



Child Safeguarding Statement

March 2018

1. Child Safeguarding Statement

This Child Safeguarding Statement is prepared in accordance with the Children First Act 2015, and the Children First: National Guidance. It sets out the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as possible, that a child availing of the Department's relevant services, is safe from harm.

2. Relevant Services Provided

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform "DPER" does not provide services directly to children but it may employ staff who are under the age of 18. In addition, the Department supports the development of the potential of children and young people and may facilitate the placement of Transition Year students for short unpaid periods of work experience within the Department. These Transition Year students are usually under 18 years of age. The Department is committed to safeguarding all those under 18 years old working or training in the Department, in line with Children First legislation and best practice.

3. Obligations under the Children First Act 2015 in relation to relevant services

Where a Transition Year student is supported by the Department through work experience, the Transition Year student is assigned to a unit or units and is the responsibility of the manager of the unit or a delegated manager for the duration of the placement.

As the placement of transition year students in the Department is considered to be a relevant service to children under the Act the following principles and obligations apply:

- a) To keep the child safe from harm¹ while receiving the service, [i.e. on the placement;
- b) To assess the risks; and
- c) To address those risks, as required by the Act, in the Department's Child Safeguarding Statement.

The nature of Transition Year student work placement and in particular, the aim to provide the broadest working experience to the Transition Year student means that these students may come into contact with a range of people including staff, colleagues from other departments, public representatives, suppliers, members of the public or, and interest groups etc.

4. Relevant Persons

The Department does not have any "mandated persons" as defined in Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015.

The Department has assigned as relevant persons for the purposes of the Children First Act a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) in keeping with

¹ Harm includes Sexual Abuse and are defined under Part 1 (2) and Schedule 3 of the [Children First Act 2015](#) respectively.

best practice in child safeguarding. They are the contact persons for any child protection concerns within the Department. They are responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures within the organisation are followed, so that child welfare and protection concerns are referred promptly to Tusla. They will act as a point of contact for reporting child protection concerns and will liaise with outside agencies, as required.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ursula Devitt, HR Strategy Unit – Contact details: Phone: 604 5298: email: ursula.devitt@per.gov.ie

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ann-Marie Gallagher, HR Strategy Unit - Contact details: Phone: 076 100 7101: email: annmarie.gallagher@per.gov.ie

5. Risks Attaching to Transition Year students

The risks identified in relation to Transition Year students are as follows:

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1	Risk of harm to a child from a member of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment prior to placement • The Transition Year student should not be left unsupervised by a member of the unit in which they are working. • The student should not have access to any information, physical or digital which would not be suitable for viewing by a minor. • IT internet access policies
2	That the student may be harmed by a non-staff member in the course of their work placement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision/accompaniment/admission/public access policies as relevant to the placement or employment of the person under 18.
3	Risk of harm or concern not being recognised or reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff information, supervision and training • Reporting Procedure • Legal and Administrative consequences for non-reporting • Consultation with service users - TY students; Provision of Child Safeguarding Statement Information for managers and staff on child safeguarding in the workplace.
4	Risk of non-compliance with the Children First Act 2015 and National Guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectoral Implementation Plan • Children First Departmental Implementation Group • Compliance assurance process • Designated Liaison Persons
5	Risk of physical harm while on the Department's premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department's Health and Safety Statement and associated controls • ,

6. Mitigation of Risks

The procedures in place to mitigate the risks outlined earlier are as follows:

- On induction to the Department, all Transition Year “TY” students will be given a copy of the following which will be explained to them in detail in relation to TY students:
 - Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Dignity at Work policy
 - IT Internet Access Policies
 - Health and Safety Statement for the Department.
- TY students will also be given the name and contact details of, and be introduced personally to, the Designated or Deputy Designated officer who will be a contact person for them, accessible at all reasonable hours, to raise any issues/concerns around abuse, bullying, inappropriate behaviour, or any issue of concern they may have.
- All staff in the unit to which the TY student is assigned will have received and signed a copy of the Department’s Child Safeguarding Statement, to be kept on their file, and both the Assistant Principal (AP) and Principal Officer (PO) in the unit will have undertaken the Children First e-Learning training.
- In determining placements of TY students, care will be taken to ensure placement in units where the nature of the work is appropriate for children.
- The roles of DLP and Deputy DLP will be based in the HR Strategy Unit.
- The DLP or Deputy DLP will be obliged to make contact with the TY half way through their placement, and again on its conclusion.
- The Department’s DLP and Deputy DLP shall undertake [Ireland's National Child Protection and Welfare Guidance](#) E-Learning annually.
- It is a condition of appointment that all successful candidates assigned to positions in the Civil Service are subject to Garda vetting and this is managed by the Public Appointment Service. All civil servants are also subject to the [Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour](#).
- Department staff under investigation by TUSLA in relation to a case under the Act, should advise HR so that the staff member can have their role risk assessed for the duration of an investigation.
- DPER HR Strategy Unit will issue this Child Safeguarding statement to the parents/guardians of any Transition Year student undertaking work experience in the Department.

7. Reporting Protocol

The Department has developed a *Children First Reporting Protocol* for staff for the reporting of child welfare and protection concerns.

The PO of the unit to which the Transition Year student is assigned will confirm and forward to HR, in advance of the placement, a signed copy of the *Children First Reporting Protocol* from themselves and the AP in the placement unit.

8. Procedures

This Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017), and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment and actions under "Mitigations of Risks", the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure in respect of any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of the relevant service in accordance with Section 11 (3) (b) of the Children First Act 2015.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

9. Employees under the age of 18 years

The employment of staff does not fall within the definition of the provision of relevant services to children as set out in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015.

However, in the case of staff who may be under the age of 18, the Department is committed to best practice in relation to child safeguarding.

The risks to underage staff are considered to be identical to those applying to TY students, as set out in section (5) above, and in that context, the Mitigating of Risks in section 6 will be adapted as appropriate to be applied to staff under the age of 18.

In the case of (5) and (6) above, the reporting of any concerns will be made in accordance with the Department's *Children First Reporting Protocol*. This provides a framework for reporting to the DLP or Deputy DLP of any incidents/reports that arise. The protocol is attached as Annex 1.

10. Implementation

The implementation of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Reporting Protocol is primarily the responsibility of the Designated and Deputy Designated Liaison Persons, along with the Officer responsible for overall Children First Implementation.

However, it is also the responsibility of all Department staff, particularly those who are providing relevant services to children.

11. Review

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if there has been a material change in any of the issues to which it refers.

Signed: _____

HR Manager

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Chief Operations Officer

Date: _____