

1. ABBEYLEIX FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING CENTRE:

Abbeyleix Further Education & Training Centre provides full and part-time high quality education opportunities to learners including PLC students under the age of 18 years and vulnerable adults. Learners study under a number of funding streams including Vocational Training and Opportunities Scheme, Post Leaving Certificate, Back to Education Initiative, Community Education and Adult Literacy. The age profile of students ranges from 17 - 65+ years.

The Management Structure consists of a Centre Manager with assistance from full and part-time staff. The Centre does not have a B.O.M. in place but reports directly to Michelle Shanahan, LOETB FET Manager (Pathways).

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's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*, the FET Management Team of Abbeyleix FET Centre has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

2. COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM:

- Our Centre is committed to safeguarding the children/vulnerable adults in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can learn and develop.
- Our policy declaration applies to all paid staff, volunteers, committee/ board members and students and staff on work placement within our organisation. All committee board members, staff, volunteers and students must sign up to and abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our child safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures.
- We will review our child safeguarding statement and accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures every year or sooner if necessary, due to service issues or changes in legislation or national policy.

1 LOETB FET Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the 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: **Helen Kavanagh, Centre Manager**

3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is: **Deirdre Borland, Learner Support Worker**

4 LOETB FET Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of Centre life and must be reflected in all of the Centre's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the Centre will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The service 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 Centre will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

5 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 Centre, the Centre adheres to the

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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 Centre 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 Centre adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016.
- 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 Centre -
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the Centre's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all **new staff** are provided with a copy of the Centre's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures staff avail of relevant training and Tusla E Learning Module
 - Encourages members of LOETB to avail of relevant training
 - Centre management maintains records of all staff training
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all Centre Staff are required to adhere to the procedures set out in *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)* including in the case of registered teachers and other Mandated persons, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- In this Centre LOETB has appointed the above named DLP as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the service's child safeguarding statement.
- All registered teachers employed by the service are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Centre Management has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the Centre or participating in Centre activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the Centre'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 DES website or will be made available on request by the Centre.

Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. LOETB FET Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the Centre in question.

- 6 This statement has been published on the Centre's website and has been provided to all members of Centre Staff, and LOETB. 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.
- 7 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 LOETB FET Management Team and Abbeyleix Further Education and Training Centre on 24/11/24.

Signed: *Felicity McLaughlin*

LOETB FET Management Team, LOETB

Signed: *Helen Kavanagh*
FET Centre Manager

For queries, please contact **Helen Kavanagh, FET Centre Manager, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.**