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## Guiding Principles and Safeguarding Procedures

### Statutory obligations of relevant services:

The Children First Act 2015 places specific obligations on organisations which provide services to children and young people, including the requirement to:

- Keep children **safe from harm** while they are using the service
- Carry out a **risk assessment** to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed while availing of the service
- Develop a **Child Safeguarding Statement** that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified
- Appoint a **relevant person** to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement.

Under the Children First Act (2015) Early Learning and Care services are the providers of **relevant services**.

A service is a relevant service if:

*'Any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children in*

- (a) an establishment which provides early years services within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991'*



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Under the Children First National Guidance, organisations who have regular direct or indirect contact with children and their families have a responsibility to safeguard children. The most effective way to do this is through a system of strong and robust policies and procedures. These policies and procedures should be in place to safeguard children from harm and to reduce the risk of harm to children.

Providers of relevant services are required to conduct an assessment of the risk of harm to a child whilst availing of the service and to have a Child Safeguarding Statement. Within this Child Safeguarding Statement, the following policies and procedures are required:

- **Reporting Procedures – DLP, Mandated Persons, etc.**
- **Responding to Allegations of Abuse made against Workers/ Volunteers**
- **Procedures for Recruiting and Selecting Workers and Volunteers**
- **Procedures for maintaining a list of mandated persons and the appointment of a relevant person**
- **Child Safeguarding Training Strategy**



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In addition to the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice recommends that the following procedures are in place to create a safe environment for children. Many of these procedures will be required to manage risks identified in the service's risk assessment.

Early Learning and Care services should have the following procedures in place in order to ensure best practice in providing a safe and child centred environment for children availing of their service:

- **Child Safeguarding Statement/Guiding Principles**
- **Reference to Types of Abuse**
- **Information Sharing and Record-keeping**
- **Confidentiality Statement**
- **Safe Management of Activities**
- **Code of Behaviour for Workers and Volunteers**
- **Supervision and Support of Workers and Volunteers**
- **Disciplinary Procedures**
- **Sharing your Guiding Principles and Safeguarding Procedures**
- **Empowering Children and Young People to Claim their Rights**
- **Anti-Bullying Policy**
- **Guidelines for Working in Partnership with Parents/Guardians and Children/Young People including Communication Strategy**
- **Complaints Procedure**

Further information on the Child Safeguarding Statement and Guiding Principles and Safeguarding Procedures can be found here:

#### **Children First National Guidance; 2017**

- [https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children\\_First\\_National\\_Guidance\\_2017.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf)

#### **Tusla Guidance on Developing and Child Safeguarding Statement**

- [https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/4214-TUSLA\\_Guidance\\_on\\_Developing\\_a\\_CSS\\_LR.PDF](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/4214-TUSLA_Guidance_on_Developing_a_CSS_LR.PDF)

#### **Child Safeguarding – A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice**

- <https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla - Child Safeguarding - A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.pdf>

#### **Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework**

- <https://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/>