



An Roinn Iompair  
Department of Transport

# Child Safeguarding Statement

January 2022

## Background

The Children First Act 2015 requires organisations that are providers of 'relevant services' to publish a Child Safeguarding Statement (Schedule 1 of the Act provides a list of work or activities that constitute a 'relevant service'). It also requires that Child Safeguarding Statements are reviewed every two years or sooner if there has been a material change in any of the services to which it refers. The principles and procedures in place ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of these services is safe from harm have been reviewed and amended as appropriate.

This Statement details the relevant services provided by the Department of Transport to children. The Statement will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there has been a material change in any of the services to which it refers.

This Statement is circulated to all Staff of the Department of Transport and is available on the Department's website on gov.ie and from the reception desks at our offices.

## Relevant services provided by the Department

In preparing this Child Safeguarding Statement, the Department undertook a review of all services provided to identify those that fall under the definition of a relevant service as defined by the Children First Act 2015.

Two services were identified, and a risk assessment of each service was undertaken. This statement details the nature of these services, the principles and procedures in place to safeguard children from harm while availing of these services and the risk assessment for each.

The services identified were:

1. Transition Year Placement Programme
2. Irish Coast Guard Search & Rescue

## Transition Year Placement Programme

The Department provides a placement programme for Transition Year secondary school students. This service falls under the relevant service outlined in the Children First Act 2015, Schedule 1, 5(a):

*Any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children.*

### ***Principles in place to safeguard children from harm***

The Department is committed to protecting and facilitating the full participation of young people on work experience. It aims to create a safe environment for young people on work experience, and is committed to ensuring their safety and welfare at all times in accordance with the following documents:

- Children First Act 2015
- Children First - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017)
- Our Duty to Care - The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People (Department of Health and Children, 2002).

A Code of Practice for staff is also in place.

## Risk Assessment

The Department has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm<sup>1</sup> to a child while availing of this service. The risks identified are listed below, along with procedures in place for managing these risks.

<i>Risk identified</i>	<i>Procedure in place to manage risk</i>
<i>Risk of harm to the young person</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Practice for the protection and welfare of young people in place</li> <li>• Staff recruitment includes Garda Vetting</li> <li>• Staff training</li> </ul>
<i>Risk of harm or concern not being recognised or reported</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Practice includes reporting procedure</li> <li>• Training and support available to all staff</li> <li>• Reporting/feedback procedures in place for student on placement</li> </ul>
<i>Risk that procedures do not reflect Children First Guidance 2017</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures reviewed and updated to take account of Children First Act and new Guidance</li> </ul>
<i>Risk of harm from accessing inappropriate material on the Internet</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Practice for the protection and welfare of young people in place. Only limited internet access is provided to students on the Transition Year Programme. The Department's web filter prevents access to inappropriate sites which may cause harm to the student.</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Harm is defined in the Children First Act as follows: "harm" means, in relation to a child— (a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or (b) sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances, or otherwise.

## Irish Coast Guard (IRCG) Search & Rescue

Coast Guard Units have a Search function. They are equipped and have the local knowledge to undertake coastal searches safely and effectively. Their primary role is in response to a maritime connected incident. This service falls under the relevant service outlined in Schedule 1,4;

*Any work or activity which consists of treatment (including assessment which may lead to treatment), therapy or counselling provided to a child.*

### ***Principles in place to safeguard children from harm***

The IRCG is committed to safeguarding children. It expects all of its staff and volunteers to share this commitment<sup>2</sup>. The IRCG recognises its responsibility for safeguarding children whilst conducting searches and recognises that treatment (including assessment which may lead to treatment) may be required upon rescue or location of a missing child. It aims to create a safe environment for children whilst carrying out its Search function, and is committed to ensuring their safety and welfare at all times in accordance with the following documents:

- Children First Act 2015
- "Children First - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children" (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017)
- "Our Duty to Care - The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People" (Department of Health and Children, 2002).

A code of Practice for staff and IRCG Standard Operating Procedures are also in place.

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<sup>2</sup> The IRCG have prepared a Child Safeguarding Statement for the IRCG Volunteers. This is available directly from the IRCG,

## ***Risk Assessment***

<b><i>Risk identified</i></b>	<b><i>Procedure in place to manage risk</i></b>
<i>Risk of harm to the young person</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Practice in place</li> <li>• Staff recruitment includes Garda Vetting</li> <li>• Staff training</li> <li>• Search standard operating procedures</li> <li>• Search training</li> </ul>
<i>Risk of harm or concern not being recognised or reported</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Practice includes reporting procedure</li> <li>• Training and support available to all staff</li> </ul>
<i>Risk that procedures do not reflect Children First Guidance 2017</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures reviewed and updated to take account of Children First Act and new Guidance</li> </ul>

## Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the *Children First: National Guidance*, and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*.

In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our services:

- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla
- Procedure for the management of allegations of harm by a staff member of a young person/child availing of our service
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff
- Provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person

All procedures listed are available upon request to the relevant person named below.

## Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. The Department is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in December 2023, or sooner if there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

For further information or queries on, please contact Anne Pickett (the relevant person for the Department under the Children First Act 2015 (01) 670 7444 [childprotection@transport.gov.ie](mailto:childprotection@transport.gov.ie)).

Signed:



Ken Spratt  
Secretary General

25 January 2022

## Child Safeguarding Statement revision list

Revision No.	Date	Description
0.1	28/2/2019	CSS updated to reflect staff change
0.2	19/5/2020	Full review as required under Children First Act 2015
0.3	25/1/2022	Full review carried out under Children First Act 2015
0.4	23/5/2022	Change of name of Relevant Person





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