



**An Roinn Iompair,
Turasóireachta agus Spóirt**
Department of Transport,
Tourism and Sport

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Tourism and Sport**

**Children First Sectoral
Implementation Plan**

August 2018

Minister's Foreword

The Children First Act 2015 fully commenced on 11 December 2017. The Act places a number of statutory obligations on specific groups of professionals and on particular organisations providing services to children. I am pleased to publish the Sectoral Implementation Plan of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in accordance with section 27 of the Act.

This Sectoral Implementation Plan sets out the safeguarding measures being undertaken by my Department in respect of our relevant services to children. It also includes information on our engagement with agencies or other bodies who provide relevant services to children and are funded by my Department in that regard.

The Department is committed to safeguarding the well-being of all the children and young people with whom we work, striving to implement child protection measures to the highest standard in my Department and in the bodies and agencies under our aegis. This Sectoral Implementation Plan provides the framework to achieve this.

Shane Ross, T.D.
Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport
August 2018

Background

The Children First Act 2015 (the Act) was fully commenced on 11 December 2017. Section 27 of the Act requires each Minister of the Government to prepare and publish a Sectoral Implementation Plan (SIP).

This SIP is prepared in accordance with section 27 of the Act and sets out the safeguarding measures being undertaken by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in respect of relevant services to children. Relevant services are specified in Schedule 1 of the Act.

This SIP will be reviewed every 3 years, or at an earlier period if determined by the Minister.

This SIP contains:

- a description of the relevant services provided by the Department (as specified in Schedule 1 of the Act);
- an outline of the measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Department with a view to ensuring compliance, by the Department and its funded services, with the Act and with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (the Guidance);
- the measures taken or proposed to be taken to promote, review and report on compliance under the Act and Guidance; and
- the monitoring and review mechanisms in respect of the Plan.

Relevant services provided by the Department

As a central Government Department, serving the Government and the people of Ireland, our mission is to shape the safe and sustainable development of transport, tourism, and sport, to support economic growth and social progress. Our high level goals are:

- Land Transport: to best serve the needs of society and the economy through safe, sustainable and competitive transport networks and services
- Aviation: to maximise air transport connectivity with a safe, competitive, cost-effective and sustainable aviation sector
- Maritime: to facilitate safe and sustainable maritime transport and the delivery of emergency management services.
- Tourism: to support the tourism industry to grow in a sustainable way.
- Sport: to contribute to a healthier and more active society by promoting sports participation and by supporting high performance and the provision of sport facilities.

More information on our mission and role can be found in our [Statement of Strategy](#).

Schedule 1 of the Act provides a list of 'work or activities' that constitute a relevant service to children. The Department provides two such relevant services:

- The Transition Year Placement Programme, a relevant service as specified in Schedule 1, part 5(a): any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children.

- Irish Coast Guard Search & Rescue, a relevant service as specified in Schedule 1, part 4: any work or activity which consists of treatment (including assessment which may lead to treatment), therapy or counselling provided to a child.

The Act also requires this SIP to outline the measures taken to ensure compliance with the Act for any organisation which provides a relevant service **and** is funded by the Department in that regard. A number of bodies carry out relevant services and are funded by the Department in that regard:

- Mountain Rescue Ireland
- Community Rescue Boats Ireland
- CHC Ireland

The services provided fall under Schedule 1, Part 4: any work or activity which consists of treatment (including assessment which may lead to treatment), therapy or counselling provided to a child.

Information in relation to agencies and other bodies

To carry out our role and achieve our mission and strategic goals as described above, the Department has a wide range of policy, governance, regulatory, safety, investment, investigatory and enforcement functions. Many of these functions are carried out by agencies and other bodies under the Department's responsibility. A list of all agencies under the aegis of the Department is included in Appendix 1.

The Department has notified all agencies under our aegis of the full commencement of the Act, and of the obligations and requirements of the Act and Guidance. We have engaged with agencies to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and obligations under the Act and Guidance. We have also advised that it is considered best practice to have child protection policies in place for any interaction they may have with children.

We have also asked each agency to ensure that any organisation or body which they may fund to provide a relevant service to children is aware of the requirements of the Act and Guidance.

A number of agencies under the aegis of the Department may provide relevant services to children that are not funded by us in that regard¹, however we have advised all agencies of the responsibilities and obligations arising from the Act and Guidance. Similarly, some services provided by agencies may not be specified as relevant services under the Act. These services may be accessible by children along with the general public and mainly include public transport services, airport and seaport services, tourist festivals and events supported by Fáilte Ireland. While these are not relevant services as specified by the Act, we have engaged and will continue to engage with agencies regarding the importance of having child safeguarding measures in place for all children accessing their services.

In addition to the agencies under our aegis, the Department also fund a number of other bodies to provide relevant services. We have notified all bodies that provide relevant services and are funded by us in that regard of the full commencement of the Act, and the obligations and requirements of the Act and Guidance.

¹ For example, Bus Eireann, an agency under the aegis of the Department, currently provides a school transport service for the Department of Education and Skills, and is funded by them in that regard. As such this service is not deemed a relevant service to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

Measures to ensure compliance with Children First Legislation and Guidance

The Department undertakes to keep children and young people safe while they are accessing our services, or those relevant services that we fund our agencies or other bodies to provide. We have taken a number of measures to keep children and young people safe, and to ensure awareness and compliance with the obligations under the Act and Guidance. These are outlined below.

Child Safeguarding Statement

Under the Act, organisations that provide relevant services to children must develop a Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS). This statement describes the services being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of these services is safe from harm².

In preparing our CSS, we reviewed all services provided by the Department and identified those that fall under the definition of relevant services. The services identified as relevant services are:

- the Transition Year Placement Programme, a relevant service as outlined in Schedule 1, part 5(a): any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children;
- Irish Coast Guard Search & Rescue, a relevant service as outlined in Schedule 1, part 4: any work or activity which consists of treatment (including assessment which may lead to treatment), therapy or counselling provided to a child.

These services were examined for the potential risk of harm to children or young people while availing of them. Where necessary, we updated our protocols and procedures to mitigate any risks identified. These risks are summarised in our CSS, along with the procedures in place to manage them. The CSS is available [here](#) or on request from the Department by phoning (01) 670 7444 or emailing euandcentralpolicydivision@dtas.gov.ie.

We have informed all of our agencies that if they provide a relevant service to children they must prepare and publish a CSS. To assist them, we provided information on preparing a CSS, a template CSS and information on the development of the Department's own statement.

Staff advice, information and training

The staff of the Department may also interact with children and young people outside the relevant services identified in our Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Department has a number of policies in place to safeguard children and young people accessing our services. These include a Code of Practice for the Protection and Welfare of Young People and a Protocol for Responding to Child Protection Concerns:

- the Code of Practice for the Protection and Welfare of Young People outlines best practice for all staff in their interactions with children and young people;
- the Protocol for Responding to Child Protection Concerns provides clear guidance to staff of the Department on how reporting should take place, by whom and in what circumstances.

² "Harm" in relation to a child is defined in the Act as (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.

Reporting of concerns will be made in the appropriate way to Tusla in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

These policies have been reviewed and updated where necessary to take account of the Act and Guidance, and have been made available to all staff.

All staff have been encouraged to participate in the online training provided through the Tusla eLearning Introduction to Children First Programme. This programme outlines the safeguarding responsibilities of organisations working with children and includes how to recognise and report child abuse.

A dedicated Child Protection and Welfare page has been established on the Department's internal intranet site, providing relevant documents, guidance and links to training materials. We will continue to identify appropriate training materials for staff and update the intranet page with these.

Engagement with agencies

The Department regularly provides information on the Act and Guidance to our agencies, including circulation of:

- [Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children](#)
- [A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns](#)
- [Best Practice Principles for Organisations in Developing Children First Training Programmes](#)
- [Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- [Children First eLearning Programme](#)

25,000 copies of the revised Children First: National Guidance were provided to Sport Ireland through the Children First Inter-Departmental Implementation Group. Sport Ireland disseminated the Guidance to the National Governing Bodies of sport, for onwards circulation to their member sports clubs.

The Department has and will continue to engage with agencies and other bodies that provide relevant services regarding the policies and procedures arising under the Act and the Guidance.

Participation in the Children First Inter-Departmental Implementation Group

Part 4 of the Act provides for the establishment of the Children First Inter-Departmental Implementation Group. The Implementation Group is a forum for members to raise child welfare and protection issues of general concern, or with a cross-departmental or cross-sectoral dimension across the various sectors.

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs established this Group and it is chaired by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Its membership is composed of nominated persons from each Government Department, plus a representative from Tusla, An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive.

The functions of the Implementation Group are to:

- promote compliance by Government Departments with their obligations under the Act;
- monitor the implementation by Government Departments of the guidelines issued by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs;
- provide support to Government Departments regarding the preparation and publication of sectoral implementation plans;

- promote a consistent approach by Government Departments to the preparation and publication of sectoral implementation plans;
- report to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, when requested, on the implementation of the Act and of the Guidelines issued by the Minister, and
- provide information or advice, or make proposals, to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs on any of the above matters

The Department has participated in the Implementation Group since its establishment in November 2016 and will continue to participate as the Act is implemented.

Measures to promote, review and report on compliance

The Department will review our Child Safeguarding Statement within 24 months of publication, in accordance with the Act.

Funded agencies and services will be required, in the context of the normal governance processes, to inform the Department that they have identified and are compliant with all their legal requirements under the Act.

We will also engage with agencies and other funded bodies on their compliance with the Act and Guidance, including incorporating compliance with child protection legislation into the relevant documentation under our Framework Oversight Plan (Governance of State Bodies).

Monitoring and review mechanisms in respect of the Plan

This SIP will be reviewed and, if appropriate, revised no later than 3 years from the date of its publication.

APPENDIX 1

Bodies under the aegis of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Bus Átha Cliath
Bus Éireann
CIÉ
Commission for Aviation Regulation
Commissioners of Irish Lights
Commission for Railway Regulation
daa plc
Dublin Port Company
Fáilte Ireland
Galway Harbour Company
Iarnród Éireann
Irish Aviation Authority
Marine Casualty Investigation Board
Medical Bureau of Road Safety
National Transport Authority
Port of Cork Company
Port of Waterford Company
Road Safety Authority
Shannon Foynes Port Company
Shannon Group
Sport Ireland
Tourism Ireland
Transport Infrastructure Ireland

DTTAS Sectoral Implementation Plan Revision List

Revision No.	Date	Description
0.1	19/05/2020	Changes to list of Agencies, links and email address