Monaghan Integrated Development

Child Safeguarding Policy & Procedures 2024

Including:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service; (section 5)
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children; (Section 6)
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm; (Section 6)
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla; (Sections 4 & 5)
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons; (Section 6)
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.(Section 5)
- And other related procedures

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Introduction

Monaghan Integrated Development (MID)

Monaghan Integrated Development (MID) is a Local Development Company funded by the Irish Government and charged with the delivery of a range of programmes whose aim is to support specific target groups (including children) with a view to making a positive difference in their lives.

A core role of MID is to promote social inclusion, support enterprise development and employment creation, enable access to education, training and lifelong learning and assist communities in identifying needs and developing local solutions. Some of our services are provided specifically for children or families. Others are targeted at adults but may still involve contact with children (for example a parent brings a child with them to an appointment).

Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm:

MID is committed to the principles laid out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. These are:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm.
- Interventions by the State should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family.
- Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where it is necessary for the State to intervene to keep children safe, the minimum intervention necessary should be used.
- Children should only be separated from parents/carers when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted.
- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect, and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/carers and families.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professinals must work together in the interests of the children.

All MID staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the vulnerability and needs of children during the course of their duties and act in a responsible manner at all times. It is recognised that most staff members/volunteers do not have expertise in this area; it is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the statutory authorities and shall not be undertaken by MIDs Relevant Person(s), Designated Liaison Person(s), Mandated Persons (if any) or other MID employees.

This policy and procedure document deals with safeguarding children with whom Monaghan Integrated Development (MID) and its agents come in contact. It provides guidance to all MID staff and volunteers during the course of their work. All staff and volunteers are expected to be familiar with and adhere to its contents.

For the purposes of this policy, associated procedures and our Child Safeguarding Statement, "staff' will include individuals working within MID under employment schemes such Community Employment, Tus and Rural Social Scheme.

MID also runs the TUS and Rural Social Scheme employment schemes in Co. Monaghan. It is the employer of the participants on these schemes but MID places them with a range of local organisations. Participants placed with other organisations will generally be subject to the host organisation's child safeguarding procedures. However, if any MID staff member (including but not limited to TUS or RSS supervisors) becomes aware of any allegation against a participant he or she must report it to the MID OLP.

This policy has been developed in accordance with government guidelines contained in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. A copy of this document can be made available on request from the Designated Liaison Person/Relevant Person or can be found on the website of CFA Tusla at https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-guidance-and-legislation/

Throughout this document the Child and Family Agency is referred to as CFA Tusla.

Child

A 'child' is defined under the Child Care Act 1991 and the Children Act 2001 as anyone under the age of 18 years who is not and has not been married.

Children, because of their dependency and immaturity, are vulnerable to abuse in various forms. Parents or guardians have primary responsibility for the care, protection and welfare of their children. However, Monaghan Integrated Development (MID) have a responsibility to ensure the protection and welfare of children participating in any MID activities.

This policy is directed at all those who have both direct and indirect contact with children in the normal course of their duties, to provide guidance on appropriate behaviour around children and what to do if physical, sexual or emotional neglect and abuse is suspected.

This Policy is not a legal interpretation of the legislation. It does, however, offer guidance to MID staff and volunteers on their responsibilities.

Section 1. Code of Behaviour in relation to Children

Monaghan Integrated Development (MID) aim to create an environment in which children are listened to, given a sense of belonging, and kept safe; parents are supported and encouraged; and employees and volunteers who work with children and young people are supported and protected. In order to meet these aims MID will follow a framework for good practice and a code of behaviour as set out below.

Monaghan Integrated Development Child-Centred Approach

All MID activities involving children shall be guided by what is best for children. Children's activities shall be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Standards of excellence should extend to personal conduct. Taking a child-centred approach means to:

- Treat all children equally;
- Listen to and respect children;
- Involve children 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 as individuals;
- Respect a child's personal space;
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids;
- Lead by example;
- Be aware of child time limitations e.g. school/exams when scheduling activities;
- Create an atmosphere of trust;
- Respect and be aware of differences of ability, culture, religion, race, and sexual orientation;
- Endeavour to provide equality/diversity training for employees in relation to cultural differences;
- Use all information in respect of children only for the purpose for which it is given, subject to child Protection and Welfare concerns.

Good Practice Framework

Monaghan Integrated Development aim to work within the following framework for good practice by:

- Providing policy training for employees and volunteers in line **with** these guidelines;

- Registering each child engaged in MID activities or projects without a parent or guardian present (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact & parental consent). In the case of a series of activities/programme with multiple events, one registration form will suffice. If the child later attends a further, separate activity/event/programme, a new registration form should be completed and signed by the parent or guardian.

  See Appendix 9 - sample registration form

- Collecting 2 alternative emergency contact phone numbers at the start of each event in case the person designated to collect the child from an event is delayed/can't collect.

- If the child will be allowed to leave unaccompanied (to walk home alone etc.) get written consent for that on the registration form signed by the parent or guardian.

- It will be noted that it is not possible to cover all open or public events e.g. concerts, play days, playgrounds;

- Complying with the Data Protection Policy of MID in respect of personal and sensitive data regarding children and their parents/guardians subject to child protection and welfare concerns;
- Making parents/guardians, children, visitors and facilitators aware of this document by displaying our Child Safeguarding Statement at our offices, making the Safeguarding Statement and this document available on our website and referring to them in relevant communications (such as booking forms or tender documents for children's activities)
- Having procedures in place for accident/injuries or emergencies as per Health & Safety and accident reporting books
- Reporting/recording any incidents and accidents;
- Being inclusive of children with specific needs;
- Reporting any concerns to the Designated Liaison Person/Deputy Designated Liaison Person and following reporting procedures;
- Evaluation of work practices where contact with children occurs on a regular basis;
- Reviewing and updating policies and procedures regularly;
- Keeping parents/guardians informed of any issues of concern regarding their children as appropriate to the service i.e. formal organised activities e.g. sports events;
- Ensuring where practical, appropriate to the service, supervision (including a minimum of two adults) depending on age, abilities and activities involved;
- Ensuring that partner organisations are familiar with MID guidelines;
- Not ignoring concerns;
- Not letting a problem get out of control;
- Ensuring that there are adequate insurance arrangements in place to cover all relevant activities;
- If photographing/filming will take place at any event do one of the following:
  (A)Obtain written consent of the parent/guardian and with older young people themselves. Or
  (b) In respect of a group of children (school, youth club etc.) permission should be sought from the school/group leader/coordinator. It is the responsibility of the school/ group leader/coordinator to have obtained relevant parental/guardian's consent;..Q[
  (c) Post a notice at the entrance to event and/or on the sign in sheet saying photos/videos will be made and anyone who wants to opt out must inform staff. If children will not be accompanied by a parent/guardian this should be included in sign up or
  @ If there is no sign in sheet and no notice is posted staff to explain verbally that photos/videos will be taken and ask anyone who wants to opt out to tell staff.

- Ensuring appropriate internet policies for those accessing internet on MID devices.

Inappropriate Behaviour - Guidance for EmployeesNolunteers

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children where practical
- Avoid taking children on journeys alone in a car where possible and never without the consent of the parent/guardian and the young person themselves;
- Where possible employees should avoid being in a one to one situation with a child;
- Do not use/allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical conduct and/or verbal language;
- Do not single out a particular child (for unfair favouritism, criticism or ridicule);
- Do not allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- Do not hit or physically chastise children;
- Do not socialise inappropriately with children e.g. outside of structured organisational activities;
- Only use social media in accordance with company guidelines. Do not 'friend' children who are clients on social media.
- Where physical contact is an inherent part of an activity, it is important to seek consent of child/young person in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation); avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch; check with child/young person about their level of comfort when doing touch exercises i.e. games may involve holding hands and it is about ensuring that this is done openly and within safe and comfortable limits for the child or young person;
- Not revealing personal information about children in any way, subject to child protection and welfare concerns;
- Relevant guidelines should be put in place where necessary.

Considerations for the Health and Safety of Children

- Do not leave children unattended/unsupervised;
- Ensure that children are not in contact with any dangerous materials;
- Provide a safe environment and where feasible ensure another employee/volunteer is present;
- Be aware of and comply with MID policies on Safety, Health and Welfare at Work;
- Ensure that you are familiar with and comply with MID procedures in relation to accidents;
- Familiarise yourself with and where necessary comply with the emergency evacuation procedures particular to the location in which you are located and brief the children in your care on what they are to do/where they must go in an emergency.
- Be familiar with the particular risks associated with the activity and/or location at which you are based. Read and understand the Safety Statement for that location;
- If undertaking a risk assessment take account of a child's natural curiosity and include appropriate precautions to safeguard a child's potential exposure;
- For any further advice in relation to health and safety issues you should contact Monaghan Integrated Development's Health and Safety Coordinator - Bernie McKenna. (Telephone: (042) 9749500, e-mail: bmckenna@midl.ie)

Consideration for Children with Specific Needs or Disabilities

Adhere to national legislation including Disability Act 2005, and Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 in relation to children with disabilities or special needs to ensure access to all MID services and activities.

General Supervision

Employees/volunteers shall endeavour to ensure that there are adequate adult/child ratios. The appropriate ratio will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the children and any special needs of the group. A general guide may be 1:8 for under 12 years of age and 1:10 for over 12 years of age (good practice is a minimum of two or more adults). Where possible there shall be at least one adult of each gender with mixed parties. This ratio may not be appropriate at service points as distinct from organised activities.

- Employees/volunteers shall endeavour to avoid being left alone with children;
- If an adult needs to talk separately to a child this should be done in an open environment in view of others whilst offering the child confidentiality;
- Employees should not be left alone with children at the end of an activity;
- Times for start and finish of activities should be clearly stated;
- Late collection of children by parents/guardians presents a potentially difficult situation, and employees/volunteers shall attempt to contact the child's parent/guardian on their contact number;
- Use an alternative contact name/number agreed with the child's parent/ guardian if necessary;
- Wait with the child with another employee member/volunteer present where possible;
- Make it clear to parents/guardians that it is not MID's responsibility to transport children home on behalf of parents/guardians who have been delayed;

Employees/volunteers shall not:

- Take the child home or to another location without permission (ideally written) from a parent /guardian;
- Send the child home with another person without permission (ideally written) from a parent/guardian;
- Leave a child unaccompanied.

Dealing with Challenging or Disruptive Behaviour

Disruptive behaviour is unacceptable, and disruptive children will be asked by employees to behave. Disruptive behaviour will be reported to parent/guardian. If a child continues to be disruptive s/he will be advised thats/he is causing a disturbance and given a warning. Parents will also be advised of ongoing disruptive behaviour. If ongoing disruptive behaviour persists, parents will be informed that a formal warning will be issued. A warning letter may be sent to the parent/guardian stating that further disruptions may result in withdrawal of facilities or services to the child. If a child is a danger to themselves or others further action may be required i.e. parent/gardaf to be contacted.

When dealing with a disruptive child, it is recommended that where possible more than one employee or volunteer be present. Instances of disruptive behaviour that require the intervention of the employee, and which put at risk the safety and wellbeing of others, must be documented. The report shall describe:

- The programme or activity running at the time;

- Whathappened;
- Who was involved;
- Where and when it happened;
- What was said, if significant;
- Any injury to person or property;
- How the situation was resolved;
- An Incident Report Form shall be completed

Section 2. Confidentiality

This policy recognises that, in the event of an allegation, suspicion or disclosure being made to a member of MID, its staff or volunteers, it is not possible to promise 'not to tell' and no undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Where MID staff engage with clients on a one to one basis, they will inform them that any disclosures made will be reported according to MIDs Child Safeguarding Policy.

Any information provided by MID to the Duty Social Work Team of the Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA) or to An Garda Sfochana will remain confidential. Those receiving information will only disclose it where on balance the welfare of the child requires it. The parents and children have a right to know when information is being shared unless doing so would put the child at further risk.

Confidentiality will be maintained. Only those who need to know of a suspicion, allegation or disclosure of abuse are informed, and the numbers that need to know will be kept to a minimum. All reports relating to child protection and welfare will be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis. This will usually mean that such reports will be made known to the OLP, the CFA TUSLA and/or Gardaf.

The Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Acts (as amended) and Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 must inform decisions regarding the sharing of such information, with the best interests of the child remaining paramount. Giving information to others for the Protection and Welfare of a child is not a breach of confidentiality.

Anyone who receives information from colleagues about possible or actual child abuse must treat it as having been given in confidence, subject to above. Any breaches of confidential information may be regarded as a disciplinary matter, subject to above. Records should be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, within an agreed HR filing system and be available only to those directly involved and within the confines of the obligations and duties of the Data Protection Acts, 2003 - 2018.

Section 3. Definitions, Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined in Children First Guidelines 2017 as falling into four categories - neglect, emotional, physical and sexual. Each of these categories is defined below. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the

development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

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

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range ofreasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

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

- Rejection

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

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

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

Physical Abuse

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

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

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

Sexual Abuse

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

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

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

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

It should be remembered that sexual activity involving a young person may be sexual abuse even if the young person concerned does not themselves recognise it as abusive.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse (for example, if both parties are aged 16). In such cases MID staff/volunteers must inform the OLP or deputy OLP who will consult with a Tusla social worker for advice on whether a report should be made.

Signs and Symptoms of Child Sexual Abuse

Guardians and professionals should be alert to the following physical and behavioural signs:

- Bleeding from the vagina/anus
- Difficulty/pain in passing urine/fasces

- An infection may occur secondary to sexual abuse, which may or may not be a definitive sexually transmitted disease. Professionals should be informed if a child has a persistent vaginal discharge or has warts/rash in genital area.
- Noticeable and uncharacteristic change of behaviour
- Hints about sexual activity
- Age - inappropriate understanding of sexual behaviour
- Inappropriate seductive behaviour
- Sexually aggressive behaviour with others
- Uncharacteristic sexual play with peers/toys
- Unusual reluctance to join in normal activities which involve undressing, e.g. games/swimming

Particular behavioural signs and emotional problems suggestive of child abuse in young children (0-10 yrs):

- Mood change, e.g. child becomes withdrawn, fearful, acting out;
- Lack of concentration (change in school performance)
- Bed wetting, soiling

Psychosomatic complaints; pains, headaches
Skin disorders
Nightmares, changes in sleep patterns
School refusal

- Separation anxiety
- Loss of appetite
- Isolation

Particular behavioural signs and emotional problems suggestive of child abuse in older children (10 yrs +):

- Mood change, e.g. depression, failure to communicate
- Running away
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Self mutilation
- Suicide attempts
- Delinquency
- Truancy
- Eating disorders
- Isolation

Circumstances where children may be more vulnerable to harm

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

Bullying

- It is recognised that bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare. Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression - whether it is verbal psychological or physical - that is conducted by an individual or group against others .While bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable.

- In cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possible abusive, you may need to make a referral to Tusla and /or the An Garda Siochana

Section 4. Recognising and Reporting Child Protection & Welfare Concerns

Guidelines for Recognition

The ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on their knowledge and information. Child abuse can often be difficult to identify and may present in many forms (see previous section, Section 4, for guidance on categories of child abuse). Early detection is important and individuals working with children should share their concerns about child protection or welfare with the DLP(s) in Monaghan Integrated Development, There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse.

These are:

- considering the possibility;
- looking out for signs of abuse;
- recording of information.

How does a concern about a child come about?

Concerns about a child can come from a number of sources such as:

- A child may make a disclosure to a member of staff or another trusted person;
- A client may inform a member of staff of concerns or that a child has made a disclosure to them. This could involve a client telling a staff member of an alleged concern involving another client, service provider or MID staff member/volunteer.
- Staff may notice signs of abuse, or be concerned about the child's welfare. For example, staff may witness a Child Protection or Welfare concern involving a client, service provider, or MID staff member
- Staff may be concerned about the behaviour of a member of staff.
- Other person / organisation (e.g. other resident / NGO) advises staff of an alleged concern about a client(s).

Examples of reasonable grounds for concern forming basis for reporting

- Specific indication from the child that (s)he was abused - i.e. disclosure;
- An account by a person who saw the child 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 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;
- Consistent indication, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

It is important to stress that no one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse; it may indeed indicate conditions other than child abuse. However, it is not the responsibility of staff or of the OLP to investigate or prove abuse. It is their responsibility to report to the OLP who will document and report issues of concern to the Duty Social Work Team.

Observations should be accurately recorded and should include dates, times, names, and locations.

General Reporting Guidelines

The primary responsibility of the person who first suspects or is told of abuse is to report it and to ensure that their concern is taken seriously. The guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse may be summarised as follows:

- The safety and well-being of the child must take priority;
- Reports should be made without delay;
- The principle of natural justice shall apply, as appropriate;
- A person is innocent until proven otherwise however any measures necessary to protect a child must be taken;
- The principle of confidentiality shall apply, whereby only those who need to know should be told of a suspicion/allegation/disclosure of abuse and the number that need to be kept informed shall be kept to a minimum.
- A suspicion of abuse should not be discussed with other staff members but should be reported directly to the **DLP**
- A suspicion, which is not supported by any objective indication of abuse or neglect, would not constitute a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern. However, these suspicions should be recorded or noted internally as future suspicions may lead to the decision to make a report and, in those circumstances; earlier suspicions may provide important information.

Remember, it is an offence under The Criminal Justice Act 2006 (Section 176: Reckless Endangerment of Children) to fail to report a suspected child protection and/or welfare concern.

Legal protections in reporting child abuse

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 protects you if you make a report of suspected child abuse to designated officers of Tusla, the Health Service Executive (HSE) or to members of the Gardai as long as the report is made in good faith and is not malicious. Designated officers also include persons authorised by the Chief Executive Officer of Tusla to receive and acknowledge reports of mandated concerns about a child from mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

This legal protection means that even if you report a case of suspected child abuse and it proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that you had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. If you make a report in good faith and in the child's best interests, you may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege.

Section 5. Reporting Structures

MID will have 1 Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) and 1 Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLP) at all times, who will deal with child protection and/or welfare concerns that fall under the scope of this policy. The DLPs will also be the Relevant Persons. All concerns/disclosures made to MID staff or the DLP will be recorded.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) will be responsible for ensuring that child protection and/or welfare concerns are reported to the CFA Tusla and to the GardaL All DLP(s) must undertake "Children First, Designated Liaison Person Role and Responsibilities" or whatever suitable training Tusla may replace this with. MID will display the name and contact details of the DLP(s) in prominent positions in its offices (Appendix 8). A OLP will deal immediately with the child protection and/or welfare concerns which arise.

Designated Liaison Persons {DLP)

Title	Name	Job title	Contact details
OLP	*Francis Mccarron*	*Team Leader*	*042 9795737*
Deputy OLP	*Sinead Keenan*	*Team Leader*	*047 72191 or 087 4173944*

Role of Designated Liaison Person in MID

- Be the principal point of contact - for management, staff and clients for any child protection or welfare issue which arises in MID and to co-ordinate action within MID re same;
- Be accessible to all staff;
- Establish contact with the Duty Social Work Team/the senior member of the CFA Tusla, which is responsible for child protection and welfare in the MID's catchment area, i.e. Area Manager;
- Provide information and advice on child protection or welfare issues within MID. The DLPs are supported in this role having attended the Children First Training, along with on-going interaction with CFA Tusla;
- Advise the organisation of child protection and welfare training needs;
- Ensure that in the event of a child protection or welfare issue arising where direction is required, that informal communications take place with the Duty Social Work Team;
- Inform/Speak to parents regarding concerns, save in circumstances where this may put the child at additional risk; or where the Duty Social Work Team instructs otherwise.
- Ensure that MID's child protection and welfare policy and procedures are followed, particularly to inform the Duty Social Work Team of relevant concerns about individual children;
- Ensure that relevant people within the organisation, particularly MID's CEO are informed through the procedures set out in this document of referrals made to the Duty Social Work Team, whilst maintaining confidentiality;
- If a concern is not referred to the Duty Social Work Team, the DLP should advise MID's CEO of the nature of the concern and the reason for not referring it to CFA Tusla;
- Where a child/children from a different family/families are part of the same child protection concern each child's details must be reported on a separately.

- Ensure appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, preferably via the Tusla reporting portal. See appendix 1 below.
- Liaise with Duty Social Work Team/An Garda Sfochana and other relevant agencies as appropriate;
- Ensure that the exchange of information is made on a need-to-know basis only and that confidentiality is maintained as appropriate;
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of all actions taken by the OLP and MID, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome and that all documents relating to child protection concerns should be held in a secure area;
- Ensure that all records are kept in a secure location in locked cabinets and/or that electronic records are stored securely. Ensure that access to these records is limited to persons who have a role in Child Protection and Welfare in MID.

Appointment of Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person

Whenever the role of OLP or DDLP becomes vacant, the CEO will consult with all team leaders and appoint one of them to fill the role. The appointment will take place and the appointed person will complete appropriate training within three months of the role becoming vacant.

If both the OLP and DDLP roles are vacant at the same time the CEO shall ensure that at least one of the roles is filled and the appointee completes training within one month of the both roles becoming vacant.

Section 6. General Child Protection or Welfare Measures

This policy also encourages external service providers of MID to be aware of, and to act, in accordance with this Child Safeguarding Policy, in this organisation.

Staff Recruitment

MID will:
(i) ensure best practice is followed in the recruitment of staff or volunteers, which includes Garda vetting (where relevant), taking up of references, good HR practices in interviewing, induction training, probation and ongoing supervision and management;
(ii) ensure that staff members or volunteers undertake suitable child safeguarding training.

All advertised positions with MID will include a job and role description. Applicants for appointment or engagement to a staff or volunteer position with MID must submit a written application and/or undergo an interview process.

The application will include personal details, past and current work/volunteering experience and any qualifications or skills relevant to the post.
They may also be required to provide formal photographic identification (depending on the position/role sought) in support of their application.

Applicants for employment will be required to make a declaration relating to previous criminal records. Furthermore:

- MID requires all its staff and relevant volunteers to be Garda Vetted if appropriate to their role i.e. if their role is "relevant work" under the vetting legislation.
- Require two references from potential employees and volunteers.
- We fully check references and follow up at least one reference verbally.

In addition, external service providers contracted by MID to work on projects involving children or vulnerable adults are:

- Obliged to have all staff involved in "relevant work" with vulnerable adults or children Garda Vetted.
- Specifically asked if there is anything which would preclude them or their staff from working with vulnerable adults and children. (This is in addition to the Garda Vetting process.)
- Requested to complete the declaration form at Appendix 2.

Mandated Persons

Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies certain classes of persons as Mandated Persons for the purposes of the Act. Those classes of persons have to report harm of children, above a defined threshold, to Tusla and to assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern that has been the subject of a mandated report.

At present, MID does not have any employees who are Mandated Persons. Each time a new member of staff is appointed the CEO shall consider whether that person is a Mandated Person and if so ensure they receive appropriate training. The CEO shall maintain a list of all staff (if any) who are mandated person.

https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/mandated-persons/am-i-a-mandated-person/

Procedures regarding allegations

It can happen that a Child Protection or Welfare concern can be reported involving:
(i) a member of MID staff
(ii) an MID volunteer
(iii) an external service provider

This Policy applies to all such persons. All relevant MID staff must sign a declaration - at Appendix 2 - stating they have seen, understand and will adhere to this Policy and that there is no reason why they cannot work with children.

Allegations against MID member of staff or volunteer

Any child protection or welfare complaint made in relation to any member of MID staff must be notified to MIDs DLP. In circumstances where an allegation against a staff member is made, MID's Child Safeguarding policy must be followed and the MID CEO must be informed immediately.

It will be the role of the:

- DLP to deal with the child and ensure that all company Child Safeguarding procedures are followed.
- CEO to deal with the staff member and ensure that all HR/organisational disciplinary procedures are followed.

Whilst the safety of the child is paramount, the principle of natural justice should apply, which means that a person is innocent until proven guilty. If MID becomes aware of an allegation of abuse of a child or children, by an employee during the execution of that employee's duties, MID will privately inform the employee of the following:

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

The employee will be afforded the opportunity to respond. MID will note the response and pass on this information when making a formal report to the Duty Social Work Team. Any action that would delay or frustrate the process must be avoided.

All stages of the process must be recorded. Any protective action taken will be proportionate to the level of risk to the child i.e. possible options that may considered or taken will be guided by agreed procedures, the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice.

Allegations against External Service provider

Where a concern arises in relation to an external service provider the DLP must immediately inform CFA Tusla of any such complaint. MID must ensure that the employer concerned is immediately informed. Depending on the circumstances of the case involved, the Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA) and/or Gardar and MID will jointly consider whether the staff member of the external service provider should be disallowed from continuing to work with MID's clients pending the outcome of any further investigation carried out by his employer.

Section 7. Record Keeping In MID

MID will have an agreed recording procedure whereby all concerns are documented. IT records must be password protected and paper files will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in MIDs head office.

As explained, all concerns relating to children will be recorded on the Standard Report Form at Appendix 1 and copied and stored as outlined above. Subsequent records created relating to the concern should be linked with the completed form and may include:

- Records of conversations with staff, other professionals, (Social worker, Gardai, etc);
- Records of follow-up phone calls;
- Formal correspondence.

All child records must be kept in accordance with legislation under Freedom of Information Amendment Act 2003 (FOi) and Data Protection Act 1988 and 2003. Within MID only the OLP and Deputy OLP will have access to the records kept.

Section 8. Grant Funding

From time to time MID may be in a position to offer grant assistance to community groups or businesses. In circumstances where there is grant assistance available under any grant scheme, MID will require the groups or businesses applying for funding to confirm that they have appropriate policies in place as regards Child Safeguarding and that these policies meet the National Policy Guidelines.

Section 9. PRACTICE DOCUMENT

Retrospective Disclosures

Not all child protection or welfare incident/concerns are contemporaneous matters. It can happen that a member of staff or another person in MID is made aware by a child of an issue of child abuse which may have happened in the past. In this circumstance the issue should be brought to the attention of the OLP who in turn should contact the CFA Tusla for advice. If the disclosure is made in respect of someone who is not the person's parent/guardian, the OLP should inform the parent/guardian of this disclosure.

Retrospective disclosures by adults

An increasing number of adults are disclosing abuse that took place during their childhoods. Such disclosures often come to light when adults attend counselling. In the case of MID staff this may occur at one to one client meetings. 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. If any risk is deemed to exist to a child who may be in contact with an alleged abuser, the staff member should report the allegation to the OLP without delay.

The HSE National Counselling Service is available to adults who experienced childhood abuse or neglect. They accept self-referrals at 1800 234 117 or referncs.lmcm@hse.ie and also GP referrals.
https://www2.hse.ie/mental-health/services-support/ncs/self-referral/

Concerns raised by another organisation

In the event that the concern is identified by another organisation or professional (e.g. an external service provider, voluntary support group), it is their responsibility to follow the child protection guidelines of their own organisation, and to make contact with the Duty Social Work Team. Where, in the first instance, the concern is brought to the attention of MID staff by either the other organisation or the client, this should be documented by the OLP on the Standard Report Form at Appendix 1 and sent to the Duty Social Work Team.

Responding to a child who discloses abuse

Everyone must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be being abused.

Remember, a child may disclose abuse to you as a trusted adult at any time during your work with them. It is important that you are aware and prepared for this.If a child hints at or tells you that he or she is being abused, it must be handled very sensitively, and in the following way:

- Be as calm and natural as possible
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked. Do not panic;
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child;
- Remember, the child may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time;
- Listen to what the child has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to;
- Do not pressurise the child. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language;
- Do not ask leading questions or details, or make suggestions;

- Do not stop the child recalling significant events, but do not make him or her repeat the story unnecessarily;
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief;
- Accept what the child has to say - false disclosures are very rare;
- Reassure the child, but do not promise to keep it a secret;
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child quite possibly may love or strongly like the alleged abuser while also disliking what was done to them. It is important therefore to avoid expressing any judgement on, or anger towards, the alleged perpetrator while talking with the child;
- It may be necessary to reassure the child that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed;
- Explain what needs to be done next;
- Record the discussion as carefully as possible.

Steps To Be Followed Where A Child Protection And Welfare Concern Is Identified

All MID Offices are required to have the names and contact details of the Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) clearly displayed in a prominent location within the centre.

An employee/volunteer who knows or suspects that a child has been or is at risk of being harmed has a duty to convey this concern to the Designated Liaison Person(s) without delay. They may also go directly to the CFA Tusla Duty Social Work Team.

If a child welfare concern is made known to, or is witnessed by, a member of staff the following sequence of steps should be followed.

Step 1: The safety and welfare of the child must take priority. The staff member should ensure that the child is not in immediate physical danger.

Step 2: The staff member should immediately contact Ml D's Designated Liaison Person. (In an emergency, where the DLP or deputy DLP is not contactable, a staff member must report their concerns directly to the CFA Tusla Duty Social Work Team. In the event that the Duty Social Work Team are not contactable, the staff member should report them directly to An Garda Sfochana). If they are seriously concerned about the incident they should report it to both the Gardaf and Tusla.
Under no circumstances should any individual member of staff/volunteer attempt to intervene or deal with the problem of abuse alone.

Step 3: When the Designated Liaison Person receives a report about suspected or actual child abuse, they should consider whether there are reasonable grounds for reporting it to CFA Tusla and/or An Garda Sfochana. If in any doubt, the DLP should seek the advice of the Duty Social Work Team (Contact details are at Appendix 7). If the suspected abuser is an employee/volunteer of Monaghan Integrated Development, the matter should be brought to the immediate attention of the CEO who should be given a copy of the report. If the abuser is not a member of MID staff, the CEO only needs to be informed that a report has been made, but will not be given the details.

Step 4: The DLP should inform the parent/guardian of the report he/she received from the staff member (unless to do so would place the child at further risk). Where applicable they should seek clarification from the parent/guardian of the circumstances involved.

Step 5: Depending on the response and the understanding of the parent/guardian, the OLP should seek the advice of the Duty Social Work Team.
Where the report concerns a possible risk to unidentifiable children, MID will always report such concerns to the Duty Social Work Team.

Step 6: If the OLP is satisfied that parent/guardian understands the gravity of the situation and that the concern is not of a serious nature, a report (Appendix 3) should be given to the CEO outlining why no further action is being taken.

Step 7: When the DLP decides there are no reasonable grounds for concern and not to proceed any further with a reported concern (i.e. by following the further steps 8 to 15 below), the reasons for not so doing should be given in writing to the person who reported the concern. That person, if they feel strongly that the concern should have proceeded further, can make the referral to the Duty Social Work Team. A copy of such a referral should be emailed to MID's CEO.

Reporting a concern further to the Social Work Team of the CFA

Step 8: The OLP informs the parent/guardian that the concern, because of its serious nature, will be referred to the Duty Social Work Team. Parents will always be informed about making the referral unless this would endanger the child; advice in relation to this can also be sought from the Duty Social Work Team.

Step 9: The OLP issues a warning letter (Appendix 4) to parent/guardian.

Step 10: The DLP makes telephone contact with local Duty Social Work Team to seek their advice - contact details are at Appendix 7. It may be useful for the OLP to discuss the concerns first with the Duty Social Work Team who can assist the DLP in deciding whether or not to formally report their concerns to the Team. Such consultation should be made immediately the concern comes to light. In most cases, the advice will be to the effect that the OLP should make a referral to the Duty Social Work Team.

Step 11: If so advised, the DLP completes the online report via the Tusla portal at https://portal.tusla.ie/ or if that is not possible, the Standard Report Form at Appendix 1 and sends to the Duty Social Work Team.

Step 12: If using the form instead of the portal, the completed Standard Report Form must be posted to the relevant Duty Social Work Team.

Step 13: In cases where an urgent out of hours concern occurs, the Gardaf should be contacted by the OLP. A report via the Portal or the Standard Report Form by post to the Duty Social Work Team should be made the next morning (or Monday morning if the concern occurs at the weekend).

Step 14: The MID OLP will act on any advice from the Duty Social Work Team and will facilitate any subsequent visit the Duty Social Work Team may wish to make.

Step 15: The MID DLP will continue to monitor the situation and keep
Child and Family Agency (CFA TUSLA) informed, where relevant.

TUSLA An Ghnfomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

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

1. Tusla Area (this is where the child resides)*

2. Date of Report*

3. Details of Child

First Name*		**Surname***	
Male*	☐	**Female***	☐
Address*		**Date of Birth***	
		Estimated Age*	
		School Name	
		School Address	
Eircode			

4. Details of Concerns*

Please complete the following section with as much detail about the specific child protection or welfare concern or allegation as possible. Include dates, times, incident details and names of anyone who observed any incident. Please include the parents and child's view, if known. Please attach additional sheets, if necessary

Please see ***'Tusla Children First - A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns'*** **for additional assistance on the steps to consider in making a report to Tusla**

5. Type of Concern

Child Welfare Concern	☐		
Emotional Abuse	☐	**Physical Abuse**	☐
Neglect	☐	**Sexual Abuse**	☐

6. Details of Reporter

First Name		**Surname**	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		**Organisation**	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		**Email Address**	

An Ghnlomhaireacht wn Leanai agusan Tenghlach
CMcl ;,nd Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is this a Mandated Report made under Sec 14, Children First Act 2015?* Yes ☐ No ☐
Mandated Person's Type

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

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

8. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers **aware** that this concern is being reported to Tusla?*	Yes ☐ No ☐
If the parent/carer does not know, please indicate reasons:	

9. Relationships

Details of Mother			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

Is the Mother a Legal Guardian?* Yes ☐ No ☐

Details of Father			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

TUSLA An Ghnlomhaireachtum Lcru1lli agusan Teaghlach Child and Family A.llency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guid ance)

Is the Father a Legal Guardian?*	Yes ☐	No ☐

10. Household Composition

First Name	Surname	Relationship	Date of Birth	Estimated Age	Additional Information e.g. school, occupation, other

11. Details of Person(s) Allegedly Causing Harm

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	☐	Female*	☐
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	☐	Female*	☐
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

TUSLA An Ghnfonihaittacht wn Lettnai agus an Teaghlach ChildlIJldFamilyJ\gl,n<.-y

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

12. Name and Address of Other Organisations, Personnel or Agencies Known to be Involved Currently or Previously with the Family

Profession	First Name	Surname	Address	Contact Number	Recent Contact e.g. 3/6/9 months ago
Social Worker					
Public Health Nurse					
GP					
Hospital					
School					
Gardaf					
Pre-school/ creche					
Other					

13. Any Other Relevant Information, Including any Previous Contact with the Child or Family

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 processthis 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 1991to 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 Siochana. 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.

14. For Completion by Tusla Authorised Person on Receipt of Report

Report Received by

First Name Surname Date

Mandated Report Acknowledgement by

An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

First Name		Surname	Date Sent

Authorised Person Signature*

Date*

Child Previously Known	Yes	☐	No	☐
Allocated Case No				

APPENDIX 1.
CHILDREN FIRST WEB PORTAL AND STANDARD CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE REPORT FORM

Reports should preferably be through the Children First portal at **https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/web-portal/** .
Tusla CFA prefer to reports to be made through the portal, it is faster, and more secure than posting forms.

If it is not possible to use the portal the Tusla Child Protection and Welfare form should be used for children currently under 18. The Retrospective Abuse Form should be used if reporting the past abuse of someone who is now an adult but was under 18 when abused. These forms are available at

https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/#SRP

Forms should be sent by registered post to:

Duty Social Work Team
Tusla Child and Family Agency,
Support Services Building,
Rooskey,
Monaghan.

049 4369801

Guidance Notes for Web Portal or Forms

Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. This will assist the Duty Social Work Team in assessing the level of risk to the child, or support services required. If you do not know the information requested, please indicate this. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report.

Transmission of Form (if not possible to use Web Portal)

This form should be **posted** to the Duty Social Work Team for your area immediately. **It should NOT be emailed without authorisation from a member of the Duty Social Work Team.**

https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/#SRP

APPENDIX 2. Declarations

Declaration to be completed by Persons Providing Services to MID or its projects.

I am aware that there is a Child Safeguarding Policy in place in MID which is based on Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.
I declare that there is no reason why my staff or I should not work with children or be in contact with them.

Signed: ....

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS): ... .

Date: ....

Declaration to be completed by MID staff

I am aware that there is a Child Safeguarding Policy in place in MID which is based on Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.
I declare that there is no reason why I should not work with children or be in contact with them.

Signed: ... .

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS): ....

Date: ... .

NOTE: This signed declaration is to be stored securely by the administration team in the staff member's HR file.

APPENDIX 3. Non Referral form

No referral to Duty Social Work Team required

Confidential

Name of Child:_____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Date of Incident: .....

To: The CEO of MID.

I refer to the concern regarding_____

It was decided not to refer this incident to the Duty Social Work team for the following reason:_____

_____

_____

_____

Yours sincerely,

Signed: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS): _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Date: .....

APPENDIX 4. Standard referral letter to parents

Confidential

Standard letter to parents re: referral made to Duty Social Work Team.

Name of Parent: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Person **No.:** _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Date: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Dear _ _ _ _ _ _

I refer to the concern on _____ (date) whereby an issue arose regarding your child's/children's welfare and/or protection.

Due to the serious nature of this concern, I will now inform Tusla, the Child and Family Agency (CFA), which is the organisation responsible for child protection and welfare.

All reports relating to child protection and welfare will be shared on a strictly need-to know basis.

Yours sincerely,

Signed..... .. ..

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS): ..... (MID Designated Liaison Person)

APPENDIX 5. Notice to clients

Notice to all Clients

Monaghan Integrated Development (MID) operates a Child Safeguarding Policy for its services to ensure the safety and welfare of all children with whom our services come in contact.

The Child Safeguarding Policy is based on "Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children". MID has a Designated Liaison Person who is the contact with outside agencies and is available to any staff member, client or other person involved with MID who a has child protection concern.

The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for ensuring that the correct reporting procedure is followed, so that suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are referred quickly to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) or in an emergency, to An Garda Siochana (The Irish Police).

If you have Child Protection and/or Welfare concerns they should be supported by evidence that indicates the possibility of abuse or neglect. These concerns should be reported to MID's Designated Liaison Person. For more information on the type of neglect or abuse, contact the individuals below.

The Designated Liaison Persons for MID are:

Designated Liaison Persons (DLP)

Title	Name	Job title	Contact details
OLP	*Francis Mccarron*	*Team Leader*	*042 9795737*
Deputy OLP	*Sinead Keenan*	*Team Leader*	*047 72191 or 087 4173944*

This policy is in place to protect the children and to protect the safety of all MID clients.

APPENDIX 6. Legislation

Key Legislative Provisions and National Guidelines

The Child Care Act 1991

The Domestic Violence Act 1996

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

The Data Protection Acts 1988 - 2003

The Education Act 1998

The Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997

The Freedom of Information Acts 1997 - 2003

The Equal Status Acts 2000-2018

The Criminal Justice Acts

The Criminal Justice Act 2006 (Section 176: Reckless endangerment of children)

The Criminal Justice Act 2012 (Withholding Of Information On Offences Against Children And Vulnerable Persons)

Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children Department of Health and Children, 2017

Our Duty to Care, The principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people Department of Health and Children, 2002

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016

APPENDIX 7: Duty Social Work Team

Tusla Child and Family Agency,
Support Services Building,
Rooskey,
Monaghan.

049 4369801

https://www.tusla.ie/se rvices/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/monaghan-duty-social-work-team/

APPENDIX 8

Monaghan Integrated Development

Child Safeguarding Statement

Name of Service: Monaghan Integrated Development CLG

(referred to as MID in this document)

The services we provide are:

MID is the Local Development Company for County Monaghan. The core purpose of MID is to provide rural development, community development and social inclusion supports for people living in Co Monaghan. Some of our services also operate in Co. Cavan. The services we provide are as follows:

Leader (Rural Development Programme),

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

The TUS Programme

The Rural Social Scheme

Monaghan Volunteer Centre

Local AreaEmployment Service

Parenting Monaghan

Monaghan Migrant Support Centre

Retrofit Champion

HSE funded programmes (migrant health programme, supports to S.39 older people's organisations etc.)

Our services and programmes change and develop over time in response to local needs and funding available. Some of our services are provided specifically for children or families. Others are targeted at adults but may still involve contact with children (for example a parent brings a child with them to an appointment).

We deliver our services at our head office in Castleblayney, our offices in Monaghan Town and Carrickmacross and at various outreach and community venues.

Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm:

MID is committed to the principles laid out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. These are:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm.
- Interventions by the State should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family.
- Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where it is necessary for the State to intervene to keep children safe, the minimum intervention necessary should be used.
- Children should only be separated from parents/carers when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted.
- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect, and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/carers and families.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.

1. Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1	A staff member or volunteer could harm a child or young person by not maintaining boundaries, behaving ina an	• All staff and Volunteers are subject to our recruitment process and under Garda Vetting if engaged in "relevant work" • Child Safe rdin Trainin - Tusla

	inappropriate relationship with them during or outside of activities	eLearning module for all staff • Further Safeguarding training for staff identified by team leaders as working regularly with children • Code of Behaviour for Staff & Volunteers • Incident Reporting Policy & Procedures in place • Procedure in place for handling allegations of abuse against staff or volunteers • Disciplinary Policy & Procedures in place • Reporting Policy & Procedure in place
2	A member of the organisation fails to report an issue or concern of harm in relation to a child or young person engaging in MID services or fails to report a retrospective disclosure.	• The DLP and deputy DLP are made known to all staff and procedures for reporting are in place. • Reporting and safeguarding responsibilities are outlined to all staff • Staff disciplinaiy and codes of behaviours are in place. • Child Safeguarding Training - Tusla eLearning module • At this point in time MID has no Mandated Reporters. If this should change Mandated reporters will be briefed of their resoonsibilities
3	A child may be harmed if a staff member or volunteer failed to report any inappropriate behaviour that may or may not be named in the organisations Code of Behaviour, by a colleague towards a child or young person	• Child Safeguarding Training - Tusla eLearning module • Child Protection & Awareness Training • Code of Behaviour for Staff & Volunteers • Incident Reporting Policy & Procedures in place • Procedure in place for handling allegations of abuse against staff or volunteers • Disciplinary Policy & Procedures in place • Reporting Policy & Procedure in place
4	A child or young person may be harmed by being bullied or abused by another child or young person during activities, after activities, on the premises or via social media A child or young person could be harmed if misconduct by another child towards them was unchallenged and allowed to continue	Normally, MID does not work as lead agency with groups of children. In any circumstance where this is not the case the following steps will be taken: • Clear process in place of contracting/setting ground rules with all groups • Code of behaviour in place for children & young people • Group contracts in place • Safeguarding policy in place and visible at activity level • Anti-bullying Policy & Procedures in place

		• Ratios and supervision standards are in line with best practice • Incident Reporting Policy & Procedures is in place • A complaints Policy & Procedures is in place • Record keeping is in place • All staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying • Bullying awareness programmes are delivered where bullying is a risk
5	A child or young person could be harmed if the organisation failed to provide a physically safe environment leading to accidents or incidents	• Health & Safety Policy & Procedures in place • Risk assessments conducted for all activities involving children • Insurance cover is adequate • Incident reporting Policy & Procedures in Place • Ratios and supervision standards are in line with best practice • Selected staff are trained First Aiders
	A child or young person may be harmed if the organisation fails to manage situations appropriately i.e. where adult members of the public may be on the premises or be encountered during activities/events. This might include adults taking part in activities aimed at families or open to both adults and children/young peo ple.	• Health & Safety Policy & Procedures in place • Sign in/out system operating in all premises • Risk assessments conducted for all new & external venues • Adequate levels of supervision maintained at all times
	A child or young person may be harmed if they leave the group unattended or if they are collected by an inappropriate person (flight and kidnapping concerns)	• Consent forms are signed by guardians outlining who is deemed as an approved person to collect a young person or if they are allowed to walk home from the group. • Adequate levels of supervision maintained at all times • All necessary staff are advised of areas of concern in relation to a child or young person who may be at risk of being collected by an unapproved person.

2. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017), and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.* In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following

procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteersof a child availing of our service;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children;
- Procedure for provision of and access to childsafeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request, as part of our Child Safeguarding Policy & Procedures document.

3. Implementation

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

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on within two years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

(CEO, On behalf of Monaghan Integrated Development CLG)
042 9749500

For queries, please contact

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APPENDIX 9

Monaghan Integrated Development

Sample Registration Form for Children Taking Part in MID Activities

Unaccompanied by Parent or Guardian

This form is to be used for any activity run by MID for children under 18 where the children will not be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The signed form must be received before the child attends the activity. It may be adapted to suit the age of children attending (for example, teens can leave alone if parent has given permission, small children cannot)

Child's Name:
Child's Address:
Child's Age:

Parent or Legal Guardian's Name:
Parent or Legal Guardian's Address:
Parent or Legal Guardian's Phone Number:

I confirm that I am the parent/legal guardian of the child named above and I consent to my child taking part in (Specify MID Activity).

I consent/do not consent (delete as appropriate) to MID taking photographs or videos of my child during the activity and using them on its website, social media and other publications.

I consent/do not consent (delete as appropriate) to my child leaving the activity to make his/her own way home.

Please provide here the name and phone number of any other person who is authorised to collect your child from the activity (other parent, childminder, grandparent etc.) Please make sure you child knows who is due to collect him/her. Children must be collected on time.

Name:	Number:	Relationship to child:
1.		
2.		
3.		

If your child is not to make his/her own way home after the activity, you must provide details of at least one other adult who we may contact and ask to collect your child if you do not collect your child on time. We will first attempt to contact you by phone if you do not collect your child on time after the activity. Ifwe are unable to contact you, we will then contact the person you name here. This might be necessary if you suddenly become ill, have an accident on the way to collect your child etc.

Please provide here details of any illness/medical condition/allergy or medication that we should be award of in case your child becomes ill or injured during the activity. Please include anything we should inform ambulance crew of in an emergency.

GP Name
GP Address
GP Phone

Please make sure your child brings any medication they might need during the activity (for example asthma inhaler).

Is there anything else you want us to be aware of?

_____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian