

# Galway County PPN Child Protection Policy- Guidance

This information is taken from: Tusla – Child and Family Agency, ‘Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice’, (2019).

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## **Intro:**

The *Children First Act (2015)* and the non-statutory obligations outlined in the *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)* both set out procedures that any groups working with children and young people must adhere to. Accordingly, groups are required to produce a Child Safeguarding statement, conduct a risk assessment as part of this, and designate a specific person who is responsible for implementation.

This Guide will help your organisation to begin discussions on the safeguarding of children and young people. This is something every organisation working with children, young people or their families should do.

Remember – this policy should be written in a manner which is appropriate to your service and to your parents/guardians and should be based on Children First guidelines so please familiarise these.

## **What is a Child Safeguarding Statement?**

A Child Safeguarding Statement is a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of the service is safe from harm.

It should set out any potential risk of ‘harm’ to a child that you have identified in a risk assessment that you must undertake, and procedures in place to reduce the identified risks, as specified in section 11 (3) of the Children First Act 2015.

The Child Safeguarding Statement should provide an overview of the measures that your organisation has in place to ensure that children are protected from harm. It may also refer to more detailed policies which can be made available on request.

Upon completion, the Child Safeguarding Statement must be furnished to all staff members. It must be displayed in a prominent place and made available to parents and guardians and members of the public upon request.

For further guidance on how to develop a Child Safeguarding Statement, please visit: [https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/4214-TUSLA\\_Guidance\\_on\\_Developing\\_a\\_CSS\\_LR.PDF](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/4214-TUSLA_Guidance_on_Developing_a_CSS_LR.PDF).

## Steps

A suggested process to develop a Child Protection Policy (referencing the NYCI toolkit- linked below).

<p><b>Step 1- Set up a Working Group</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a small policy <b>working group</b>, representative of the different levels and areas within the organisation (key stakeholders).</li> <li>This group should <b>consult</b> with the wider organisation, about the development of the policy.</li> <li>This working group will should work together to <b>draft and revise</b> the policy.</li> <li>The group should identify a named person who will ensure that the task of meeting the responsibilities under <i>Children First</i> legislation is fulfilled. For small organisations this may be someone who is already in a key position and has an overview of the activities and people working in the organisation. For large and complex organisations it is likely that specific resources will have to be allocated to ensure that a named person is identified and dedicated to the implementation task. The work associated with implementing the requirements of <i>Children First</i> will only be achieved if someone is given lead responsibility.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 2- Clarify the position</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree a <b>clear and shared position</b> within the Organisation of its approach to child protection (ie meaning, purpose, mission).</li> <li>This will involve consulting with all the relevant stakeholders. In particular, this <b>consultation</b> should focus on looking at <b>what is working</b> well, including any relevant existing policies or procedures and also looking at <b>gaps</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 3- Identify what should be covered</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Identify</b> the procedures that need to be addressed in the policy.</li> <li>Everyone on the organisation must be <b>aware</b> of the procedures so that everyone <b>knows</b> how to fulfil their <b>responsibilities</b> in relation to child protection.</li> <li><b>Clarify</b> issues such as <b>reporting</b>, for example, how does a concern regarding possible abuse of a child get reported and <b>who has responsibility</b> for the process (there may already be an informal procedure but it may not be written down anywhere)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 4- Appoint a DLP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointment a <b>Designated Liaison Person (DLP)</b>. This person is <b>responsible</b> for ensuring that the child protection policy is <b>implemented and followed</b>.</li> <li>The <b>role and contact</b> details for the DLP should be clearly outlined in the policy.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree the <b>target audience</b> for the policy, the <b>content and format</b> for the policy and <b>assign roles and responsibilities</b> for writing the policy.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Step 5- Drafting the Policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once available share the first draft with relevant stakeholders for <b>feedback</b>.</li> <li>• Consider the production of <b>user-friendly formats</b> for children, young people and their parents/guardians.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 6- Pilot the Policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following agreement on the final draft of the policy, collect comments on its <b>usefulness</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Pilot</b> the policy using relevant <b>case studies/scenarios</b> to <b>test</b> it.</li> <li>• Make any <b>changes</b> necessary to improve the policy and ensure that the <b>legal implications</b> of the policy have been approved.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 7- Ratify the policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior management/Board of Management should officially sign off on the policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 8- Implement the policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a <b>plan</b> to <b>roll out</b> the policy.</li> </ul> <p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>dissemination</b> of the policy to relevant stakeholders within and outside the organisation;</li> <li>○ <b>briefing</b> sessions for relevant stakeholders;</li> <li>○ <b>training</b> on the use of the policy for personnel</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 9- Monitor and evaluate the policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Monitoring and evaluation</b> measures should be in place to implement the policy.</li> <li>• An agreed date for a <b>formal review</b> of the policy should be noted in the policy document itself along with the name of the person responsible for overseeing this task.</li> </ul>

## Useful Resources/ examples:

- Early Childhood Ireland: [Developing a Child Protection and Welfare Policy](#)
- Tusla: [Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice](#) and [Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- Early Years Child Protection Programme: [Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide For Early Years Services in Ireland](#)
- National Youth Council of Ireland: [Toolkit for Youth Work Organisations to design, review and evaluate their child protection policy Protecting our Children and Young People](#)
- [Children First Information and Advice Officers](#)- contacts
- Galway Childcare Committee- [Child Protection information](#)
- Sport Ireland (example): [Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport](#)
- Southside Community Training Network: [A Guide to Policies and Procedures for Community Organisations](#)- includes info on Child protection policy
- Irish Red Cross (example): [Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures](#)
- Heritage Council (example): [Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- Community Games (example): [Child Protection Policy](#)
- Cashel Arts Festival (example): [Child Protection and Safeguarding](#)

## Appendix 1: Child Safeguarding Statement Sample Template

**Note:** This is a sample template provided as a guide only. It is not a standardised format for a Child Safeguarding Statement. Please see the following documents for more information about developing a Child Safeguarding Statement:

- *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*
- *Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement* ([www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie))
- *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice* ([www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie))

### 1. Name of service being provided:

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### 2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm (brief outline of what our service is, what we do and our commitment to safeguard children):

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### 3. Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services including the area of online safety when accessing the internet. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

### 4. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017), and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. 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;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children;
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

## 5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on \_\_\_\_\_, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Provider)

[Provider's name and contact details]

For queries, please contact \_\_\_\_\_, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

## Child Safeguarding Statement Sample Template

**Section 2: Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm:** Describe the nature of your services and specify the principles that you will observe to keep children safe from harm while they are availing of your service.

**Section 3: Risk assessment:** *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017) provides additional guidance on carrying out the risk assessment component of your Child Safeguarding Statement.

**Section 4: Procedures:** As this is only a sample list, you will need to add to this list as appropriate, based on the outcome of your risk assessment. Please see also Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*.

**Section 5: Implementation:** At a minimum, reviews must be carried out every 24 months. The provider is the individual with overall responsibility for the organisation. This may be the chief executive officer, chairperson of a board of management, owner/operator, etc.

**Relevant Person:** You should include the name and contact details of the Relevant Persons, who are the first point of contact regarding your Child Safeguarding Statement.