



Bellurgan National School

Bellurgan, Dundalk, County Louth, A91 N288

Tel - 0429371479

Website - <http://www.bellurgans.ie>



Child Protection Policy

Bellurgan National School strives to provide a child-friendly, secure environment catering for the needs of all students as far as is practicable and where respect is fostered in a culture which values diversity and difference. An individual copy of this policy document will be made available to all staff. It is incumbent on all staff to familiarize themselves with 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

Rationale

This policy has been developed and agreed in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection procedures. It addresses the responsibilities of the school in the followings areas;

- a) Prevention – curriculum provision.
- b) Procedures - procedures for dealing with concerns / disclosures.
- c) Practice - best practice in child protection.

Aims and Objectives of the policy

- Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment.
- Provide a personal safety skills education which specifically addresses abuse prevention for all children in the school.
- Develop awareness and responsibility in the area of child protection amongst the whole school community.
- Put in place procedures for good practice to protect all children and staff.
- Ensure that all staff members are aware of and familiar with the 'Children First' and the DES guidelines and procedures in relation to reporting concerns and/or disclosures of child abuse.
- Provide for ongoing training in this and related areas for all school staff.

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Prevention

The Stay Safe Programme is the primary resource used in this school to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as part of the schools' SPHE curriculum under the strand unit Safety and Protection. The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety each year. Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

Procedures

- All staff (Teachers, SNAs, ancillary, secretarial, caretaking etc.) in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in 'Children First' and the Department of Education and Science document, 'Child Protection, Guidelines and Procedures 2017'.
- The Board of Management of this school has appointed **Dermot McCoy** (Principal) as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and **Aine Byrne** as the deputy DLP.
- The staff and management of this school have agreed:
 1. All concerns/ disclosures involving child protection/child welfare issues will be reported in the first instance to the DLP (deputy DLP where appropriate).
 2. Each report to the DLP will be dated and signed by the person making that report.
 3. A strict adherence to maintaining confidentiality – information regarding concerns or disclosures of abuse should only be given on a 'need to know' basis.

Ratification and Communication

This policy will be in operation from the school year 2024/2025, having been ratified by Staff and BOM. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

Date of next policy review: October 2025

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Department Appendix: Child Protection Policy of Bellurgan N.S

Bellurgan National School is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the requirements of [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 Bellurgan National 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 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 Mr Dermot McCoy (Principal)**
- 3 **The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Miss Aine Byrne (Deputy Principal)**
- 4 **The Relevant Person is Mr Dermot McCoy (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 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;

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- 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.

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.

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- 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 (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, 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 this statement.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DES 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.

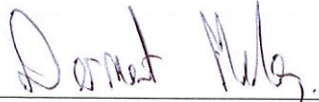
- 8 This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 19th October 2023

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on the 14th October 2024

Signed: 
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 14th October 2024

Signed: 
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 14th October 2024

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Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment 2023

1. 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 2017'	No
2. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	Yes
3. Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	Yes
4. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
5. 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
6. Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	Yes

Signed _____ Jimmy Hughes  Date _____ 19/10/2023 _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Dermot McCoy  Date _____ 19/10/23 _____

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Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment 2024

1. 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 2017'	No
2. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	Yes
3. Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	Yes
4. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
5. 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
6. Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	Yes

Signed _____ Fergal Malone

Date _____ 14/10/2024 _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Dermot McCoy

Date _____ 14/10/24 _____

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Written Assessment of Risk of Bellurgan National 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 Bellurgan National School.

1. List of school activities

Examples of School Activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- Annual Sports Day
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Changing for Games / PE / Swimming
- 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
- Recruitment of school personnel including -
 - Teachers/SNA's
 - 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

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- 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.
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- Use of school premises by other organisation during school day

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

- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
- 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 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.

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- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in appropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of online teaching and learning remotely.

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

- All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement*
 - The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* are made available to all school personnel
 - 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*
 - The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
 - The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
 - 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*
 - 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, changing rooms etc.
 - The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings
 - The school has a Health and safety policy
 - The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
 - The school has a codes 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

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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
- 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 in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils
- The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- 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 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

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.

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This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on 14th October 2024.
It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed  Date 14-10-24

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed  Date 14-10-24

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Principal - Mr Dermot McCoy
Deputy Principal - Ms. Aine Byrne

