




Child Safeguarding Statement

Version Control

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Introduction

This Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) is intended to ensure compliance with the University's obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, (hereinafter as 2017 National Guidance) to ensure that allegations of child abuse and neglect are reported in accordance with this CSS and to provide a clear framework for managing such reports to assist and support staff.

Dublin City University (DCU) will uphold the key principle that the welfare of the child is paramount and that children are protected, treated with respect, listened to and have their views taken into consideration.

Name of Service being Provided

Dublin City University (DCU) is a university established under Statute whose main objectives are the advancement of education through the provision of full and part-time academic programmes at Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Doctoral levels and the undertaking of Research for societal benefit. In addition, DCU is renowned for its commitment to innovation and entrepreneurship and its proactive engagement with the enterprise sector and its local community.

DCU is based in Dublin with over 21,000 students and 1,800 staff based on three academic campuses.

Scope

This Policy applies to:

- a) all University staff, students and those working on a voluntary or unpaid basis on behalf of the University, including campus companies and research centres.
- b) all other external parties (e.g. agents, contractors, service providers, summer residency programmes / activities, licensees and visitors) operating on behalf of DCU.

Please note that the groups listed above are collectively known as **Members** throughout this document and associated documents. (See definition set out above).

This Child Safeguarding Statement should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy and the Child Protection Procedures document.

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

The University falls within the definition of an organisation that provides relevant services to children as outlined in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015.

The University admits some students who are under the age of 18 years at date of Registration. The university provides education, engages in research and provides other education related activities including the Centre for Talented Youth Ireland, Access Programme, DCU International Academy, Transition Year programmes, Open Days, School Tours/visits and Summer Camps that involve children coming onto the campus.

Any new activity involving children will be risk assessed by the organiser.

The University will maintain links with Tusla and An Garda Síochána in order to promote appropriate child protection and welfare policies and practices.

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this CSS is to ensure compliance with the University's statutory obligations as well as promoting best practice in child protection by:

- complying with statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015;
- complying with non-statutory best practice outlined in the 2017 National Guidance;
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that children are safe from harm while availing of the University's services (i.e. while attending the University or while participating in university activities);
- undertaking an assessment of any potential for harm to children while they are availing of a service from the University;
- preparing and displaying this CSS in accordance with the requirements of Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015;
- appointing a Relevant Person to be the first point of contact in respect of this CSS. For the purpose of this CSS, the Relevant Person will be the Designated Liaison Person;
- providing a copy of this CSS to University personnel and, where requested to students, parents, Members of the public and to Tusla;
- setting out procedures to enable University Members deal with child protection concerns in which the protection and well-being of the child is the paramount consideration;
- training University Members to make informed decisions and appropriate responses to child protection concerns;
- advising University Members on their responsibilities in relation to child protection and compliance with statutory and non-statutory obligations; and
- ensuring information relating to child protection concerns is only shared on a "need to know" basis in accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015 and the 2017 National Guidance.

Legal Framework

The legal framework and key publications are outlined in [Appendix 2](#).

Roles and Responsibilities

This CSS is intended to ensure the University's compliance with the Children First Act 2015 and the 2017 National Guidance and to assist University Members, in dealing appropriately with child protection concerns.

Responsibility for the implementation of this CSS

The ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this CSS rests with the University President.

Responsibility of Unit Managers/Line Managers/General Managers

It is the responsibility of all unit managers to ensure that each University member is made aware of their duties and complies with this CSS, insofar as it applies to them.

Responsibility of the University Members

This CSS applies to all University Members and it is the duty of each University member to comply with this CSS.

Responsibility of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The University appointed a DLP who will:

- act as a resource to any University member who has a child protection query or concern;
- act as a liaison with outside agencies such as the Child and Family Agency (“Tusla”) and An Garda Síochána;
- ensure that mandated and non-mandated reporting procedures are followed, so that cases of child abuse and neglect are referred promptly to TUSLA and/or to An Garda Síochána;
- ensure compliance by MPs with joint reporting procedures;
- record all allegations of child abuse and neglect brought to his/her attention;
- record all actions taken in relation to allegations of child abuse and neglect;
- where a concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but there remains a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, report this to Tusla;
- seek informal advice from Tusla where there is any doubt as to whether a matter should be reported to Tusla and/or as to whether a mandated report should be made;
- record the reasons where a decision is made not to report an allegation;
- Where the DLP does not believe the concern satisfies the threshold of harm sufficient to submit a mandatory report, s/he should inform the MP in writing that if s/he remains concerned, the MP may submit a mandated report to Tusla. In these circumstances, the MP must furnish the DLP with a copy of the mandated report s/he provided to Tusla and inform the DLP of any advice, information and/or documentation s/he receives from Tusla in relation to the report.
- raise awareness of the University’s commitment to child protection via information on the Child Protection Website and through promotion of Tusla Children First Training available via Loop.

The University may appoint a person to act as the DLP who is also a Mandated Person.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) responsible for dealing with all child protection matters in DCU is the Chief Operations Officer. In the absence of the Designated Liaison Person the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) responsible for dealing with child protection matters is the Deputy Chief Operations Officer or the Deputy President.

Contact	Name	Contact details
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Dr Declan Raftery Chief Operations Officer	child.protection@dcu.ie 01-700 5118 01-700 8257

Contact	Name	Contact details
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)	Martin Ward, Deputy Chief Operations Officer	child.protection@dcu.ie 700 7476
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)	Prof. Anne Sinnott Deputy President	child.protection@dcu.ie 01-700 5396

Responsibility of Mandated Persons

The statutory obligation to report mandated concerns in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 rests with Mandated Persons and not with the Designated Liaison Person.

In accordance with this CSS, Mandated Persons are required:

- to inform the DLP as part of the reporting structure of any allegations, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or neglect;
- when making a mandated report, to make it jointly with the DLP;
- Where the DLP is of the view that a report does not need to be made, the DLP should inform the MP that it is open to the MP to seek informal advice from TUSLA and/or to report his/her concern and/or to make a mandated report where s/he still considers that such a report is warranted. In such circumstances, the MP shall:
 - inform the DLP that a report has been made and whether it was a mandated report; and
 - provide a copy of the report to the DLP.
 - assist Tusla, if requested, in accordance with Section 16 of the Children First Act 2015 in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report; and
 - uphold the key principle that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Risk Assessment

The University has undertaken a risk assessment in which it has assessed potential harm to children while availing of the services provided by the University and the list of procedures for managing these risks. The DCU Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template is available as [Appendix 3](#) of this CSS.

Procedures

This CSS has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015 and the 2017 National Guidance. In addition to the University’s risk management process, the following procedures support the University’s intention to safeguard children while they are availing of its services.

Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against a member in relation to a child who is availing of the University’s services

If an allegation is made against a Member, action will be guided by the Children First Act 2015, the 2017 National Guidance, and the rules of natural justice. The DLP shall be informed as soon as possible.

The first priority should be to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. The DLP shall, as a matter of urgency, refer the matter to the Director of Human Resources (Note ¹) who may take any necessary protective measures, including, where necessary, immediately placing the staff member on administrative leave. These measures should be proportionate to the level of risk and should not unduly penalise the staff member, financially or otherwise, unless necessary to protect children.

Any allegation must be dealt with sensitively and the University member treated fairly. This includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair enquiry. The DLP will advise the Director of HR who should advise the person against whom the allegation of child abuse is being made of the following:

- the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her; and
- the available details of the nature of the allegation.

A follow up of allegations of abuse against a Member should be made in consultation with Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána. Immediate contact should be made with these two agencies for that purpose.

It is important to note that if an allegation is made against a staff Member, there are two procedures to be followed:

- the relevant HR procedures applicable to the Member; and
- reporting the allegation in accordance with this CSS, to Tusla and An Garda Síochána.

In general, the same person should not have the responsibility of dealing with both procedures. The DLP (Note ²) is responsible for reporting the matter to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána, while the Director of Human Resources or his/her nominee is responsible for addressing the relevant procedural issues applicable in respect of a staff member.

Allegations of child abuse against a student of the University

If an allegation is made against a student, action should be guided by the Children First Act 2015, the 2017 National Guidance, the agreed procedures under the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline.

The DLP should be informed as soon as possible.

The first priority should be to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. The DLP shall, as a matter of urgency, refer the matter to the Deputy President & Vice-President Academic Affairs/Registrar who may take any necessary protective measures. These measures should be proportionate to the level of risk and should not unduly penalise the student member.

Any allegation of abuse must be dealt with sensitively and the student should be treated fairly. This includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair enquiry. The DLP should privately advise the person against whom the allegation of child abuse is being made of the following;

- The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her; and
- The available details of the nature of the allegation.

¹ Or his/her nominee

² Or the DLP and MP acting jointly

The student should be afforded the opportunity to respond to the DLP (rather than the Person making the allegation). The DLP should note the response and pass the information on to Tusla, if making a formal report.

A follow up of allegations of abuse against a student should be made in consultation with Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána. Immediate contact should be made with these two agencies for that purpose.

It is important to note that if an allegation is made against a student of the University, then there are two procedures to be followed:

- dealing with the matter in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline
- reporting the allegation in accordance with this CSS, to Tusla and An Garda Síochána.

In general, the same person should not have the responsibility of dealing with both procedures. The DLP is responsible for reporting the matter to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána, while the Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for addressing the application of the student Code of Conduct, where relevant.

It should be further noted that in the event that an allegation is made against a student who is under 18 years of age, this should be considered a child welfare and protection issue for both parties and the DLP should follow the outlined procedures for both the alleged victim and the alleged abuser.

Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers to work with children

The University shall:

- appoint via appropriately qualified/experienced interview boards;
- use standard forms and agreed recruitment procedures;
- require appropriate qualifications/experience from applicants;
- issues job/role description for each post that describes the broad range of duties the role will involve and it issues a Person Specification that describes the type of attributes the University requires the post-holder to have (e.g. experience, qualifications and other requirements);
- ensure that prospective candidates working with children undergo a process which includes a formal interview;
- check successful applicant's references, qualifications, experience, suitability to work with children, gaps in curriculum vitae etc;
- undertake vetting of current and prospective employees and volunteers in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 (as amended); and
- require that all new recruits undergo a probationary period.

Procedure for the provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm

The University shall:

- make a copy of this CSS available, via the Child Protection webpages of the Office of the Chief Operations Officer, to every University staff member;
- encourage staff to avail of relevant training; and
- undertake to ensure that appropriate briefing sessions will be provided to Members, including those who may not work with children on a regular basis, in order to ensure that Members have

the necessary familiarity with the Children First Act 2015, the 2017 National Guidance and this CSS.

Focused training will be provided to Members who:

- are the Designated Liaison Person/Deputy Designated Liaison Person
- are Mandated Persons; and/or
- a necessary and regular part of their work or activities consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children, in order to ensure that they are:
 - aware of their statutory obligations, if applicable;
 - in compliance with the provision of information, instruction and training;
 - aware of the procedures in place to inform and instruct Members in relation to the identification of child protection concerns;
 - providing children’s activities in keeping with best practice; and
 - providing confident responses to child protection issues.

Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla

This must be done in accordance with the provisions of this CSS.

Procedure for maintaining a Schedule of the classes of persons as Mandated Persons as per Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015.

OCOO will publish Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 which sets out the classes of persons as Mandated Persons for the purpose of the Act.

Procedure for appointing a relevant person

The University has appointed the Designated Liaison Person as the Relevant Person to be the first point of contact in respect of this CSS.

Access to Procedures

The DCU Child Protection Procedures documents can be accessed at [this link](#).

Reporting Framework

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles on reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

- The safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made; and
- Reports should be made immediately to TUSLA in accordance with this CSS.

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types:

- (i) Neglect
- (ii) Emotional abuse
- (iii) Physical abuse
- (iv) Sexual abuse

A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger and can be an adult or another child.

In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, it is a child welfare and protection issue for both children and child protection procedures should be followed for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer.

Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) of this CSS for further information on recognising the signs and symptoms of child abuse/neglect.

Mandated and Non-Mandated Reporting

There are two instances of reporting to TUSLA:

- Mandated reporting; and
- Non-mandated reporting/Reporting of reasonable concerns.

Where University Members, including Mandated Persons, know, believe or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he/she shall without delay report this to the DLP.

When such a report is made to the DLP, s/he should consider whether this is a mandated or non-mandated concern.

Mandated Reporting

In accordance with section 14 of the Children First Act 2015, where an MP knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information that he or she has received, acquired or become aware of in the course of his or her employment or profession as such a mandated person, that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed; s/he shall as soon as practicable, report that knowledge, belief or suspicion to TUSLA.

Where a child believes that s/he has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed and discloses that belief to an MP in the course of the MP's employment or profession, the MP shall report that disclosure to Tusla.

Where a MP has the knowledge, belief or suspicion outlined at (i) above and/or receives a disclosure from a child in accordance with (ii) above, s/he shall without delay, report this to the DLP.

Where the DLP and the MP both agree that there are reasonable grounds for concern, the DLP and MP must jointly consider whether the concern in question is at or above the defined threshold of harm at which point a report must be submitted as a mandated report to Tusla.

Where the DLP and/or the MP are unsure whether the concern meets the threshold for making a mandated report, the DLP shall seek advice from Tusla. The DLP shall inform the MP concerned that such advice is being sought and shall inform the MP of the advice once same has been provided.

Where Tusla advises that a mandated report should be made, the DLP and the MP shall act on that advice and a mandated report shall be submitted to Tusla jointly by the DLP and MP as soon as practicable.

Where a mandated concern requires urgent intervention to make the child safe, section 14(7) of the Children First Act 2015 allows the DLP/MP to alert Tusla of the concern in advance of submitting a written report. Subsequently, the MP and the DLP must jointly submit a mandated report to Tusla within three days.

Where the DLP does not believe the concern satisfies the threshold of harm sufficient to submit a mandatory report, s/he should inform the MP in writing that if s/he remains concerned, the MP may submit a mandated report to Tusla. In these circumstances, the MP must furnish the DLP with a copy of the mandated report s/he provided to Tusla and inform the DLP of any advice, information and/or documentation s/he receives from Tusla in relation to the report.

The thresholds of harm for each category of abuse at which MPs have a legal harm obligation to make mandated reports are as follows:

Neglect

The threshold of harm at which an MP must make a mandated report to Tusla is reached when s/he knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child's needs have been neglected, are being neglected, or are at risk of being neglected to the point where the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Emotional Abuse/Ill-Treatment

The threshold of harm, at which an MP must make a mandated report to Tusla is reached when s/he knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Physical Abuse

The threshold of harm, at which an MP must make a mandated report to Tusla is reached when s/he knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being assaulted and that as a result the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Sexual Abuse

All sexual abuse falls within the category of seriously affecting a child's health, welfare or development. If an MP knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused, then the MP must make a mandated report to Tusla. Sexual abuse is an offence against the child as specified in Schedule 3 of the Children First Act 2015.

There is one exception to the requirement to report sexual abuse i.e. certain consensual sexual activity between teenagers, as provided for in the Children First Act 2015.

No obligation to submit a mandated report

There is no obligation to make a mandated report where:

- the concern relates to consensual sexual activity as defined in section 14(3) of the Children First Act 2015;
- the sole basis for the MP's knowledge, belief or suspicion of is as a result of information s/he has acquired, received or become aware of from:
 - Another MP, who has made a report to Tusla; or
 - A person, other than an MP, who has reported jointly with an MP to Tusla, unless an MP becomes aware of any additional information, in which case a further report should be made to Tusla;
- information was received by the MP pursuant to his or her role in assisting Tusla with an assessment as to whether a child who is the subject of a report or any other child has been, is being or is at risk of being harmed; or
- information is acquired by an MP outside the course of his/her professional work or employment on the basis of a personal rather than a professional relationship.

The foregoing exemptions do not apply to a disclosure made by a child to an MP.

Failure to make a mandated report

MPs should be aware of the administrative actions that Tusla can take if, after an investigation, it emerges that an MP failed to make a mandated report. Tusla may:

- Make a complaint to the Fitness to Practise Committee of a regulatory body of which the MP in question is a member; or
- Pass information about the MP's failure to make a report to the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána. This information could then be disclosed to an MP's current or future employers when s/he is next vetted.

The University will treat a failure to make a mandated report as a disciplinary matter. Administrative actions may include (but are not restricted to) the initiation of steps for implementation of the Dublin City University disciplinary procedures under Dublin City University Statute No. 5 of 2010: 'Suspension and Dismissal of Employees' leading to demotion or dismissal (relevant to Dublin City University employees only).

In addition, the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 requires that any person who has information about an offence against a child, which may result in charges or prosecution, must report this to An Garda Síochána. Failure to report is a criminal offence.

An MP cannot submit a mandated report anonymously.

Non-Mandated Persons (NMP) Reporting

If an NMP receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he/she shall, without delay, report this to the DLP.

Where both the DLP and MP decide that the concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but there remains a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, the DLP is required to report this to Tusla. If the DLP is unsure whether the matter should be reported, s/he shall take advice from Tusla and act on this advice.

Concerns from NMPs

Where a NMP has a concern in relation to child abuse or neglect, the NMP should report this to the DLP. In light of the information received, the DLP will decide whether to report the matter to Tusla and/or seek informal advice.

Seeking informal advice from Tusla

Where the DLP and/or an MP is concerned about a child but is unsure whether to report the concern to Tusla, or whether a report should be submitted to Tusla as a mandated report, the DLP shall seek advice from Tusla.

In consulting Tusla, the DLP shall be explicit that he or she is requesting advice and consultation and that he or she is not making a report. At this informal stage, the DLP need not give identifying details.

It should be noted that if the concern was brought to the attention of the DLP by a MP, the DLP shall inform the MP that Tusla's advice is being sought and shall inform the MP of the advice when received.

If Tusla advise that a report should be made to it, the DLP should act on that advice.

In all cases where the DLP has sought the advice of Tusla, the DLP shall retain a record of the consultation which will note the date, the name of the Tusla official and the advice given.

Where the DLP does not report the matter to Tusla

If the DLP decides not to report a matter to Tusla, the matter should still be recorded or noted internally by the DLP.

If the DLP decides not to report a concern to Tusla, the following steps should be taken:

- The reasons for not reporting should be recorded;
- Any actions taken as a result of the concern should be recorded;
- The DLP must provide the NMP with a clear written explanation of the reason why the DLP decided not to report;
- The DLP must inform the NMP who raised the concern that it is open to him/her to seek informal advice from Tusla and/or to report his/her concern where s/he still considers that such a report is warranted and/or report the matter to An Garda Síochána; and
- In such circumstances the NMP must provide a copy of the report to the DLP.

Disclosure of suspected child abuse by a child to a Member

If a complaint of abuse is disclosed directly from a child to a Member, the child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and the Member may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. Great care should be taken not to damage trust and deal with disclosures sensitively and professionally.

The following approach is suggested as best practice for dealing with these disclosures.

- 1) React calmly
- 2) Listen carefully and attentively
- 3) Take the child seriously
- 4) Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you
- 5) Do not promise to keep anything secret
- 6) Ask questions for clarification only
- 7) Do not ask leading questions
- 8) Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood
- 9) Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser
- 10) Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow
- 11) Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible, using the actual words that the child used
- 12) Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of this CSS, legislation and the 2017 National Guidance.
- 13) If child abuse is suspected, or an allegation is made, the University member should:
 - insofar as is appropriate gather information;
 - record the conversation (in the words of the child) and their observations accurately. The observations should include dates, times, names, locations, context and any other information that may be relevant;
 - inform the DLP as soon as possible; and
 - the University member should not interview the child or the child's parents/carer about the alleged abuse, as this is the function of TUSLA and/or An Garda Síochána. The role of the University member is not to investigate.

Allegations of Child Abuse on Placement

University staff, when arranging work placements, must clarify the child safeguarding procedures within the host organisations. The University's students must familiarise themselves with these procedures.

If a Member has a child protection concern while on work placement, then the Member should follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns in the organisation the work placement is taking place in. If the Member is unclear of the procedure, s/he should contact the DLP for clarification.

Disclosure of suspected child abuse by a third party to a Member

If a complaint is made to a Member from either another Member or a third party, to the effect that there is reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect is alleged to have taken place against a child, the Member should:

- direct the person to the DLP to report the concern; or
- report the concern to the DLP him/herself.

If the disclosure is made to an MP, s/he may have a statutory obligation to report to Tusla, this should be done in accordance with this CSS.

Child Pornography

Knowingly producing, distributing, printing, publishing or showing child pornography or possessing it for any of these purposes is a criminal offence under Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998. In order to combat child grooming and similar behaviour, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act, 2017 makes it a criminal offence for a person to send sexually explicit material by means of information and communication technology to a child.

If a Member is concerned that child pornography images are being downloaded, this should be reported as soon as possible to the DLP. The DLP is then responsible for ensuring that suspicions or allegations are referred to the Gardaí/Tusla and managed as per this CSS. If the Member is an MP, s/he may have a statutory obligation to report to Tusla, if applicable, this should be done in accordance with the joint reporting procedures in this CSS.

Members must not send, save, print out or move from one device to another any explicit content involving minors.

MPs who work with adults

Where a Member works with or treats persons, during the course of his/her employment, with mental health difficulties, intellectual disability, addiction or domestic violence issues, s/he must consider the welfare and safety of any children in that person's family and/or children in regular contact with the person. If there are concerns, which meet or exceed the thresholds outlined above, then s/he must report them jointly with the DLP to Tusla in accordance with this CSS. Reasonable concerns below that threshold should also be reported to the DLP who will report it to Tusla in accordance with this CSS.

Retrospective disclosure of child abuse by an adult

Some adults may disclose abuse that took place during their childhood. Such disclosures may come to light in various ways such as when a student attends an MP who works as a Student Counsellor or Student Healthcare professional. Such a disclosure may require mandated reporting as set out above. In accordance with professional obligations, an MP will endeavour to establish whether there is any current risk to any child who may be in contact with the alleged abuser revealed in such disclosures.

Where an MP provides counselling, it is recommended that students are put on notice before the counselling starts, that if any child protection issues arise and the alleged perpetrator is identifiable, the MP must pass the information on to Tusla. If the student does not feel able to participate in any investigation, Tusla may be seriously constrained in their ability to respond to the retrospective allegation.

Any reasonable concern about past abuse, where the information came to attention before the Children First Act 2015 came into force and where there is a possible continuing risk to children, should be reported in accordance with the non-mandated reporting procedures outlined in section 8.4 of this CSS.

If a Member makes a disclosure of abuse suffered during their childhood, the person to whom s/he has made the disclosure should provide him/her with contact information for relevant University support services; a student should be provided with contact details for Student Health/Counselling services. The University staff member should contact HR for details of the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) (EAP) service.

Reports in relation to retrospective abuse can be made by submitting a report to Tusla.

Internal Oversight

The DLP shall inform the University President and the appropriate University Officer of mandated and non-mandated reports made by a Member. The appropriate University Officer will be:

- the Vice President for Academic Affairs where the allegation is made against a student; and
- the Director of Human Resources where the allegation is made against a University employee or an individual working on a voluntary/unpaid basis on behalf of the University or any other person.
- the Company Secretary where the allegation concerns a campus company.

All of the above persons will be sensitive to the fact that information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis with those with a right or a need to know.

Protection from Civil Liability

Where the DLP or any other person reports suspicions of child abuse and neglect “reasonably and in good faith” to designated officers of Tusla or any Members of An Garda Síochána, the Protection of Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 (the “1998 Act”) protects them from civil liability for doing so. This means that if a person makes a report of suspected child abuse to Tusla or to An Garda Síochána even if it proves unfounded, any person taking an action would only be successful if they could prove the person had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. The 1998 Act also makes it an offence to make a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities “knowing the statement to be untrue”. This is designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

Research Activities involving children – Best Practice

Guidance on undertaking research with children is provided in the published Department of Children and Youth Affairs National Strategy for Research and Data on Children’s Lives 2011-2016, Ethical Review and Children’s Research in Ireland (2010) and in the associated guidance document Guidance for developing ethical research projects involving children (2012).

Research involving children must comply with the above documents (as updated, replaced and/or amended from time to time) and be approved in advance by the University’s Research Ethics Committee. General information on research ethics applications can be obtained from the University [Research Ethics Committee website](#).

In situations where research involves children who are or have been in state care, such children and their care proceedings are governed by “in camera” rules and principles of confidentiality, as set out in section 29 and section 31 of the Child Care Act 1991 (as amended). Legal advice should always be sought in advance of undertaking such research.

Confidentiality & Record Keeping

Sharing of Information

No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given by any Member to the person reporting an allegation of child abuse, be they an adult or a child. This should be made clear to all parties involved, although reassurances can be given that all information will be handled with sensitivity, taking full account of legal requirements.

All information regarding concerns of child abuse or neglect should be shared on a “need to know” basis only i.e. with personnel who have a legitimate involvement or role in dealing with the issue. Giving information reasonably and in good faith to those who need to have the information for the protection of a child who may have been or is in danger of being abused (including the DLP, Tusla or An Garda Síochána) is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection laws.

At all stages in the process (disclosure, reporting and dealing with an abuse allegation), confidentiality is of extreme importance. Statements, letters and other communications shall be confidential to those involved as per the procedure outlined in this CSS.

In accordance with section 17 of the Children First Act 2015, where the DLP and/or MP is assisting Tusla to carry out an assessment, s/he may not share this information with a third party save in accordance with the law, or unless Tusla authorises in writing the disclosure of information, subject to such conditions (if any) as Tusla considers appropriate and specifies in the authorisation. A person who fails to comply with this requirement shall be guilty of a criminal offence.

Management of records

All records of allegations in relation to child protection issues, which are made to a Member, should be regarded as highly confidential and should be provided to the DLP and stored in a secure location, in keeping with Data Protection requirements.

Record Keeping/Recording Allegations

Where there is an allegation of child abuse or neglect, the DLP shall keep proper dated and signed records. All records are highly confidential and it is the responsibility of the DLP to ensure that these are kept securely.

Details of allegations and reports of alleged incidents of abuse must be recorded. The records include:

- the date and time of disclosure;
- details of the allegation;
- details of what action the University has taken;
- an indication of the parties involved (including third parties) including names and addresses;
- any suspicions consequent on the information and the factual grounds for such suspicions;
- the response of the parents/guardians to the information (if any);
- the response of the person against whom the allegations were made (if any);
- the report from the University staff member who received the information or who has concerns;
- where a decision is made not to inform the parents/guardians, the reason for the decision and the advice received from Tusla;
- details (dates, times, people, place) of any subsequent meetings and communications of interested parties; and
- decisions re referral (or not) to Tusla, or An Garda Síochána including how, why, when and by whom the decision was taken.

Other Considerations

Informing the Child's Parent(s)/Guardian(s) that a report is being made

The 2017 National Guidance outlines that it is good practice to inform the parent/carer that a report concerning his or her child is being made and the reasons for the decision to make the report. It is not necessary to inform a parent/carer that a report is being made:

- if by doing so, the child will be placed at further risk; or
- in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment; or
- if the reporter is of the reasonable opinion that by doing so it may place him/her at risk of harm from the family.

Accordingly, when the DLP is submitting a report to Tusla, he/she should inform a parent/carer that a report is being made and the reasons for the decision to report except where any of the conditions at (1) to (3) above apply. In any case, where an MP is submitting a report to Tusla, the DLP, rather than the MP concerned, shall assume the responsibility for informing the parent/carer.

A record shall be made of the information communicated by the DLP to the parent/carer. A decision by the DLP not to inform a parent/carer shall be recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

Where the DLP has any doubt as to whether to inform a parent/carer that a report is being made, the DLP shall seek the advice of Tusla.

Implementation & Review

The University recognises that implementation is an on-going process. The University is committed to the implementation of this CSS, which supports our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our services.

This CSS will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Conclusion

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

Useful Contact Numbers

The University's Internal Contacts

Contact	Name	Contact details
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Dr Declan Raftery Chief Operations Officer	child.protection@dcu.ie 01-700 5118 01-700 8257
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)	Martin Ward, Deputy Chief Operations Officer	child.protection@dcu.ie 01-700 7476
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)	Prof. Anne Sinnott Deputy President	child.protection@dcu.ie 01-700 5396

TUSLA Contact

Child and Family Agency
180-189 Lakeshore Drive
Airside Business Park
Swords
Co. Dublin

Ph.: 01 870 8000

An Gardaí Síochána

Relevant Garda Síochána station to be based on the actual location of the children "at risk."

Appendix 1 - Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse

This is an extract from Chapter 2 the 2017 Children First - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children

Signs and symptoms of neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognized as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability. A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where the University member sees the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

Characteristics of neglect

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation
- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- Lack of adequate clothing
- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Abandonment or desertion
- Signs and symptoms of emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when

adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children’s emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognize because the effects are not easily seen. A reasonable concern for the child’s welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Characteristics of emotional abuse

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection
- Lack of comfort and love
- Lack of attachment
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child
- Bullying
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviours or actions
- Extreme overprotectiveness
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom)
- Ongoing family conflicts and family violence
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development.

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.

It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

Signs and symptoms of physical abuse

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child’s health and/ or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

● Physical punishment	● Deliberate poisoning
● Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking	● Suffocation
● Pushing, shaking or throwing	● Fabricated/induced illness
● Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling	● Female genital mutilation
● Use of excessive force in handling	

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and, in some instances, occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family Members. Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
 - Inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
 - Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act
 - Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse
 - Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse. Details on exemptions for mandated reporting of certain cases of underage consensual sexual activity can be found in this CSS.

Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm

If the University member is dealing with children, s/he needs to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children s/he comes into contact with. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

The following list is intended to help identify the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Parent or carer factors:

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Addiction, including gambling
- Mental health issues
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability
- Conflictual relationships
- Domestic violence
- Adolescent parents

Child factors:

- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide
- Conflictual relationships
- Domestic violence
- Adolescent parents
- Communication difficulties
- Trafficked/Exploited
- Previous abuse
- Young carer

Community factors:

Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction.

Culture-specific practices, including:

- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage
- Honour-based violence
- Radicalisation

Environmental factors:

- Housing issues
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently
- Poverty/Begging
- Bullying
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage:

- Non-attendance at appointments
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans

University Members should consider these factors as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla.

Bullying

It is recognized that bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it is verbal, psychological or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyberbullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name-calling, malicious gossip and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices.

While bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable. These include children with disabilities or special educational needs; those from ethnic minority and migrant groups; from the Traveller community; lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children and those perceived to be LGBT; and children of minority religious faiths.

There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying among children with special educational needs. This is particularly so among those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating. Some children with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly. Such children may be more vulnerable because they do not have the same social skills or capacity as others to recognize and defend themselves against bullying behaviour. Bullying in schools is a particular problem due to the fact that children spend a significant portion of their time there and are in large social groups. In the first instance, the school authorities are responsible for dealing with such bullying. School management boards must have a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy in place.

The DLP/MP should also be aware of the University's anti-bullying policy and of the relevant guidelines on how it is handled. In cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, the DLP/MP may need to make a referral to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána.

Appendix 2 - Legal Framework and Key Publications

The following laws, policies and key publications were taken into account when developing this CSS:

- The Children First Act 2015
- The 2017 National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children
- Children First Support Documents including the following:
 - 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; and
 - Mandated Assisting Protocol for TUSLA Staff
- The Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- Protected Disclosures Act 2014
- Child and Family Agency Act 2013
- Child Care Act, 1991
- Criminal Justice Act 2006
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
- Protection of Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003
- Freedom of Information Act 2014 (as amended)
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016
- Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2017
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, Department of Education and Skills 2017
- Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Children's Sport, Irish Sports Council 2000
- Ethical Review and Children's Research in Ireland, Department of Health and Children March 2010
- Guidance for developing ethical research projects involving Children Department of Children and Youth Affairs April 2012
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs National Strategy for Research and Data on Children's Lives 2011-2016 (2011)

Appendix 3 - Child Protection - Risk Assessment

List of DCU Activities	Risk of Harm in respect of the activity	Procedures / Protocols in place to address risk of harm identified	Likelihood of the risk occurring: L/M/H	Who is responsible for the risk?
Research involving children	<p>Risk of harm/abuse to children.</p> <p>Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a child -</p>	<p>Research involving children must be approved by the University's Research Ethics Committee prior to the commencement of the work.</p> <p>Written informed consent (and children's assent) must be obtained before the research can take place.</p> <p>In addition to the child, two or more persons shall be present during the research in so far as this is possible.</p> <p>In circumstances where a one-to-one meeting or interview is necessary this should always be conducted in a room with open door /visual access.</p> <p>All Members of DCU involved in research must familiarise themselves with signs and symptoms of child abuse and the DCU Child Protection policy and procedures.</p> <p>Child Protection Training to be undertaken by all Members of staff involved in research involving children</p>	Low	<p>At institutional level – the Designated Liaison Person.</p> <p>At individual Unit level - the Head of Unit</p>

List of DCU Activities	Risk of Harm in respect of the activity	Procedures / Protocols in place to address risk of harm identified	Likelihood of the risk occurring: L/M/H	Who is responsible for the risk?
<p>Teaching activities involving children e.g. CTYI programmes, Language School (DCULS) etc.</p> <p>It is recognised that there are a small percentage of DCU students that maybe under <18 years on starting 1st year.</p>	<p>Risk of harm/abuse to children.</p> <p>Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a child.</p>	<p>Teaching activities are delivered in a group environment in open classrooms / laboratories.</p> <p>All Units involved in the delivery of teaching to children to appoint a Designated Child Protection Contact Person and have in place a detailed Child Protection procedures and risk assessments.</p> <p>Child Protection Training to be undertaken by all Members of staff involved in research involving children.</p>	Low	<p>At institutional level – the Designated Liaison Person.</p> <p>At individual Unit level - the Head of Unit.</p>
<p>Students on work placements e.g. teachers, nurses etc.</p>	<p>Risk of harm/abuse to children.</p> <p>Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a child.</p>	<p>Garda vetting requirement prior to placement.</p> <p>Placement providers to make students aware of their Child Protection policies and procedures and contact details for their Designated Liaison Person.</p> <p>Students on placement by their very nature are supervised the majority of the time.</p>	Low	<p>Placement providers and the DCU Head of Unit.</p>
<p>Sporting Activities involving children e.g.</p>	<p>Risk of harm/abuse to children.</p>	<p>DCU Sport have a detailed Child Protection policy in place with a</p>	Low	<p>DCU Sport</p>

List of DCU Activities	Risk of Harm in respect of the activity	Procedures / Protocols in place to address risk of harm identified	Likelihood of the risk occurring: L/M/H	Who is responsible for the risk?
Easter/ summer campus, swimming lessons.	Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a child.	Designated Liaison Person. For swimming lessons, parents are present at the poolside and in the dressing rooms at all times. Easter / Summer camps are conducted in group sessions with multiple Members of staff / students present at all times. Dedicated toilets are provided for such camps.		
Trips, Tours and Travelling to Sporting Events	Risk of harm/abuse to children. Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a child.	DCU does not undertake trips or tours off campus with children. There are a small percentage of DCU students that maybe under 18 years on starting 1st year. Trips/tours including field trips are undertaken in groups.	Low	At institutional level – the Designated Liaison Person. At individual Unit level - the Head of Unit.
School visits by DCU staff	Risk of harm/abuse to children. Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not	School visits are pre-arranged and take part with the full co-operation and supervision of school staff. No one-on-one sessions take place in such visits.	Low	At institutional level – the Designated Liaison Person. At individual Unit level - the Head of Unit

List of DCU Activities	Risk of Harm in respect of the activity	Procedures / Protocols in place to address risk of harm identified	Likelihood of the risk occurring: L/M/H	Who is responsible for the risk?
	being recognised or reported by a child.	All Units undertaking such visits have a Designated Child Protection Contact person and have in place a detailed Child Protection procedures and risk assessments.		



Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template

Version Control

Document Name	Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template		
Unit Owner	Office of the Chief Operations Officer		
Version Reference	Original Version 2.0	Reviewed Version 2.1	
Approved by	Executive	Deputy COO	
Effective Date	December 14 th 2021	November 29 th 2024	

Overview of how this Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment process operates:

As part of this Risk Assessment exercise, please provide a short summary of operational matters associated with your Functional Area. This information is designed to provide some “context” to assist the Designated Liaison Person with understanding the operational environment of the Faculty/Department/School/Unit.

(Any Member, having concern as to a child’s welfare must consult immediately with the DLP and the Internal Reporting Form set out in Appendix 7 of the Child Protection Procedures must be completed and submitted without delay to the DLP.)

While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, DCU has in place policies and procedures and trained personnel to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent. This Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment will provide important information in an operational setting to the Designated Liaison Person.

This Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment document should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy, the Child Protection Procedures document and the Child Safeguarding Statement.

To help you complete this Risk Assessment, Information on Reasonable Grounds for Concern is set out in Appendix 1:

Please complete this Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment and return it to the Designated Liaison Person. Thank you.

Neglect:

The threshold of harm at which a Mandated Person must make a mandated report to Tusla is reached when he/she knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child's needs have been neglected, are being neglected, or are at risk of being neglected to the point where the child's health, development or welfare has been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Please quantify the likelihood of this risk occurring – Low/Medium/High

Has the threshold of harm been reached -Yes or No

If Yes, has a Mandated Report been provided to Tusla (please attach a copy)

Please outline the procedures/protocols in place to address the risk of harm identified above

Who is responsible for managing this Child Protection Risk

Emotional Abuse:

The threshold of harm at which a Mandated Person must make a mandated report to Tusla is reached when he/she knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Please quantify the likelihood of this risk occurring – Low/Medium/High

Has the threshold of harm been reached -Yes or No

If Yes, has a Mandated Report been provided to Tusla (please attach a copy)

Please outline the procedures/protocols in place to address the risk of harm identified above

Who is responsible for managing this Child Protection Risk

Physical Abuse:

The threshold of harm at which a Mandated Person must make a mandated report to Tusla is reached when he/she knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being assaulted and that as a result the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Please quantify the likelihood of this risk occurring – Low/Medium/High

Has the threshold of harm been reached -Yes or No

If Yes, has a Mandated Report been provided to Tusla (please attach a copy)

Please outline the procedures/protocols in place to address the risk of harm identified above

Who is responsible for managing this Child Protection Risk

Sexual Abuse:

All sexual abuse falls within the category of seriously affecting a child’s health, welfare or development. If a Mandated Person knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused, then the Mandated Person must make a mandated report to Tusla.

Sexual abuse is an offence against the child as specified in Schedule 3 of the 2015 Act.

Please quantify the likelihood of this risk occurring – Low/Medium/High

Has the threshold of harm been reached -Yes or No

If Yes, has a Mandated Report been provided to Tusla (please attach a copy)

Please outline the procedures/protocols in place to address the risk of harm identified above

Who is responsible for managing this Child Protection Risk

Garda Vetting – Please indicate the Garda Vetting status of staff in your Faculty/School/Unit:

Child Protection Training - Please outline the Child Protection training arrangements in place for staff in your Faculty/School/Unit:

In undertaking this Risk Assessment, DCU has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risk of harm relevant to Faculty/Department/ Schools/Units and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage and address all risks identified. Please provide further details in terms of Gaps and Actions and Timelines.

Please identify any Gaps identified as part of this Risk Assessment:

Please list the Actions required to address the Identified Gaps:

Please set out a realistic Timeline to address the Identified Gaps:

Finally - Please outline any Learnings identified as part of this Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment. These Learnings may impact on the policies and procedures associated with Child Safeguarding in a University setting.

This Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment has been prepared by

Signed _____ Date _____

Definitions:

Designated Liaison Person (DLP) means a person appointed by the University in accordance with the 2017 National Guidance. For the purpose of the Child Safeguarding Statement, the DLP will also be the Relevant Person.

Contact	Name	Contact details
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Dr Declan Raftery Chief Operations Officer	childprotection@dcu.ie 01-700 5118 01-700 8257
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL P)	Martin Ward, Deputy Chief Operations Officer	childprotection@dcu.ie 01-700 7476
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL P)	Anne Sinnott Deputy President	childprotection@dcu.ie 01-7005396

Relevant Person (RP) means the person appointed by the University as the relevant person in accordance with Section 8 of the 2015 Act and who will be the first point of contact in respect of the Child Safeguarding Statement. For the purposes of the Child Safeguarding Statement, the Relevant Person will also be the Designated Liaison Person.

Mandated Person (MP) means a person, employed by the University, who is specified in Schedule 2 of the 2015 Act, the full list of Mandated Persons is set out in Schedule 2 of the 2015 Act.

Appendix 1

To help you complete this Risk Assessment, Information on Reasonable Grounds for Concern is set out below:

Information on Reasonable Grounds for Concern

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) states that “you should always inform Tusla - Child and Family Agency when you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

If you ignore what may be symptoms of abuse, it could result in on-going harm to a child. It is not necessary for you to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern to Tusla. All that is required is that you have reasonable grounds for concern.

” Further details on reasonable grounds for concern and when to make a report are set out in Chapter 4 of the Child Protection Procedures document.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence, for example, an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.

Retrospective Abuse:

If you receive a disclosure from an adult that they were abused as a child and, as a result of that disclosure, you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child (identifiable or not), who is under 18 years at the time of the disclosure, has been or is being abused or neglected, or a child is at risk of being abused or neglected in the future, this information should be reported to Tusla.

Definitions

‘Assault’ in relation to a child, means when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts him/her at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) of this Child Safeguarding Statement (‘CSS’) where an extract from Chapter 2 of the 2017 National Guidance is reproduced. This outlines types of child abuse and how they may be recognized.

‘Child’ means a person under the age of 18 years of age other than a person who is or has been married.

‘Designated Liaison Person’ (DLP) means a person appointed by the University in accordance with the 2017 National Guidance. For the purpose of this CSS, the DLP will also be the Relevant Person.

‘Harm’ means in relation to a child - 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 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.

‘Ill-treatment’ means in relation to a child, to abandon or cruelly treat the child, or causing or procuring or allowing the child to be abandoned or cruelly treated. Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) of this CSS where an extract from Chapter 2 of the 2017 National Guidance is reproduced. This outlines types of child abuse and how they may be recognized.

‘Mandated Person’ (MP) means a person, employed by the University, who is specified in Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015, the full list of MPs specified in Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 and they include:

- Registered nurse
- Physiotherapist
- Psychologist/ Counsellor
- Teacher registered with the Teaching Council
- Manager of a Language School
- Member of the clergy

See Appendix 4 – Schedule of Mandated Persons set out in the Child Protection Procedures document.

‘Mandated Report’ means a report made by a mandated person in accordance with Sections 14(1) & 14(2) of the Children First Act 2015.

‘Neglect’ means, in relation to a child, to deprive the child of adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, supervision, safety or medical care. Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) of this CSS where an extract from Chapter 2 of the 2017 National Guidance is reproduced. This outlines types of child abuse and how they may be recognised.

‘Non-Mandated Persons’ (NMPs) means, for the purpose of this CSS, any person employed by the University other than a Mandated Person.

‘Non-Mandated Report’ means any report made to TUSLA in accordance with this CSS and/or the 2017 National Guidance, other than a mandated report.

‘Physical Abuse’ in this CSS, physical abuse has the same meaning as assault. Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) of this CSS where an extract from Chapter 2 of the 2017 National Guidance is reproduced. This outlines types of child abuse and how they may be recognized.

‘Relevant Person’ (RP) means the person appointed by the University as the relevant person in accordance with Section 8 of the Children First Act 2015 and who will be the first point of contact in respect of this CSS. For the purpose of this CSS, the Relevant Person will also be the DLP.

‘Sexual Abuse’ means in relation to a child, the offences specified in Schedule 3 of the Children First Act 2015.

'2015 Act' refers to the Children First Act 2015, as amended.

'2017 National Guidance' refers to 'Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children', issued by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in 2017.

'Welfare' in relation to a child, includes the moral, intellectual, physical, emotional and social welfare of the child.

'Student' refers to full time and part time registered students of the University

'University' means Dublin City University.

'Members'

The phrase **Members** as used in this Child Safeguarding Statement, Child Protection Policy, and in the Child Protection Procedures Policy is a term used to encompass all those persons who are involved in the operations of DCU. It also includes all university staff, students and those working on a voluntary or unpaid basis on behalf of the university, including campus companies and research centres. All other external parties (e.g. agents, contractors, service providers, summer residency programmes/activities, licensees and visitors) operating on behalf of DCU are included in this term.

Governing Authority and its associated sub-committees are also included in this term members.