An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	St Coen's National School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Merrymeeting Rathnew Co. Wicklow
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	20208M
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	11/11/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	23/02/2026

What is a child protection and safeguarding inspection?

A Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection (CPSI) is a focused inspection of the implementation of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* or the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*. These procedures provide direction and guidance to school authorities and to school personnel in relation to meeting their statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015. They also provide direction and guidance in relation to the continued implementation of the best practice, non-statutory guidance in Children First National Guidance 2017. The inspection examines the implementation of the procedures through undertaking six checks and administering surveys to parents and pupils.

The inspection process consists of a single-day inspection, with follow-up activity where full compliance was not achieved. The follow-up activity is carried out in a relatively short timeframe.

The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

What happens during a Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection?

During a CPSI, inspectors:

- Hold meetings with:
  - Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and deputy DLP
  - Chairperson of board of management
  - Sample of school personnel
- Review the following documents:
  - Board of management minutes
  - Child safeguarding statement and risk assessment
  - Annual review documents, notifications, and vetting
- Review child protection casefile records.

How to read this report

The first section of the report indicates the school's compliance with each of the checks conducted by indicating whether the school was:

- **Compliant**
- **Not yet compliant**
- **Not applicable**

Some of the checks may not be relevant to a particular school, for example, a school that has no child protection casefiles. In such instances, the report indicates that the school had no child protection casefiles, and the check does not apply.

It should be noted that the term 'school personnel' is used as a generic term to cover all adults who are involved in the operation of the school. It covers employees such as teachers, special needs assistants, caretakers, secretaries, cleaners, voluntary workers in the school, paid or voluntary tutors, and parent association members when they are working in the school.

Where a school is *not yet compliant* with a particular requirement, the report sets out the *actions required* for the school to achieve compliance.

A *Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections* can be accessed at www.gov.ie. This guide sets out how CPSIs are conducted and provides the framework used by inspectors in arriving at judgements about a school's compliance with the aspects of the procedures that are checked during the inspection.

Actions of the school in creating a school culture that prevents and addresses bullying behaviour

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's anti-bullying procedures were conducted:
1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy using Appendix A of Bí Cineálta, it is reviewed annually (or earlier if required) and includes a student/pupil friendly version that is displayed where students/pupils and the school community can see it. 2. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, staff, parents and pupils/students. 3. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides an update to the board at each ordinary board meeting that meets the requirements of Bí Cineálta 4. The school has appropriate initiatives in place to promote a positive and inclusive school culture and environment. 5. All staff visited report that they have read the school's Bí Cineálta policy and that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the anti-bullying checks above.

Child protection and safeguarding inspection report

The checks detailed below derive from the procedures which are designed to ensure that schools provide a safe and secure environment for all our children. Responsibility for ensuring the school is *compliant* with the checks, set out below, rests with the board of management. In cases where the school is *not yet compliant* with the checks, the Inspectorate will engage with the school until it becomes *compliant*.

The table below confirms that on **11/11/2025** the school was compliant with all the checks conducted.

The school was compliant with all the checks conducted

Checks	Compliant Not yet compliant Not applicable
1. The school had developed and reviewed its child safeguarding statement, which includes the risk assessment, in line with the procedures.	**Compliant**
2. The school had communicated the required aspects of the procedures to relevant stakeholders.	**Compliant**
3. School leaders, school personnel and members of the board of management undertook child protection training, as necessary, and were aware of their responsibilities.	**Compliant**
4. Correct reporting and record keeping practices were implemented in the case files examined.	**Compliant**
5. The board carried out its oversight role as set out in the procedures.	**Compliant**
6. The principal and chairperson of the board of management reported that they are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the vetting of all school personnel and they discharge these responsibilities.	**Compliant**

Findings from the surveys of pupils and parents

While the level of response to the parent survey was low, almost all parents who participated agreed that the school was welcoming and that their child mattered. Equally, they agreed that their child was safe and they knew who to approach if they had a concern. Most parents agreed that the school promoted a positive school climate, that there were clear expectations about behaviour, and that they were confident that the school would act promptly and effectively if they had a child protection or bullying concern. While the majority of parents were satisfied with the steps the school had taken to prevent bullying, a significant minority indicated that they were unsure. School leaders were advised to explore this survey finding further to ensure parents were aware of the school's efforts to prevent bullying.

In the pupil survey, almost all agreed that they had at least one trusted adult they could approach, and that respectful behaviour was expected. Pupils indicated that they felt safe in classrooms, toilets and corridors, and that staff helped to stop bullying. Most pupils agreed that they felt safe on the yard and at arrival and dismissal times. While the majority of pupils felt their opinions were being listened to and valued, a significant minority were unsure. This merits further exploration by school leaders and teachers to deepen pupils' perception that their contributions are valued.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management welcomes the finding of Child Protection School Inspection and will continue to maintain compliance in all areas through continued monitoring and review of procedures, policies and practises.

Part B Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

Regarding the significant minority cited in the report the school will seek feedback from parents via the Parents Association and direct communication relating to the effectiveness of the Child Safeguarding and Antibullying procedures undertaken by the school.

Regarding the significant minority of pupils cited the school will utilise the Student Council to give pupil voice to further contributing to the Child Safeguarding and Antibullying polices and procedures.