Child Protection Policy

National Library of Ireland



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Section 1

The National Library of Ireland – An Introduction

The National Library of Ireland is the library of record for Ireland; our collections are permanent, and accessible by all. Established in 1877, our mission is to collect, protect and share the material that comprises Ireland's literary and documentary heritage, in whatever form it takes.

We have always fostered and supported research, learning, debate, and the diversity of Irish culture and heritage. Our programme of engagement aims to reach many people through our online resources, our reading rooms, and our events, exhibitions and learning programmes.

Vision

To share the story of Ireland through our unique collections

Values

Welcome and helpful

• Committed to the delivery of a high standard of services to our users and visitors

Open, equal and inclusive

Share our collections with everyone

Supportive and collaborative

• Supporting learning and working collaboratively with partners to deliver interesting, informative and exciting programmes.

Section 2 - Child Protection Policy Statement

We The National Library of Ireland are committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children* and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, while providing stimulating and enjoyable activities where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. We will adhere to the recommendations of *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2017* published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The child protection policy is a statement of the NLI's commitment to keep children and young people safe and to report any concerns about their welfare. The policy contains procedures for how this is done in the organization.

We have implemented procedures covering:

- Code of behaviour for staff
- •Procedures for reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse
- Confidentiality
- •Recruitment and selecting staff
- Managing and Supervising Staff
- •A Designated Person who deals with child protection issues
- Involvement of primary carers
- •Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff
- Complaints and comments
- Incidents and accidents.
- Garda Vetting

The procedures take account of the Children First Act, 2015 and the updated Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children published in 2017

Section 3 - Code of Behaviour for staff

The code of behaviour is categorised under the following headings:

- Child-centred approach
- Good practice
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Physical contact
- Health and Safety
- Digital Engagement
- A code of behaviour for staff, including volunteers, is part of our child protection policy.
- We have a code of behaviour for children and young people.
- We have an anti-bullying policy.
- We also ask parents/guardians to comply with certain measures to ensure their children's safety (see below).

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

Child Centred Approach

- Treat all children and young people equally
- Listen to and respect children and young people
- Involve children and young people in decision-making, as appropriate
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability)
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal)
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere
- Offer constructive criticism when needed
- Treat all children and young people as individuals
- Respect a child's or young person's personal space;
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers
- Agree group 'contract' before beginning sessions
- Encourage feedback from group
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials
- Be cognisant of a child's or a young person's limitations, due to a medical condition for example
- Create an atmosphere of trust
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation
- Apply a model of inclusivity across all activities
- Encourage feedback where appropriate

Good Practice

- Register each child and Primary Carer (Parent/Teacher/Accompanying adult) as appropriate
- Make primary carers, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures;
- Have emergency procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures;
- Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs;
- Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically;
- Report any concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures;
- Organisations should have an anti-bullying policy. Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of anti-bullying policy;
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour;
- Evaluate work practices on a regular basis;
- Provide appropriate training for staff (and volunteers, if applicable);
- Report and record any incidents and accidents;
- Update and review policies and procedures regularly;
- Inform primary carers of any issues that concern their children;
- Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved;
- Don't be passive in relation to concerns, i.e., don't 'do nothing';
- Don't let a problem get out of control;
- Do not take a session on your own. If this is not possible, ensure it is done with the consent and full knowledge of primary carers.
- Never give a lift to a child/young person
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then address it in a sensitive manner.

Inappropriate behaviour

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people
- NLI staff/facilitators should not accompany a child into toilet facilities. This is the responsibility of the accompanying adult/parent/teacher.
- Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language
- Don't single out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention
- Don't allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Don't hit or physically chastise children/young people
- Don't socialise inappropriately with children/young people e.g., outside of structured Library activities

- Do not engage in social media with young people
- Do not let allegations made by a child go unrecorded

Physical Contact

- There should be no unnecessary physical contact between staff and a child
- Seek consent of child/young person in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation)
- Do not allow children to engage in what might be termed 'horseplay'

Health and Safety

- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised;
- · Manage any dangerous materials;
- Provide a safe environment;
- Be aware of NLI accident procedure and follow accordingly;
- Risk assessment appropriate to the activity required

NLI Digital Engagement

When NLI staff are interacting with children online or digitally, the principle that the online space is an extension of the physical space applies. All activities should be fully risk-assessed to ensure adherence to the child protection policy and other relevant policies including data protection policies. When working digitally, staff should always adhere to the same code of behaviour and reporting procedures and policies as set out in this policy. (Appendix 1)

This Code of Behaviour should be followed by all staff and visiting facilitators/artists to the National Library.

Section 4 - Reporting Procedures

The **Children First Act 2017** provided for mandatory reporting of child welfare and protection concerns by key professionals to Tusla – Child and Family Agency. Mandated persons are people who have contact with children and who, because of their qualifications, training and/or employment role, are in a key position to protect children from harm. Under the legislation, mandated persons are required to report any knowledge, belief or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The four definitions of harm as defined by the Act can be summarised as:

- neglect,
- emotional abuse/ill-treatment,
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse.

A Designated Liaison Person and a Deputy Designated Liaison Person have been appointed to deal with issues related to child protection and welfare in the National Library. Both have undertaken appropriate training. The Designated Liaison Person is the main point of contact where there is an issue of concern about any aspect of a child's safety and welfare. It is the responsibility of this person: to advise staff about policies and procedures in relation to child protection and to ensure that procedures are followed, to support and advise staff in the event of any concerns regarding child protection and welfare and to liaise with the Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochána where appropriate.

Brid O'Sullivan is the current Designated Liaison Person (DLP). Katy Lumsden has been designated as deputy.

Issues which would constitute reasonable grounds for concern

- Specific indication from the child or young person that s/he has been abused;
- An account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused;
- Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way
- An injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse {an example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour;}

Recording Procedures

There is a system and mechanism in place for recording concerns about the protection of children and young people in the National Library. There is an incident log kept by the Head of HR and all records are stored in the HR office.

Staff should record the following information in relation to children and young people:

- Suspicions
- Concerns
- Worrying observations
- Behavioural changes
- Actions and outcomes should be logged

Dealing with a disclosure

If a child or young person comes to you with any kind of disclosure you should follow the advice below to assist you with responding appropriately:

- Stay calm and listen to the child/young person, allow him or her enough time to say what s/he needs to say
- Don't use leading questions or prompt details
- Reassure the child/young person but do not promise to keep anything secret
- Don't make the child/young person repeat the details unnecessarily
- Explain to the child/young person what will happen next (explanation should be age appropriate)

How to report concerns/disclosures

All staff are obliged to report any concerns that they have or disclosure that have been made regarding child protection issues; and the following principles should be followed:

- Reporting procedures should be known and accessible
- The person who expresses concern should complete a file report, outlining the situation, including the date, time and people involved with the concern/disclosure, the report should be factual. Any opinions should be stated as such supported by factual information.
- Actions and outcomes should be noted.
- The matter should then be brought to the attention of the Designated Person or deputy if unavailable.

Formal Reporting

- It is the role of the Designated Person or deputy to formally report concern
- The Designated Person will then decide to discuss the concern or consult with primary carers. Parents, carers or responsible adults should be made aware of a report to Tusla
 Child and Family agency unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk
- The Designated Person may contact the Tusla Duty Social Work Department for an informal consultation prior to making the report.
- Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis
- If there are reasonable grounds for concern as outlined above the Designated Person will contact the Duty Social Worker in the relevant Tusla area using the standard reporting form available from the Tusla. Reports to the Duty Social Worker can be made initially and then followed by the standard reporting form. Reports should be made to Tusla without delay.
- Report can be made to Tusla in person and by telephone to the local Child protection and Duty Social work service (in the area where the child lives). A verbal report should be followed by completing the Child Protection and Welfare Report form.
- If the Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person is not available, contact the local Duty Social Worker or Tusla directly.
- In case of emergencies outside of Tusla Social Work Dept. hours, contact the Gardaí.
 In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/young person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí.

Section 5 – Confidentiality Statement

We in the National Library of Ireland are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

- Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child/young person
- Giving such information to others for the protection of a child or young person is not a breach of confidentiality
- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of a child/young person are at risk
- Primary carers, children and young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to Tusla, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk
- Images of a child/young person will not be used for any reason without the consent of the parent/carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public performances)
- Procedures are in place in relation to the use (by the NLI) of images of children/young people
- Procedures are in place for the recording and storing of information in line with our confidentiality policy

Section 6 - Recruiting and selecting staff

Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement

We will ensure that staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job (paid or voluntary);
- Posts will be advertised widely;
- We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel;
- Candidates will be required to complete an application form;
- Candidates will be asked to sign a good character declaration form;
- At least two references that are recent, relevant, independent and verbally confirmed will be necessary;
- Staff will be selected by a panel of at least two (or more) representatives through an interview process;

No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed; Some of the exclusions would include:

- Any child related conviction
- Refusal to sign application form and declaration form
- Insufficient documentary evidence of identification
- Concealing information on one's suitability to working with children;

There will be a one year probationary period.

All staff will be required to consent to Garda clearance, and this will be sought.

Section 7 - Managing and supervising staff

Staff management policy statement

To protect both staff (paid and voluntary) and children/young people, we undertake that:

New staff will:

- Receive and induction training session
- Be made aware of the organisation's code of conduct, child protection procedures, and the identity and role of who has been designated to deal with issues of concern
- Undergo a one year probationary period.

All staff will:

- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices
- Be expected to have read and signed the Child Protection Policy Statement
- Be provided with child protection training.

Additionally, staff who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will:

• Be provided with child protection training.

Section 8 - Involvement of primary carers

Policy Statement on the involvement of primary carers

We are committed to being open with all primary carers

We undertake to:

- Advise primary carers of our child protection policy
- Inform primary carers and schools of all activities and potential activities
- Issue contact/consent forms where relevant
- Comply with health and safety practices
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice
- Adhere to our recruitment guidelines
- Ensure as far as possible that the activities are age-appropriate
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parent(s), carer(s) or responsible adult(s), where appropriate.

If we have concerns about the welfare of the child/young person, we will:

- Respond to the needs of the child or young person
- Inform the primary carers unless this action puts the child or young person at further risk
- Where there are child protection and welfare concerns we are obliged to pass these on to the Duty Social Worker and, in an emergency, the Gardaí.
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff, we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform primary carers as appropriate

As a child-centred organisation, we are committed to putting the interest of the child/young person first. To that end we will:

- Contact Tusla and Gardaí where there is a child protection welfare concern
- Encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by our organisation to ensure the safety of their children
- Have a designated contact person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person's welfare.

Section 9 - Dealing with allegations against staff

In the event of allegations being made against an employee, the protection of the child/young person is the first and paramount consideration.

The Library has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and employee. The same person must not have responsibility for dealing with the child/young person welfare issues and the staff employment issues.

An allegation against an employee should be assessed promptly and carefully. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, a formal report to Tusla should be made. The reporting procedures outlined in Section 4 of these guidelines will be followed. The Library will maintain a close liaison with Tusla and the Gardaí

The Library will follow its Disciplinary Codes of Practice.

Dealing with an allegation against staff

Two separate procedures must be followed:

- 1. In respect of the child/young person, the Designated Person will deal with issues related to the child/young person.
- 2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made, the Head of HR, will deal with issues related to the staff member.

- The first priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk;
- If allegations are made against the Designated person then the Deputy Designated person should be contacted;
- The reporting procedures outlined in Section 4 of these guidelines will be followed.
- Both the primary carers and child/young person will be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner;
- The staff member will be informed as soon as possible in line with the Library's Bullying and Harassment Policy
 - Of the nature of the allegation
 - > And will be given the opportunity to respond

The Chairperson and Director of the Library will be informed as soon as possible.

Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee will be taken in consultation with Tusla and the Gardaí.

After consultation, the Chairperson and or the Director of the Library will advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.

Section 10 - Complaints and comments procedures

Any complaint or comment in relation to Child Protection being registered with the Library will be managed by Sean Holly, Head of Human Resources.

Brid O'Sullivan has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to Sean Holly, Head of Human Resources.

In the case of a verbal complaint/comment the person will be asked to put the complaint/comment in writing after which it will be responded to within two weeks of being received.

Section 11 - Accident Procedure

The Library has a Health and Safety Statement. Procedures to follow in the event of an accident have been formulated.

Accident Procedure

The organisation will register the contact details of all Primary Carers of children/young people who attend activities/programmes in the Library;

Children/young people's details will be cross-referenced between the incident book and file;

First aid boxes are available and regularly re-stocked;

The locations of the first-aid boxes are known to staff;

Availability of first-aid is in accordance with the Library's Health and Safety Guidelines; Accident/incident forms are available from the Healthy and Safety officer.

We will use risk free materials in our children/young people programmes/activities.

All accidents/incidents are recorded and investigated in line with Health and Safety Authority requirements.

Section 12 - Garda Vetting

In accordance with the Child and Vulnerable Persons Act 2012, the National Library of Ireland will follow all procedures to facilitate Garda vetting and re-vetting of staff who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. All questions relating to this procedure should be directed to the HR Department.

Contact Phone Numbers

TUSLA - Child and Family Agency

www.tusla.ie

Tusla - Contact a Social Worker

Dublin South Central Tel: 01 7955749

Child and Family Agency, Bridge House,

Cherry Orchard Hospital,

Dublin 10

Dublin North City Tel: 01 8567704

Child and Family Agency, Wellmount Health Centre, Wellmount Park, Finglas.

Dublin 11

Dublin South East Tel: 01 9213400

Child and Family Agency, Unit 9, Nutgrove Retail Park,

Churchtown, Dublin 14

Dublin South West Tel: (045) 839300

Building 2, Vista Primary Care Centre,

Ballymore Road,

Naas, Co Kildare. W91 HT2X

Dublin North Tel: 01 8708000

Child and Family Agency, 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park,

Swords, Co. Dublin. https://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/dublin

Out of office hours concerns should be referred to Gardaí:

www.garda.ie

Pearse Street Garda Station Tel: 01 6669000 Kevin Street Garda Station Tel: 01 6669400

Legislation and guidelines governing this policy includes:

Childcare Act 1991

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1991/act/17/enacted/en/html

Protections for persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/49/enacted/en/html

Criminal Justice Act 2006

Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable persons) Act 2012 Criminal Law Act (sexual offences) 2017

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts2012 – 2016

Children First Act 2015

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
Data Protection Act 2018 & Data Protection Regulation 2018

National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012-2016

Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011)

Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017

Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Online safety) 2019

Tusla - Children First Publications and Forms available:

https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/

Appendix 1: Online Activity

The NLI is committed to providing safe learning environments to encourage and support learning for children. This includes onsite visits to any of our buildings and any online engagement that our staff have with children as part of family events or school programmes, e.g. social media mediums, video conferencing tools such as Zoom.

We apply all aspects of our Child Protection Policy to all interactions with children, but we recognise that there are different risks when operating in the online sphere and undertake to implement the following steps to limit those risks.

- Links will only be sent to registered participants for family events
- Links will only be sent to teachers for school events
- Links will never be shared on social media, online forums or websites
- Waiting rooms will be used to prevent unregistered users from engaging with the children, and to avoid interference from other parties, and to avoid the use of unsuitable or offensive materials by other parties
- For family sessions NLI staff will operate the waiting room and act as host
- For family sessions NLI staff will operate the waiting room and act as co-host if another service provider is participating in the event
- An adult must be present with children at family events
- A teacher must be present for school sessions and will operate the waiting room admittance and act as co host
- The use cameras, microphone and online chat functions will be made clear at the time of booking
- Sessions will only ever be recorded with the explicit permission of participants and quardians
- Screenshots will only ever be taken with the explicit permission of participants and quardians
- Complaints or issues will be acknowledged and dealt with as outlined under section 10

Appendix 2: Work Experience Reference Form

	Work	Experier	ce Refe	erence Form	
the National Library of					e work experience with
This post involves subs welfare and protection concerned about this a	of childre	n, we are an	ixious to k	know if you have a	any reason at all to be
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If you are happy to cor confidential and will on offered a position. We person.	ly be sha	red with the	applicant	's immediate supe	
How long have you kno	own this p	erson?			
In what capacity?					
What attributes does the for work experience? _	•		•		them a suitable person
How would you describ	e their pe	ersonality?			
Please rate this person	on the fo	llowing			
	Poor	Average	Good	V/Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self-motivation					
Motivation of others					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					
Signed:			Dato		
Joigileu.			_ Date		
Occupation:				_	

Appendix 3: Declaration Form

Dec	claration Form	
Confidential		
Declaration form for all those working	ng with children and young people	
Surname	First Name	
Date of Birth	Place of Birth	
Address:		
Tel no:	Mobile no:	_
Any other name(s) previously know	n as:	_
Is there any reason that you would land young people? Yes	be considered unsuitable to work with No (please tick one)	children
If yes please outline:		
Have you ever been convicted of a citick one)	riminal offence? Yes No	(please
If yes, please state below the nature	e and date(s) of the offence (s):	
Signed:	Date:	-

Appendix 4: Tusla Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

Note: form is also available to download from the Tusla website: https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Child_Protection_and_Welfare_Report_Form_FINAL.pdf

Use block letters when filling out this form. Fields marked with an * are mandatory.

1. Tusla Area resides)*	(this is where the child							
2. Date of Re	nort*							
2. Dute of Re	port							
3. Details of	Child							
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sneets, ii nece	ssai y							
Please see '7	usla Children First – A Guid	de for t	he Rep	orting of	Child Pro	otection	and We	lfare
	or additional assistance on							
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your professional address Eircode	•	Sec 14,	Email Addre	ess	ct Yes	s	No	

Surname

7. Details of Other Persons Where a Joint Report is Being Made

First Name

10. Household (First Name	Surname	Relationship	Date of I	Birth	Estir Age	mated	Additional Information e.g. school,
15 tile Fatilei a							
To the Eather a	Legal Guardian?	*	Yes			No	
Eircode							
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		1	Telephone No.				
Address		I	Mobile No.				
Details of Fath First Name	er		Surname				
			103			110	
Is the Mother:	a Legal Guardian	7*	Yes		7	No	
Eircode							
		_	Address				
			No. Email				
Addiess		7	Telephone				
First Name Address			Surname Mobile No.				
Details of Moth	ner				-		
9. Relationships	;						
indicate reason		iow, piease					
this concern is	being reported t	o Tusla?*	- -				
8. Parents Awar Are the child's	<u>e of Report</u> parents/carers a	aware that	Yes]	No	
			-uui 655				
Eircode			Email Address				
professional address							
your							
capacity, please use			Telephone No.				
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Hospital								
School								
Gardaí								
Pre-school/ crè	che							
Other								
13 Any Other	Polova	nt Informa	tion	Including	any Previou	ıs Cor	ntact with the C	hild or Family
13. Ally Other	Keleval	il Illioillia	ition,	Including	ally Pieviou	is Cui	itact with the C	illid of Faililly

Please ensure you have indicated if this is a mandated report in section 6. Thank you for completing the report form.

In completing this report form you are providing details on yourself and on others. Details such as name, address and date of birth fall under the definition of 'Personal Data' in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. Tusla has a responsibility under these Acts in its capacity as a Data Controller to, amongst other things, obtain and process this data fairly; keep it safe and secure; and to keep it for a specified lawful purpose. That purpose is to fulfil our statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. Tusla may, during the course of the assessment of this report disclose such Personal Data to other agencies including An Garda Síochána. Further details about Tusla's responsibilities as a Data Controller and your rights as a Data Subject can be found on our website, www.tusla.ie. As you are providing Personal Data on others, you are a Data Processor. We ask that you only provide those details that are necessary for the report and that you keep this report and the Personal Data contained in it secure from unauthorised access, disclosure, destruction or accidental loss.

Report Received by					
First Name	Surname		Date		
Mandated Report Ac	knowledgement by				
First	Surname		Date		
Name			Sent		
Authorised Person S	ignature*				
Date*					
Child Previously Kno	wn	Yes		No	
Allocated Case No			1	l	