

Griffith Barracks Multi Denominational School

Roll number 20012s
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CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

GRIFFITH BARRACKS MDS

1. NAME OF SERVICE BEING PROVIDED

Griffith Barracks Multi Denominational School (GBMDS) is a Primary National School, state-funded by the Department of Education. The school was established under its own patronage and affiliated to Educate Together which defines the ethos of the school. We are based on South Circular Road, Dublin 8 on the grounds of the old Griffith Barracks and we share the campus with Griffith College. GBMDS provides primary education for children aged 4 to 12 years. We currently employ 19 teachers, 6 Special Needs Assistants, 1 secretary, an accounts person and a caretaker.

2. NATURE OF SERVICE AND PRINCIPALS TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM

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 2017](#) and [TUSLA Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of GBMDS has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document. The Board of Management fully complies and adheres to Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary School (Revised 2023).

GBMDS operates under the core principals of Educate Together in that we are equality-based, co-educational, child-centred and democratically run. The role of the school is to provide an appropriate education for our pupils. A stable, secure learning environment is essential in order to achieve this goal. Here in GBMDS, we adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity of taking unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect. We are committed to creating a safe and positive learning environment that is respectful, inclusive and caring for all our pupils. The Board commits itself to following the Children First National Guidance (2017) and the Children First Act 2015 without exception including the Child Protection Procedure for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023).

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) at GBMDS is Eddie Fox

The Deputy Liaison Person (DDL) at GBMDS is Fionnuala Ward

Activities and services provided:

- Daily activities to educate the children in line with the Primary Curriculum. Lessons are conducted through whole-class teaching, team teaching (i.e. 2 or more adults co-teaching a class), small group and station teaching (i.e. one adult and six children) and withdrawal teaching

(i.e. small groups of children or individual children receiving additional instruction with a support teacher outside of the main classroom).

- Visiting teachers to the school, e.g. G.A.A coach, storytellers, writers, science speakers, Dog's Trust
- School-based activities off campus, e.g. swimming lessons in the local swimming pool, sport events, school tours
- After-school clubs run on the school premises with school staff or independent businesses, e.g. drama, music, sport, arts and crafts.
- Engagement with representatives of local initiatives, e.g. Bizworld, Young Entrepreneurs, Heads Together, CraftEd
- School Events, e.g. Sport's Day, Intercultural Day, Heritage Week, Science Week, Maths Week, Book Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge.
- Parental involvement in the education of their children, e.g. Maths for Fun, Science for Fun, Shared Reading, Grandparent's Day, Intercultural projects.

We believe that children have the right to learn in an environment in which they feel secure and protected from all forms of harm; such as neglect, assault, ill-treatment or sexual abuse. Our staff are vigilant for any signs of distress or harm among our pupils and apply our safeguarding procedures diligently to address and alleviate any such problems.

3. SCHOOL SPHE (STAY SAFE AND RSE)

Child Protection

In our school, all child protection and welfare issues are dealt with in accordance with 'Children First - The National Guidelines for the Protection & Welfare of Children' & the D.E.S. 'Child Protection Guidelines & Procedures' (2001). The Designated Liaison Person is the Principal (Eddie Fox) and in his absence the Deputy Principal (Fionnuala Ward) will deal with all related issues.

In line with our Child Safeguarding Statement, prior to teaching the Stay Safe Programme, teachers assure children that their safety is of utmost importance. They ensure that children in their class are aware of how they can tell an adult if they feel unsafe in school.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

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 2017, `Griffith Barracks MDS have carried out a risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child while under our care. The following is the list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1	School-based bullying, verbal, physical or psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferencing practices implemented throughout the school to investigate and resolve conflict, e.g. peer mediation and Berry Street. • Anti-bullying lessons for school • Parents can let school know of any bullying behaviours outside of school through the class teacher initially (see Communications Policy). • Anti-bullying procedures for children displayed in every room to inform adults as to the steps to be followed • Anti-racism officers identified during school induction and at staff meetings to support students within the school. • Yard behaviour books kept as a record of trends of behaviour and bullying • Anti-bullying policy on our school website to inform parents • Promotion of a culture of openness and respect in which students can approach staff to discuss concerns and worries • Adequate supervision is provided to ensure codes are being followed. • The school Anti-bullying programme is supported by the planning and teaching of SPHE, RSE, the Stay Safe Programme, Fun Friends, Friends for Life and Weaving Wellbeing. • A worry bag will be in each class from Rang 2 Upwards.
2	Interaction with visitors to the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors to the school must check in at reception at the front entrance and sign into our Visitors App with phone number. • Front entrance to the school has a magnetic lock and so visitors must be provided with access by a staff member as does the front door • Visitors are accompanied by a staff member at all times during their visit • Regular visitors to the school, e.g. external teachers, guest speakers, are Garda Vetted or a copy of their Garda vetting is provided to the school. • Persons administering external programmes (e.g. GAA) through another body will provide the school with a copy of their Garda vetting and any appropriate insurance. • Children are closely supervised by staff members during all school events in which visitors are invited into the school, e.g. Intercultural Day, Science Week, Sport's Day, School Performances) • Students in the school on teaching placement will be allocated a staff mentor and receive support throughout their time in the school. • TY students and Interns in the school on work placement will be allocated a staff mentor and are not responsible for the teaching of the children. They must be at least 16 years of age at the beginning of their placement. They will never be in sole supervision of any students.

3	Exposure to inappropriate online content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of electronic devices in school is guided by the school's <i>Acceptable Usage Policy</i>. • Use of electronic devices, e.g. iPads, Chrome Books, laptops, cameras, is monitored and supervised by adults. • School internet is provided by <i>PDST Technology in Education</i> which is monitored for inappropriate content and unsuitable websites are blocked. • Inappropriate content which appears through the school internet is logged and reported to our internet provider. • Cyber safety talks to parents are arranged on a biannual basis
4	School events held outside the school grounds, e.g. school tours, swimming lessons, sport's events, concerts, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A risk assessment will be completed before each school tour or trip. • Children will be closely supervised by a teacher and SNA when utilising the outdoor classroom. • Pupil-teacher ratio is reduced for school tours to maximise the supervision of children. Pupil-teacher ratio for junior Infants to 1st class is 10:1 and for 2nd -6th class is 15:1. Pupils are closely supervised by staff when transitioning from one area to another (e.g. going to the toilets, going to and from the bus) and when interacting with staff and/or volunteers from the establishment they are visiting. • Changing rooms are closely supervised by staff when in use by children e.g. at swimming lessons and sport's events. • Parent volunteers are advised what procedure to follow during changing at swimming. • Parent/guardian helpers on trips will be informed that pictures may only be taken by staff members. • Parental consent is provided on enrolment and for other trips for children to leave the school to attend any events.
5	After-school clubs: drop-off, staff, collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-off: Children are lined up by their class teacher and handed over directly to the external after-school teacher. • Internal staff: Teachers are given a list of children's names and the names of adults who can collect them. • External staff: Teachers provide the school with copies of their insurance, Garda Vetting, etc. • Part of the external ECA form will be the contact details and names of who is collecting each child.
6	Hand-over of children to responsible adult at collection time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual extra-curricular organisers have a responsibility to ensure that children are dropped off and collected appropriately. • If an unknown adult comes to collect a child (e.g. a family friend, an aunt/uncle, a cousin, etc.) and the school has not been informed beforehand by parents, the class teacher calls the parents to confirm the child has permission to go with that adult and asks for identification if the adult is unknown to them. • If an adult appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they come to collect a child from school, this would then be reported to the DLP or DDLP immediately.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children from 3rd-6th class can walk home from school only if their parents have given the school written permission in advance annually. Students can walk with older siblings providing they have written permission of their parents. • If a child is not collected and left for more than 20 minutes the DLP or DDLP is contacted.
7	Storage or publication of photos of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written parental permission to take photos of children is obtained by the school at enrolment and every year while the child is in the school. • Class teachers are made aware of any children in his or her class who do not have permission to be in school photos. • Photos taken by staff are removed from personal devices at the end of each school day. Photos are stored securely on the school online storage space. • Children names are not published with photos uploaded to the school website or class blogs. • Children are not permitted to use electronic devices (e.g. iPads, cameras, personal devices) unless under the supervision of an adult. Children are not permitted to use camera phones during the school day or at school events and the school has recently developed a student mobile phone policy.
8	Withdrawal of children from class / yard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glass panels are installed in the doors of all classrooms in the school. • Parents are informed and provide written consent if children are withdrawn from class on a regular basis, e.g. for learning support, English language support, resource or movement breaks. This is done at the start of the year. • Children who need assistance with toileting during the school day are accompanied/assisted by two adults. Adults are not permitted to go into a toilet with a child alone. Staff are mindful of the dignity of the child in these situations. • Children who need to use the toilet during yard time are recorded in the yard book.
9	Lack of healthy lunch or insufficient lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher monitor children's lunches and ensure that all children are provided with a sufficient quantity of healthy food each day. • Orientation Meetings take place for each class at the beginning of the school year. • Teacher will speak to the parent directly in an informal supportive way. • If a child is regularly provided with insufficient lunch the class teacher discusses it with the parents in the first instance. • The school has access to Glanmore Foods sandwiches and milk which are provided by Dublin City Council. • School Healthy Eating Policy is shared on the school website and highlighted in the Newsletter annually. • If a child regularly has no lunch or insufficient lunch and the situation does not improve after speaking with the parents, the class teacher informs the DLP or DDLP.

10	Data protection (See Data Protection and Records Retention Policy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidential documents relating to children in the school are stored securely in the school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hard copies are stored in locked filing cabinets in the principal's office and in support teachers' classrooms ○ Soft copies are stored in a secure online database. A password is required to access the documents. ○ Word documents are password protected. ○ Two Step Authentication is used in the school. • Documents are shared with staff on a need to know basis. • Parental permission for transfer of information (i.e. between school staff, between the school and previous/prospective schools, between the school and other professionals) is obtained at the beginning of each school year. • Initials used when mentioning children in internal emails. • Shredder used for sensitive documents
11	Children presenting with social, emotional, behavioural or medical needs in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns relating to social, emotional, behavioural or medical needs are communicated to parents by phone, at collection time or through formal meetings. • Children are provided with additional support in school through the model of the Continuum of Support. This may be in the form of in-class support or withdrawal from class. Staff discuss concerns and learning targets with parents and formulate a written plan, signed by the parents. Learning targets are regularly monitored to track progress. • An individual care plan / holistic profile will be completed for children with additional vulnerabilities to ensure extra supports are in place within the school environment as required. The specific strategies outlined in this care plan will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the needs and supports identified are current and appropriate. • The school may recommend onward referral to parents (e.g. to the Primary Care Team, the School Age Disability Team, NEPS, GP or CAMHS) for children presenting with significant difficulties. • Significant concerns are raised with the DLP or DDLP. • The Administration of Medication Policy will be implemented in the event that a child requires medication throughout the school day. Parent/Guardians must complete the relevant forms and put a request in writing to the board. A copy of this policy can be downloaded from the school website. • A standing item on the staff meeting agenda is "children to look out for" which aims to support and scaffold children who are finding school life difficult. • Children with behaviour or sensory needs may need to have an individual behaviour plan (IBP) as part of their holistic profile which supports them and the staff working with them in school. • We have a no nut policy in the school, where children are discouraged from bringing foods containing nuts to school.

12	Late drop-offs, early collection, late pick up, attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who are dropped to or collected from school more than 10 minutes late are signed in or collected from the office and early leaving book by an adult. The school discusses punctuality with parents if children are regularly late. • Attendance strategy. • Text sent to all families who have missed 14 days or 17 days and then families are contacted if there is an awareness that they will miss more than 20 days or will be chronic attenders. A monthly student absence report is prepared. • Absence notes are inputted on Aladdin. • Care team support individual children • Significant concerns in relation to timekeeping are reported to the Education Welfare Officer. • Children’s attendance at school will be monitored with absence notes required for any missed days. Contact will be made with parents in instances of regular absences, with a record of any discussion stored securely on the school system. • Significant attendance concerns are reported to the Education Welfare Officer. • Teachers must be informed in advance if children are to be collected early from school. Children must be signed out by a parent-approved adult in the Early Collections Book. • Each classroom has an internal phone.
13	The school site is utilised by other services with the approval of the Board of Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sherpa Kids, The Korean School and any other services utilising the school premises shall be responsible for the review and implementation of their own Child Safeguarding Statement and supporting documents and provide the school with a copy of same. The BOM reserves the right to refuse access if these policies are not up to the standard of the school. • If a referral is made by these services to TUSLA they must report this to the DLP/DDLP • Any concerns relating to these services shall be raised immediately with the DLP or DDLP.
14	Accidents and injuries on site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accidents and injuries that occur on the premises shall be recorded in the accident and yard books which are then signed by the principal and chairperson. This includes the administration of first aid where required. • This policy will be discussed with all staff at induction day and at any other point required and training provided. • First Aid Training is provided every year. • A copy of this policy will be placed on the school website. • There will be three staff members who have occupational first aid training and there will be biannual whole staff first aid training.
15	Sporting Activities including annual Sports Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan is published for all staff and parents for sports day. • Children with individual care plans or who are flight risks have plans put in place • parents giving lifts will be checked to ensure they have appropriate insurance and are Garda vetted.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only those with Garda vetting can accompany children to the toilet and all adults understand this before leaving for the match/event
16	Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff will be informed of the Code of Behaviour Policy at staff induction at the beginning of each school year. • Any staff member that joins after the date of this induction day will be informed of this Policy and provided with a copy as soon as possible following their start date. • A copy of this Policy will be made available to all staff on the school drive. • A copy of this Policy will be placed on the school website.
17	Recreation breaks for pupils /Classroom teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be allocated a yard for outdoor play according to their age group. • Each yard will be supervised by a teacher deployed according to need. • The teacher on each yard will be responsible for ensuring a first aid kit is available to each member of staff on that yard. • In the event that the yard is unsuitable for use (e.g. due to rain or ice), all staff will be informed via intercom that the children are to remain in their classroom. The staff members responsible for yard duty on that day will be responsible for the supervision of the children in their classroom. • Children do not bring food into the yard as it is a choking hazard.

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 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 2017.

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 and in Section 4 of this Child Safeguarding Statement to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

This risk assessment shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

5. PROCEDURES

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 recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations.

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the *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's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice* and Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023). 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 workers / volunteers of a child availing of our service***
 - Minor complaints about staff are managed in line with the complaint's procedure, as outlined in our *Parent Teacher Communication Policy*.
 - Allegations against staff of abuse or misconduct are managed according to the school *Child Safeguarding Statement*.
 - Griffith Barracks MDS will fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children.
 - Griffith Barracks MDS will fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters.
 - 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 2017* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the gov.ie website.

- ***Procedure for the recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children***
 - Only teachers who are Garda vetted are employed. All temporary and permanent teachers are registered with the Teaching Council.
 - All SNAs who are employed in the school in a temporary or permanent capacity are Garda vetted by Educate Together. Substitute SNAs will present with Garda vetting.
 - Parents and volunteers who work with the children on a long-term and/or consistent basis are Garda vetted by Educate Together.
 - References from previous employers are obtained before employment in the school.
 - Form of Undertaking and Statutory Declaration completed before commencing in the school.

- ***Procedure for the provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm***
 - Staff are informed of school child-protection and anti-bullying procedures during staff induction at the beginning of each school year
 - School policies are provided to all staff and discussed. Staff are informed of the relevant person to direct queries to for each policy.
 - All staff will be trained in the recognition of signs of abuse and reasonable grounds for concern and provided with a copy of the relevant sections of *Children First* during staff induction each October. All new members of staff hired after this induction day will receive training as soon as possible from an appropriate member of staff.
 - Staff are informed of reporting procedures and provided with a copy of the *Child Safeguarding Statement*.

- The school *Child Protection Policy* and *Anti-Bullying Procedures* are available to download on our school intranet and on our school website. Child Protection and Anti-Bullying documents, e.g. reference sheets, reporting templates, are available for staff on the school intranet also.
- Child Protection Guidelines, including names of the DLP and DDLP and reporting procedures, are displayed in every room.
- The DLP/DDLP/Board of Management engage with Child Protection training through local education centres.
- School management stay updated on current Child Protection guidelines and circulars. School management will update staff and BoM and provide any training required where appropriate.

➤ ***Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to TUSLA***

- All mandated persons shall report a mandated concern to TUSLA as soon as practicable in accordance with the Children First Act.
- The DLP or DDLP shall act as a resource to the mandated person to ensure that reporting procedures are followed correctly and promptly.
- In order to protect the identity of each child each case reported from TUSLA is recorded in the following way. The year of the record eg. 18 followed by the month (January 01) and then by the case number. An example of this for the first case of the year would be 180101. The TUSLA portal is used for this by all mandated personnel
<https://portal.tusla.ie/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2f>
- On completion, a report shall be forwarded to the relevant Duty Social Worker by the DLP, DDLP or Mandated Person.
- In the event the report is forwarded by the DLP or DDLP, the Mandated Person shall be informed in writing that the report has been forwarded.
- If the DLP/DDLP feel that a report to TUSLA is not warranted they will inform the Mandated person that a report is not warranted in writing giving their reasons why the report has not been submitted.
- In the event that the report is forwarded by a mandated person without the assistance of the DLP/DDLP, the DLP or DDLP shall be informed and any copies provided to be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet in the DLP's office.
- All SNA's shall report a child protection or welfare concern to the DLP or DDLP as soon as practicable. The DLP or DDLP will complete a report which shall be forward to the relevant Duty Social Worker.
- All staff will fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.
- All reports to TUSLA will be shown to the Board with identifying information redacted from them.

➤ ***Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons***

- All teachers in the school are mandated persons. Mandated persons, as defined in the Children First Act 2015, have a statutory obligation to report concerns which reach a particular threshold to TUSLA and to cooperate with TUSLA in the assessment of mandated reports.

➤ ***Procedure for appointing a relevant person***

- The school principal and DLP, is the relevant person in accordance with the Children First Act 2015.
- The deputy principal and DDLP, will deputise for the DLP in his absence.
- The name and contact details of the current DLP and DDLP will be displayed at the school entrance, in every classroom and on the school website.

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.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This document will be published on our school website and will be circulated to all members of our school community including parents and staff. A hard copy of this Statement will be made available on request.

All staff will complete TUSLA and PDST training in relation to new Child Safeguarding Procedures during the 2017/2018 school year.

7. REVIEW

The Board of Management of GBMDS has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document. This Child Safeguarding Statement replaces our Child Protection Policy. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually using the most up to date version of the Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement on the gov.ie website.

As part of this annual review, the board of management will seek feedback from parents and pupils (in an age appropriate manner). Any areas for improvement identified will be addressed and an action plan will also be put in place.

Notification regarding the board of management's review of the Child safeguarding Statement will be used to notify staff, the school's Parent Association and our patron that the annual review has been undertaken. This will also be published on the school's website.

Chairperson name and contact details: _____

Signed: _____

Principal name and contact details: _____

Signed: _____

For queries, please contact Eddie Fox, School Principal. Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

Final ratification by the Board of Management after pupil, parent, staff and patron feedback: 5/2/2018
Reviewed and amended February and March 2019 by Staff, Parents and Board of Management.
Reviewed September 2019 by Staff, Parents and Board of Management.
Reviewed October 2020 by Staff, Parents and Board of Management.
Reviewed October 2021 by Staff, Parents and Board of Management.
Reviewed September 2022 by Staff, Parents and Board of Management.
Reviewed September 2023 by Staff, Parents and Board of Management.