaviour amongst students, including appropriate use of restraint	High	• Risk of injury to students and staff. • Risk of behaviours that challenge and complexity of needs. • School building and environment. • Lack of supervision.	• Code of Behaviour, Behaviour Support and Health & Safety Policies in place. • Individual Student Support Files which are reviewed on an ongoing basis. • Clinical Referral procedures in place to seek appropriate clinical and therapeutic supports for students. • Back up support provided if needed. • The environment is constantly being reviewed to maintain a positive safe environment, as far as possible, for students and staff. • Behaviour incident forms are completed. These forms are completed by the staff involved and are reviewed and signed by the Principal and Clinical Director. • Strategies are reviewed and updated if required. • Environment is reviewed and adapted where possible. • Patterns of behaviour and triggers are identified where possible to try to prevent re-occurrence.
Recreation breaks for students	Medium	• Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in yard/classroom. • Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child.	• There is one access point to the playground from outside. • This is kept closed at all times while students are in the playground. • Students are always supervised in the playground/classrooms while on break.



			• Visitors do not travel through the playground. • Acknowledging that staff ratios are reduced at break times, there will be at least 2 staff present at all times.
Outdoor teaching activities – work experience, trips to cafes etc.	Medium	• Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities. • Behaviours that challenge and complexity of needs.	• Students are accompanied at all times by teachers/SNAs. • Trips do not go ahead without adequate staff ratios. • Permission is sought from parents for activities taking place outside the school via Aladdin. • Student Support Files in place for each student.
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst students	Low	• Risk of child being harmed by another student.	• The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. • Staff to adhere to procedures in place.
Administration of Medication and First Aid	High	• Risk of medical harm to students. • Expiry Date on medication. • Staff administering medication on their own. • Harm by incorrect administering of medication. • Losing/misplacing medication.	• Administration of Medication Policy is in place. • All staff are trained where there is a specific need to administer prescription emergency medication. • Only medication signed off by students GP and parents will be administered by school staff if staff are in agreement to this. • First Aid Training is provided for all school staff. • All medications are kept in locked boxes.
School outings	Medium	• Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities.	• Students are accompanied at all times by teachers/SNAs. • Trips do not go ahead without adequate staff ratios and permission from parents.
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	High	• Risk of harm to students while travelling on school transport. • Behaviours that challenge and complexity of needs.	• Policies in relation to Garda vetting are followed when recruiting bus escorts. • Students are not left on the bus without both the bus driver/escort present.



		Risk of harm to students while getting on or off a bus or moving around in the area.	- School personnel adhere to all policies and procedures in place. - Child Safe Guarding Statement made available to all drivers/bus escorts and school staff. - Close supervision of students when getting on or off the buses/taxis by school staff. - Clinical Referral procedures in place to seek appropriate clinical and therapeutic support.
Use of mobile phones in school	Low	- Risk of inappropriate use of social media. - Risk of staff not adhering to procedures in place.	- IT Policy and Data Protection Policy in place. - Use of Mobile Phones in school Policy in place.
Jonah Special School Facebook Page	Low	- Risk of inappropriate use of social media. - Risk of staff not adhering to procedures in place.	- Parental consent provided. - Specific phone/camera used for photographs. - IT policy in place. - Only designated school staff have access for uploading photos of students to this page.
Use of video/photography/ other media to record school events	Medium	- Risk of unauthorised sensitive images being shared with unauthorised parties. - Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel or a pupil accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner. - Staff not adhering to procedures in place	- Data Protection, Mobile Phone & IT policy in place. - Permission is sought to share images of students on the school website and Facebook page. - Images will not be shared on any other site/forum. - Images of students will not be shared over email or text message or any media form. This applies also to sharing of media of school events by parents.
Covid 19	Medium	Potential Exposure to Covid 19.	- Schools Covid 19 Response Plan. - HSE Guidelines on exclusion period followed and updated as required.

Important Note:

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Website: www.jonahschool.ie

Roll Number – 20380B
RCN – 20204520
Principal – Caitríona Barry
Clinical Director – Niamh McEvoy



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.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on 17th October 2025. It will be reviewed as part of the school’s annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on: _____

Date

Signed: _____

Principal

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management



Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* require that the Board of Management must undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and that the following checklist will be used for this purpose. **The review must be completed every year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers.** Undertaking an annual review will also ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the *Children First Act 2015*, to review its Child Safeguarding Statement every two years.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list of the issues to be considered. Individual Boards of Management shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities and their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the *Children First Act 2015*, the *Addendum to Children First (2019)* and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*.

		Yes/No
1.	Has the Board formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)'?	Yes
2.	Is the Board satisfied that the Child Safeguarding Statement is displayed in a prominent place near the main entrance to the school?	Yes
3.	As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)'?	Yes
4.	Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015? (This includes considering the specific issue of online safety as required by the Addendum to Children First)	Yes
5.	Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	Yes
6.	Has the Risk Assessment taken account of risk of harm relevant to online teaching and learning remotely?	Yes
7.	Has the DLP attended available Child Protection training?	Yes
8.	Has the Deputy DLP attended available Child Protection Training?	Yes
9.	Have any members of the Board attended Child Protection Training?	Yes
10.	Has the school appointed a DLP and a Deputy DLP?	Yes
11.	Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	Yes
12.	Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?	Yes
13.	Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)' and the Children First Act 2015?	Yes
14.	Has the Board received a Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	Yes
15.	Since the Board's last review, did each CPOR contain all of the information required under each of the 4 headings set out in sections 9.5 to 9.8 inclusive of procedures?	Yes



16.	Since the Board's last review, has the Board been provided with and reviewed all documents relevant to CPOR?	Yes
17.	Is the Board satisfied that the records provided are anonymised and redacted as necessary to ensure that the identities of children and other parties, including school personnel, to whom the concern or report relates are not disclosed?	Yes
18.	Since the Board's last review, have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the records provided to the Board as part of CPOR report?	Yes
19.	Have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the CPOR report?	Yes
20.	Is the Board satisfied that the Child Protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed in each case reviewed?	Yes
21.	Is the Board satisfied that, since the last review, all appropriate actions are being or have been taken in respect of any member of school personnel against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made?	Yes
22.	Where applicable, were unique identifiers used to record Child Protection matters in Board minutes?	Yes
23.	Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to Child Protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	Yes
24.	Has the Board been notified by any parent in relation to that parent not receiving the standard notification required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)'?	No
25.	In relation to any cases identified at question 20 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)' were subsequently issued by the DLP?	Yes
26.	Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	N/A
27.	Has the Board ensured that the Patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Yes
28.	Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	Yes
29.	Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (Applies to primary schools).	Yes
30.	Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (Applies to post – primary schools).	Yes
31.	Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	Yes
32.	Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?	Yes
33.	Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a Child Protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?	Yes
34.	Is the Board satisfied that, from a Child Protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?	Yes
35.	Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Yes– no suggestions or complaints received
36.	Has the Board sought the feedback of parents in relation to the school's compliance with the requirements of the Child Safeguarding requirements of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)'?	Yes
37.	Has the Board sought the feedback of students in relation to the school's Child Safeguarding arrangements?	Yes



38.	Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	Yes
39.	Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
40.	Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement?	N/A
41.	Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	Yes

Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on: _____

Date

Signed: _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management



Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

To: Jacinta Walsh (Patron – Autism Ireland)

The Board of Management of Jonah Special School wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Managements annual review of the schools Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of 17th October 2025.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on gov.ie website.

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management