



**University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Dublin**

**Child Protection Policy & Guidelines**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 The University's interaction with children**

Children may be present on the University campus or under the supervision or direction of University staff or students in a wide number of circumstances, including for example:

- University students under the age of 18;
- Attending summer schools;
- Using sport facilities;
- Work experience placements or temporary employees;
- Brought on site by parents during school holidays;
- Staying in student residences during holiday periods (eg. as part of a school party);
- Attending interviews for admission to the University;
- As subjects of academic research;
- As visitors for any other reason;
- Where students or staff are actively involved in volunteering activities involving children;
- Interaction with students from primary and secondary schools including "young scientists", transition year student work placements, outreach programmes operated by UCD Access & Lifelong Learning, tutoring, mentoring, shadowing, Summer schools and campus visits and use of library facilities.

### **1.2 Aims of child protection policy**

- The child protection policy protects children and promotes good practice by providing children with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in University activities or visiting the University.
- The primary aim of the policy is to provide a mechanism for dealing with any suspected incidents of child abuse on campus.
- It allows staff and students of the University to make informed decisions and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- The policy is not intended to replace the existing structures within the University such as the student complaints and dignity and respect policies which exist in parallel.

### **1.3 Scope of child protection policy**

This document is intended for all University staff, students, contractors and those working on a voluntary or unpaid basis on behalf of the University. It is also intended for all service providers, third party users, licensees, visitors and campus companies located on campus.

### **1.4 Policy statement**

The University wishes to ensure that it maintains the highest possible standards to meet its responsibility to protect and safeguard children. These guidelines provide information to help protect children on campus. The policy also outlines the steps to be taken when there is a concern about a child's welfare, or when an allegation is made about staff or students of the University. In the area of child protection, this policy takes precedence over all other University policies. Whilst the primary concern is the protection of children, the policy will also serve to assist those in a position of trust so that they can act to the highest standards and so best protect those for whom they have responsibility.

It offers a practical guide by outlining fundamental principles of good practice. This is a general guide and may need to be adapted for particular situations; however, the general

principles should be adhered to. It also gives information on how to recognise signs of child abuse and the correct steps to take within the University if it is suspected, witnessed or disclosed. **Staff, students and service providers of the University must be alert to the possibility of child abuse and of their obligation to convey any concerns to the Child Protection Officer.**

When an allegation of child abuse arises in relation to a member of staff or student of the University, the University holds a dual responsibility in its duty of care in:

- *Safeguarding children:* This must at all times take priority. The University will ensure that all appropriate procedures are followed in relation to reporting suspected child abuse to the civil and (as necessary) criminal authorities and do what is within its power to ensure that no child continues to be exposed to the risk of being abused.
- *Dealing with the person accused:* The University must ensure that proper procedures are followed in relation to the person against whom the complaint has been made, in line with fair procedures, natural justice and a presumption of innocence until the contrary is established.

The University reserves the right to update this policy, including taking into account changes to legislation, Tusla - Child and Family Agency/HSE guidelines and recommendations and other legal and/or policy developments. This policy should be interpreted in light of the Children First Act 2015.

## **1.5 Guiding principles**

- A child is a person under 18, excluding a person who is married or who has been married;
- Children should be protected, treated with respect, listened to and have their own views taken into consideration;
- The protection of children must always come first;
- The safest possible practices should be adopted by the University to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and to protect staff and students of the University from the necessity to take risks and leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- Staff and students of the University have a duty to raise concerns about the behaviour of others which may be harmful to children in their care;
- Staff and students of the University who work with children must maintain a policy of openness with parents/carers/children's school teachers (subject to Confidentiality guidelines, and subject to the fact (in relation to University students under 18 years) that, as a general rule, the University does not communicate or report to parents about the students' performances or interactions in the University);
- The University will maintain links with Tusla - Child and Family Agency in order to promote child protection and welfare policies and practices.

## **1.6 Child Protection Officer**

The President of the University will appoint a Child Protection Officer to assist in the implementation of this policy. This role is described in section 5 and shall be the Designated Liaison Person for the purposes of the Children First Act 2015.

## **1.7 National guidelines**

This policy has been adapted from the Department of Health & Children's publication entitled Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (July 2011) and its earlier publication entitled Our Duty of Care – the Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People (2004). This policy incorporates the principles

outlined in these publications, with a view to reflecting a common approach to child protection within the University community.

**1.8 UCD Sport and Fitness**

The UCD Sport and Fitness facilities located on the University campus, such as the sports fields, the aquatic centre and the gym, are managed by UCD Campus Sport and Leisure Limited, in conjunction with the University. There is a separate child protection policy in place at UCD Sport and Fitness. Any University employees who engage in any work related activities at the UCD Sport and Fitness facilities or who work in association with UCD Campus Sport and Leisure Limited shall comply with the UCD Sport and Fitness child protection policy in respect of those activities.

**1.9 UCD Crèche**

UCD Crèche is located on the University campus and is run by Oakmount Crèche Limited. UCD Crèche has its own child protection policy. If any University employees engage in any work related activities at UCD Crèche, they shall comply with the Crèche's child protection policy.

## 2. PROMOTING SAFETY AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN

**Everybody operating on behalf of the University must be alert to the possibility of child abuse and of their obligation to convey any concerns to the Child Protection Officer.**

### 2.1 Some practical guidelines

- Do not take children to your home;
- Avoid giving lifts to individual children especially for long car journeys;
- Do not exchange personal contact details with children unless this is required by the activity and the parent has consented (or the child is a registered student under 18 and the contact details are required as part of normal academic activities);
- Do not add a child with whom you are working as a friend on Facebook or other social network medium. Do not post any photos of children without their parents' consent and do not make any comments in relation to specific children on social media;
- Treat all children equally and with respect and dignity;
- Demonstrate exemplary behaviour in the presence of children;
- Provide a safe, appropriately monitored environment for any children visiting the campus;
- Adopt the safest possible practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children;
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback instead of negative criticism. (In relation to University students under 18 years – and to students of the University generally, this point does not inhibit or prohibit giving criticism to those students: criticism is viewed as a component of third and fourth level education and can be important to positive development and progression.);
- Never use physical punishment;
- Always refer child abuse, welfare and safety issues to the Child Protection Officer. If a member of staff or student of the University is inhibited for any reason in reporting the incident internally to the Child Protection Officer or where they are dissatisfied with the response, they should contact Tusla - Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochána.

### 2.2 Garda Vetting

Garda vetting is part of UCD's recruitment process for certain posts and education programmes, particularly in the areas of medicine, health, social work and education, which require staff and students to undertake activities that will bring them into unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults and in which they will assume positions of trust. The Garda vetting policy for staff can be found at [https://www.ucd.ie/hr/t4cms/Garda\\_Vetting\\_Policy.pdf](https://www.ucd.ie/hr/t4cms/Garda_Vetting_Policy.pdf)

The University's Garda vetting policy for students can be found at [http://www.ucd.ie/registry/admissions/Garda\\_Vetting\\_Policy\\_May2015.pdf](http://www.ucd.ie/registry/admissions/Garda_Vetting_Policy_May2015.pdf)

### 2.3 UCD Student Residences

When children attend UCD as part of a trip/language school organised by a third party and stay at UCD Student Residences, the school/trip organisers should ensure the following:

- Written parental consent for each child is obtained;
- Any information about the children which may be relevant to staying away overnight, like allergies, medical problems or special needs is obtained and on hand;
- Appropriate and well supervised sleeping arrangements;
- Respect for the privacy of children and young people in dormitories, changing rooms, showers and toilets;

- All staff engaged by the organiser and having direct access to children shall be Garda/police vetted (as applicable by jurisdiction);
- Adequate insurance cover.

In order to take account of UCD students who are under 18 and residing at UCD Student Residences during the academic year, the following measures will be taken:

- In order that applicants under 18, and their parents, can make a fully informed decision before applying for accommodation, the UCD Student Residences online booking page highlights that accommodation booking is open to all UCD students, mixed genders and ages and that students under the age of 18 will in all likelihood be sharing an apartment with students over 18 years or age.
- All residents under 18 are identified on the SIS Web Accommodation Management system.
- UCD Residences House Rules and Overnight Guest Policy preclude guests under the age of 18.
- All residents will be made aware of the UCD Residences Child Protection Operational Guidelines and will be expected to abide by them at all times.
- UCD Student Residences shall work with the Child Protection Officer (once appointed) to consider any relevant training that can be given to staff and contractors.

UCD Student Residences shall develop specific operational guidelines for accommodation of children which shall apply to both UCD employees and third party contractors.

## **2.4 The University and Secondary School Students**

The University organises a range of activities involving interaction between UCD students and school pupils. These include mentoring, tutoring, summer schools, campus visits, shadowing days and orientation activities.

Shadowing day is an annual event where fifth year secondary school pupils spend the day with a UCD student attending lectures, tutorials and using campus facilities. UCD students are recruited college wide, complete an application form and are required to comply with the following (as well as adhering to this policy):

- UCD students must work in pairs and remain with their shadows on campus;
- UCD student will not visit any student residence;
- UCD student will not carry, offer or consume any illegal substances or alcohol; and
- UCD student will not visit pubs/bars while being shadowed.

The participating UCD students in all outreach activities will attend training sessions where staff and others will make students aware of appropriate behaviour, good practice in child protection and reporting procedures.

## **2.5 Research involving children – best practice**

Research involving children must be approved by the University's research ethics process prior to the commencement of the work. General information on research ethics applications can be obtained from the University's Research Ethics Committee. When working with children, the researcher must comply with this policy and Guidance UCD's Code of Good Practice in Research and all policies and guidelines of the University's Human Research Ethics Committee including, but not limited to, the policy on "Vulnerable Groups" and "Research with Students who are a Minor."

In particular, the following must be complied with:

- In relation to research which has required approval from the Ethics Committee written consent must be obtained from the parents/guardians of children under 18 years and (where appropriate, i.e. where the children are capable of providing informed assent) from the children themselves.
- In assessing whether the child is capable of giving informed assent, their age, literacy, cultural background and any learning difficulties or disabilities should be taken into account.
- Children need to be informed in appropriate language so that they understand the research in which they are being asked to participate.
- The effect of the research on the child is monitored to ensure that the child feels comfortable with continuing with the research. A child's right to discontinue participation must be respected.
- There may be occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary and in such circumstances, the interview should be conducted in a room with an open door or visual access.
- Assurances of complete confidentiality must not be given.

## 2.6 Specific issues relating to children

- *Physical integrity*; of children must be respected at all times. Never engage in inappropriate physical contact such as touching of groin, genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment – including tough physical play, physical reprimand, and horse-play. This should not prevent appropriate contact in situations where it is necessary to ensure the well-being and safety of a child, e.g. when a child is distressed or in need of first aid treatment;
- *Right to privacy*; of children must be respected at all times. Particular care regarding privacy must be taken when they are in locations such as changing areas, swimming pools, showers and toilets. Photographs of children must never be taken when they are in changing areas. Tasks of a personal nature (washing, toileting or changing clothes) must never be done for children. Don't do something that a child can do themselves;
- *Corporal punishment*; or the use of physical force of any form on a child is not permissible under any circumstances;
- *Verbal abuse*; of children, telling jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children, or making any sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child is not acceptable; Great care must be taken if it is necessary to have a conversation regarding sexual matters with a child;
- *Bullying*; behaviour – verbal, psychological or physical must not be engaged in or tolerated;
- *Alcohol, tobacco or drugs*; under no circumstances should staff or students of the University give alcohol, tobacco or drugs to a child;
- *Computer and computing facilities*; Staff and students of the University, and other authorised users must comply with IT Services Acceptable Use Policy and any codes of conduct or policies, such as in relation to social media, internet use, privacy etc;
- *Children with special needs*; may depend on adults more than other children for their care and safety, so the tasks must be undertaken with the utmost discretion and sensitivity. Where it is necessary to carry out tasks of a personal nature for a child with special needs, this will be done with the full understanding and consent of the parent/guardian. In an emergency situation where assistance is required, parents must be informed as soon as is reasonably possible of the assistance given;
- *Vulnerable children*; may depend on adults more than other children for their care and safety. It is important that they are carefully listened to, in recognition of the fact that they may have difficulty in expressing their concerns and in order that the importance of what they say is not

underestimated. They are more likely than other children to be bullied or subjected to other forms of abuse and may be less clear about physical and emotional boundaries;

- *Challenging or disruptive behaviour;* of a child should be dealt with by more than one person. A record must be kept describing what happened, the circumstances giving rise to the incident, who was involved, whether any injury was sustained or property damaged and how the situation was resolved. Parents must be informed when such instances occur as soon as possible. (This does not apply in all circumstances to University students under 18 years: staff may deem it appropriate to deal with such behaviour one-on-one, and it may not be appropriate to inform the student's parents in all circumstances.);
- *Good Behaviour;* Where appropriate, children must be advised of good behaviour practices by those in charge when attending the University. (This rule does not specifically apply to University students under 18 years: they will be treated in the same manner as other students in relation to standards or required practices of behaviour.);
- *Trespassers:* Trespassers on the University campus shall be dealt with in accordance with the University's security procedures.

### 3. ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\*

**All incidents should be reported to the Child Protection Officer who shall help assess the situation and report to Tusla - Child and Family Agency and/or Gardai. However, of paramount importance is child safety and if the Child Protection Officer is unavailable, this should not delay a report being made to Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai. If you have a serious concern and cannot contact the Child Protection Officer, you should contact Tusla - Child and Family Agency /Gardai directly using the contact details set out in Appendix 2 (having first discussed the situation in confidence with your Head of School/Unit where possible and alternatively, your line manager).**

This section offers guidance if you are concerned or suspect that children are being abused or neglected or at risk of abuse or neglect. It is taken from sections 2 and 3 of the Children First National Guidance 2011. That Guidance directs that these two sections should not be changed or adapted in any way in local child protection policies and accordingly, they are copied here *in italics* without any changes. The sections explain child abuse and outline the standard reporting procedure to be used in passing information to the statutory authorities about child protection concerns.

#### 3.1 Definition and recognition of child abuse

#### 2. Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse

##### 2.1 Types of child abuse

###### 2.1.1

*This section outlines the principal types of child abuse and offers guidance on how to recognise such abuse. Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.*

###### 2.1.2

*In the Children First: National Guidance, 'a child' means a person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or has been married.*

##### 2.2 Definition of 'neglect'

###### 2.2.1

*Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and/or medical care.*

###### 2.2.2

*Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is significant is determined by the child's health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.*

###### 2.2.3

*Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child whose height or weight is significantly below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school may be being deprived of intellectual stimulation.*

2.2.4

*The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.*

2.3 *Definition of 'emotional abuse'*

2.3.1

*Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a parent/carer and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms. Examples may include:*

- i. the imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;*
- ii. conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;*
- iii. emotional unavailability of the child's parent/carer;*
- iv. unresponsiveness of the parent/carer and/or inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;*
- v. premature imposition of responsibility on the child;*
- vi. unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way;*
- vii. under- or over-protection of the child;*
- viii. failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the child's cognitive and emotional development;*
- ix. use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;*
- x. exposure to domestic violence;*
- xi. exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology.*

2.3.2

*Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour. The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.*

2.4 *Definition of 'physical abuse'*

2.4.1

*Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.*

*Physical abuse can involve:*

- i. severe physical punishment;*
- ii. beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;*
- iii. pushing, shaking or throwing;*
- iv. pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling;*
- v. terrorising with threats;*
- vi. observing violence;*
- vii. use of excessive force in handling;*
- viii. deliberate poisoning;*
- ix. suffocation;*
- x. fabricated/induced illness (see Appendix 1 of Children First National Guidance 2011 for details);*
- xi. allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child.*

## 2.5 Definition of 'sexual abuse'

### 2.5.1

*Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. Examples of child sexual abuse include:*

- i. exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child;*
- ii. intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;*
- iii. masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;*
- iv. sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal;*
- v. sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse;*
- vi. consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purposes of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. An Garda Síochána will deal with the criminal aspects of the case under the relevant legislation.*

### 2.5.2

*It should be noted that the definition of child sexual abuse presented in this section is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offence of sexual assault.*

## 2.6 Recognising child neglect or abuse

### 2.6.1

*Child neglect or abuse can often be difficult to identify and may present in many forms. A list of indicators of child abuse is contained in Appendix 1 (of Children First National Guidance 2011). No one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse. It may indicate conditions other than child abuse. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the context of the child's situation and family circumstances.*

## 2.7 Guidelines for recognition

### 2.7.1

*The ability to recognise child abuse can depend as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on their knowledge and information. There are commonly three stages in the identification of child neglect or abuse:*

- i. considering the possibility;*
- ii. looking out for signs of neglect or abuse;*
- iii. recording of information.*

#### *Stage 1: Considering the possibility*

### 2.7.2

*The possibility of child abuse should be considered if a child appears to have suffered a suspicious injury for which no reasonable explanation can be offered. It should also be considered if the child seems distressed without obvious reason or displays persistent or new behavioural problems. The possibility of child abuse should also be considered if the child displays unusual or fearful responses*

to parents/carers or older children. A pattern of ongoing neglect should also be considered even when there are short periods of improvement.

*Stage 2: Looking out for signs of neglect or abuse*

*2.7.3*

*Signs of neglect or abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. They can exist in the relationships between children and parents/carers or between children and other family members/other persons. A cluster or pattern of signs is more likely to be indicative of neglect or abuse. Children who are being abused may hint that they are being harmed and sometimes make direct disclosures. Disclosures should always be taken very seriously and should be acted upon, for example, by informing the HSE Children and Family Services. The child should not be interviewed in detail about the alleged abuse without first consulting with the HSE Children and Family Services. This may be more appropriately carried out by a social worker or An Garda Síochána. Less obvious signs could be gently explored with the child, without direct questioning. Play situations, such as drawing or story-telling, may reveal information.*

*2.7.4*

*Some signs are more indicative of abuse than others. These include:*

- i. disclosure of abuse by a child or young person;*
- ii. age-inappropriate or abnormal sexual play or knowledge;*
- iii. specific injuries or patterns of injuries;*
- iv. absconding from home or a care situation;*
- v. attempted suicide;*
- vi. underage pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease;*
- vii. signs in one or more categories at the same time. For example, signs of developmental delay, physical injury and behavioural signs may together indicate a pattern of abuse.*

*2.7.5*

*Many signs of abuse are non-specific and must be considered in the child's social and family context. It is important to be open to alternative explanations for physical or behavioural signs of abuse.*

*Stage 3: Recording of information*

*2.7.6*

*If neglect or abuse is suspected and acted upon, for example, by informing the HSE Children and Family Services, it is important to establish the grounds for concern by obtaining as much information as possible. Observations should be accurately recorded and should include dates, times, names, locations, context and any other information that may be relevant. Care should be taken as to how such information is stored and to whom it is made available.*

*2.8 Children with additional vulnerabilities*

*2.8.1*

*Certain children are more vulnerable to abuse than others. Such children include those with disabilities, children who are homeless and those who, for one reason or another, are separated from their parent or other family members and who depend on others for their care and protection. The same categories of abuse – neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse – are applicable, but may take a slightly different form. For example, abuse may take the form of deprivation of basic rights, harsh disciplinary regimes or the inappropriate use of medications or physical restraints (see also Chapter 8).*

*2.9 Fatal child abuse*

*2.9.1*

*In the tragic circumstances where a child dies as a result of abuse or neglect, there are four important aspects to be considered: criminal, child protection, bereavement and notification.*

2.9.2

*Criminal aspects: This is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána and they must be notified immediately.*

*The Coroner must also be notified and his or her instructions complied with in relation to post-mortems and other relevant matters.*

2.9.3

*Child protection aspects: These will be particularly relevant if there are other children in the family/ in the same situation, and will therefore require immediate intervention by the HSE Children and Family Services to assess risk.*

2.9.4

*Bereavement aspects: The bereavement needs of the family must be respected and provided for and all family members should be given an opportunity to grieve and say goodbye to the deceased child.*

2.9.5

*Notification aspects: The HSE should notify the death of a child to the National Review Panel and to the Health Information and Quality Authority in accordance with the HIQA's Guidance for the Health Service Executive for the Review of Serious Incidents, including deaths of children in care (HIQA, 2010):*

- *all deaths of children in care, including natural causes;*
- *all deaths of children known to the child protection system;*
- *serious incidents involving a child in care or known to the child protection services.*

*Managers and staff should cooperate fully with any review undertaken to establish the facts of the case and any actions that should be taken, to identify learning that will improve services in the future and to provide assurance to the public (see Chapter 5, Section 5.20).*

2.10 Points to remember

2.10.1

*The severity of a sign does not necessarily equate with the severity of the abuse. Severe and potentially fatal injuries are not always visible. Neglect and emotional and/or psychological abuse tend to be cumulative and effects may only be observable in the longer term. Explanations that are inconsistent with the signs should constitute a cause for concern.*

2.10.2

*Neglect is as potentially fatal as physical abuse. It can cause delayed physical, psychological and emotional development, chronic ill-health and significant long-term damage. It may place children at serious risk of harm. It may also precede, or co-exist with, other forms of abuse and must be acted upon.*

2.10.3

*Experiencing recurring low-level abuse may cause serious and long-term harm. Cumulative harm refers to the effects of multiple adverse circumstances and events in a child's life. The unremitting daily impact of these circumstances on the child can be profound and exponential, and diminish a child's sense of safety and well-being.*

2.10.4

*Child abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture. All signs must be considered in the wider social and family context. Serious deficits in child safety and welfare transcend cultural, social and ethnic norms, and must elicit a response.*

2.10.5

*Challenging behaviour by a child or young person should not render them liable to abuse.*

*Children in certain circumstances may present management problems. This should not leave them vulnerable to harsh disciplinary measures or neglect of care.*

**2.10.6**

*Exposure to domestic violence is detrimental to children's physical, emotional and psychological well-being. The adverse effects of domestic violence have been well established.*

**2.10.7**

*While the impact of neglect is most profound on young children, it also adversely affects adolescents. Neglect renders young people liable to risk-taking behaviours, such as running away, early school leaving, anti-social behaviour, mental health and addiction problems, including the risk of suicide.*

**2.10.8**

*It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between indicators of child abuse and other adversities suffered by children and families. Deprivation, stress, addiction or mental health problems should not be used as a justification for omissions of care or commissions of harm by parents/carers. The child's welfare must be the primary consideration.*

**2.10.9**

*Neglectful families may be difficult to engage. Research shows that families may be reluctant to seek help in response to experiencing the factors associated with neglect.*

**2.10.10**

*Families where neglect and abuse are prevalent may go to considerable lengths to deceive professionals. It is important for professionals to approach cases with a wary trustfulness, seek evidence to substantiate claims of improvement and speak with the children concerned individually.*

**2.10.11**

*Social workers need good observation and analytical skills in order to be able to understand the nature of the relationship between a parent and child, to understand signs of non-compliance, to work alongside a family and to come to safe and evidence-based judgements about the best course of action.*

**2.10.12**

*Working in the area of child abuse and neglect is dealing with uncertainty. Social workers and other professionals should adopt a 'respectful uncertainty' on parental reporting of improvement until supported by clear evidence.*

**3.2 Basis for reporting concerns and standard reporting procedure**

**3. Basis for reporting concerns and Standard Reporting Procedure**

**3.1 Purpose**

**3.1.1**

*This section offers guidance to the general public and to all people, both professional and voluntary, working with or in direct contact with children who may be concerned or who suspect that children are being abused or neglected or at risk of abuse or neglect. It outlines the standard reporting procedure to be used in passing information to the statutory authorities about child protection concerns.*

**3.2 Responsibility to report child abuse or neglect**

**3.2.1**

Everyone must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be suffering from abuse or neglect. This responsibility is particularly relevant for professionals such as teachers, child care workers, health professionals and those working with adults with serious parenting difficulties. It is also an important responsibility for staff and people involved in sports clubs, community activities, youth clubs, religious/faith sector and other organisations catering for children.

**3.2.2**

The HSE Children and Family Services should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

**3.2.3**

Child protection concerns should be supported by evidence that indicates the possibility of abuse or neglect.

**3.2.4**

A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable, should also be communicated to the HSE Children and Family Services.

**3.2.5**

The guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

- i. the safety and well-being of the child must take priority;
- ii. reports should be made without delay to the HSE Children and Family Services.

**3.2.6**

Any reasonable concern or suspicion of abuse or neglect must elicit a response. Ignoring the signals or failing to intervene may result in ongoing or further harm to the child.

**3.2.7**

Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 introduced the criminal charge of reckless endangerment of children. It states: 'A person, having authority or control over a child or abuser, who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by –

- (a) causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse, or
- (b) failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation, is guilty of an offence.'

The penalty for a person found guilty of this offence is a fine (no upper limit) and/or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years.

**3.2.8**

The HSE has a statutory obligation to identify children who are not receiving adequate care and protection, to provide family support services and, where necessary, to take children into the care of the HSE. People who report concerns need to be assured that their information will be carefully considered with any other information available, and a child protection assessment will only proceed where sufficient risk is identified.

**3.2.9**

Any professional who suspects child abuse or neglect should inform the parents/carers if a report is to be submitted to the HSE Children and Family Services or to An Garda Síochána, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

**3.2.10**

The HSE will respect the wishes of non-professionals reporting concerns in good faith who ask to remain anonymous in as much as possible, but cannot give a guarantee that the information would not be sought and given within judicial proceedings. (The Data Protection Acts offer protection under

privacy, but should the information be sought directly within legal proceedings, there is no guarantee.)

### 3.3 Designated Liaison Persons for reporting neglect or abuse

#### 3.3.1

Every organisation, both public and private, that is providing services for children or that is in regular direct contact with children should:

- i. Identify a designated liaison person to act as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns.
- ii. The designated liaison person is responsible for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure is followed, so that suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are referred promptly to the designated person in the HSE Children and Family Services or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of the HSE, to An Garda Síochána.
- iii. The designated liaison person should ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and undertake any training considered necessary to keep themselves updated on new developments.

### 3.4 Standard Reporting Procedure

#### 3.4.1

Any person reporting a child abuse or neglect concern should do so without delay to the HSE Children and Family Services. A report can be made in person, by telephone or in writing. Contact numbers for all HSE offices nationwide are given in Appendix 2 (of the Children First National Guidance 2011) and are also available on the HSE website ([www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)) or through the HSE LoCall Tel. 1850 241850 (see also contact details in Appendix 2 of this policy).

#### 3.4.2

Before deciding whether or not to make a formal report, you may wish to discuss your concerns with a health professional or directly with the HSE Children and Family Services (see HSE contacts in Appendix 2 of Children First National Guidance 2011) (see also contact details in Appendix 2 of this policy).

#### 3.4.3

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or to risk of harm pending HSE intervention. In the event of an emergency where you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot get in contact with the HSE, you should contact the Gardaí. This may be done through any Garda station.

#### 3.4.4

The Standard Report Form for reporting child welfare and protection concerns to the HSE (see Appendix 3 of the Children First National Guidance 2011) should be used by professionals, staff and volunteers in organisations working with or in contact with children, or providing services to children when reporting child protection and welfare concerns to the HSE Children and Family Services. If a report is made by telephone, this form should be completed and forwarded subsequently to the HSE.

#### 3.4.5

The HSE will follow up on all referrals, even if the Standard Report Form has not been used.

### 3.5 Information to be included when making a report

#### 3.5.1

The ability of the HSE Children and Family Services or An Garda Síochána to assess and investigate suspicions or allegations of child abuse or neglect will depend on the amount and quality of information conveyed to them by the people reporting concerns. As much as possible of the following detail should be provided:

- i. the name, address and age of the child (or children) for whom the report is being made;

- ii. *the name of the child's school;*
- iii. *the name and contact details of the person reporting concerns;*
- iv. *whether the person reporting is a professional, a person working with children or a member of the public;*
- v. *the relationship to the child of the person making the report;*
- vi. *a full account of what constitutes the grounds for concern in relation to the protection and welfare of the child or children, e.g. details of the allegation, incident, dates, description of any injuries, etc;*
- vii. *the names and addresses of the parents/carers of the child or children;*
- viii. *the names of other children in the household;*
- ix. *the name, address and details of the person allegedly causing concern in relation to the child or children;*
- x. *the child's and/or parents/carers' own views, if known and relevant;*
- xi. *the names and addresses of other personnel or agencies involved with the child or children, e.g. GP, social worker, public health nurse, Gardaí, etc;*
- xii. *any other relevant information.*

### 3.6 *Retrospective disclosures by adults*

#### 3.6.1

*An increasing number of adults are disclosing abuse that took place during their childhoods. Such disclosures often come to light when adults attend counselling. It is essential to establish whether there is any current risk to any child who may be in contact with the alleged abuser revealed in such disclosures.*

#### 3.6.2

*If any risk is deemed to exist to a child who may be in contact with an alleged abuser, the counsellor/ health professional should report the allegation to the HSE Children and Family Services without delay.*

#### 3.6.3

*The HSE National Counselling Service is in place to listen to, value and understand those who have been abused in childhood. The service is a professional, confidential counselling and psychotherapy service and is available free of charge in all regions of the country (see [www.hse-ncs.ie/en](http://www.hse-ncs.ie/en)). The service can be accessed either through healthcare professionals or by way of self-referral (Freephone 1800 477477).*

### 3.7 *Deciding to share child protection concerns*

#### 3.7.1

*The belief that parents/carers or other persons in charge of children would actually harm or neglect them is not easy to sustain. There may be a tendency, therefore, to deny, minimise or explain away any signs that a child is being harmed, even when evidence exists. At times, it is hard to distinguish between abusive situations and those where other problems are present, such as unemployment, poverty, poor housing, addiction, mental illness or isolation. Sympathy for families in difficult circumstances can sometimes dilute personal or professional concerns about the safety and welfare of children. However, the protection and welfare of the child must always be the paramount concern.*

#### 3.7.2

*Reluctance to act on suspicions about child abuse or neglect can often stem from uncertainty and fear. Members of the public or professionals may be afraid of repercussions, afraid of being thought insensitive, afraid of breaking a confidence or afraid of being disloyal. Knowledge and information about child abuse will help to overcome reluctance to take action. So too will confidence in the child protection and welfare services.*

#### 3.7.3

*It is the responsibility of all agencies working with children and for the public to recognise child protection concerns and share these with the agencies responsible for assessing or investigating them, not to determine whether the child protection concerns are evidenced or not.*

### **3.8 Cases not reported to the HSE or An Garda Síochána**

#### **3.8.1**

*In those cases where an organisation decides not to report concerns to the HSE or An Garda Síochána, the individual employee or volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written statement of the reasons why the organisation is not taking such action. The employee or volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, the HSE or An Garda Síochána. The provisions of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply once they communicate 'reasonably and in good faith' (see Paragraph 3.10.1).*

### **3.9 Confidentiality**

#### **3.9.1**

*The effective protection of a child often depends on the willingness of the staff in statutory and voluntary organisations involved with children to share and exchange relevant information. It is therefore critical that there is a clear understanding of professional and legal responsibilities with regard to confidentiality and the exchange of information.*

#### **3.9.2**

*All information regarding concern or assessment of child abuse or neglect should be shared on 'a need to know' basis in the interests of the child with the relevant statutory authorities.*

#### **3.9.3**

*No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with a child and family should make this clear to all parties involved, although they can be assured that all information will be handled taking full account of legal requirements.*

#### **3.9.4**

*Ethical and statutory codes concerned with confidentiality and data protection provide general guidance. They are not intended to limit or prevent the exchange of information between different professional staff with a responsibility for ensuring the protection and welfare of children. The provision of information to the statutory agencies for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.*

#### **3.9.5**

*It must be clearly understood that information gathered for one purpose must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided that information.*

#### **3.9.6**

*The issue of confidentiality should be part of the training necessary for staff who work in the area of child protection and welfare and the general training of staff in organisations that work with children. Each organisation should have a written policy in this regard.*

### **3.10 Legal protection**

#### **3.10.1**

*The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 makes provision for the protection from civil liability of persons who have communicated child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of the HSE (see Appendix 10 of Children First National Guidance 2011) or to any member of An Garda Síochána. This protection applies to organisations as well as to individuals. This means that even if a communicated suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took*

*an action would have to prove that the person who communicated the concern had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report.*

#### 4. UCD PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\*

All incidents should be reported to the Child Protection Officer who shall help assess the situation and report to Tusla - Child and Family Agency and/or Gardai. However, of paramount importance is child safety and if the Child Protection Officer is unavailable, this should not delay a report being made to Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai. If you have a serious concern and cannot contact the Child Protection Officer, you should contact Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai directly using the contact details set out in Appendix 2 (having first discussed the situation in confidence with your Head of School/Unit where possible and alternatively, your line manager).

##### 4.1 Role of Child Protection Officer on receipt of an allegation of abuse

On receipt of an allegation or suspicion of child abuse the Child Protection Officer shall:

- Notify the Deputy President (student cases) / Director of Human Resources (staff cases) / President (other cases) of the complaint;
- Assess complaints, including retrospective disclosures, to determine if "*reasonable grounds for concern*" exist that child abuse may have occurred or is suspected;
- Where "*reasonable grounds for concern*" are established that child abuse occurred or is suspected details at Appendix 3 will immediately be reported to Tusla - Child and Family Agency and copy sent to the Gardai. The form of report appended to Children First contained in Appendix 4 will be used. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate risk, and a Duty Social Worker from Tusla - Child and Family Agency is unavailable the Gardai should be contacted. ***Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending Tusla - Child and Family Agency intervention.***
  - Ensure the early involvement of the Gardai where there may be an opportunity to secure material or forensic evidence and where such evidence is available on campus preserve it pending the involvement of the Gardai;
  - Ensure that the parents/guardians of the child are informed by the most appropriate person, giving due regard to the implications of this action placing a child at further risk;
  - Ensure that the person is advised that an allegation of child abuse is made against him/her in the course of their duties. Prior to doing so liaise with Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai to determine the timing of advising the person against whom a complaint is made. Where they ask for a delay in informing the accused person such a request should be recorded;
  - Liaise as closely as possible with Tusla - Child and Family Agency and Gardai in their investigations and in the progress of the case to decision and (if relevant) criminal trial, including in order to be informed of the outcome of Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai investigation;
  - Determine what feedback is to be given to the various parties i.e. the child, the parents/guardians of the child, the person who reported concerns of abuse and the person against whom the complaint is made;
  - Ensure that responsibility for dealing with the reporting issues surrounding the child and the employment and/or contractual issues surrounding a member of staff are managed independently. Liaison persons will be appointed, one to deal with the child, its parents/guardian and another to deal with the person against whom the allegation is made;
  - Determine how best to provide access to appropriate support for all parties concerned;

- When not satisfied that the information received and available constitutes "*reasonable grounds for concern*", seek greater clarification and information;
- Consult without delay Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai where there is a doubt or uncertainty as to the weight of the available evidence constituting "*reasonable grounds for concern*" but concerns remain on the appropriate steps to be taken;
- If it is decided, following consultation, that there are no grounds for the Child Protection Officer to formally report the matter to Tusla - Child and Family Agency, give the person who referred the matter a written explanation outlining the reasons why no further action is being taken, indicating that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to consult with, or report to Tusla - Child and Family Agency /Gardai;
- Having already notified the Director of Human Resources in a case involving a member of staff or the Deputy President in a case involving a student, keep them updated of developments;
- Ensure the President of the University is aware of the complaint and what action is proposed;
- Carry out a risk assessment to determine and assess the wider implications which may have contributed to the situation and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the President of the University to prevent further occurrences.
- Take into account the provisions of all relevant University policies (including this policy) and (as relevant) the University Statutes.

As the role and function of the Child Protection Officer develops, this procedure may evolve and be improved so as to ensure that it is practical, workable and in accordance with best practice, at all times putting the interests of the child first.

#### **4.2 Outcomes of investigations**

Complaints of child abuse will give rise to investigation by Tusla - Child and Family Agency and the Gardai to determine if a child has been abused.

The findings of Tusla - Child and Family Agency investigation can be:

- *Confirmed*; - child abuse occurred;
- *Inconclusive*; - unable to determine whether or not child abuse occurred; or
- *Confirmed non-abuse*; child abuse did not occur.

Following a Garda investigation the Director of Public Prosecutions may decide:

- To proceed with a criminal prosecution before the Courts; or
- Not to prosecute. Such a decision may indicate that the evidence would not meet the standard of proof required by a Criminal Court, but it does not necessarily imply innocence.

The outcomes of a criminal prosecution may be:

- A conviction where the accused person is found guilty and a sentence is imposed;
- An acquittal of the accused person;
- A mis-trial, with no determination of the charges;
- A null prosecute, where the Director of Public Prosecutions withdraws the charges before the Court, with no determination of the charges.

It is important to note that not all instances of abuse amount to criminal offences. It will be for the Gardai to form an initial view as to whether a criminal offence has been committed and whether to additionally pursue an investigation on this basis.

#### 4.3 Outcome unclear as to whether child abuse occurred

If the outcome of an investigation by Tusla - Child and Family Agency and/or the Gardai is unclear as to whether child abuse did occur, the Child Protection Officer will convene an appropriate professional team to assess the situation having due regard for the safety and protection of children. The team shall report to the Child Protection Officer who shall inform the President of their assessment.

#### 4.4 False and mistaken allegations

It is important that when an allegation is found to be false or mistaken that all appropriate steps are taken to restore the good name of the person wrongly accused. The Child Protection Officer shall liaise with appropriate colleagues (including the Deputy President or the Director of Human Resources) and they shall decide on how the accused person is to be supported and facilitated in resuming their functions.

When the Child Protection Officer is satisfied immediately that it would have been impossible for the person complained of to have committed the abuse, for instance, it can be clearly established that they were elsewhere at the time of the alleged complaint s/he will:

- Advise the complainant in writing of the action being taken and its outcome, including information on other avenues to pursue the matter if they remain dissatisfied;
- Advise the person against whom the complaint has been made, providing details and confirming that it is without substance and that no further action is being taken;
- Consider if the complainant has been abused by someone else and report the matter to Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai;
- Keep a comprehensive record of the incident, including the reason for no further action; and
- Consider initiating a complaint of knowingly making a false report of child abuse under the provisions of Section 5 of the Protection of Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998.

#### 4.5 UCD internal disciplinary/investigation procedure of the University for allegations of child abuse against a member of staff or a student of the University

**\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\***

**This internal procedure does not impact on the reporting procedure set out in 4.1-4.4 above and the duty to report the allegation of abuse to Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai as appropriate. The below procedure may take place in parallel, with or after such a report has been made.**

Allegations of child abuse made against a member of staff or a student of the University will be dealt with by the University as follows:

- Where the allegation is against a member of staff the Director of Human Resources will carry out or cause to be carried out an independent investigation in keeping with the principles set out in the Statutes of the University. The Director of Human Resources shall consult with the Child Protection Officer in respect of the investigation.
- Where the allegation is against a student of the University the Deputy President will carry out or cause to be carried out an independent investigation in keeping with the principles of the University and the UCD Student Code. The Deputy President shall consult with the Child Protection Officer in respect of the investigation.

- Where it is determined that child abuse did occur, the University shall take action in accordance with the University Statutes and all relevant University policies.
- The University shall ensure that the investigation of complaints against members of staff and students of the University are carried out in keeping with the principles of fair procedures and natural justice. Staff and student of the University may be subject to erroneous or malicious allegations, therefore, an investigation must be dealt with sensitively and with a presumption of innocence until the contrary is proved.

## **5. UCD CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER**

The Child Protection Officer is appointed by the President of the University. The Child Protection Officer reports to the President of the University or his/her nominee.

The Child Protection Officer will act as a resource to all who have child protection concerns and will be responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to Tusla - Child and Family Agency or Gardai. The Child Protection Officer must be accessible to everyone in the University.

The role of the Child Protection Officer shall include (but not be limited to) the following functions:

- Oversee the implementation of the policies and procedures contained in this document;
- Be familiar with relevant legislation, guidance, rules and policies, including the University Statutes and policies;
- Liaise regularly with relevant external agencies responsible for child protection with a view to ensuring awareness of developments in legislation, policy and practice;
- Consult with associated organisations on campus who provide services to children to ensure that they adopt appropriate guidelines safeguarding the best interests of children;
- Promote awareness of these guidelines and ensure that staff and students of the University have ready access to the contact details of the Child Protection Officer;
- Ensure that new employees and students of the University are made aware of these guidelines and other policies relevant to dignity and respect during staff induction training and student orientation week;
- Establish reporting procedures to and from the Child Protection Officer and ensure that they are made known to all;
- Receive and process reports of allegations and suspicions of child abuse without delay and decide on appropriate action, taking into account the immediate danger to children and the requirements of the Gardai to secure material evidence;
- Inform Tusla - Child and Family Agency and Gardai of all incidents where reasonable grounds for concern exist that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse to ensure that they are involved with appropriate speed;
- Liaise with the President, Director of Human Resources and Deputy President of the University, as appropriate, regarding specific cases;
- Provide professional expertise and support in regard to decision making in individual cases. Additional professional resources may be called on as the need arises;
- Ensure that appropriate steps are taken in relation to an accused person while enquiries are underway;
- Review and evaluate this policy and its guidelines annually to determine their operational effectiveness and to ensure that contact details are up to date; and
- Provide child protection training to all relevant staff such as training targeted at specific units/personnel who have direct contact with children; rolling seminars for all personnel to attend; and training for specific appointments if necessary.

As the role of the Child Protection Officer develops and becomes embedded in the University community, the tasks and functions may evolve.

**Appendix 1**

**Key Publications and Relevant Legislation**

**Departmental & Third Party Guidance**

- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (July 2011), Department of Children & Youth Affairs
- Our Duty to Care: The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children & Young People (2004) Department of Health and Children
- Code of Good Practice: Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector – May 2003
- Child Protection Guidelines for Post Primary Schools (2001), Department of Education and Science
- UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (1992)

**Relevant Legislation**

(Note: summaries of this legislation are given in Appendix 7 to Children First National Guidance 2011)

- Article 42A of Bunreacht na hÉireann
- Children First Act 2015
- Children Act 2001
- Child Care Act 1991
- Criminal Justice Act 2006
- Domestic Violence Act 1996
- Protection of Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- Non Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997
- Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003
- Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003
- Education (Welfare) Act 2000

**Appendix 2**  
**Key Contacts List**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Mobile/Fax No.</b>
Child Protection Officer <i>(to be appointed)</i>		
UCD Safety Officer	(01) 7168771	
Deputy President	(01) 716 1404	
Director of Human Resources	(01) 716 4967	
UCD Services First Response	(01) 7167000	
UCD Unicare Security and Safety on Campus	(01) 7167999	
Dublin South East Child Protection Services, Churchtown	(01) 4916400	
HSE, Dublin South East, Vergemount Hall, Clonskeagh,	(01) 2680320	
HSE out of hours service for Dublin	(01) 6755992	
Alternative:	(01) 8976828	
Garda Station Donnybrook	(01) 666 9200	Fax: (01) 666 9240
Children's Ombudsman	1800 202040/ (01) 865 6800	Fax: (01) 874 7333

***\*The Child Protection Officer will review the above contact details periodically.***

**Appendix 3**

**Information to be included when making a report to Tusla - Child and Family Agency/Gardai**

The ability of the Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochána to assess and investigate suspicions or allegations of child abuse or neglect will depend on the amount and quality of information conveyed to them by the people reporting concerns. As much as possible of the following details should be provided:

- i. the name, address and age of the child (or children) for whom the report is being made;
- ii. the name of the child's school;
- iii. the name and contact details of the person reporting concerns;
- iv. whether the person reporting is a professional, a person working with children or a member of the public;
- v. the relationship to the child of the person making the report;
- vi. a full account of what constitutes the grounds for concern in relation to the protection and welfare of the child or children, e.g. details of the allegation, incident, dates, description of any injuries, etc;
- vii. the names and addresses of the parents/carers of the child or children;
- viii. the names of other children in the household;
- ix. the name, address and details of the person allegedly causing concern in relation to the child or children;
- x. the child's and/or parents/carers' own views, if known and relevant;
- xi. the names and addresses of other personnel or agencies involved with the child or children, e.g. GP, social worker, public health nurse, Gardai, etc.

Appendix 4



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

FORM NUMBER: CC01:01:01

**STANDARD REPORT FORM**  
*(For reporting CP&W Concerns)*

**A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Date of Report**

**2. Details of Child**

Name:			Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address:	DOB			Age		
	School					
Alias			Correspondence address (if different)			
Telephone			Telephone			

**3. Details of Persons Reporting Concern(s)**

Name:			Telephone No.		
Address:			Occupation		
			Relationship to client		
Reporter wishes to remain anonymous			<input type="checkbox"/>	Reporter discussed with parents/guardians	
			<input type="checkbox"/>		

**4. Parents Aware of Report**

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported	- Mother	Yes	No
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	- Father	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment	<input type="text"/>		

**5. Details of Report**

*(Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.)*



## STANDARD REPORT FORM

(For reporting CP&W Concerns)

**6. Relationships**

Details of Mother		Details of Father	
Name:		Name:	
Address: (if different to child)		Address: (if different to child)	
Telephone No's:		Telephone No's:	

**7. Household composition**

Name	Relationship	DOB	Additional Information e.g. School/ Occupation/Other:

**8. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child**

	Name	Address
Social Worker		
PHN		
GP		
Hospital		
School		
Gardaí		
Pre-School/ Crèche/YG		
Other (specify):		

**9. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child**

Relationship to child:		Age		Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name:			Occupation				
Address:							

**10. Details of person completing form**

Name:		Occupation:	
Address:		Telephone No's:	
Signed		Date:	