BLACKWATER
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Child Protection Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment

Approved and adopted by the Board of Management on

Date: 22nd September 2026

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

For:	**Blackwater Community School**
At:	**Lismore, Co. Waterford**

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):

Mr. Denis Ring (Principal)

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

Mrs. Maria O' Brien (Deputy Principal)

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

Name of Relevant Person

Mr. Denis Ring (Principal)

(In schools this person is the DLP)

Relevant Person can be contacted on:

058 - 53620	info@blackwatercs.com

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:

Colette Power

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 will 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.

The protection of children, and their safety and wellbeing must be the priority, and no child should be exposed to unnecessary risk.

- The school shall as a matter of urgency ensure that any necessary protective measures are taken, including where there is an urgent child safeguarding requirement to immediately absent an employee from the school.
- 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.
    - In the context of these procedures, where circumstances warrant it, as an essential precautionary measure in order to protect the children in the school, the school principal, in consultation with the Chairperson, is authorised by the Board of Management to direct an employee to immediately absent himself or herself from the school without loss of pay until the matter has been considered by the employer. It is very important to note that the action under the protocol is intended to be precautionary and not disciplinary. The action under this protocol is an interim measure pending the employer's further consideration of the matter.
    - The employee will be invited to a meeting with the principal, the purpose of which is to inform the employee of the allegation and the action being taken. The employee may be accompanied by an appropriate person of his or her choice and will be so advised.
    - In any event, the employee will also be advised of the matter, in writing. The principal shall make a record of the meeting which shall be retained on the relevant case file.
- In the context of allegations or suspicions of child abuse regarding school employees, the primary goal is to protect the children within the school.
- The school authority has a duty of care, as an employer, in respect of its employees.
- The employee shall be treated fairly, which includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair process and as applicable, in accordance with the relevant disciplinary procedures.
- The school will comply with employment legislation and any other relevant employee relations policies.
- Legal advice will always be sought in such a case as circumstances can vary from one case to another and it is not possible in these procedures to address every scenario.
- The matter will be treated in the strictest confidence at all times and that the identity of the employee shall not be disclosed, other than as required under the procedures within this document.
- The requirement for treating matters in confidence does not prevent a DLP from informing a parent/carer about an allegation of abuse that is related to their child

Procedure for the Safe Recruitment and Selection of School Personnel to Work With Children

In the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school will 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 as outlined in Chapter 10 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*

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.

Procedure for Maintaining a List of the Persons (if any) in the Relevant Service Who Are Mandated Persons

- At the beginning of each school year, the Principal/Designated Liaison Person (DLP) will identify all staff members who are considered mandated persons under the *Children First Act 2015*.
- The school will maintain a formal **Mandated Persons Register**. The register will include:
    - Staff member name
    - Role/position in the school
    - Teaching Council registration number where applicable
    - Date of commencement in the school
    - Confirmation of child protection training completed
- The Principal, acting as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP), is responsible for maintaining and updating the register. Administrative support may assist with record keeping under the direction of the Principal.
- The register will be reviewed:
    - At the beginning of each school year
    - When new staff members are appointed
    - When staff members leave the school
    - Following changes to legislation or Department of Education guidance
- The Mandated Persons Register will be stored securely in line with GDPR and school data protection procedures. Access to the register will be limited to appropriate school management personnel and the Board of Management where necessary.
- The Principal/DLP will confirm annually to the Board of Management that:
    - The Mandated Persons Register has been reviewed and updated

- Relevant staff are aware of their obligations
- Appropriate child protection procedures are being implemented

Procedure for Appointing a Relevant Person (In schools this person is the DLP)

- The appointment of the DLP is discussed as an agenda item at a formally convened Board of Management meeting.
- The Board ensures that the appointment complies with the current Child Protection Procedures.
- The Board formally ratifies the appointment through an agreed Board resolution.
- The appointment is recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting.
- The Board ensures that the identity of the Relevant Person is communicated to:
  - School staff
  - Parents/guardians
  - Students where appropriate
- The Board of Management ensures that the details are displayed prominently in the school and included in relevant school documentation and policies

The various procedures referred to in this Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment 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.

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, 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 refer.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

As well as the risk mitigation measures set out in the table below, the school ensures that the following measures are implemented to mitigate the risk for every school activity / area of risk.

- 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 has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- The school ensures all new personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- 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

	School Activity / Area of Risk	**Risk Identified Against Each School Activity**	**Risk Mitigation Measures**
1.	Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school	Code of Behaviour; staff supervision arrangements
2.	Recreation breaks for pupils	Risk of harm due to bullying of a child; Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school	Bí Cineálta procedures; staff supervision arrangements
3.	Classroom teaching	Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel; Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly;	Child Protection Procedures; staff training; Child Safeguarding Statement
4.	One-to-one teaching	Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching situations; Risk of inappropriate relationship/communications	One-to-one teaching policy; visibility and supervision procedures;
5.	One-to-one learning support	Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching situations; Risk of inappropriate relationship/communications	SEN policy; one-to-one support procedures

	School Activity / Area of Risk	Risk Identified Against Each School Activity	Risk Mitigation Measures
6.	One-to-one counselling	Risk of harm in counselling situations; Risk of inappropriate relationship/communications	One-to-one counselling policy; Child Protection Procedures
7.	Outdoor teaching activities	Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision during out-of-school activities	School outings policy; Health and Safety policy
8.	Online teaching and learning remotely	Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online communication platforms; inappropriate online communication;	Acceptable Use Policy; online teaching procedures
9.	Sporting activities	Risk of child being harmed by another child or adult	External sports coach policy; the school adheres to Garda vetting legislation; supervision
10.	School outings	Risk of harm while attending out-of-school activities	School tour policy; risk assessments; supervision
11.	School trips involving overnight stay	Risks where children are living away from home	Overnight trip safeguarding procedures; school tour policy
12.	School trips involving foreign travel	Risk of harm during out-of-school activities	School tour policy; safeguarding procedures
15.	Annual Sports Day	Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision	Supervision; Health and Safety policy; Administration of First Aid policy
16.	Fundraising events involving pupils	Risk of harm by volunteers or visitors	Supervision procedures; the school adheres to Garda vetting legislation where appropriate
17.	Use of off-site facilities	Risk of harm during out-of-school activities	Risk assessments; supervision procedures
18.	School transport arrangements	Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision during out-of-school activities	Supervision arrangements; Code of Behaviour
19.	Care of children with SEN including intimate care when needed.	Risk of harm to children with special educational needs	SEN policy; support plans; intimate care policy
20.	Care of vulnerable adult students	Risk of harm to vulnerable students	Safeguarding supports; intimate care procedures

	School Activity / Area of Risk	Risk Identified Against Each School Activity	Risk Mitigation Measures
21.	Management of challenging behaviour	Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour	Code of Behaviour; School compliance with understanding Behaviours of Concern & responding to crisis situations developed by the DEY.
22.	Provision of food and drink	Risk of harm to children with medical vulnerabilities	Health and Safety policy; care plans; Administration of Medication policy
23.	Administration of medicine	Risk of harm to children with medical vulnerabilities	Administration of Medication policy
24.	Administration of First Aid	Risk of harm due to inadequate procedures	First Aid policy and staff training
25.	SPHE/RSE	Risk of harm not being recognised by pupils or staff	Full implementation of SPHE and RSE programme as well as the full Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle.
26.	Prevention and dealing with bullying	Risk of harm due to bullying	Bí Cineálta policy. Proactive awareness facilitated by the school.
27.	Training of school personnel	Risk of harm where personnel have not received appropriate training	Child protection training; training records. All staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk assessment.
28.	Use of external personnel	Risk of child being harmed by external adults	External personnel policy; The school adheres to Garda vetting legislation.
29.	External sports coaches	Risk of child being harmed by adults	External coaches policy; the school adheres to Garda vetting legislation; supervision
30.	Pupils with specific vulnerabilities	Risk of harm to vulnerable pupils	SEN policy; safeguarding supports; Bí Cineálta policy;
31.	Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants	Risk of harm due to racism	The school facilitates multi-cultural awareness initiatives; Bí Cineálta policy
33.	LGBT pupils/perceived LGBT pupils	Risk of harm due to bullying	Bí Cineálta procedures; wellbeing supports; proactive awareness initiatives facilitated by the school
34.	Pupils of minority religious faiths	Risk of harm due to racism/discrimination	Inclusion and equality procedures

	School Activity / Area of Risk	Risk Identified Against Each School Activity	Risk Mitigation Measures
35.	Children in care	Risk of harm not being recognised or reported	Child Protection Procedures; liaison with Tusla
36.	Children on CPNS	Risk of harm not being recognised or reported	DLP oversight; safeguarding procedures; liaison with Tusla
37.	Children with medical needs	Risk of harm to children with medical vulnerabilities	Medication and healthcare plans; Administration of Medicine policy
38.	Recruitment of school personnel	Risk of child being harmed by school personnel	The school adheres to Garda vetting legislation and recruitment procedures as set out by the DEY.
39.	External tutors/guest speakers	Risk of child being harmed by visitors	Supervision; external personnel procedures
40.	Volunteers/Parents in school	Risk of child being harmed by volunteers or visitors	Vetting and supervision arrangements
41.	Visitors/contractors during school hours	Risk of child being harmed by visitors	Visitor management procedures
42.	Visitors/contractors after school	Risk of harm by adults on school premises	Access control and supervision
43.	Religious ceremonies/instruction	Risk of harm during external activities	Supervision and safeguarding procedures
44.	ICT/use of Google workspace/social media use	Risk of inappropriate access/use of devices; inappropriate communication;	Acceptable Use Policy; smartphone/device policy; Bí Cineálta policy; Professional Code of Conduct
45.	Application of sanctions	Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour	Code of Behaviour; detention procedures
47.	Students on external work experience	Risk of harm during out-of-school activities	External work experience policy; the school adheres to Garda vetting legislation
48.	Student teachers on placement	Risk of harm by school personnel	Student teacher placement procedures
49.	Use of video/photography/media	Risk of inappropriate communication or circulation of material	Acceptable use policy; consent procedures
53.	Homework club/evening study	Risk of harm in one-to-one situations; inadequate supervision	Supervision and safeguarding procedures

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.

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 22nd September 2026

Signed:*	*Colette Power*	**Date**: 22/09/2026

Chairperson of the board of management

Signed:*	*Denis Ring*	**Date**: 22/09/2026

Principal/Secretary to the board of management

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is expected to be reviewed annually: BOM Meeting September 2027

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.

- Hard Copy in the Principal's office
- Hard copy displayed in the foyer area of the school
- Soft copy on the website
- Soft copy accessible to parents through the website.