CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

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1. **Introduction**

The Department has a corporate duty to promote the safety and well-being of children with whom it is in contact in any capacity. This policy document deals with the recognition, reporting and management of child safety concerns and will assist managers in having due regard for the rights and interests of children. This policy applies to all Department staff.

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht interacts with young people in several different ways; through the provision of high quality education services and visitor programmes run at our National Parks and nature reserves, Irish Language schemes aimed at students and the Transition year student programme.

In carrying out its functions, the Department also provides grants to various individuals, bodies and groups, many of which provide services to children and young people. The Department requires adherence to *Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* as a condition of funding for groups dealing with or in contact with children and young people and has established procedures to ensure that evidence of appropriate levels of compliance with *Children First* guidelines are in place in organisations in receipt of funding under schemes operated by the Department.

The Bodies and Agencies funded from the Department's Vote Group also interact with children and young people through their various education programmes and through the programmes which they provide funding for. These Bodies and Agencies are also tasked with putting in place suitable child protection guidelines and policies in line with *Children First*. The Department will ensure compliance with this obligation through the Service Level Agreement Process and through the network of Designated Liaison Persons in the Department and its bodies and agencies. Given the wider societal concerns in relation to child protection it is essential that strong guidelines regarding child protection are in place in the Department and the Bodies and Agencies funded from the Department's Vote Group to support all staff who may interact with children in any capacity and to ensure protection of any child in our care.

*Children First* places an obligation on the Department to promote the welfare and protection of children. For the purposes of these guidelines a child is defined as anyone under 18 years of age who is not or has not been married.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs published the current version of *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* in 2011, available at [www.dcya.gov.ie](http://www.dcya.gov.ie). This policy was developed for the Department against this background. The policy will be updated again ahead of the commencement of the Children First Act 2015 and following publication of the updated *Children First* guidance document from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service already have an established Code of Behaviour for Child Protection. These practices and procedures have been incorporated into the
Department’s Child Protection Policy. These practices and procedures are attached at Appendix 3. All staff in the NPWS should familiarise themselves with these additional practices and procedures and sign the declaration form attached at the end of Appendix 3 and Appendix 9 as appropriate.

All staff members of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, both permanent and temporary, have been given a copy of this Child Protection Policy. New staff members who deal directly with children will be briefed on the policy and their responsibilities at induction. Staff members dealing directly with children on a regular basis must sign a copy of the Staff Declaration Form at Appendices 8 and 9.

2. Child Protection Statement

We in the Department want to ensure that insofar as possible children are protected while they are with staff of this Department in any capacity. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. We will adhere to the recommendations of *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

We also want to ensure that where the Department provides grants to particular individuals, groups or bodies which provide services to children and young people, that the grant recipients provide evidence of compliance with *Children First*.

The Department will:

- Acknowledge the rights of children to be protected, treated with respect, listened to and have their own views taken into consideration;
- Recognise that the welfare of children must always come first, regardless of all other considerations;
- Adopt the safest possible practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take risks and leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- Develop procedures for responding to accidents and complaints;
- Provide child protection training for workers where necessary. This should clarify the responsibilities of both the organisation and individuals, and clearly show the procedures if child abuse is suspected;
- Co-operate with any other child care and protection agencies and professionals by sharing appropriate information when necessary and working together towards the best possible outcome for the children concerned;
- Make links with other relevant organisations in order to promote child protection and welfare policies and practices;
- Ensure that evidence of appropriate levels of compliance with *Children First* guidelines are in place in organisations in receipt of funding under funding schemes operated by the Department.

The Department’s Child Protection policy is an evolving document. Periodically, the Department will evaluate the Policy taking into account such items as feedback received,
best practice and/or any changing legislation over that period and amend accordingly. Bodies and Agencies funded from the Department's Vote are also obliged to have a Child Protection Policy in place and this policy and those of the agencies and bodies will be continually assessed in the context of the aforementioned factors.

A copy of the Department's Child Protection Policy has been circulated to all staff in the Department and is also available on the Department's web-site and extranet service. Managers are asked to remind all staff of the procedures on a regular basis and the policy will be outlined to all new staff members who have regular contact with children. A Training Needs Analysis will be carried out on a regular basis with a view to identifying key staff for training purposes. Training will be provided to relevant staff and will be organised by the Training and Development Unit in co-operation and consultation with the HSE as necessary.

3. **Code of Practice for staff**

Staff in the Department will observe the following good work practices to ensure that every child remains safe and has a favourable interaction with the Department whether in work placement, in participation in our education programmes or visiting our facilities. All staff members who are in contact with children as part of their working day must adopt a child centred approach.

- Always put the child’s welfare and safety first
- Treat all children and young people equally and as individuals, with respect and dignity
- Involve children and young people in decision-making, as appropriate
- Use appropriate language and maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner
- Respect a child’s or young person’s personal space
- Lead by example and create an atmosphere of trust
- Be cognisant of a child’s or a young person’s limitations, due to a medical condition for example
- Give children encouragement, support and enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Ensure any dangerous behaviour is avoided or stopped
- Ensure that any personal details relating to children are kept confidential
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs to a child, along with details of treatment given
- Ensure there are clear channels of communication and access to staff if parents/guardians or children/young people wish to voice their concerns if there is something they are not happy about.

Staff should not take one young person alone on outings such as car journeys. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full consent and knowledge of the parents/guardians and a senior member of the staff.
While we recognise that sometimes it is appropriate for staff to work on a one to one basis with a child or young person, staff should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with an individual child/young person. Where an adult needs to meet with a child/young person alone, the door should be left open and another adult informed of the meeting.

There should be no unnecessary physical contact between a staff member and a young person although there are times when for example, placing a hand on a distressed child/young person’s shoulder to comfort him/her would be appropriate. Physical contact should only be in response to the needs of the child and should be appropriate to the age and the level of development of the child. Generally the consent of the child should be sought in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation).

Staff should not communicate with children they have met through their workplace using text messages, facebook or any other forms of social media. Phone calls on personal mobiles should also be avoided.

In addition, staff will never engage in the following inappropriate behaviour;

- Do not use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language
- Do not single out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, unwelcome focus or attention
- Do not allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Do not hit or physically chastise children/young people
- Do not leave children unattended or unsupervised
- Do not exert undue influence over a child in order to gain personal benefit or reward.
- Do not let allegations made by a child go unrecorded
- Do not make or receive private calls/texts while supervising a children's activity
- Do not accompany a child into toilet facilities

A breach of any of the above will be seen as a breach of the Code of Practice and could give rise to both disciplinary and criminal proceedings. Staff should report concerns they note about any inappropriate behaviour of an officer of the Department with regards to a child/ren either through their line manager or the DLP directly.

### 4. Implementation of the Child Protection Policy in the Department

The policies and procedures contained in this document apply to all areas of the Department and to all staff members. However, it is recognised that there are a number of areas where child protection issues may feature more prominently. Additional information on these areas is outlined below:
National Parks and Wildlife Service
The Department operates a National Parks and Wildlife Service Education Programme. Additional measures are set out for Departmental staff whose role involves contact with children in national parks and reserves and in the Department's education centres. These are attached at Appendix 3 of this document. The code of practice and procedures is relevant for all Departmental NPWS staff who come into contact with children during the course of their work particularly education staff.

All Departmental NPWS staff, both permanent and temporary, whose role involves contact with children, will be given a copy of this Child Protection Policy which includes additional practices and procedures for NPWS staff. They must sign the Staff Declaration Form as set out at the end of Appendix 3 certifying that they have read the Policy and additional practices and procedures, they agree to abide by it and that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable for working with children/young people.

All new staff recruited, either on a permanent or temporary basis, whose work involves contact with children must fill out the Self Declaration form at Appendix 9. Garda vetting will be required for staff whose role primarily involves working with children. Training and Development Unit will assist with the provision of training for relevant officers.

Gaeltacht Summer Colleges
Since 2010, the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is responsible for the administration of the Irish-Language Colleges in the Gaeltacht and it is responsible for the development and implementation of policies to ensure high standards in the system overall. Therefore, any committee intending to organise an Irish-Language College in the Gaeltacht under the Irish-Language Learners Scheme must apply to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for official recognition. An extract from the rules governing recognition of Irish-Language Colleges relating to the safety of children is provided at Appendix 10.

The Department must ensure that child protection is central to all aspects of the colleges' work, that they have agreed and are implementing a robust child protection policy, that there are visible signs posted within the centres in which the colleges operate and that specific staff members have been nominated to deal with child protection and welfare issues and have been adequately trained. The steering committees of the colleges must ensure that the Children First guidance is adhered to throughout the courses. Comhchoiste Náisiúnta na gColáistí Samhraidh (CONCOS) – the umbrella organisation for the Irish-Language Colleges - has developed General Guidelines regarding child/adolescent safety and protection while in the care of Irish-Language Colleges. CONCOS has also obtained recognition to apply to have all Gaeltacht College staff vetted through An Garda Síochána and this process is now in operation. In 2013, workshops were organised for Gaeltacht College representatives with regard to Children First so that all college employees are receiving training in Child Protection and Welfare.

Irish Language Support Scheme
The Department will continue to support the Gaeltacht households that accommodate learners. Households who currently hold recognition have been advised in writing of their obligations regarding the protection and welfare of children and new households will also be advised. All members of these households are vetted through An Garda Síochána by the Department. Child protection is included as part of a training course which is provided for at least one member of each household. The Colleges, which are responsible for the recruitment of these households, are required to have robust procedures in place to oversee and monitor the protection of those children in the charge of the households. The Department will continue to review its policies and procedures in the colleges on a regular basis and any resulting implications for the Department’s Child Protection Policy will be included as appropriate in the rules governing recognition of Irish-Language Colleges relating to the safety of children.

Grant Schemes
The Department also provides grants to various individuals, bodies and groups, many of which provide services to children and young people. The Department requires adherence to Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children as a condition of funding for groups dealing with or in contact with children and young people and has established procedures to ensure that evidence of appropriate levels of compliance with Children First guidelines are in place in organisations in receipt of funding under schemes operated by the Department.

Any application form for funding from the Department should ask the applicant if their work/service involves any work or activity, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of access to, or contact with, children or relates to the provision of educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities, or the provision of advice to, or the care and supervision of children.

If the applicant indicates that their work/service does indeed meet the criteria set out above, he/she should be asked to complete the checklist at Appendix 12, which asks if their Child Protection Policy includes key elements signalled by the Child and Family Agency as being essential to a policy which meets Children First. Should the Child Protection policy be missing any particular element the applicant is asked to indicate when that element will be in place from, with a view to follow-up by the Department, if necessary.

5. Procedures for dealing with lost / missing children

Where a Child is Lost/ Left unattended

If a lost child is found or if a child is left unattended at any Department site, the following procedure will be adhered to by staff members:

- If the lost child is found by an unrelated member of the public the staff member should take custody of the child and should get as many details as possible from the member of the public including their contact details.
• Reassure the child and endeavour to obtain as much information about the child as possible:
  · Name of Child;
  · Age of Child;
  · Address/ Name of School;
  · Physical description of Child (Height, colour of hair, clothing etc.);
  · Where the child was found.

• It is advised that the child remain at all times with at least one member of staff and at least two adults. It is not advisable for staff members to remain on their own with the child. However, it is recognised that this is not always feasible.

• Make every effort to locate the primary carer by asking for assistance from other people in the area or using a paging system if this is available.

• If the child is not claimed, contact should be made with An Garda Síochána in the first instance, and the Line Manager and the Deputy Regional Manager or Regional Manager as appropriate (or the equivalent managerial grade). Complete an incident report on the matter and record in writing who found the lost child. Give this record to the Line manager and also send a copy to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)(see Section 7 below) for retention.

Where a Child is Reported Missing

• If someone reports that a child is missing, the following information will be obtained by the staff member who receives the report:
  · Name of Child;
  · Age of Child;
  · Address/ Name of School;
  · Physical Description of Child (height, colour of hair, clothing etc.);
  · Where the Child was last seen;
  · The time the child was last seen.

• The line manager must be notified immediately and all staff on site will be informed and a thorough check of all areas on site including bathrooms, offices and exits will be made.

• Once a sufficient check is made, if the child is not found, An Garda Síochána should be contacted immediately along with the appropriate line manager. In some case it may be appropriate to contact cliff or mountain rescue teams.

• A written statement of events will be recorded by the staff member who initially received the report of the missing child. This statement will be given to the Line Manager and a copy also sent to the Designated Liaison Person for retention.

6. Guidelines for photographing children

There is some evidence that photographs of children can be used inappropriately. Therefore, the following guidelines will be observed by staff in this regard.
• Permission will be sought from both the teacher/carer and the children if it is
desired to take photographs. If the Department wishes to use the photograph of
any child for promotional or publicity reasons, they will first contact the child’s
parents (via the school) and obtain written permission.
• Staff members will not take photographs of children for any reason other than
specified official reasons.
• No child appearing in any promotional photograph will be named.
• Only images of children in suitable dress can be considered for use.
• Inappropriate use of images of children must be reported to the DLP and will be
considered as a breach of the Department's Code of Practice and could give rise to
both disciplinary and criminal proceedings.

7. **Role of the Designated Liaison Person**

The ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the Child Protection Policy is the
Secretary General of the Department. However, the Designated Liaison Persons in the
Department will ensure that the Child Protection Policy of the Department is promoted
and will support the implementation of the policy. It is also the responsibility of the
Designated Liaison Persons to liaise with the Child and Family Agency or An Garda
Síochána where appropriate. Due to the nature of work in the Department, a Designated
Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person, both possessing Irish language
skills, have been named to deal with any cases which involve an area of responsibility of
the Gaeltacht Division.

Eddie Forsyth, APO, Corporate Governance Unit (eddie.forsyth@ahg.gov.ie/01
6313822/0876787275) and Beirtí Ó hAinmhire, PO, Gaeltacht (Irish speaker)
(beirti.ohainmhire@ahg.gov.ie/(091) 503 711, are the Designated Liaison Persons for this
Department and are the people to contact if you have an issue or concern about any
aspect of a child's or young person’s safety and welfare in the workplace or if a child
discloses information regarding abuse in the workplace to you.

In the event that the above Designated Liaison Persons are unavailable for any reason, the
following officers can be contacted in their capacity as Deputy Designated Liaison
Persons – Sarah Keaveney, HEO, Corporate Governance Unit
(sarah.keaveney@ahg.gov.ie/01_6313829) and Bridie Ní Churraoin, HEO, Gaeltacht
(Irish speaker) (bridie.nichurraoin@ahg.gov.ie/091 503769).

8. **Recognising Child Abuse**

Child abuse occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power than a
child causes the child harm. As children can be abused in a number of ways, sometimes
at the same time, it is not always easy to categorise it, but four broad definitions can be
considered and may be briefly summarised as neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse
and sexual abuse.
Definitions of the four types of abuse and how to recognise abuse are included in Appendices 1 and 2, which are based on “Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children”. However, child neglect or abuse can often be difficult to identify and may present in many forms. No one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse. It may indicate conditions other than child abuse. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the context of the child’s situation and family circumstances.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds of concern (*taken from the Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook Section 2.2*):

- An injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse.
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- Admission or indication by someone of an alleged abuse.
- A specific indication from a child that he/she was abused.
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.
- Evidence such as injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.

The ability to recognise child abuse can depend as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on their knowledge and information. There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse:

(a) considering the possibility,
(b) looking out for signs of abuse,
(c) recording of information.

**Considering the possibility of child abuse**
The possibility of child abuse should be considered if a child appears to have suffered a suspicious injury for which no reasonable explanation can be offered. It should also be considered if the child seems distressed without obvious reason or displays persistent or new behavioural problems. The possibility of child abuse should also be considered if the child displays unusual or fearful responses to parents/carers.

**Looking out for signs of abuse**
Signs of abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. They can exist in the relationship between children and parents/carers, between children and other family members/other persons and amongst their peers. A cluster or pattern of signs is likely to be more indicative of abuse. Children who are being abused may hint that they are being harmed and sometimes make direct disclosures. Disclosures should always be believed. Most signs of abuse are non-specific and must be considered in the child’s social and family context. It is important to always be open to alternative explanations for physical
or behavioural signs of abuse. Sometimes a specialist assessment may be required to clarify if particular concerns constitute abuse.

**Recording of Information**

If abuse is suspected, it is important to establish the grounds for concern by obtaining as much detailed information as possible. Observations should be accurately recorded and should include dates, times, names, locations, context and any other information that may be relevant. This information should be communicated to the DLP as soon as possible and without delay. The DLP will take any necessary follow-up action. Records will be maintained centrally by the DLPs.

If a staff member has any concerns that are not, as a once off, sufficient to provide reasonable grounds for concern but which taken with other factors over time may lead to a child protection or welfare concern, they should contact one of the Department's DLPs, who will maintain the records and review in consultation with the Child and Family Agency as necessary.

**9. Disclosure of child abuse**

Here in the Department we are most likely to become aware of a case of abuse if a child should disclose it to us. It is essential that this is dealt with sensitively and professionally by the staff member involved. The following are guidelines to support the worker in this:

- React calmly - give the child time to say what he/she wants
- Listen carefully and attentively; take the young person seriously
- Reassure the young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you and they are not to blame
- Aim to ensure ‘observed confidentiality’, where you are witnessed speaking to the child, but cannot be overheard
- Do not be judgemental
- Do not promise to keep anything secret; or make any other promises
- Ask questions for clarification only and do not ask leading questions
- Do not speculate or make assumptions
- Check back with the child/young person that what you have heard is correct and understood using their own words
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser
- Record the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible. Sign and date the record
- Ensure that the child/young person understands the procedures which will follow
- Be honest with the child about what we can and cannot do. Tell them that we cannot keep secrets and inform them what will happen next
- Do not confront the individual who is alleged to be responsible
- Pass the information to the Designated Liaison Person, do not attempt to deal with the problem alone
All the above steps should be carried out without undue delay whilst not compromising the thoroughness of the process.

Where abuse is suspected or disclosed the one thing you must not do is nothing.

10. Responsibility to report suspected or actual child abuse

Any person who suspects that a child has been, is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, has a responsibility and a duty of care to report their concerns to the Child and Family Agency, either directly or through the Designated Liaison Persons. A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable, should also be communicated to the Child and Family Agency, either directly or through the Designated Liaison Persons.

The guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse is that the safety and well-being of the child or young person must take priority. No child must be exposed to unnecessary risk.

In the Department abuse suspicions must be reported immediately to either of the Designated Liaison Persons listed below (please see Section 7).

Eddie Forsyth, APO, Corporate Governance Unit (eddie.forsyth@ahg.gov.ie 01-6313822/087 6787275)
Beirtí Ó hAinmhir, PO, Gaeltacht (Irish speaker) (beirti.ohainmhire@ahg.gov.ie (091) 503 711)

Or, in the event that the above Designated Liaison Persons are unavailable, please contact the Deputy Designated Liaison Officers – Sarah Keaveney, HEO, Corporate Governance Unit (sarah.keaveney@ahg.gov.ie/01 6313829) and Bridie Ní Churraoin, HEO, Gaeltacht (Irish speaker) (bridie.nichurraoin@ahg.gov.ie 091 503769).

11. Reporting procedure in respect of child abuse

The Department has put in place a standard reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse. The safety and well-being of the child must take priority. The standard reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse is that set out in the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children document.

1. The employee who has received a disclosure of child abuse or who has concerns of abuse should bring it to the attention of one of the Department's two Designated Liaison Persons immediately (or, should either of the Designated Liaison Persons be unavailable, the Deputy Designated Liaison Officers should be contacted).

2. It is important that all staff members are aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding
whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána. Under no circumstances should any staff member attempt to deal with the problem of abuse alone.

3. That employee who initially expresses concern will be required to complete a report, in consultation with the Designated Liaison Persons, outlining the situation, including the date, time and people involved. The report should be factual. Any opinions should be stated as such and supported by factual information. A Standard Report Form should be used when reporting child welfare and protection concerns to the Child and Family Agency. This standard form is in Appendix 4.

4. The Designated Liaison Person will review the information that has been provided to ensure that all relevant information has been gathered. They will contact the Child and Family Agency for informal advice without delay relating to the allegation, concern or disclosure, when necessary.

5. The Designated Liaison Person will then take one of two options:
   a. Report the allegation, concern or disclosure formally to the Child and Family Agency or
   b. Not make a formal report to the Child and Family Agency but keep a record of the concerns on file. The reasons for not reporting the allegation, concern or disclosure will be clearly recorded. The employee who made the initial report will be informed in writing if a formal report is not being made to the Child and Family Agency and it is open to him/her to make a formal report themselves, directly to the relevant authority if they feel this is necessary. Provisions of the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 will apply.

   It is important that reports are made to the Child and Family Agency without delay.

6. Where a formal report is made, it is likely that the Child and Family Agency will want to speak to the person who first made the report to clarify facts and the circumstances of the report.

7. In an emergency, out of hours, a report should be made directly to An Garda Síochána.
   In making a report on suspected or actual child abuse, the individual must ensure that the first priority is always for the safety and welfare of the young person and that no young person is ever left in an un-safe situation. Parents/guardians of the child will be informed of the allegation, concern or disclosure unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

Any reasonable concern or suspicion of abuse or neglect must elicit a response. Ignoring the signals or failing to intervene may result in ongoing or further harm to the child. Failure to act may result in incurring criminal charges under Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 which introduced the criminal charge of reckless endangerment of children.
Cases not reported to the HSE or An Garda Síochána

In those cases where the Department decides not to report concerns to the Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochána, the individual employee or volunteer who raised the concern will be given a clear written statement of the reasons why the Department is not taking such action. The employee or volunteer will be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, the Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochána. The provisions of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply once they communicate 'reasonably and in good faith'.

Retrospective disclosures by adults

An increasing number of adults are disclosing abuse that took place during their childhoods. Where the identity of the alleged perpetrator or alleged victim is known the service should always consult with the Child and Family Agency to discuss whether a report should be made. Where appropriate, reports should be made to the Child and Family Agency without delay either directly or through the Designated Liaison Persons.

12. Confidentiality

Considerations of confidentiality will not be allowed to over-ride the right of the child to protection. The welfare of the child will be paramount. It is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection to give information which supports the protection of a child.

Therefore, in matters of child abuse, an employee should never promise to keep secret any information which is divulged. It should be explained to the young person that this information cannot be kept secret but only those who need to know will be told.

It is essential in reporting any case of alleged/suspected abuse that the principle of confidentiality applies. The information should only be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis and the number of people that need to be informed should be kept to a minimum.

Concerns about a child that are reported anonymously should be followed up fully in accordance with HSE standard procedures. If the report has been made through a third party, the person mediating should be requested to facilitate contact between the original person who reported the concern and the Child and Family Agency. If, however, contact is not facilitated, the concerns reported via the third party must be reported to the Child and Family Agency.

Records in relation to child protection and welfare concerns will be kept securely and maintained by the Designated Liaison Persons. The Department will co-operate with the Child and Family Agency on the sharing of their records where a child welfare or protection issue arises. The Department is committed to attend and share information, as required, at formal child protection and welfare meetings as organised by the Child and Family Agency i.e. Child Protection Conferences and Strategy Meetings.
The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998
This Act provides immunity from civil liability and from penalisation by an employer to persons who report child abuse ‘reasonably and in good faith’ to the Designated Officers in the Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochána. (See Appendix 6.)

13. Staff Allegation procedures

In the event of allegations being made against an employee, or if a staff member suspects another member of staff of inappropriate behaviour towards or abuse of a child, the protection of the child/young person is the first and paramount consideration. The first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. The Department should as a matter of urgency take any necessary protective measures (Appendix 7). The measures should be proportionate to the level of risk and should not unreasonably penalise the staff member, financially or otherwise, unless necessary to protect children. Where protective measures penalise the staff member, it is important that early consideration be given to the case.

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, procedures will take on two strands.

The reporting of the child abuse will be the same as Section 11 above (staff member → Designated Liaison Person → Child and Family Agency). However, there will also be an investigation into the alleged abuse. In fact, there may be three investigations:

1. an internal investigation
2. an investigation by the Child and Family Agency investigation
3. and possibly a criminal investigation by the Gardaí.

A staff member from the HR Division will handle the departmental investigation into the alleged abuse by a staff member. This investigation will be put in place by the Principal Officer, HR, and will be dealt with promptly and carefully. The HR Division will consult with the Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána in order to avoid unintentionally impeding an investigation.

It must be remembered that staff may be subjected to erroneous or malicious allegations. Therefore, any abuse allegation must be dealt with sensitively, and support and, if necessary, counselling should be provided. While the primary goal must be to protect the child, care will be taken to ensure that the employee is treated fairly.

As soon as an allegation against a staff member has been made, these steps will be followed:

1. The staff member making the allegation will make a report in writing to the Designated Liaison Person.
2. The reporting procedures outlined in Section 11 of these guidelines will be followed.
3. The Designated Liaison Person will also report the matter to the Personnel Officer. The Personnel Officer in taking action will be guided by the agreed procedures, the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice.

4. The Personnel officer will privately inform the employee of the following;
   (i) the fact that an allegation has been made against him or her;
   (ii) the nature of the allegation.

5. The employee will be afforded the opportunity to respond and this response will be shared with the Child and Family Agency where a report has been/is being made.

6. The Personnel Officer will, as a matter of urgency, take any necessary protective measures to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. These measures will be proportionate to the level of risk and will not unreasonably penalise the employee financially or otherwise.

7. The Personnel Officer will follow up the allegation of abuse against the employee in consultation with the Child and Family Agency and/or An Garda Síochána and will ensure that any action taken does not undermine any investigations being conducted by these bodies. The parents of the child in question will be informed at the earliest opportunity taking care also to protect the employee's rights. All stages of the process will be recorded by Personnel.

The Child and Family Agency social work referral points are shown in Appendix 5. This contact information is for the benefit, not only of the Designated Liaison Person, but also in situations where the Designated Liaison Person is unavailable.

**Malicious Claims:** If it is found that a malicious claim has been made by a member of the public, the case will be referred to the necessary authorities. If it is found that a malicious claim has been made by a staff member, the disciplinary process will be invoked and any necessary action will be taken as appropriate.

All records relating to allegations against staff will be kept secure by HR/Personnel Division.

**14. Recommended procedures for persons alleged to have breached guidelines**

If you are accused of abuse, and subject to the procedures above, it is recommended that you observe the following points:
- Make notes of all your contacts / actions with the child in question as soon as possible.
- Seek access to professional and legal advice.
- Ensure that you no longer have any contact with the child in question.

**15. Accident Procedures**

If an accident happens to a child (or adult) while in the care of the Department it is important not only to treat the situation competently, but also to report and record it correctly. The following steps should be observed:
If at all possible, two adults should remain with the injured child. However, other children may need to be removed from the scene, and it may not always be possible to have two adults present.

First Aid as appropriate should be administered if a competent person is available and should as best practice be carried out in the presence of another adult.

If necessary, an ambulance should be requested or another emergency service such as cliff and mountain rescue (dial 999 or 112). Insofar as possible, the person dialling for help will need to convey as much concise information as possible to the emergency services such as nature of the injury and medical history if known. They should stay beside the phone to await a return call confirming the request. Staff must be aware of the nearest phone at all times. If moving far from a phone, either a mobile phone or a radio should be carried.

Once the casualty is stabilised and/or removed by ambulance, the parents / carers must be contacted. In practice, this will be via the school.

Immediately after the incident, a detailed report must be filed with the head of Section. If the accident occurs at an NPWS site, then the incident must also be reported in the Accident Report Book held at each NPWS site and sent to relevant personnel. A copy of the accident report must also be forwarded to the Designated Liaison Person for the Department.

16. Complaints Procedure for Staff, Parents and Children

If a member of staff, a parent or child has any complaints with how the Department's Child Protection Policy is being implemented or if it is perceived that the Code of Practice has been breached by a member of staff, a complaint can be made, preferably in writing, to one of the Department's Designated Liaison Persons. In the case of a complaint by a child, this can be done orally to any member of staff who will then contact the Designated Liaison Person in writing regarding the particulars of the complaint.

The complaint will be handled by the Designated Liaison Person who will consult with HR and/or the HSE as necessary. The complaint will be dealt with promptly and sensitively and complainants will be kept informed at all stages of the process.

Contact details for the Department's Designated Liaison Persons and Deputy Designated Liaison Persons are listed below:

Designated Liaison Persons:

Eddie Forsyth
Corporate Governance
Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
23 Kildare Street
Dublin 2
eddie.forsyth@ahg.gov.ie
01 6313822
Beirtí Ó hAinmhire
Gaeltacht Section
Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Na Forbacha
Co. Galway
beirti.ohainmhire@ahg.gov.ie
091 503711

Deputy Designated Liaison Persons:

Sarah Keaveney
Corporate Governance
Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
23 Kildare Street
Dublin 2
sarah.keaveney@ahg.gov.ie
01 6313829

Bridie Ní Churraoin
Gaeltacht Section
Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Na Forbacha
Co. Galway
091 503769
bridie.nichurraoin@ahg.gov.ie

For complaints regarding any other aspect of the Department's services, please consult the Department's Customer Services Action Plan (Complaints Procedure).

Appendix 1

**Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse**
*(Children First; National guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011)*

**Types of child abuse**
Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. More detail on each type of abuse is given in Appendix 2.

In the *Children First: National Guidance for the protection and Welfare of Children*, ‘a child’ means a person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or has been married.

**Definition of ‘neglect’**
Neglect can be defined in terms of an *omission*, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and/or medical care.

Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is *significant* is determined by the child’s health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways *over a period of time* rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child whose height or weight is significantly below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school may be being deprived of intellectual stimulation.

The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when the child’s needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

**Definition of ‘emotional abuse’**
Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the *relationship* between a parent/carer and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child’s developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms. Examples may include:

(i) the imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
(ii) conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;
(iii) emotional unavailability of the child’s parent/carer;
(iv) unresponsiveness of the parent/carer and/or inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
(v) premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
(vi) unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child’s capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way;
(vii) under- or over-protection of the child;
(viii) failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the child’s cognitive and emotional development;
(ix) use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
(x) exposure to domestic violence;
(xi) exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology.

Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child’s behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour. The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.

**Definition of ‘physical abuse’**
Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.
Physical abuse can involve:
(i) severe physical punishment;
(ii) beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;
(iii) pushing, shaking or throwing;
(iv) pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling;
(v) terrorising with threats;
(vi) observing violence;
(vii) use of excessive force in handling;
(viii) deliberate poisoning;
(ix) suffocation;
(x) fabricated/induced illness (see Appendix 1 for details);
(xi) allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child.

**Definition of ‘sexual abuse’**
Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. Examples of child sexual abuse include:
(i) exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child;
(ii) intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
(iii) masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
(iv) sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal;
(v) sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual
acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modeling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the ‘grooming’ process by perpetrators of abuse (vi) consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purposes of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. An Garda Síochána will deal with the criminal aspects of the case under the relevant legislation.

It should be noted that the definition of child sexual abuse presented in this section is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offence of sexual assault

(See Appendix 2 below and Appendix 1 of the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children for further signs and symptoms of child abuse.)
Appendix 2

(Taken from 'CHILD ABUSE signs and symptoms' Kidscape 2004)

Indicators of Abuse

Physical abuse

*Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the child:*
Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
Fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school
Seems frightened of the parents/carer and protests or cries when it is time to go home from school.
Shrinks at the approach of adults or reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver.

*Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:*
Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury;
Describes the child in some other very negative way;
Uses harsh physical discipline with the child

Emotional Abuse

*Consider the possibility of emotional abuse when the child:*
Has low self esteem
Over-reacts to mistakes
Shows extremes in behaviour, such as overly compliant or overly passive
Has delayed physical, mental or emotional development.
Has attempted suicide
Reports a lack of attachment to the parent

*Consider the possibility of emotional abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:*
Constantly blames, belittles, or berates the child
Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's school problem
Overtly rejects the child

Sexual Abuse

*Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the child:*
Is overly affectionate or demonstrates sexual knowledge beyond their years
Regresses to younger behaviour such as thumb sucking or bed wetting, having nightmares
Has difficulty walking or sitting
Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities
Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age fourteen
Runs away, attempts suicide or self-harm, overdoses, becomes depressed
Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver or older child

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the parent or other adult caregiver:
Is unduly protective of the child, severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
Is secretive and isolated
Describes marital difficulties involving family power struggles or sexual relations

Neglect

Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:
Is frequently absent from school
Begs or steals food or money from classmate
Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
Is consistently dirty and has severe body odour
Dosen't wear warm enough clothes in winter
Abuses alcohol or other drugs
Says there’s no one at home to care for them

Consider the possibility of neglect when the parent or other adult caregiver:
Appears to be uninterested in the child
Seems apathetic or depressed
Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
Is abusing alcohol or other drugs
Recognising Child Abuse: What Parents Should Know
APPENDIX 3

Additional measures for Child Protection

for the

National Parks and Wildlife Service Education Program and Visitor Centres

2014

The practices and procedures as laid out in this document are supplementary to the measures set out above in the Department's Child Protection Policy.

General Guidelines:

- The child’s welfare and safety will always be put first.
- Staff will ensure, to the best of their ability; that every child remains safe and experiences our education service positively.
- Management will provide, and the staff will participate in, recognised and appropriate Child Protection Training.
- Staff will apply the practice and procedures as outlined in their training.
- All young people will be treated with dignity and respect.
- All staff will give children enthusiastic and constructive feedback.
- The necessary staff will receive appropriate First Aid Training and hold valid First Aid certificates.
- All staff will have a complete First Aid kit nearby them at all times when in the company of any programme participants.
- Staff will keep a written record of any incident that occurs to a child, along with an outline of any action taken by them. This will be copied to the Department's Designated Liaison Person.
- Staff members will familiarise themselves with the Department's Child Protection Policy and sign declaration forms as required.

Definition of ‘Responsible Adults’

For the purpose of this policy document ‘responsible adults’ are teachers, parents, guardians, or club leaders who accompany groups of children or individual children participating in any NPWS activities. These responsible adults have the primary responsibility for the welfare and behaviour of each child in their care and on whose behalf the appropriate registration forms were signed by them. The responsible adults (e.g. teachers, parents, guardians, leaders) who accompany groups of children or individual children participating in any NPWS activities have the duty to make the staff aware of any medical or other condition of any participant that they “need to know” of in the interests of the child and the group.
**Site Specific Child Safety Provisions**
Due to the wide range of events and activities that the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department hosts nationwide, it is essential that each National Park / Visitor Centre defines its own site specific child safety provisions. It is the responsibility of each Park’s Management to ensure that the site specific child safety provisions are updated as required and that Department’s Designated Liaison Person (as set out in the Child Protection Policy) is informed of any revisions made to these provisions.

The table to be used by each individual site is set out at appendix A. This must be kept up to date and a copy held by Park Management and a copy forwarded to the Department’s Designated Liaison Person.

**Education Programme registration:**
NPWS Education Programme Booking forms are the official registration forms that are provided for groups and individual children participating in any education programme activities. The responsible staff member must ensure that they are fully completed before being accepted for processing and the form must be stored (or an exact copy) in the specified record keeping facility.

Any member of staff who is taking a booking must ensure that responsible adults for individual children or groups participating in any form of education programme / activity complete, sign and date the booking form or relevant registration form / book before permitting them to participate in the program / activity.

The procedure above is particularly relevant for events such as open days, summer projects, etc when the child is not participating as part of a pre-existing group.

**Visitor Centre registration:**
Every NPWS Visitor Centre must have a booking form which must be completed for any group of children from a school or club who visit the site. Please see the booking form at appendix B which can be used as a template. Any member of staff who is taking a booking must ensure that responsible adults for groups of children must complete, sign and date the booking form or relevant registration form. This form must then be stored in a specific filing facility.

**Recording Incidents including Accidents:**
All accidents and other incidents (e.g. near misses) that occur should be fully recorded, signed, dated and stored appropriately by the staff member on duty as soon as is reasonably possible after the incident. The Accident / Incident Report Form must be counter signed and dated by a Safety Officer as soon thereafter as is reasonably possible.

**Records:**
The education centre office / visitor centre office must have a secure locked filing cabinet that will contain the following information, dated and signed by the appropriate person(s):

- Booking / Registration Forms
- Incident / Accident Report Forms, if required
• Consent of parents or school to use photographs or other material that relates to children participating in any NPWS activities, if required.

All staff must record data for groups they book or work with. The Head or Supervisor guide must ensure that records are kept up to date.

Locations:
The following practices and procedures are outlined for NPWS Education Staff to minimise the possibility of children who participate in an NPWS programme coming to harm of any sort when they are:

• On Departmental premises
• In their own school grounds
• Visiting a site that is not one of the above (e.g. visiting a woodland or bog whether it owned by the Department or the property of another agency or individual).

Irrespective of which of the above locations is being used, the Education staff member in charge must inform the accompanying ‘Responsible Adult/s’ of the following important facts:

➢ The accompanying adults are the “responsible adult(s)” for each participants welfare and behaviour and the management of the group as a whole.
➢ They must stay with their participants at all times.
➢ If a child or children need to leave the main group at anytime, it is they who must accompany their child / students (e.g. to avail of toilet facilities, retrieve forgotten items from another location, or attend A&E departments, etc.)
➢ They must adhere to the instructions of Education staff in relation to site or activity specific safety instructions.

A. On Departmental premises

Education staff will ensure that:

• The official registration form is completed and stored in the appropriate file, for the individual, group/s attending the centre before they use the centre facilities.
• They respond appropriately to the information regarding the medical or other conditions of the participants given to them by the accompanying responsible adult.
• They note the total number of participants that actually attend on the day of the visit.
• The total number of participants [not including responsible adults] visiting the centre at any one time does not exceed the maximum designated for that centre by the Safety Officer.
• Ensure that there are at least two ‘responsible adults’ (not to include the NPWS Education Officer) accompanying the participants even when the group is less than 20.
• A responsible adult to child ratio of not less than 1:10 must be maintained. Where the group number exceeds 20 i.e. where more than 2 ‘responsible adults’ are required, the NPWS Education staff member may, at local managers’ discretion, be included in the calculation of sufficient responsible adults.
• They have a complete First Aid kit close by at all times.

B. In school grounds

**Education staff will ensure that:**

- The official registration form is completed and stored in the appropriate file
- They respond appropriately to the information regarding the medical or other conditions of the participants given to them by the accompanying responsible adult.

C. Visiting a site that is not one of the above

**Education staff will ensure that:**

- The official registration form is completed and stored in the appropriate file, for the individual, group/s visiting the site, before the visit commences.
- Ensure that there are at least two ‘responsible adults’ (not to include the NPWS Education Officer) accompanying the participants even when the group is less than 20.
- A responsible adult to child ratio of not less than 1:10 must be maintained. Where the group number exceeds 20 i.e. where more than 2 ‘responsible adults’ are required, the NPWS Education staff member may, at local managers’ discretion, be included in the calculation of sufficient supervisory adults.
- They note the total number of participants that actually attend on the day of the visit.
- There is a limit of 30 child/young adult participants per Education staff member. This must not be exceeded irrespective of the number of responsible adults e.g. if there were 40 children and 5 accompanying responsible adults this is simply too much for one Education Guide to provide a quality service.
- One responsible adult remains at the rear of the group and that all participants must stay in front of this person at all times.
- They respond appropriately to the information regarding the medical or other conditions of the participants given to them by the accompanying responsible adult.
- They have a complete First Aid kit close by at all times.
- They have some form of communication by which the emergency services can be contacted as soon as possible should the need arise.
Procedures

The procedures as set out below are additional to those set out above in the Department’s Child Protection Policy

Accident / Incident:
Note: It must be remembered that the “Responsible Adult” is primarily responsible for the welfare and behaviour of each child in their care and on whose behalf the appropriate registration forms were signed.

- If at all possible two adults (one of whom must be a “Responsible Adult” other than the Education / Visitor Service staff member) will remain with the injured child. If one adult is with the child, at least one other adult should remain at the scene.
- The appropriate emergency service should be contacted if necessary as soon as possible (Dial 999 or 112). The person making the contact will need to give location of incident and outline of incident and any injury detected. The contact person must await confirmation that the information given has been received.
- First aid is to be administered as appropriate by a competent person who holds a valid First Aid Certificate.
- Education / Visitor Service staff member should inform the line manager (normally Head or Supervisor guide) of the incident as soon as possible and keep them updated.
- If there is a casualty, parents / guardians must be notified as soon as possible via the school personnel.
- Immediately after the incident an incident report sheet must be completed, dated and signed by the Education / Visitor service staff member(s) present, and presented to and signed and dated by a line manager.
- A copy of the Accident / Incident report will be submitted by the line manager (normally Head Guide or Supervisor Guide) to the Safety Officer as soon as possible. The SO will arrange for an accident investigation. A copy of the report must also be send to the Designated Officer for the Department.

Lost / Missing Person(s):

Please see Section 5 ‘Procedures for dealing with Lost / Missing Children’ above

Dealing with challenging or disruptive behaviour

The safety and welfare of the children and young people is a priority and the staff will deal sensitively and professionally with any difficult issues that may arise. Where instances of challenging or disruptive behaviour occur with children / young people, a record will be kept of this where the instance requires the intervention of a staff member or where the safety and well being of others are at risk. In a case of such behaviour, two staff members should be present in dealing with the situation. Staff members who are present at the time, should complete an incident / accident report form.

The report of the incident should include:
• The programme or activity which was happening at the time;
• Date of Incident;
• A record of what happened;
• Details of who was involved;
• Details of where and when it happened;
• A record of any significant comments;
• A record of any injury to person or property;
• Details of how the situation was resolved or left.
Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour for Child Protection Declaration

Name (block capitals): _______________________________________

Date of birth: _____________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Telephone number: ___________________________________________

Work location: ________________________________________________

Grade: _______________________________________________________

I have received a copy of the

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht’s Child Protection Policy

I have read and understand the particulars outlined in both the policy and the additional practices and procedures and I agree to follow the guidelines on procedures and practices contained within them.

Signed: _________________________________

Name of Employee

Date: _________________________________

This declaration must be signed and returned to:

Personnel Section, Rm 307, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.
## Appendix A

Please describe each event or activity hosted at your site under the following headings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event¹</th>
<th>Venue²</th>
<th>Category of participant³</th>
<th>Maximum number of participants</th>
<th>Booking required Y or N</th>
<th>Registration Y or N</th>
<th>Risk Level⁴</th>
<th>Supervisory Ratio expressed as NPWS Staff: Responsible Adult⁵: Adult⁵: Child</th>
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¹Event/activities may include but are not limited to school outreach visits, activities based at your site’s education centre, indoor tours for children, e.g. castle tours, site based outdoor activities, e.g. woodland walks or trails, family events, large scale events.

² Venue may include for example, a school, education centre, indoor national park amenity e.g. castle, outdoor national park amenity, e.g. mountain, woodland.

³ Category of participant may include primary school children, secondary school children, e.g. transition year students.

⁴ In assessing an activity’s level of risk, the probability of injury occurring during the activity and the severity of such an injury are scored as outlined on page 3.

⁵ A responsible adult may include a teacher, parent or guardian.

**PROBABILITY OF INJURY**

1 = HIGHLY IMPROBABLE – almost certainly will not occur
2 = UNLIKELY – probably will not occur
3 = POSSIBLY – reasonable chance of occurring
4 = PROBABLE – likely to occur

**SEVERITY**

1 = TRIVIAL – unlikely to involve injury
2 = MILD – may involve some injury
3 = MODERATE – likely to involve injury
4 – SEVERE – life threatening
Having scored the activity’s injury probability and severity, plot the probability score on the vertical axis and the severity score on the horizontal axis of the matrix below. Read down and across from each score to the cell that intersects both axes. The number in this cell indicates the activity’s risk level. The risk levels are colour coded as shown below.

**Matrix of probability (vertical axis) and severity (horizontal axis)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
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</table>

**GREEN** activities (scoring 1, 2, 3 or 4) are low risk

**AMBER** activities (scoring 6, 8 or 9) are medium risk

**RED** activities (scoring 12 or 16) are high risk
Appendix B

School / Club Booking Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreed Date of Your Visit:</th>
<th>Agreed Times:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Numbers:</th>
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What activities do you wish to participate in?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Names of teachers/responsible adults attending:</th>
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Any children with special or additional needs:

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<th>Additional Information:</th>
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School Insurance Details:

Contact Person Details and Phone Number:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full School Name / Club Name &amp; Phone Number:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School / Club E-mail address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This form must be signed by the person in control of discipline and safety on the day.

Signed:......................................................................................................................

Please e-mail all booking forms to _______________
Alternatively, post completed forms to _______________

The teachers/ responsible adults are responsible for their group at all times while visiting the park.

(Please contact a staff member in the case of an emergency)
APPENDIX 4

Standard Report Form for reporting child protection and/or welfare concerns to the HSE (also available as an MSWord version at www.hse.ie/go/childrenfirst).
STANDARD REPORT FORM
(For reporting CP&W Concerns to HSE)

A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate:

1. Date of Report

2. Details of Child

   Name:
   Address:
   DOB
   Age
   School
   Alias
   Correspondence address (if different)

3. Details of Persons Reporting Concern(s)

   Name:
   Address:
   Telephone No.
   Occupation:
   Relationship to client:
   Reporter wishes to remain anonymous
   Reporter discussed with parents/guardians

4. Parents Aware of Report

   Are the child’s parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to the HSE?
   Yes
   No

5. Details of Report

   (Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent’s view(s), child’s view(s) if known.)

---

National Child Care Information System Project – Phase 3
6. Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details of Mother</th>
<th>Details of Father</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(if different to child)</td>
<td>(if different to child)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Telephone Nos. | Telephone Nos. |

7. Household composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>DOB</th>
<th>Additional information, e.g. school/occupation/other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Worker</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardaí</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-School/Gréche/YG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to child:</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Details of person completing form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Occupation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signed</td>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guidance Notes

The HSE has a statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. The HSE therefore has an obligation to receive information about any child who is not receiving adequate care and/or protection.

This Report Form is for use by:
- Any professional, individual or group involved in services to children, including HSE personnel, who becomes aware of a child protection or welfare concern, or to whom a child protection or child welfare concern is reported.
- Professionals and individuals in the provision of child care services in the community who have service contracts with the HSE.
- Designated persons in a voluntary or community agency.

Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. This will assist the Social Work Department in assessing the level of risk to the child or the support services required. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate this by putting a line through the question. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report.

The HSE aims to work in partnership with parents. If you are making this report in confidence, you should note that the HSE cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality for the following reasons:
- A Court could order that information be disclosed.
- Under the Freedom of Information Act 1997, the Freedom of Information Commissioner may order that information be disclosed.

You should also note that in making a ‘bona fide report’, you are protected under the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998.

If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone the HSE duty social worker and discuss your concerns with them

*(see Appendix 5 for a full list of HSE offices nationwide).*
## APPENDIX 5
HSE Nationwide: List of Duty Social Work Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
<th>Tel</th>
<th>Fax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dublin South (Dún Laoghaire)</td>
<td>Our Lady’s Clinic Patrick St Dún Laoghaire (NB Jan-Apr ’08 - Northumberland Ave, Dún Laoghaire)</td>
<td>01 6637300</td>
<td>01 2844955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin South East</td>
<td>Duty Social Work Team Leader HSE, Vergemount Hall Clonskeagh Dublin 6</td>
<td>01 2680320 / 01 2680333</td>
<td>01 2680406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicklow</td>
<td>North Team (Bray Area) Bray Health Centre, Block B Civic Offices, Main St., Bray</td>
<td>01 2744100 / 01 2744180</td>
<td>01 2744136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South Team (Wicklow / Arklow Area) Seafront Office Unit 3 North Quay, Wicklow</td>
<td>0404 60800</td>
<td>0404 60888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin South City</td>
<td>Duty Team Leader HSE Dublin Mid Leinster Carnegie Centre 21-25 Lord Edward St Dublin 2</td>
<td>01 6486555</td>
<td>01 6486702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin South West</td>
<td>Duty Team Leader Millbrook Lawns Health Centre St Dominic’s Tallaght, Dublin 24</td>
<td>01 4275000</td>
<td>01 4275090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin West</td>
<td>Bridge House Social Work Department Community Services Dublin West Cherry Orchard Hospital Ballyfermot</td>
<td>01 6206387</td>
<td>01 6206388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Contact Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Kildare West Wicklow      | Social Work Dept Swan Centre  
                          Fairgreen  
                          Naas  
                          Co Kildare | Tel: 045 882400  
                          Fax: 045 882424 |
| Laois                     | Social Work Department Child and Family Centre  
                          Portlaoise | Tel: 057 86 92567  
                          Fax: 057 86 62535 |
| Offaly                    | Social Work Department  
                          Derry Suite  
                          Castle Buildings  
                          Tara St  
                          Tullamore, Co Offaly | Tel: 057 93 70700  
                          Fax: 057 93 70748 |
| Longford                  | Social Work Department  
                          Tivoli House  
                          Dublin Road  
                          Longford | Tel: 043 3350584  
                          Fax: 043 3350798 |
| Westmeath                 | Duty Social Work  
                          Athlone Health Centre  
                          Coosan Road  
                          Athlone  
                          Co Westmeath  
                          Duty Social Work  
                          Child and Family Centre  
                          Springfield  
                          Mullingar  
                          Co Westmeath | Tel: 090 64 83106  
                          Fax: 090 64 91329  
                          Tel: 044 93 84450  
                          Fax: 044 93 84396 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cavan</td>
<td>HSE Community Child &amp; Family Services, Drumalee Cross, Cavan</td>
<td>Tel: 049 4377305 &amp; 049 4377306 Fax: 049 4377377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>Duty Social Work Department, Local Health Care Unit, Rooskey, Monaghan</td>
<td>Tel: 047 30426 / 047 30427 Fax: 047 77908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin North Central</td>
<td>Duty Social Work Office, 22 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1</td>
<td>Tel: 01 855 6871 Fax: 01 855 0589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ballymun Civic Centre (2nd floor), Main St, Ballymun, Dublin 9</td>
<td>Tel: 01 8467235 Fax: 01 8467522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dublin</td>
<td>Coolock Health Centre, Cromcastle Rd, Coolock, Dublin 5</td>
<td>Tel: 01 8160314 / 8160373 Fax: 01 8487747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-West Dublin</td>
<td>Wellmount Health Centre, Finglas, Dublin 11</td>
<td>Tel: 01 8567704 Fax: 01 8567702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>Social Work Department, Local Health Care Unit, Wilton House, Stapleton Place, Dundalk, Co Louth</td>
<td>Tel: 042 9392200 Fax: 042 9392264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meath</td>
<td>Duty Social Work, 25 Brewshill</td>
<td>Tel: 046 9030616 Fax: 046 9030648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co Meath</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
# HSE Nationwide: List of Duty Social Work Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address and Details</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carlow</strong></td>
<td>Duty Social Work Office&lt;br&gt;Ground Floor&lt;br&gt;St Dympna’s Hospital&lt;br&gt;Athy Road&lt;br&gt;Carlow</td>
<td>Tel: 059 9136587 / 059 9136588&lt;br&gt;Fax: 059 9136502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kilkenny</strong></td>
<td>Social Work/Child Care Dept&lt;br&gt;HSE South Community Services&lt;br&gt;James’s Green&lt;br&gt;Kilkenny&lt;br&gt;(moving to new premises some time in 2008)</td>
<td>Tel: 056 7784532 / 056 7784017&lt;br&gt;Fax: 056 7784000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cork - North Lee</strong></td>
<td>Duty Social Work Dept.&lt;br&gt;Blackpool (adjacent to Shopping Centre)&lt;br&gt;Blackpool&lt;br&gt;Cork</td>
<td>Tel: 021 4927000&lt;br&gt;Fax: 021 4927001 / 021 4927002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cork - South Lee</strong></td>
<td>Duty Social Worker&lt;br&gt;South Lee Social Work Dept.&lt;br&gt;St Finbarr's Hospital&lt;br&gt;Cork</td>
<td>Tel: 021 4923001&lt;br&gt;Fax: 021 4312960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Cork</strong></td>
<td>Social Work Department&lt;br&gt;HSE South&lt;br&gt;West Cork Community Services&lt;br&gt;Coolnagarrane&lt;br&gt;Skibbereen&lt;br&gt;Co Cork</td>
<td>Tel: 028 40447&lt;br&gt;Fax: 028 40449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Cork</strong></td>
<td>HSE Social Work/Child Protection Offices&lt;br&gt;134 Bank Place&lt;br&gt;Mallow&lt;br&gt;Co Cork</td>
<td>Tel: 022 54100&lt;br&gt;Fax: 022 54150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Kerry | Kerry Community Services, Rathass  
Trapee  
Co Kerry  

Killarney Duty Social Work Department  
St Margaret’s Road  
Killarney  
Co Kerry | Tel: 066 7195641 / 066 7195642 / 066 7195643  
Fax: 066 7195610  
Tel: 064 36030 / 064 50700  
Fax: 064 70714 |
|---|---|
| Tipperary South Tipperary | Duty Social Work Team  
South Tipperary Community Care Services  
Western Road  
Clonmel,  
Co Tipperary | Tel : 052 77303  
Fax: 052 77301 |
| Waterford | Social Work Service  
HSE, Waterford Community Services  
Cork Rd  
Waterford | Tel: 051 842827 / 051 842841  
Fax: 051 842811 |
| Dungarvan | Duty Social Work Department  
Dungarvan Community Services  
St Joseph’s Hospital  
Dungarvan  
Co Waterford | Tel: 058 20921 / 058 20906  
Fax: 058 44485 |
| Wexford North | Gorey Health Centre  
Hospital Grounds  
Gorey  
Co Wexford  

Enniscorthy Health Centre  
Millpark Road  
Enniscorthy  
Co Wexford | Tel: 053 21374 / 053 9430100  
Fax: 053 9421492  
Tel: 053 9233465 / 053 9243700  
Fax: 053 9233469 |
| Wexford South | New Ross Health Centre Hospital Grounds New Ross Co Wexford Duty Social Work Dept Ely Hospital Ferrybank Wexford | Tel: 051 421445 Fax: 051 421238 Tel: 053 9123522 Ext 201 Fax: 053 9147706 |
# HSE Nationwide: List of Duty Social Work Contact Details

## HSE West - Duty Social Work Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>East Team, Links Business Centre, Lisfannon, Buncrana, Co Donegal</td>
<td>Tel: 074 9320420, Fax: 074 9320419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Team, Euro House, Killybegs Road, Donegal Town</td>
<td>Tel: 074 9723540, Fax: 074 9723489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>East Central Team, Millennium Court, Pearse Road, Letterkenny, Co Donegal</td>
<td>Tel: 074 9123672, Fax: 074 9123697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Central Team, Millennium Court, Pearse Road, Letterkenny, Co Donegal</td>
<td>Tel: 074 9123770, Fax: 074 9123697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clare</td>
<td>Social Work Dept, River House, Gort Road, Ennis, Co Clare</td>
<td>Tel: 065 6863908 / 065 6863907, Fax: 065 6863984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galway City and County</td>
<td>Galway City, Duty Social Worker Local Health Office, HSE West, 25 Newcastle Road, Galway</td>
<td>Tel: 091 546366 / 546370 / 546325 / 546369, Fax: 091 527601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Galway County, Tuam Social Work Department, Health Centre, Vicar Street, Tuam</td>
<td>Tel: 093 24492, Fax: 093 24608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Tel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Galway City and County</td>
<td>Co Galway</td>
<td>091 847820</td>
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<td>Loughrea Social Work Department</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Health Centre</td>
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<td>Ballinasloe Social Work Department</td>
<td>09096 46200</td>
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<td>Health Centre</td>
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<td>Brackernagh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Co Galway</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Oughterard Social Work Department</td>
<td>091 552200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oughterard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co Galway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick East &amp; West</td>
<td>Limerick East,</td>
<td>061 483091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roxtown Health Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Old Clare St</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moyross Health Centre</td>
<td>061 483790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moyross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ballynanty Health Centre</td>
<td>061 457100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kileely Rd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ballynanty, Limerick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SW Dept. South Hill Health Centre</td>
<td>061 209985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South Hill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limerick City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limerick West SW Dept</td>
<td>069 66653</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Newcastle West Health Centre</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gortboy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newcastle West, Co Limerick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>Ballina Social Work Team</td>
<td>096 21511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mercy Road</td>
<td>096 70442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Contact Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Ballina, Co Mayo** | Castlebar Social Work Team  
Hill House  
Mountain View  
Castlebar  
Co Mayo  

Swinford Social Work Team,  
Health Centre  
Swinford  
Co Mayo  

Tel: 094 9022333  
Fax: 094 9026110 |
| **North Tipperary** | North Tipperary Social Work Department  
Annbrook  
Limerick Rd  
Nenagh  
Co Tipperary  

St Mary's Health Centre  
Parnell Street  
Thurles  
Co Tipperary  

Tel: 067 41934  
Fax: 067 42069 |
| **Roscommon** | Roscommon Town, Duty Social Work  
Community Services, Lanesboro Road  
Roscommon  
Boyle Area, Health Centre  
Boyle  
Co Roscommon  

Castlerea Area, SW Dept  
HSE Offices  
Heavey House  
Knockroe  
Castlerea  
Co Roscommon  

Tel: 090 66 37528 / 090 66 37556  
Fax: 090 66 27043 |
| **Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan:** | Sligo town and surrounding areas:  
Tel: 071 91 55133 |
| Markievicz House Barrack Street, Sligo | Fax: 071 91 55142 |
| South County Sligo: One Stop Shop Teach Laighne Humbert Street Tubbercurry |
| County Leitrim/West Cavan: Community Care Office Leitrim Road Carrick on Shannon Co Leitrim | Tel: 071 96 50324 Fax: 071 96 20334 |
| Tel: 071 91 20062 Fax: 071 91 85472 |
APPENDIX 6

Protection for persons reporting child abuse

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse “reasonably and in good faith” to the HSE or An Garda Síochána. This means that even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded a plaintiff who took action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report.

This protection applies to organisations and to individuals. It is considered therefore that organisations should assume full responsibility for reporting suspected child abuse to the appropriate authorities. Reports to the HSE and to the Garda Síochána should be made as per the OPW’s policy and guidelines.

Section 3 (1) of the Act states:

“3. (1) A person who apart from this section, would be so liable shall not be liable in damages in respect of the communication, whether in writing or otherwise, by him or her to an appropriate person of his or her opinion that-

(a) a child has been or is being assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or
(b) a child’s health development or welfare has been or is being avoidably impaired or neglected,

unless it is proven that he or she has not acted reasonably and in good faith in forming that opinion and communicating it to the appropriate person”.

Under Section 4 of the same Act no employee will be penalised for making a report of child abuse in good faith to the HSE or to the Garda Síochána.

The Defence of Qualified Privilege
A person who makes a report in good faith and in the child's best interests may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege.

The Common Law provides a defence, in particular circumstances, to individuals who make 31 verbal or written statements of a kind, which could expose their author to a claim of defamation if such statements were made in different circumstances. The defence exists in recognition of the fact that there are circumstances in which individuals have to be able to speak freely without fear of adverse legal consequences.

In general, the privilege covers situations where the maker of the statement has a duty to speak or is obliged to protect some interest. The duty in question does not have to be a strictly legal one: a moral or social duty to make a statement or report is sufficient. The
recipient of the statement must have a corresponding duty to receive the statement. The
defence only applies where the individual who makes the statement is not motivated by
malice in making this statement.
In circumstances where an individual has a duty to speak and does so without malice, he
can be assured that the defence of the qualified privilege will protect him from any
defamation claim to which his statement could possibly give rise. The defence will apply,
for example, when an employee reports to his line manager (or some specially designated
person), his bona fide suspicion that a fellow employee may have committed an act of
abuse in the course of the latter's employment.
APPENDIX 7

Allegation against staff member; Protective Measures

Pending the outcome of the investigation, the Department should take whatever protective measures necessary to ensure that children are not exposed to unacceptable risk. These protective measures are not disciplinary measures, and may include:

- Providing an appropriate level of supervision;
- Re-assigning duties where the accused will not have contact with children/young people;
- Putting the staff member off duty with pay.

Putting the staff member off duty pending the outcome of the investigation should be reserved for exceptional circumstances. It should be explained to the staff member concerned that the decision to put him/her off duty is a precautionary measure and not a disciplinary sanction.

The views of the staff member concerned will be taken into consideration when determining the appropriate protective measures to take. However, the final decision will rest with the Secretary-General of the Department.
APPENDIX 8

Staff Declaration form

Child Protection Policy Declaration

Name (block capitals): ______________________________________

Date of birth: ____________________________________________

Address: _________________________________________________

Telephone number: _________________________________________

Work location: _____________________________________________

Grade: ___________________________________________________

I have received a copy of the
Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht’s Child Protection Policy

I have read and understand the particulars outlined in the policy and I agree to follow the guidelines on procedures and practices contained within it.

Signed: __________________________________________ Name of Employee

Date: _________________________________________________

This declaration must be signed and returned to:

Personnel Section, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Room 307, Kildare Street, Dublin.
APPENDIX 9

Self-Declaration form

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, HERITAGE AND THE GAELTACHT

SELF-DECLARATION FORM

This post involves substantial access to children and young people. The Department is committed to the welfare and protection of children and young people, and therefore must ask you to declare the following information to us. The information you provide on this declaration is treated as strictly confidential.

FORENAME: ___________________ SURNAME: _____________________
(Block capitals)

ANY OTHER NAME(S) BY WHICH YOU WERE PREVIOUSLY KNOWN (if applicable):

____________________________________________________________
(Block capitals)

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIMINAL OFFENCE?

YES ☐ NO ☐

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A CAUTION?

YES ☐ NO ☐

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A BOUND OVER ORDER?

YES ☐ NO ☐
IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED YES TO ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE STATE THE NATURE AND DATE(S) OF THE OFFENCE(S):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE OF OFFENCE</th>
<th>NATURE OF OFFENCE</th>
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IMPORTANT

You must sign and date this declaration below.

In the event that you are offered a position you will be subject to a Garda Vetting inquiry. If the Garda vetting inquiry discloses any information to us which contradicts the information you have provided on this declaration, it will result in your immediate dismissal.

SIGNED: ___________________________  DATE: __________________
4(b) The committee must also ensure that particular attention is given to student safety throughout the course, particularly on roads, during organised events on the playing areas and at swimming practice in the sea and pool and in the houses. A written policy must also be devised and implemented to prevent child abuse, bullying and other anti-social behaviour. A written health and safety statement must exist and a Health and Safety officer must be named and registered in the college's plan. A copy of this statement must be available to inspectors and other Departmental representatives. The Steering Committee must be aware of the College's obligations regarding the welfare and protection of the children in their care. The committee must ensure that the appropriate provisions from the Children First guidelines are implemented in all of the college's activities both within and outside of the classroom and in the lodging houses.
Appendix 11

Safe Recruitment Procedures for Workers and Safe Management of Workers

In general, departmental recruitment is carried out in conjunction with the Public Appointments Service. However, the Department manages Temporary seasonal recruitment for the National Parks and Wildlife Service on an annual basis. Temporary seasonal recruitment is advertised in print media local to the area where the position is located. These positions are also advertised on the NPWS website. Detailed information on the job and role description is provided on the website alongside the application form for the positions. Information on the activities of the NPWS can be found on the website, which applicants need to visit in order to download the application form.

Once a candidate has been offered a position, they have to submit a completed clearance form for Garda vetting. There is provision for review of a potential candidate if a disclosure is made. Depending on the role advertised, there may be some specific requirements that might exclude applicants from working in the organisation. Any specific job requirements are detailed in the application form.

As part of the child protection policy within the Department, all members of staff are required to complete two declaration forms – one agreeing to comply with the various child protection policies in place in the Department and the other a self-declaration form (denying or confirming any past convictions). Candidates are required to include a photograph with their application forms and references are confirmed by telephone.

For temporary staff, the first month of their fixed term contract is considered the probationary period and is highlighted in the contract as such. Contracts are agreed by management and workers and appropriate security clearance is required. If security clearance is not to the satisfaction of the Department, the contract may be revoked.

The reporting function is identified in the contract. As temporary seasonal staff are typically General operatives and Visitor\Education guide, supervision is typically on a weekly basis but usually more frequently than that.

Management will provide and the staff will participate in recognised and appropriate Child Protection Training where necessary.
Appendix 12

Compliance with

*Children First*

*National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*

*2011*

Checklist for bodies funded under grant schemes operated by

the

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

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*An Roinn*

*Ealaíon, Oidhreachtta agus Gaeltachta*

*Department of*

*Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*
Compliance checklist for Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children
The Children First guidance document (section 4.2.2) sets out the roles and responsibilities of Government Departments as:

“Every Government department or publicly funded body that delivers or funds services to children – whether directly or indirectly through bodies or agencies under its aegis – has a responsibility to ensure that there is an awareness within the relevant organisations of the Children First: National Guidance and that the standards in relation to child protection and welfare set out in the guidance are adhered to in the delivery of those services.”

This checklist sets out to meet the Department’s responsibilities, as outlined above, with a view to assessing the level of implementation of Children First with regard to services which are funded by the Department.

Who should complete this checklist?
If you or your organisation provides activities or services to children and families, Children First 2011 advises you that you have a corporate duty and responsibility to safeguard the children in your care. As an organisation or an individual providing activities or services to children and families, you must develop guidance and procedures for staff and volunteers in relation to child protection – this is generally set out in a Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

This checklist should be completed by the provider of a service which is funded or paid for by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and which involves any work or activity, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of access to, or contact with, children through the provision of educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities, or the provision of advice to, or the care and supervision of children. In instances where the Department funds an organisation or body that in turn provides funding to a third party to provide any of the aforementioned services to children, it is the duty of the body or organisation the Department funds directly to ensure that the recipient of downstream funding has put in place policies and procedures which comply with Children First.

What does this checklist seek to achieve?
This checklist will assist grant recipients to assess, in cases where it is applicable, the level of implementation of Children First in the provision of their service(s) and is based on the following:

- Our Duty to Care - Department of Health 2002;

The checklist should be completed with reference to these documents.

Completion of the checklist and the provision of key information in relation to how children are protected by you or your organisation will assist you and the Department in meeting our respective obligations to children.
Please note that should your child protection policy not meet the standards referred to in the checklist that it is possible that the Department will not be in a position to provide funding to you/your organisation.

**Child Protection Policy Checklist**

If you answer **NO** to any of the questions, please indicate what corrective actions you are undertaking and an indicative time frame, if applicable. If not applicable, please state why.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Child Protection and Welfare Policy (CP&amp;WP)</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comment if any action is required to ensure implementation/compliance</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Do you have a Child Protection and Welfare Policy (CP&amp;WP) which is consistent with Children First National Guidance 2011 and Our Duty to Care 2002?</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>Does the CP&amp;WP include definitions and signs of abuse as outlined in Children First 2011?</td>
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<td>1.3</td>
<td>Does your CP&amp;WP include information on Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006(^1) (reckless endangerment of children) and Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012(^2)</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
<td>Do you outline what is meant by reasonable grounds for concern?</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
<td>Does your policy include retrospective disclosure?</td>
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<td>1.6</td>
<td>Does the CP&amp;WP outline a clear reporting structure setting out, in particular, whose responsibility it is to report child protection and welfare concerns and to whom?</td>
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\(^1\) places a requirement on a person with authority or control over a child or over an abuser not to intentionally or recklessly endanger the child by leaving or placing them in a situation of substantial risk of serious harm or sexual abuse. It states that they have committed an offence if they have failed to take reasonable steps to protect a child that they know may be in a risk situation.  
\(^2\) creates a criminal offence of withholding information relating to the commission of a serious offence, including a sexual offence, against a person who is under the age of 18 years or an otherwise vulnerable person.
1.7  Do you have a Designated Liaison Person appointed for your organisation in line with Children First 2011?

If so, please provide the name of the Designated Liaison Person:

1.8  Do you have a Deputy Designated Liaison Person appointed?

If so, please provide the name of the Deputy Designated Liaison Person:

1.9  Does your policy have procedures in relation to confidentiality?

1.10 Does your policy include the sharing of information where a child protection or welfare concern arises?

1.11 Does your policy include procedures on dealing with allegations against staff?

1.12 Does your policy set out a Code of Behaviour between staff and young people?

1.13 Does your policy provide guidance on the management of challenging behaviour? e.g. verbally and physically aggressive behaviour

1.14 If applicable, do you have procedures dealing with day trips/outings for children?

1.15 Do you have specific guidance for staff for especially vulnerable children?

If so, please specify

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3 Children who may have been abused or neglected, or who are at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in residential settings; children in the care of the State under the Child Care Act 1991 (foster care, relative care; residential care); children who are homeless; children with disabilities; separated children seeking asylum; children being trafficked.
1.16 Does your policy set out good practice in relation to the safe management of activities, including for one-to-one situations?

1.17 Does your policy set out a complaints procedure?

1.18 Does your policy set out procedures in relation to Incidents/Accidents?

1.19 Does your policy set out procedures on record keeping?

If so, do your record keeping procedures state that records should be kept in a safe and confidential manner?

And do your record keeping procedures identify where records of allegations, child protection concerns are stored?

1.20 Do you make your Child Protection and Welfare Policy available to parents and young people?

Please set out how you make your policy available i.e. website, hard copy given to parents etc.:  

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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Staff and Volunteers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Do you apply for Garda vetting and vetting from other countries, if applicable, for staff and volunteers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Do you have specific factors which would exclude applicants from working in your organisation?</td>
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<td>2.3</td>
<td>Do you have procedures on the recruitment and management of volunteers?</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
<td>Do you have procedures on the</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Do staff and volunteers receive induction information on your organisation’s Child Protection and Welfare Policy?</td>
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<td>2.6</td>
<td>Do you provide training to relevant staff on Child Protection and Welfare?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Review Mechanisms</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>How often is your Child Protection and Welfare Policy reviewed?</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
<td>Who is responsible for reviewing your Child Protection and Welfare Policy?</td>
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<td>Name:</td>
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<td>Contact Details:</td>
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STATEMENT

I hereby confirm that the information which I have provided above is true and correct.


Signed: __________________________________________________

Position/Title: ______________________________________________

Name of organisation/body:

________________________________________________________

Contact Details: (Phone) (E-mail)

Date checklist completed: _______/______/_____

For Departmental Use:

Name of funding manager in Department:

________________________________________________________

Date checklist received: _______/______/_____