

# The Language Body

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## Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Republic of Ireland

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The North/South Language Body comprises of Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency.

The North/South Language Body is committed to ensuring Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are up-to-date. An internal Language Body Safeguarding forum meets twice a year and undertakes an internal review as appropriate, while an external review is carried out every three years in accordance with changes in legislation and practice guidelines.

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are approved by the Boards of Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency, as well as the North/South Language Body Board. In addition, the safeguarding policy statement will be prominently displayed in offices and venues, as well as the relevant sections of the websites of each Agency.

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## GLOSSARY

BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CHO	Community Health Organisation
DLP	Designated Liaison Person
EEA	European Economic Area
HSE	Health Service Executive
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning, and others. It refers to a population of people united by having gender identities or sexual orientations that differ from the heterosexual and cisgender majority.
Meitheal	The proposed Child and Family Agency standardised approach to assessing the needs of children and families that have come to the attention of practitioners and community members because of a child welfare or safety concern.
ROI	Republic of Ireland

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# SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The North/South Language Body comprises of Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency. Both agencies have their own chairperson, board, Chief Executive, senior management and staff. Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency operate on an all-island basis. The aims of the relevant agency can be found in Appendix 1. For the purposes of Child Protection and Safeguarding each agency has its own Designated Safeguarding Officer (DLP and Mandated Person in the Republic of Ireland).

Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency provide a wide range of services which include funding groups to organise youth events and other activities for the public. This Safeguarding Policy may also be commonly referred to as a Child Protection and Welfare Policy, however for consistency across our organisation, we continue to use the term Safeguarding Policy. Both terms are the same and cover all aspects of safeguarding/child protection.

The Language Body's written Risk Assessment document indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and gives the required policy, guidance or process documents required to alleviate these risks. The Risk Assessment was undertaken on 19 February 2018.

As a relevant agency under the Children's First Act 2015, our Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements of legislation and Children First: National Guidance, Tusla's Children Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice and the HSE's Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse National Policy & Procedures (2014)

The Mandated People for Ulster-Scots Agency are: **Jane Wallace** and **Gary Blair**.

Our Safeguarding Policy contains:

- procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by staff/volunteers against a child, young person, or adult availing of our services;
- procedures for the safe recruitment of staff/volunteers who work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults;
- A training schedule that sets out access to safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedures for the report of child protection or welfare concerns to statutory authorities.

These policies and procedures will help us to work with our staff/volunteers to establish and implement agreed, consistent, minimum safeguarding standards and outline our expectations of those individuals or organisations we fund who provide any services for children, young people, or vulnerable adults to effectively address safeguarding requirements. Funded organisations will be subject to compliance procedures as outlined in their offer of funding.

The Language Body believes that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Living a life that is free from harm and abuse is a fundamental right of every person. Everyone who comes into contact with children, their families, and/or vulnerable adults has a role to play. Those most vulnerable are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together.

The Language Body has developed and will implement policies and procedures to ensure that everyone knows and accepts their responsibility in relation to their 'Duty of Care' for children, young people, and vulnerable adults. We will endeavour to ensure our services and activities take place in an environment where children, young people, and adults are safe from the possibility of any form of ill-treatment.

This policy is applicable to all staff/volunteers in The Language Body including current board members of both agencies that may have direct or indirect contact with children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults. Staff/Volunteers must be aware of their role and responsibility for undertaking best safeguarding

practice. The Language Body will provide appropriate training to raise awareness of abuse issues and to familiarise staff/volunteers with its safeguarding policy, procedures, and guidelines.

This policy operates alongside other organisational policies and procedures, including:

- recruitment and selection;
- health and safety;
- equal opportunities;
- training;
- whistleblowing;
- disciplinary, grievance and appeals, etc.

All organisational policies will dovetail with this safeguarding policy. This holistic approach will ensure a safe and healthy organisation for staff/volunteers, and the children, young people and vulnerable adults that use services provided or funded by The Language Body.

Everyone involved with The Language Body will be made aware of the safeguarding policy and the procedures that have been put in place to best protect children, young people, and adults. This will be achieved through dissemination of the policy, training, and awareness raising.

**All incidents or concerns must be reported to the Designated Liaison Person in accordance with the procedures laid out in this document.**

The safeguarding policy statement will be prominently displayed in offices and venues, as well as relevant sections of the website of each Agency. It is internally reviewed on an annual basis and an external review is carried out every three years. Amendments are made in accordance with changes in legislation and practice guidelines.

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are approved by the Boards of The Language Body, Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency.

***Current policy reviewed and approved ... March 2018***  
***Internal review due... March 2019***  
***External review due... March 2021***

Ulster-Scots Agency’s Designated Liaison/Mandated Persons are:

<b>Designated Liaison Person:</b>	<b>Jane Wallace</b>	<a href="mailto:jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891786 / 07872 952 654
<b>Deputy Designated Liaison:</b>	<b>Gary Blair</b>	<a href="mailto:gblair@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">gblair@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891 784 / 07702 831 341

## Aims of Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

The Language Body is committed to practice that protects children, young people and/or vulnerable adults from harm and abuse, and aims to provide an environment that promotes their safety. The Language Body supports a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and harm of any kind, and will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.

The aim of these policies and procedures is to:

- demonstrate The Language Body's commitment to providing and maintaining an organisation that protects children, young people, and adults from harm, and protects staff/volunteers and the organisation itself from potential allegations;
- ensure our staff/volunteers are appropriately selected and vetted by setting out robust recruitment and selection procedures for all staff/volunteers in line with legislative requirements;
- ensure our staff/volunteers are aware of our safeguarding standards;
- to manage safeguarding risks associated with our activities;
- provide procedures for appropriate and relevant supervision, including the appointment of Designated Liaison Persons;
- provide guidelines on appropriate safeguarding training for staff/volunteers so they know how to recognise and respond to abuse;
- set standards for managing records, confidentiality, and sharing information about safeguarding and best practice with staff/volunteers, children, young people and/or vulnerable adults and parents/guardians/carers as appropriate;
- provide guidance on how staff/volunteers should respond to disclosures;
- provide clear procedures and guidance on how staff/volunteers must deal with any safeguarding incidents or concerns;
- provide clear reporting procedures in the event of suspected or actual abuse of a child/young person and/or adult;
- ensure appropriate action, in-line with best practice, is always taken in the event of a safeguarding incident;
- provide a clear code of behaviour which all staff/volunteers must sign up to, in addition to codes of behaviour for children & young people, adult service users, and parents/guardians/carers;
- provide a procedure for dealing with comments and complaints;
- ensure the general safety and the effective management of The Language Body's activities.

## Values expected from the staff/volunteers of a public body

The Board of The Language Body have agreed to the following values as part of the public service and expect the same values to be agreed by members of staff/volunteers.

They are:

- Impartiality - staff/volunteers should be continually aware of their role in stewarding public funds as independently as possible without favour;
- Accountability - staff/volunteers should be aware of their role in stewarding public funds and be constantly aware of the extent to which key targets are being met both as individual staff/volunteers and of the organisation as a whole;
- Integrity - staff/volunteers should not use their position to receive, agree, accept, or attempt to receive any outside payment or other recompense for a duty relating to their job. They should not receive any benefit which may in actuality or perceptively compromise their judgement or integrity;

- Objectivity - in taking decisions and carrying out public business, including the awarding of contracts or making recommendations for reward and benefit, staff/volunteers should always make choices on merit;
- Openness - staff/volunteers should be aware of the commitment of the Board to be as open as possible about all decisions and processes that lead to decisions, and actions that they take. Decisions should be explained and information only restricted if such a restriction is deemed to be in the wider public interest;
- Responsiveness - The Language Body should ensure that it can demonstrate it is using resources to good effect and without reason for criticism that they are being used for private, partisan or political purposes. Staff/volunteers should bear these requirements in mind when managing their time and resources and not use time or resources within the employ of The Language Body for private, partisan or political purposes;
- Honesty - staff/volunteers have a duty to declare private interests relating to their work and to take steps to resolve any potential conflicts that protects both themselves and the public interest. This includes individual and associated group interests. An annual declaration is completed by staff/volunteers;
- Leadership - staff/volunteers are expected to promote the code and these principles by example particularly relating to staff/volunteers supervised by them;
- Value for Money - staff/volunteers should ensure that in-house services and those tendered for are delivered in the most economic, efficient and effective way, with appropriate evaluation of performance.

The Language Body is committed to the improvement of the organisation and each individual within the organisation. Given the need for the staff/volunteers to act in a team environment, The Language Body expects openness to improvement and to team working by all staff/volunteers.

# SAFEGUARDING DEFINITIONS

**Child** means a person under the age of 18 years other than a person who is or has been married (*Section 2 Child Care Act 1991; Children First Bill 2014; Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011*).

An **Adult** is anyone aged 18 or over as defined by *Age of Majority Act, 1985*

**Safeguarding and Child Protection:** Safeguarding describes the protection of children and young people from abuse and neglect, and the creation of a safe and inclusive environment where their welfare is actively promoted. “Safeguarding” is used less frequently in ROI, with statutory bodies continuing to refer to “protection” of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. For the purposes of this policy, the term “safeguarding” will be used as opposed to “child protection”, as the document encompasses children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults.

**Adult Safeguarding** is protecting a person’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It must be built on empowerment: on listening to the voices of individuals who are at risk, and those who have been harmed.

*The Department of Social Protection: Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults 2017*

**Vulnerable Adult:** Adults who may be vulnerable are those who may be restricted in their capacity to guard themselves against harm or exploitation, possibly as a result of illness, dementia, mental health problems, physical disability or intellectual disability.

*The Department of Social Protection: Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults 2017*

When considering someone a 'vulnerable adult', it is also important to consider the factors that can increase a person's vulnerability (e.g. social and emotional isolation, substance misuse, violence, exploitation, changes in family/financial circumstances etc.)

There should be a presumption of decision making capacity unless proven otherwise and a person has a right to make decisions which other people may consider as unwise. The autonomy of the individual must be respected as much as possible.

An adult with **an impairment or a disability** may or may not identify themselves/be identified as a vulnerable adult.

**Poor Practice** is behaviour that can place children, young people and/or adults at risk of harm or abuse, or leave staff/volunteers vulnerable to allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

## LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

The **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989** is an international human rights treaty that sets minimum standards for children and young people's civil, political, social, cultural and economic rights. In 1992, Ireland signed up to the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** thus obligating government to ensure that legislation and policy does not contravene any of the standards outlined in the Convention.

**Child Care Act 1991** This is the key piece of legislation which regulates child care policy in ROI. Under this Act, Tusla has a statutory responsibility to promote the welfare of children and young people who are not receiving adequate care and protection.

**Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998** This Act 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 Gardaí as long as the report is made in good faith and is not malicious.

**Criminal Justice Act 2006** - Section 176 of this Act created an offence of reckless endangerment of children. This offence may be committed by a person who has authority or control over a child/young person or by an abuser who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child/young person by:

1. Causing or permitting the child/young person to be placed or left in a situation that creates a substantial risk to the child/young person of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse; or
2. Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child/young person from such a risk while knowing that the child/young person is in such a situation.

**Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012** Under this Act, it is a criminal offence to withhold information about a serious offence, including a sexual offence, against a person under 18 years or a vulnerable person. The provisions of the Withholding legislation are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015.

**National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016** Under these Acts, it is compulsory for employers to obtain vetting disclosures in relation to anyone who is carrying out relevant work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

**Children First Act 2015** is an important addition to the child welfare and protection system as it will help to ensure that child protection concerns are brought to the attention of Tusla without delay.

**Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017** addresses the sexual exploitation of children/young people and targets those who engage in this criminal activity.

**Domestic Violence Act 1996 & Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act 2002**

The safeguarding practices and procedures within this policy are based on the principles contained within the above legislation and the following guidance:

- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse National Policy & Procedures (2014)**
- **Children First: Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)**



## Principles of Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Vulnerable people have a right to be protected against abuse and to have any concerns regarding abusive experiences addressed. They have a right to be treated with respect and to feel safe.

All adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.

We will seek to ensure that The Language Body is inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment. We will also commit to continuous development, monitoring, and review.

The rights, dignity and worth of all adults will always be respected.

We recognise that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, for example those who have a dependency on others or have different communication needs.

The following principles are critical to the safeguarding of vulnerable persons from abuse:

**Human Rights:** All persons have a fundamental right to dignity and respect. Basic human rights, including rights to participation in society, are enshrined in the Constitution and the laws of the State. Historically, vulnerable persons may have been isolated from their communities and professional personnel played a major role in their support network. As a result, vulnerable persons may have limited sources of outside assistance, support or advocacy to safeguard them from abuse and to support them if they are ever victimised. It is crucial to provide opportunities for individuals that will expand their relationships and promote community inclusion.

**Person Centeredness:** Person Centeredness is the principle which places the person as an individual at the heart and centre of any exchange concerning the provision or delivery of a service. It is a dynamic approach that places the person in the centre. The focus is on his/her choices, goals, dreams, ambitions and potential with the service seen as supporting and enabling the realisation of the person's goals rather than a person fitting into what the services or system can offer.

**Culture:** Key to the successful safeguarding of vulnerable persons is an open culture with a genuinely person-centred approach to care/support, underpinned by a zero-tolerance policy towards abuse and neglect. It is important that service providers create and nurture an open culture where people can feel safe to raise concerns. The importance of good leadership and modelling of good practice is essential in determining the culture of services.

**Advocacy** assumes an important role in enabling people to know their rights and voice their concerns. The role of an advocate is to ensure that individuals have access to all relevant and accurate information to allow them to be able to make informed choices. Advocacy is one of the ways of supporting and protecting vulnerable persons.

**Confidentiality:** All vulnerable persons must be secure in the knowledge that all information about them is managed appropriately and that there is a clear understanding of confidentiality among all service personnel. This must be consistent with the HSE Record Management Policy. The effective safeguarding of a vulnerable person often depends on the willingness of the staff in statutory and voluntary organisations involved with vulnerable persons to share and exchange relevant information. It is, therefore, critical that there is a clear understanding of professional and legal responsibilities with regards to confidentiality and the exchange of information. All information regarding concerns or allegations of abuse or assessments of abuse of a vulnerable person should be shared, on 'a need to know' basis in the interests of the vulnerable person, with the relevant statutory authorities and relevant professionals. No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given.

**Empowerment:** This principle recognises the right of all persons to lead as independent a life as possible. Every possible support should be provided in order to realise that right. Self-

directedness recognises the right of the individual to self-determination insofar as is possible, even if this entails some degree of risk. Abiding by this principle means ensuring that risks are recognised, understood and minimised as far as possible, while supporting the person to pursue their goals and preferences.

**Collaboration:** Interagency collaboration is an essential component to successful safeguarding. It can be undermined by single service focus, poor information sharing, limited understanding of roles, different organisational priorities and poor involvement of key service providers in adult safeguarding meetings.

*Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse: National Policy & Procedures*

# ASSESSING & MANAGING SAFEGUARDING RISKS

Assessing and managing safeguarding risks to children, young people and/or adults is an integral part of The Language Body's risk management strategy. In assessing and managing safeguarding risks, the aim is to minimise either the likelihood of risk or its potential impacts. This applies to all activities in the organisation. It is the responsibility of The Language Body to ensure that each identified risk is properly managed. This is managed by the Chief Executive Officer, who ensures that the organisational culture reflects that the rights of children, young people, and adults are respected. There is "zero-tolerance" of abuse whenever it occurs and whoever causes it.

The safeguarding risk assessment process involves:

- identifying of risks; and
- determining the level of risk by evaluating its potential impact and the likelihood of it happening.

A copy of our risk assessment template can be found in Appendix 4. All identified safeguarding risks and risk-reducing measures will be recorded and reviewed at least once a year.

The Language Body will aim to reduce both the likelihood and impact of abuse by:

- instigating a safe recruitment policy to prevent unsuitable people from joining The Language Body;
- training staff/volunteers to be aware of the indicators of vulnerability and risk and the possible signs of abuse and equipping them to respond quickly to concerns about actual, alleged or suspected abuse;
- ensuring that staff/volunteers are properly inducted, trained, supported and supervised throughout their work with The Language Body;
- creating a code of behavior for staff/volunteers that sets out what constitutes acceptable behaviours and good practice;
- having a robust whistleblowing policy to promote a culture of inclusion, transparency and openness throughout the organisation and its services and activities;
- having clear procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns/incidents to support staff when they challenge poor practice or have concerns or receive disclosures;
- making staff/volunteers aware of confidentiality and data protection and specifically how information about safeguarding incidents/concerns should be managed;
- having in place good overall organisational management and practice supported by a range of organisational policies and procedures.

## Accidents

The Language Body is committed to ensuring the safety of all children, young people and/or adults by completing a risk assessment for activities and endeavouring to provide first-aid treatment for injury, accidents, and cases of ill-health during its activities.

Any accidents are to be recorded in line with the relevant agency's Health & Safety policy. In the event of the accident involving children or young people then parents/guardians/carers are to be informed. If an accident involves an adult service user then the parent/guardian/carers should be informed as appropriate with the consent of the individual.

All staff / volunteers should be prepared with an action plan in the event of an emergency and be aware of the relevant agency's First-Aid procedures. This will include:

- access to First-Aid equipment;
- telephone contact if the participant is a minor;
- telephone contact to the Emergency Services.

# DESIGNATED LIAISON/MANDATED PERSON

The Language Body's Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy are responsible for acting as a source of advice on safeguarding matters, for co-ordinating safeguarding action within the relevant agency, and for liaising with statutory authorities about suspected or actual cases of abuse of a child, young person, or adult.

**The Mandated Person** is someone who is employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection function of religious, sporting, recreational, cultural, educational and other bodies and organisations offering services to children or young people. If they are made aware of a concern about a child/young person that meets or exceeds the thresholds of harm for mandated reporting, they have a statutory obligation to make a report to Tusla arising from their position.

Within The Language Body a Designated or Deputy Designated Liaison Person is also a Mandated Person. This means the Designated Liaison Person or the Deputy must fulfil the statutory obligations of the Mandated Person.

The named Designated Liaison Persons shall be made known to staff/volunteers as the individuals to whom any safeguarding concerns raised will be addressed. The names of the Designated Liaison Persons shall be displayed as part of the safeguarding statement in offices and venues, as well as relevant sections of the website of each agency to make parents/guardians/carers, children, young people, and/or adult service users aware of the people to whom staff/volunteers will pass safeguarding issues in line with the reporting procedure.

## Duties and responsibilities

The Designated Liaison Person or Deputy will:

- work with CEO/Senior Management Team to assess and manage safeguarding risks;
- provide information and advice on safeguarding issues for all staff/volunteers;
- endeavour to ensure that The Language Body's safeguarding policy and procedures are followed and kept up to date with current legislation and best practice;
- undertake training to ensure they are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues and renew this training every three years to remain date on with current legislation and best practice;
- endeavour to be accessible and available at all times, but this should not prevent staff/volunteers taking any actions in an emergency situation;
- receive and record any disclosures made by a child, young person or adult to staff/volunteers;
- receive and record any concerns and/or allegations of children, young people and/or adults;
- be able to direct individuals with any non-agency related safeguarding concerns to the relevant authorities or services;
- make reports to statutory services, ensuring that the appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, in a confidential manner;
- file any written records securely and confidentially;
- Inform both sponsor departments' Designated Liaison Person/Designated Safeguarding Officer of any safeguarding reports from staff/volunteers or from funded organisations.

Ulster-Scots Agency's Designated Liaison/Mandated Persons are:

<b>Designated Liaison Person:</b>	<b>Jane Wallace</b>	<a href="mailto:jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891786 / 07872 952 654
<b>Deputy Designated Liaison:</b>	<b>Gary Blair</b>	<a href="mailto:gblair@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">gblair@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891 784 / 07702 831 341

**If there is a safeguarding concern about the Designated Liaison Person, please report to the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.**

# SAFE RECRUITMENT

The majority of people who want to work or volunteer with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults are well motivated. Unfortunately, some individuals will try to use voluntary and community organisations to gain access to children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults for inappropriate motives. Therefore, it is essential that we have effective recruitment and selection procedures to help screen out and discourage those who are not suitable to represent our organisation.

The Language Body will ensure effective recruitment and selection procedures for posts/roles within The Language Body by:

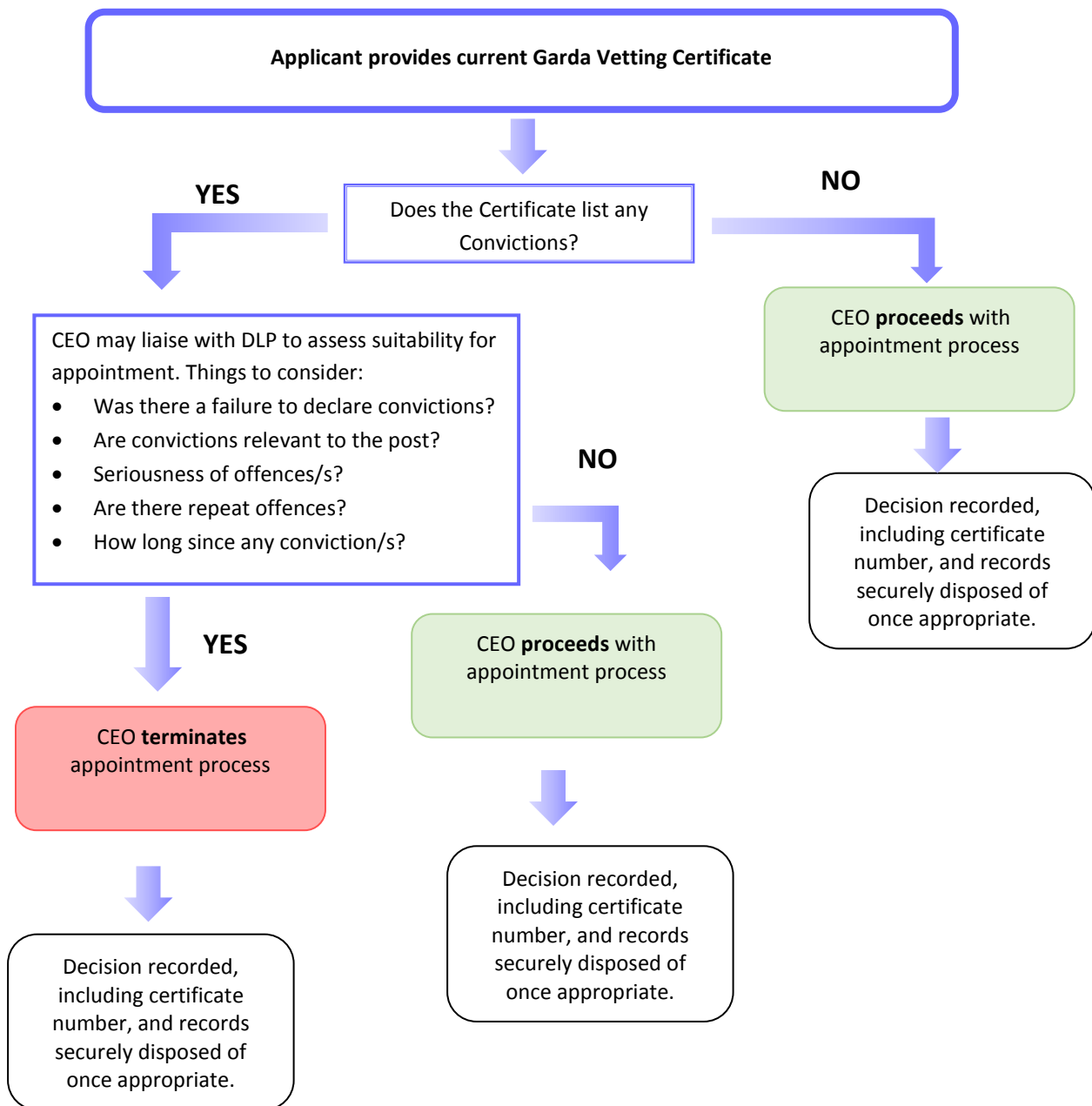
- providing a job/role description for each post that describes the range of duties the role will involve, and a person specification that describes the type of attributes we require the post-holder to have (e.g. their experience, qualifications and other requirements). At this stage, it will indicate if the job/role fits the definition of regulated activity. This will help staff/volunteers in the organisation to have clarity about their job/role;
- openly advertising jobs/roles in local and regional press or The Language Body website. This will include an indication, if applicable, that a vetting check will be undertaken;
- ensuring that any person applying for a post within The Language Body completes our application form which will include a section asking the individual to consent to a vetting check if required. The application form will include a separate section to allow the applicant to self-declare any convictions or relevant information. This will be sent out with the application form to ensure confidentiality and impartiality. The purpose of the declaration form is to ensure that the information provided concurs with relevant checks made;
- obtaining details of two referees in writing. These should preferably include their last employer/volunteer manager, depending on the duties of the post;
- requesting a Garda Central Vetting Unit check on all new recruits in line with legal requirements. Any existing staff/volunteers who move to a role that involves regulated activity will be required to undertake a Garda Central Vetting Unit (ROI). The National Vetting Bureau Act 2012 provides for sharing of relevant information with regard to pre-employment/volunteering information for applicants;
- interviewing staff/volunteers by at least two representatives of the relevant agency of The Language Body;
- checking out any gaps in the application form, verifying qualifications and experience, clarifying any apparent gaps in employment/volunteering and ensuring the applicant has the ability and commitment to undertake the role.

The Language Body also expects that organisations it funds or supports ensure they follow best practice in recruitment and selection. Effective recruitment and selection procedures benefit everyone. They ensure that staff/volunteers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, which will have a positive impact on children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Parents/guardians/carers will be assured that as far as possible The Language Body has taken all reasonable measures to ensure that only suitable people will be recruited to work with children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults.

## Dealing with Garda Vetting Checks

Following a conditional offer of the post, applicants should provide written consent to a Garda Vetting disclosure (ROI). Once the disclosure information is obtained and cross referenced with the self-declaration, the organisation will consider all information when making an appointment to post. In general, a criminal history will not automatically prevent a person from working/volunteering with The Language Body, however, the Chief Executive Officer shall assess information returned from any of the above sources and make the employment decision.



# SAFEGUARDING TRAINING & STAFF SUPERVISION

The Language Body is committed to providing all staff/volunteers with appropriate Safeguarding awareness sessions or the relevant level of training.

In addition to safeguarding training, The Language Body will also provide:

- induction training to familiarise staff/volunteers with the working environment of The Language Body, expectations and the requirements of the job including compliance with all current policies;
- particular skills training may be needed to enable staff/volunteers to perform the necessary health and safety requirements, for example First Aid training, fire procedures.

All managers will be responsible for ensuring that staff/volunteers in their team are made aware of and implement The Language Body's Safeguarding policy and procedures as appropriate to the job roles using existing organisational system and guidelines.

At each level, the training or awareness raising will identify:

- required safeguarding knowledge and skills;
- key learning outcomes;
- target audience

## Safeguarding Training Schedule

### **Level 1: Safeguarding Awareness**

*All staff/volunteers within the organisation.*

This will involve familiarising staff/volunteers with the working environment, with our expectations and the requirements of the job. All staff/volunteers will be provided with a code of behaviour, which they must read. The code of behaviour will draw particular attention to The Language Body's Safeguarding policy and procedures.

### **Level 2: Safeguarding Children, Young People, and Adults at Risk Training**

*All staff/volunteers who have relevant contact with children, young people, or adults at risk, or with carers/parents/guardians/essential aids, or those responsible for assessing organisations who have regular contact with children, or have contact with adults known or suspected of posing a risk to children and young people or adults at risk.*

The 3-hour face-to-face training session will enable staff/volunteers to understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding within the context of the organisation's Safeguarding policy and procedures. This involves raising awareness about what constitutes abuse, issues that should alert staff/volunteers to the possibility of abuse, reacting and responding to children, young people and/or adults at risk who disclose they are being abused, who to tell, and dealing with issues such as confidentiality and the reporting procedures.

### **Level 3: Designated Liaison Person Training**

*All Designated Liaison Persons.*

This full-day, face-to-face training session will enable DLPs to become familiar with the role and the responsibilities of their role and to develop competence in dealing with safeguarding concerns or incidents.

*Completion of **Level 1: Safeguarding Awareness** and attendance at all subsequent relevant training is a mandatory requirement and individual training records will be maintained by Human Resources. Relevant staff will be required to complete Level 2 and Level 3 training every three years.*



## Staff Supervision

The Language Body recognises the importance of setting up a system of support and supervision for all staff/volunteers. This will enable staff/volunteers to become more effective at their roles by identifying training needs and quickly dealing with difficulties. Staff/volunteers will be offered regular opportunities to review their experiences and to identify any training or further support needs. The overarching benefit of having a good system of support and supervision in place is that The Language Body can have confidence with the quality of service being provided and staff/volunteers have the opportunity to raise concerns, including safeguarding concerns.

Staff/volunteers have a right to:

- access ongoing training and information on all aspects of working with children/young people and/or vulnerable adults;
- support when reporting abuse (including professional support services);
- fair and equitable treatment by The Language Body;
- protection from abuse by other staff/volunteers, children, young people, adult service users, and/or parents/guardians/carers;
- not be left vulnerable when working with children, young people, and/or adult service users.

An annual appraisal (staff) or annual review (volunteers) will take place to assess and give feedback to individuals on their general performance so they may be given recognition for the good work they are doing and be helped to develop their skills further.

Written records of training completed by staff/volunteers, support and supervision and annual appraisal sessions will be kept in compliance with data protection requirements.

# RECORD KEEPING & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Record keeping and information management is a key part of effective inter-agency, inter-disciplinary working in relation to safeguarding. Failure to record information, understand its significance, share it in an appropriate, purposeful, and timely manner and then take appropriate action can hamper the work of those tasked with keeping children, young people, and adults safe.

The Language Body is committed to providing an inclusive environment, where transparency and openness are central to how services/activities are provided.

## Data Protection

Information obtained by organisations in the exercise of their safeguarding and child protection duties may be personal information about a particular child, young person, or adult, and therefore is governed by the common law duty of confidentiality and Data Protection legislation. For the purpose of Data Protection, such organisations or individuals who control the contents and use of personal data are known as Data Controllers.

The Language Body adhere to the eight Principles of Data Protection

- Obtain and process information fairly;
- Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes;
- Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes;
- Keep it safe and secure;
- Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date;
- Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose(s);
- Give a copy of his/her personal data to that individual on request.

The Designated Liaison Person has responsibility for keeping safeguarding records securely and for sharing information in an appropriate, purposeful and timely manner with Tusla, the Gardaí, and reporting that an incident or disclosure has occurred to the Chief Executive Officer and sponsor departments' Departmental Designated Liaison Person/Designated Safeguarding Officers

The Language Body recognises the need to comply with the various laws regulating the processing of personal data relating to individuals and in accordance with Data Protection legislation. The Language Body recognises the importance of the correct and lawful treatment of personal data. All personal data, whether it is held on paper, on computer or other media, will be subject to the appropriate safeguards:

- Any basic data gathered e.g. through registration forms etc will be kept securely within folders or filing systems.
- Any personal or confidential data gathered must be kept within a secure environment and only authorised personnel should be allowed to access it.

When necessary, The Language Body will request essential personal details about children, young people and/or adults who engage in services and activities. This may include the name, address and contact numbers for the child, young person, adult service users, and their parents/guardian/carer as appropriate. Medical and health information may also be requested to ensure a safe service. This information, as well as written consent to take part in the activities of the organisation, are requested on the organisation's registration form.

In addition, a record of attendance will be kept for each service/activity.

Upon request, children, young people, adult service users, and parents/guardians/carers will be told how information will be used, stored, and shared (if relevant) before they provide it. They should also be able to see any information about them that is held.

## Confidentiality & Sharing Information

It is important that all concerned are confident that the information they provide will only be disclosed where it is in the best interests of the child or young person or adult to do so. The Language Body's policy and procedures have been carefully constructed to ensure such confidentiality while protecting the interests of the child, young person, or adult.

The Language Body has Designated Liaison Persons, who have been specially trained in the area of safeguarding children, young people, and adults and who are committed to the principle of confidentiality.

However, where safeguarding concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child/young person/adult at risk with the relevant statutory authorities and, if appropriate, with parents/guardians/carers.

- The proportionate provision of information to the statutory agencies necessary for the protection of a child/young person/adult at risk is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.
- Parents/guardians/carers and children/young people/adults have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child, young person, or adult being harmed at further risk or may put the reporter at risk.

Information about the care and safety of a child, young person, or adult, or where a crime is suspected, must be reported by staff/volunteers to the Designated Liaison Person as per the reporting procedures and using the appropriate forms.

The Language Body will share this information with external agencies as appropriate, including those statutory agencies with a responsibility for safeguarding.

Children, young people, adult service users, and their parents/guardians/carers will have access to information about The Language Body. They will be:

- informed of the safeguarding policy and be directed to where they can access a copy;
- made aware of the reporting procedures and the name of the Designated and Deputy Liaison Persons;
- given a copy of the safeguarding policy statement upon request;
- informed of the procedures for providing feedback and for making a complaint.

# CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

## Child Abuse

A child/young person may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child/young person or a stranger, and can be an adult or another child or young person.

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

Children First: Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) recognises four main categories of child abuse: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. The following definitions of abuse, the terms child/children are inclusive of young people.

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

to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to 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

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** 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.

**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.

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
- Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.

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.

**BULLYING** while bullying is not defined as separate category of child abuse 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. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating, and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools.

It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyberbullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices.

While bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable. These include: children with disabilities or special educational needs; those from ethnic minority and migrant groups; from the Traveller community; LGBTQ+ children and those perceived to be LGBTQ+; and children of minority religious faiths.

## Children & Young People with Increased Vulnerabilities

Children and young people from all backgrounds and with all levels of abilities can suffer abuse. However, some children and young people have a greater vulnerability to abuse due to specific circumstances:

- Children/Young People in care;
- Children /Young People Who Go Missing;
- Young people in Supported Accommodation;
- Young People who are Homeless;
- Children/Young people who are privately fostered;
- Domestic Violence and Abuse;
- Children/Young People within BAME communities;
- Children/Young People of Parents with Additional Support Needs;
- Separated, Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children and Young People;
- Children/Young People with Disabilities;

- Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, or Trans\*, Queers/Questioning Children/Young People (LGBT).

These children and young people face an increased risk of abuse because they can experience greater and created vulnerability. This is the result of negative societal values, attitudes, and assumptions and unequal access to services and resources. The nature of their vulnerability will be unique to each individual child/young person. They may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive, and/or communication impairments.

Generalised assumptions may be made about these children and young people that can increase their vulnerability to harm, such as an assumption that certain behaviours are displayed due to their circumstances rather than any abuse they may be suffering. If staff/volunteers who support children and young people have limited or no knowledge of increased vulnerabilities, this can increase the barriers to the recognition of abuse. It is important that staff/volunteers treat each child/young person as an individual and recognise that what may be perceived as 'bad behaviour' can sometimes be indicators of abuse.

## Adult Abuse

Abuse of adults may be defined as:

*“any act, or failure to act, which results in a breach of a vulnerable person’s human rights, civil liberties, physical and mental integrity, dignity or general wellbeing, whether intended or through negligence, including sexual relationships or financial transactions to which the person does not or cannot validly consent, or which are deliberately exploitative. Abuse may take a variety of forms.”*

*The National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities.*  
Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA). Dublin, 2013

Abuse of a vulnerable person may be a single act or repeated over a period of time. It may comprise one form or multiple forms of abuse. The lack of appropriate action can also be a form of abuse. Abuse may occur in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and can be perpetrated by a person who acts in breach of that trust. Abuse can also be perpetrated by people who have influence over the lives of vulnerable persons, whether they are formal or informal carers or family members or others. It may also occur outside such relationships.

It is critical that the right of vulnerable people to lead as normal a life as possible is recognised, in particular deprivation of the following rights may constitute abuse:

- Liberty;
- Privacy;
- Respect and dignity;
- Freedom to choose;
- Opportunities to fulfil personal aspirations and realise potential in their daily lives;
- Opportunity to live safely without fear of abuse in any form;
- Respect for possessions.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse: National Policy & Procedure (2014) define 7 main categories of abuse that adults may suffer:

**Physical abuse** includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

**Sexual abuse** includes rape and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the vulnerable person has not consented, or could not consent, or into which he or she was compelled to consent.

**Psychological abuse** includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

**Financial or material abuse** includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Neglect and acts of omission** includes ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Discriminatory abuse** includes ageism, racism, sexism, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

**Institutional abuse** may occur within residential care and acute settings including nursing homes, acute hospitals and any other in-patient settings, and may involve poor standards of care, rigid routines and inadequate responses to complex needs.

Adults who become vulnerable have the right:

- to be accorded the same respect and dignity as any other adult, by recognising their uniqueness and personal needs;
- to be given access to knowledge and information in a manner which they can understand to help them make informed choices;
- to be provided with information on, and practical help in, keeping themselves safe and protecting themselves from abuse;
- to live safely without fear of violence in any form;
- to have their money, goods and possessions treated with respect and to receive equal protection for themselves and their property through the law;
- to be given guidance and assistance in seeking help as a consequence of abuse;
- to be supported in making their own decisions about how they wish to proceed in the event of abuse and to know that their wishes will be considered paramount unless it is considered necessary for their own safety or the safety of others to take an alternate course, or if required by law to do so;
- to be supported in bringing a complaint;
- to have alleged, suspected or confirmed cases of abuse investigated promptly and appropriately;
- to receive support, education and counselling following abuse;
- to seek redress through appropriate agencies.

*Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse: National Policy & Procedures*



# RECOGNISING SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Recognising abuse is not easy. Abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a person may experience more than one type of harm or significant harm.

A **concern** is a feeling of worry about someone's behaviour or practice that could indicate underlying safeguarding issues.

A safeguarding **incident** is when an act of abuse, inappropriate behaviour, or poor practice occurs and is witnessed by someone.

An **allegation** is a claim or assertion that someone has committed an act or acts of abuse.

A **disclosure** is when a child, young person and/or adult tells of abuse. It may or may not contain an allegation against a 'named' abuser.

It is not our responsibility in The Language Body to decide whether abuse has occurred or if a child or young person or adult is at significant risk of harm from someone.

We do, however, have both a responsibility and duty to **act**: Staff/volunteers should report any safeguarding concerns or incidents to the Designated Liaison Person so that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect the child, young person, or adult.

There are a variety of ways that you could be alerted that an individual is suffering harm:

- they may tell you;
- someone else may tell you of their concerns or something that causes you concern;
- they may show some signs of physical injury for which there does not appear to be a satisfactory or credible explanation;
- their demeanour/behaviour may lead you to suspect abuse or neglect;
- the behaviour of a person close to them makes you feel uncomfortable (this may include another staff/volunteers, peer or family member);

All staff/volunteers should be able to recognise, and know how to act upon, indicators that an individual's welfare or safety may be at risk.

Who might the abuser be? **It can be anyone.**

Where might the abuse occur? **Abuse can happen anywhere.**

**No individual should be considered 'above suspicion' of committing abuse.**

If staff/volunteers witness concerning behaviour or poor practice they must report this to the Designated Liaison Person. Staff/volunteers may wish to respect autonomy/privacy and may not wish to be intrusive but it is important to remember that abuse or harm occurs as much from omissions and lack of protection as from commission of actual acts of abuse.

# RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

## Allegations against staff/volunteers

If a safeguarding allegation is made against staff/volunteers, this should be reported to the Designated Liaison Person, in accordance with the reporting procedure. The Designated Liaison Person will liaise with the Chief Executive Officer and Human Resources.

If the allegation is about or involves the Designated Officer, a report should be made to the Deputy Designated Officer, who will also liaise with the Chief Executive Officer and Human Resources.

The Designated Liaison Person will review the allegation and determine whether the allegation meets the threshold for external referral to Tusla or the Gardaí. If the Designated Liaison Person is unsure if an allegation meets the threshold for external referral they should seek advice from an appropriate agency.

Consideration may be given to temporary suspension of staff/volunteers in question (or moving them to alternative duties) while statutory authorities carry out any investigation.

If the allegations constitute a possible act (or acts) of gross misconduct disciplinary procedures will be initiated internally by The Language Body.

## Concerns about failures to adhere to Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

If staff/volunteers at The Language Body have concerns about a colleague not fulfilling the requirements of our Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, in the first instance, the colleague should be reminded of the importance of adhering to our policies and procedures and best practice.

If staff/volunteers continue to have concerns, these should be taken to the Designated Liaison Person. The Designated Liaison Person will liaise with the individual's line manager in the first instance and may refer to Human Resources if necessary.

## Dealing with Disclosures

Children, young people, and adults will talk about their concerns and problems with people they feel they can trust; this will not necessarily be senior staff/volunteers. If you are approached by someone you think wants to tell you about abuse they have suffered, you should listen positively and follow the procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns but there are some extra considerations for you to take:

- **Ensure the immediate safety** of the person. If urgent medical/Gardaí help is required, call the emergency services.
- **Stay calm and listen attentively:** Avoid expressing your own views on the matter. A reaction of shock or disbelief could cause the person to 'shut down', retract or stop talking so try to stay calm.
- **Express concern and acknowledge what is being said;** They've told you because they want help and trust you'll be the person to believe them and help them.
- **Tell them it's not their fault.** Abuse is never the person's fault and they need to know this.
- **Tell the person that s/he did the right thing in telling you;** Reassurance can make a big impact to the person who may have been keeping the abuse secret.

It can be very hard for individuals to reveal abuse. Often, they fear there may be consequences. Some delay telling someone about abuse for a long time, while others never tell anyone, even if they want to. People value being believed and it is vital that you act on what you've been told.

- **Say you believe them.** An individual could keep abuse secret in fear they won't be believed. They've told you because they want help and trust you'll be the person to believe them and help them;
- **Don't talk to the alleged abuser.** Confronting the alleged abuser about what you've been told could make the situation a lot worse for the person;
- **Explain what you'll do next.** Explain to the person in an age-appropriate way that you'll need to report the abuse to someone who will be able to help.

When receiving a disclosure from an adult it is important to be open and transparent about what steps you need to take following the disclosure. Remember to consider the capacity of the adult.

Depending on the individual circumstances e.g. age of the adult, level of understanding, it may be necessary for an advocate to be present to enable the adult's voice to be heard more effectively. This might be the adult's group leader, carer or parent, unless she or he is the person of concern. If the supervising person is not available, staff/volunteers (preferably the Designated Liaison Person) can be availed of to assist in representing the voice of the adult if appropriate.

- **Let the person know that the information will be taken seriously** and provide details about what will happen next, including the limits and boundaries of confidentiality;
- **Explain to them that it is your duty to share your concern** with your Designated Liaison Person unless to do so could increase their risk – i.e. the Designated Liaison Person is the subject of the allegations. In this case contact the Deputy Designated Liaison Person should be contacted.
- **Reassure the person that they will be kept involved at every stage;** explain that the Designated Liaison Person will seek their consent before any referral is made to external agencies.
- **If you think a crime has occurred** be aware that medical and forensic evidence might be needed. Consider the need for a timely referral to the police service and make sure nothing you do will contaminate it.
- **Complete a Safeguarding Incident form** as soon as possible and report to the Designated Liaison Person immediately.

Whether you receive a disclosure from a child, young person, or an adult **DO NOT:**

- Stop someone disclosing to you;
- Make promises about the future;
- Promise to keep secrets;
- Criticise the alleged perpetrator;
- Use leading questions or put words in the person's mouth;
- Press the person for more details or make them repeat the story unnecessarily;
- Gossip about the disclosure or pass on the information to anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know;
- Contact the alleged person to have caused the harm;
- Attempt to investigate yourself;
- Leave details of your concerns on a voicemail or by email.

**Don't delay reporting the abuse.** The sooner the abuse is reported after a disclosure the better.

**Do report immediately** to the Designated Liaison Person. Complete a Safeguarding Incident Form and pass to the Designated Liaison Person as soon as possible. The Designated Liaison Person will take any immediate action required to ensure the child, young person, or vulnerable adult of harm is safe and decide when it is appropriate to speak with the individual about the concerns and any proposed actions.

## How to Record a Disclosure

If someone discloses abuse to you, you must complete a Safeguarding Incident Form (see Appendix 3) and give it to your Designated Liaison Person. If you have a literacy or language difficulties, the Designated Liaison Person may assist you to complete the form but this must be acknowledged this on the incident form.

The Safeguarding Incident Form will be retained securely and confidentially by the Designated Liaison Person. Adult safeguarding records will be retained with “protected status” (as defined by the Data Protection legislation) for 3 years after the incident/concern raised or if requested by the Gardaí or statutory authorities until they confirm that the information is no longer required. Safeguarding records related to children or young people will be retained with protected status (as defined by Data Protection Act legislation) until the child/young person’s known or perceived 23rd birthday.

When recording the disclosure, you must:

- make a note, as soon as practical, of what the individual has said, using their own words;
- describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about. Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate; and,
- be mindful of the need to be confidential, this information must only be shared with your designated Liaison Person and others only on a need to know basis.

## Consent and Capacity for Vulnerable Adults

It is important to include the vulnerable adult throughout the process and seek consent for any referral to statutory authorities or the Gardaí unless the adult is in imminent danger of harm. Designated Liaison Persons are not in the position to determine the capacity of adults; if you are unsure if an adult is able to consent you should contact the HSE Safeguarding and Protection Team for advice and guidance.

Particular challenges arise in situations where concerns exist regarding potential abuse of a vulnerable person and that person does not want to engage or co-operate with interventions. This can be complex particularly in domestic situations. Where an adult indicates that they do not wish to engage or cooperate with the HSE and the HSE continues to have concerns, the HSE will need to consider the issue of capacity and in that regard the following will be noted:

- There is a presumption that all adults have capacity.
- An adult who has capacity has the right not to engage with the HSE or any services, if they so wish.
- If there is a concern that an adult is vulnerable and may or may not have the capacity to make decisions, the HSE may well have obligations towards them.
- The HSE should consider whether the non-cooperation of the individual may be due to issues of capacity, is voluntary, or if it could stem from for example some form of coercion.

Decisions as to the appropriate steps to deal with such cases need to be made on a case-by-case basis and with appropriate professional advice. It is also important to identify the respective functions and contributions of relevant agencies which include the Gardaí, Tusla and local authorities. Inter-agency collaboration is particularly important in these situations.

In situations where an adult is in imminent danger it may not be possible to discuss with them their wishes and obtaining a valid consent may not be achievable. Under these circumstances, staff/volunteers should take whatever action they feel is appropriate to protect the adult, including seeking medical and/or Gardaí intervention.

## Retrospective Disclosures by Adults

An increasing number of adults are disclosing abuse that took place during their childhood. Where the identity of the alleged perpetrator or alleged victim is known the service should always consult with Tusla to discuss whether a report should be made. Where appropriate, reports should be made to Tusla without delay either directly or through the Designated Liaison Persons using Tusla's Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF) available on their website.

## Reasonable grounds for Reporting Child Abuse

Staff/volunteers should report all concerns, incidents, disclosures or allegations to the Designated Liaison Person who will review the report and will decide if there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child or young person may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way;
- any concern about possible sexual abuse;
- consistent signs that a child/young person is suffering from emotional or physical neglect;
- a child/young person saying or indicating by other means that they have been abused;
- admission or indication by an adult or a child/young person of an alleged abuse they committed;
- an account from a person who saw the child/young person being abused.

It is not necessary for the Designated Liaison Person to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern to Tusla. All that is required is that you have reasonable grounds for concern.

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

- The safety and well-being of the child/young person must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made;
- Reports of concerns should be made without delay to Tusla.

If the Designated Liaison person is unsure whether to report to Tusla, they may contact Tusla to informally discuss the concern. If the concern is below the threshold for reporting, Tusla may be able to provide advice in terms of keeping an eye on the child/young person and other services that may be more suitable to meeting the needs of the child, young person, and/or family.

## Mandated Reporting

If you are a mandated person and have a concern about a child/young person, it is **your legal responsibility** to make a decision as to whether the concern meets the threshold for a mandated report under the Children First Act 2015 or not. If you are satisfied that this threshold has been reached, you should clearly identify on the report that it is a mandated report made under the Children First Act 2015.

If you are unsure whether your concern reaches the legal definition of harm for making a mandated report, you can discuss the concern with a Tusla social worker. However, the responsibility for making the decision rests with you as a mandated person under the Act.

If you are a mandated person, you cannot submit a mandated report anonymously.

The Children First Act 2015 requires mandated persons to report a mandated concern to Tusla "as soon as practicable". The Children First Act 2015 requires Tusla to appoint authorised persons to receive mandated reports. Authorised persons are obliged to acknowledge in writing all mandated reports they receive.

# REPORTING SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

## STAGE 1 – REPORTING

### All staff or volunteers

If as part of your role with The Language Body you:

- (a) suspect that a child or young person or adult has been, or is at risk of being abused; or
- (b) have had a disclosure made to you; or
- (c) receive a complaint from a member of the public relating to a safeguarding issue; or
- (d) have a direct allegation made against you or other staff/volunteers; or
- (e) observe concerning behaviours by a member of the public (adult or young person) relating to safeguarding children, young people, or adults;
- (f) become aware that poor safeguarding practice is taking place, suspect poor safeguarding practice may be occurring, or you are told about something that may be poor safeguarding practice.

**You must complete a Safeguarding Incident Form and report to a Designated Liaison Person.**

**Do not investigate yourself – Just Listen**

Under no circumstances should any staff / volunteer attempt to deal with the problem of abuse alone.

Notify your Designated Liaison Person



### Emergency Action

If the child is in need of immediate protection from harm you must contact the Gardaí, Ambulance, and Tusla immediately.

Inform the Designated Liaison Person at the earliest opportunity.

Write careful notes in the safeguarding incident form of what you witnessed, heard, or were told.

Sign and date the form and give it to the Designated Liaison Person.



### Non-Emergency Action

If the child is not at risk of immediate harm, write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard, or were told on the Safeguarding Incident Form.

Sign and date the form and give it to the Designated Liaison Person who will follow the procedure set out in stage 2.

## Children & Young People Safeguarding Contacts

**Tusla – Child and family Agency** [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)

Phone: 01 7718500 /Email: [info@tusla.ie](mailto:info@tusla.ie)

**An Garda Síochána** Phone: 999 / 112

## Adult Safeguarding Contacts

### Safeguarding and Protection Teams

There are nine Safeguarding and Protection teams across in country. You should contact the team within the Community Health Organisation where the individual lives.

**HSE Information Line** Monday to Saturday, 8am-8pm

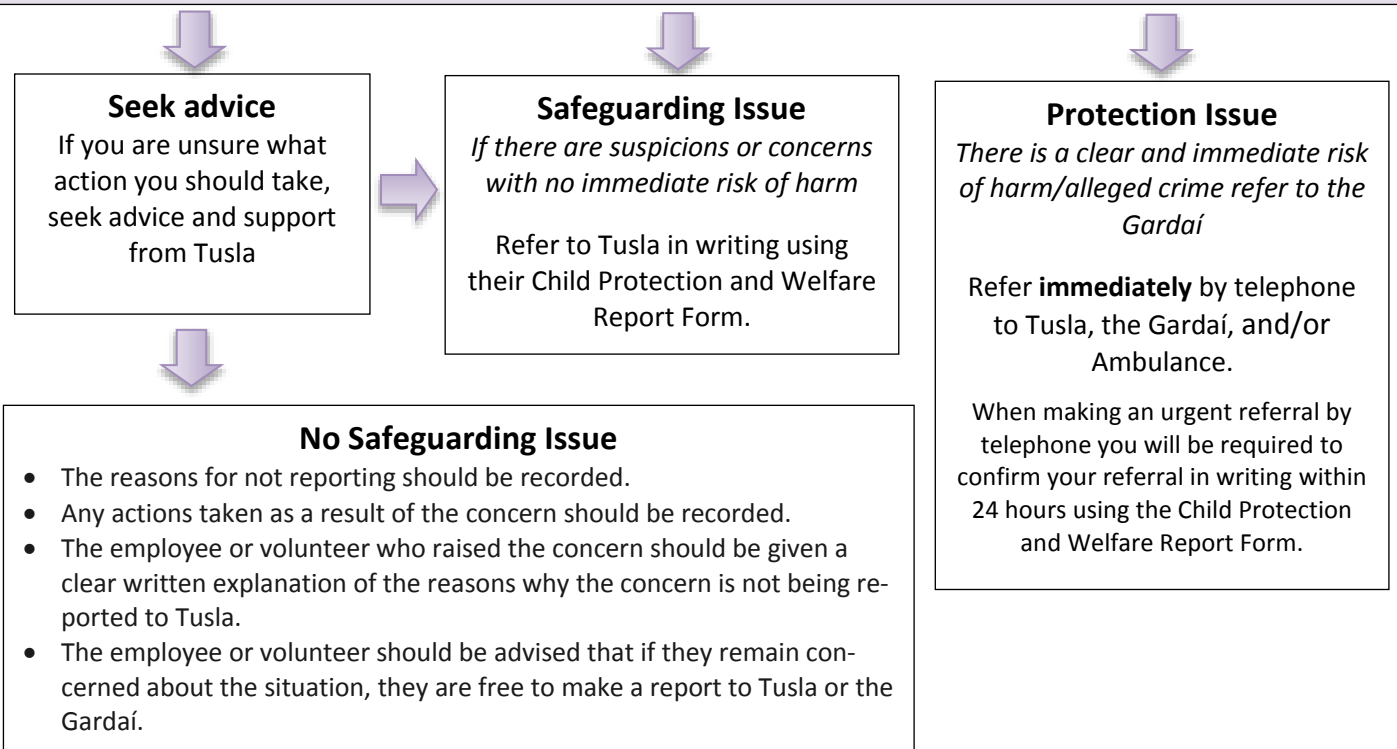
Call Save: 1850 24 1850/ Email: [info@hse.ie](mailto:info@hse.ie)

## Stage 2a – Reviewing & Referring Safeguarding Children Concerns Designated Liaison Persons

On receiving the report of a concern, the Designated Liaison Person must review the concern, along with any other relevant information, and determine often in liaison with others, what actions should be taken. The Designated Liaison Person will inform both sponsor departments' Designated Liaison Person/Designated Safeguarding Officer of any external referrals.

Tusla or the Gardaí should always be informed when there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child or young person may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse.

**If the child/young person is in imminent danger of harm you should refer to Tusla and the Gardaí without delay.**



### Whatever your decision, you **MUST**:

- Record in writing all actions taken, the reasons for these, and by whom the actions were taken.
- Start a Safeguarding Case File (kept as per data protection guidelines);
- Keep a full record of all actions and decisions;
- Ensure pastoral care is provided to staff/volunteer as appropriate.

When making a referral to Tusla you should provide as much relevant information as you can about the child, his/her home circumstances and the grounds for concern. These could include:

- The child's name, address and age;
- Names and addresses of parents or guardians;
- Names, if known, of who is allegedly harming the child or not caring for them appropriately;
- A detailed account of your grounds for concern (e.g. details of the allegation, dates of incidents, and description of injuries);
- Names of other children in the household;
- Name of school the child attends;
- Your name, contact details and relationship to the child.

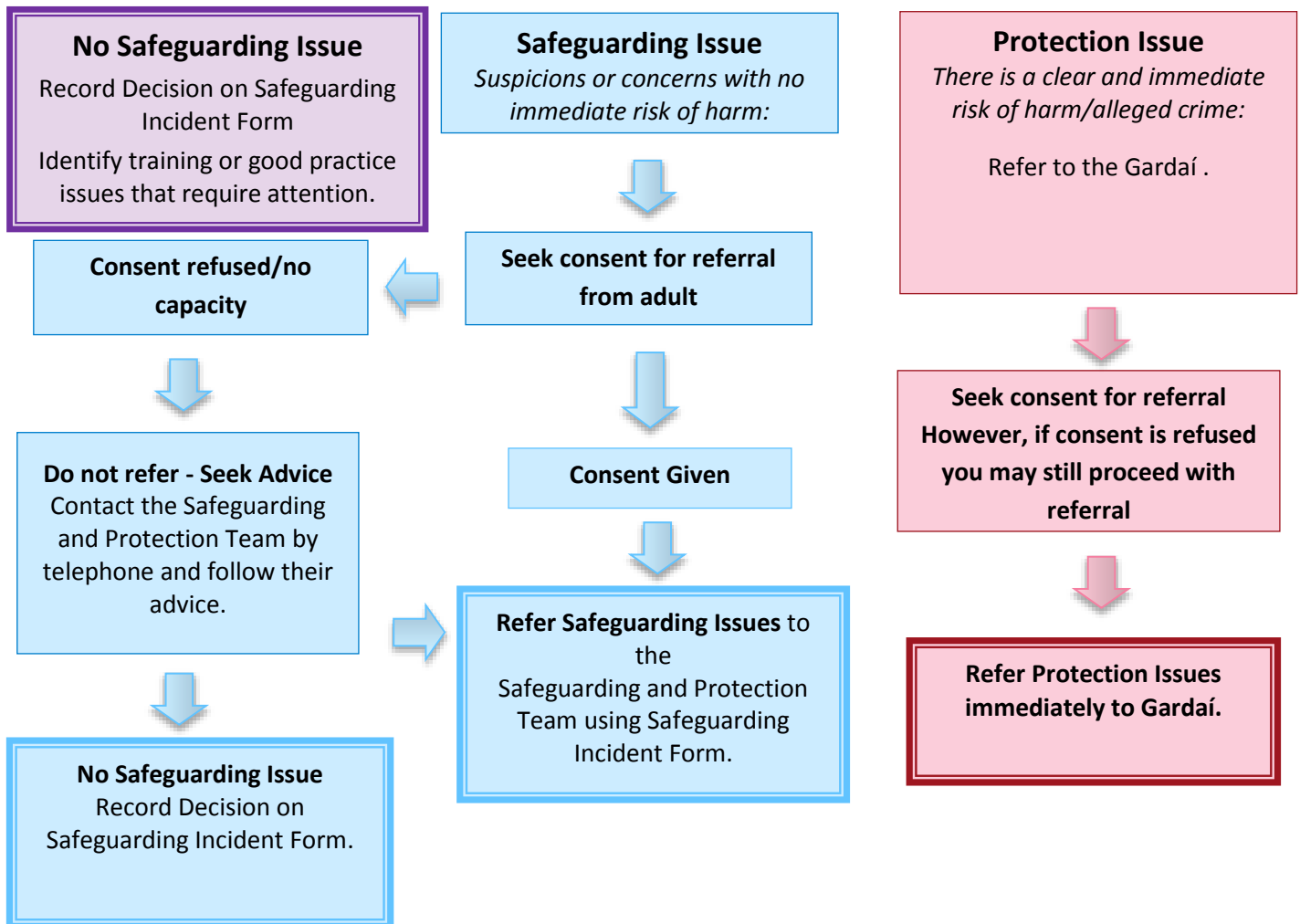
## Stage 2b – Reviewing & Referring Adult Safeguarding Concerns

### Designated Liaison Persons

On receiving the report of a concern, the Designated Liaison Person must review the concern along with any other relevant information and determine, often in liaison with others including the adult, what actions should be taken. The Designated Liaison Person will inform both sponsor department's Department Designated Liaison Person/Designated Safeguarding Officer of any external referrals.

*If you are unsure what action you should take **seek advice** and support from the Safeguarding and Protection Team or the Gardaí.*

**If an adult is in imminent danger of harm you should refer directly to the Gardaí.**



Whatever your decision or outcome, you **MUST**:

- Record in writing all actions taken, the reasons for these, and by whom the actions were taken.
- Start a Safeguarding Case File (kept as per data protection guidelines);
- Keep a full record of all actions and decisions;
- Ensure pastoral care is provided to staff/volunteer as appropriate.

You will need to provide as much detail as possible (adult's name, address, circumstances). Make sure you have this to hand when making a referral.



## Stage 3 - Assessments and Enquiries

For Designated Liaison Persons & Statutory Agencies

Tusla should acknowledge reports that you make about a child and may contact you for further information, if necessary.

Statutory agencies will carefully consider the referral along with any other information available and a child protection assessment will be carried out where sufficient risk is identified. They may decide to hold a strategy meeting or Meitheal. This is a meeting of professionals, such as the Gardaí, education professionals, social services and any other organisations. This may include The Language Body's Designated Liaison Person(s).

If invited, the Designated Liaison Person(s) should attend strategy meetings and ensure that any recommendations made at that meeting are fed back to the relevant management The Language Body.

As a result of the information shared at the strategy meeting/Meitheal the statutory agencies may make further enquiries or assessments of the matter and will keep other agencies updated if necessary.

## Stage 4 - Conclusions

For Designated Liaison Persons & Statutory Authorities

Assessments and enquiries

The Designated Liaison Person(s) should assist statutory authorities until any assessment and enquiries are concluded. While is not always possible for Tusla to keep you informed on the progress or outcome of the case they may contact you to inform whether thresholds have been met and based on that whether they will be taking further action.

### NO FURTHER ACTION BY STAUTORY AUTHORITES

After assessing the concern statutory agencies may decide to take no further safeguarding action.

In these circumstances, the child/vulnerable adult may still receive support from statutory agencies.

Even if statutory authorities decide to take no further action the issue raised may be cause for intervention by The Language Body, who may wish to pursue case management procedures or review practice.

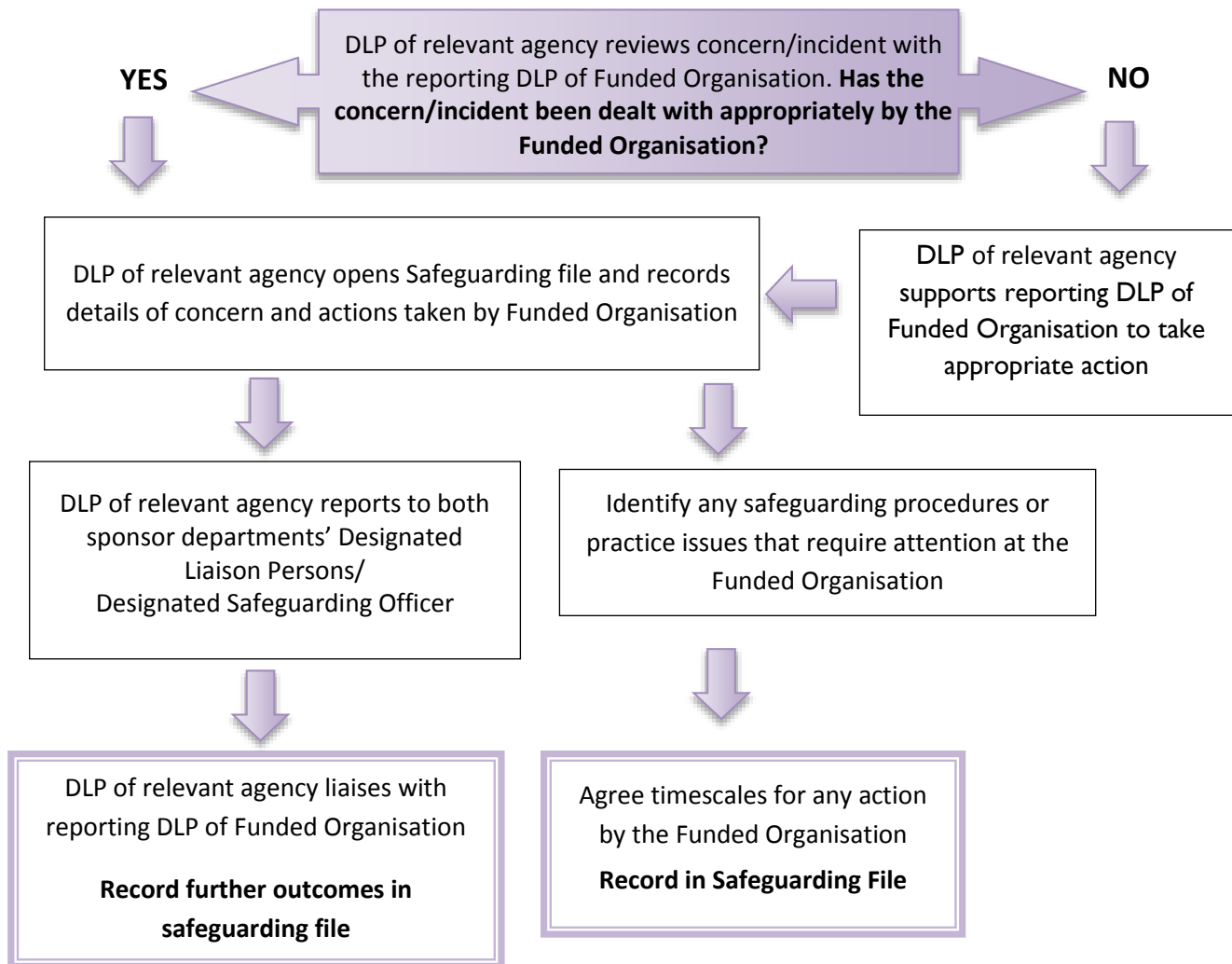
### FURTHER ACTION TAKEN BY STAUTORY AUTHORITES

If statutory authorities feel there are grounds to take further action regarding an allegation against staff/volunteers then internal disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

Even if staff/volunteers are not implicated the situation will be discussed by CEO and DLPs and further safeguarding risk assessments of The Language Body's activities or services may be recommended including case management procedures or practice review.

## Receiving Reports of Safeguarding Concerns/Incidents from Funded Organisations

All organisations funded by The Language Body are required to report any safeguarding concerns/incidents to The Language Body’s Designated Liaison Person(s). Once the DLP of the relevant agency of The Language Body has received such a report they should follow the procedure set out below.



If the relevant agency of The Language Body determines that any funded organisation has failed to deal appropriately with safeguarding concerns or incidents then they may consider the suspension of the organisation’s funding until the matter has been resolved. Repeated failures to appropriately deal with safeguarding concerns or deal with issues of poor practice will result in the removal of funding.

# SAFEGUARDING COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR SERVICE USERS

The Language Body has a culture of inclusion, transparency and openness, which facilitates a free flow of information from the organisation to all staff/volunteers, children, young people, and adult service users and their parents/guardians/carers in relation to our ethos, aims, and what we wish to achieve.

If you would like further information about The Language Body's safeguarding policies and procedures or you have any comments or suggestions regarding safeguarding within the organisation, please contact the Designated Liaison Person.

Parents/guardians/carers need to be aware of what we do and how we do it, and that staff/volunteers will always be on hand during activities for consultation or advice. Further information relating to an event or activity will be provided via letters, emails, or telephone contact.

The Language Body requires that consent is obtained for all children and young people undertaking activities from a parent/guardian/carer. The Language Body requires that consent is obtained from adult service users or if applicable, the adult's parents/guardians/carers.

A regular review of The Language Body's policies will take place through meetings with staff/volunteers and feedback from children, young people, and/or adult service users and parents/guardians/carers.

## Non-Safeguarding Complaints

Where children, young people and/or adults at risk or their carers or parents have a concern or complaint about some aspect of The Language Body **that is not related to safeguarding** they should access the relevant agency's complaints procedure.

Disciplinary, grievance, and appeals procedures as agreed by the Boards of The Language Body should be adhered to at all times. A copy of the relevant agency's complaints procedure is available on available on request. The complaints procedure should be used by the public to raise an issue and members of staff/volunteers should use The Language Body grievance procedure.

## Safeguarding Complaints

However, if you have a complaint related to safeguarding children, young people or adults you should contact the Designated Liaison Person directly.

If your complaint is in relation to inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers or service users towards children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults please report these to the Designated Liaison Person.

### **Stage 1: Safeguarding complaint made to the Designated Liaison Person**

If you have a complaint regarding safeguarding please contact the Designated Liaison Person who will follow our safeguarding procedures.

**If the Designated Liaison Person is not available or the complaint is about the Designated Liaison Person go to the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.**

Once the Designated Liaison Person has received the complaint they must **review** it within 24 hours. A record of the complaint and the review will be made and kept confidentially. The Designated Liaison Person will **determine** whether the complaint constitutes:

- **No Safeguarding Issue:** *there are no suspicions or concern of harm but there is evidence of poor practice*
- **Safeguarding Issue:** *there are suspicions or concerns with no immediate risk of harm*
- **Protection Issue:** *there is a clear and immediate risk of harm/alleged crime*

If the Designated Liaison Person is unsure whether the complaint is a safeguarding or protection issue they may **seek advice** from Tusla or Safeguarding and Protection teams about whether a referral is necessary.

Once a **determination** has been made, this will be **communicated to you** within 3-5 working days and any actions required will be agreed and implemented as soon as possible.

### **Stage 2: Appeal of Decision to the CEO**

If you feel the complaint has not been satisfactorily dealt with at Stage 1 the complaint should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer who will review the complaint and actions taken by the Designated and Deputy Designated Liaison Persons, reach a decision, and communicate this to you within 14 Days of receiving the appeal.

At any point in the process you can report your concerns to Tusla, the Gardaí, or Safeguarding and Protection Teams.

Ulster-Scots Agency's Designated Liaison/Mandated Persons are:

<b>Designated Liaison Person:</b>	<b>Jane Wallace</b>	<a href="mailto:jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891786 / 07872 952 654
<b>Deputy Designated Liaison:</b>	<b>Gary Blair</b>	<a href="mailto:gblair@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">gblair@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891 784 / 07702 831 341

# SAFEGUARDING CODES OF BEHAVIOUR

## Safeguarding Code of Behaviour for Staff/Volunteers

The safeguarding code of behaviour for staff/volunteers of The Language Body as outlined below is intended as a guideline for staff and a reference for Board Members and senior management. The code should be read in conjunction with the code of behaviour for Board members and the terms of the establishment of The Language Body.

The safeguarding code of behaviour for staff/volunteers should be read in conjunction with each employee's own specific terms and conditions of employment and job description.

The Language Body implements a robust safeguarding code of behaviour across the organisation to minimise the opportunity for children, young people and/or adults to suffer harm. This safeguarding code of behaviour also helps to protect staff/volunteers by ensuring they are clear about the behaviour that is expected of them and the boundaries within which they should operate.

Many aspects of the safeguarding code of behaviour may appear to be common sense but The Language Body has formalised these issues to ensure consistency of practice across all staff/volunteers and to encourage ownership of it.

Staff/volunteers are expected to:

- ensure the safety of all children, young people, and/or adults by careful supervision, proper pre-planning of all activities, and using safe methods;
- treat everyone equally and ensure they feel valued, and show no favouritism;
- encourage an environment of non-discrimination on the grounds of religious beliefs, race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, or ability/impairment;
- appreciate and reward the efforts of all children, young people, and adults service users involved with The Language Body;
- be positive, approachable, and offer praise to promote the objectives of the work;
- report any safeguarding concerns or incidents to the Designated Liaison Person;
- have access to a telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required;
- foster team work to ensure the safety of children, young people, or adult service users in their care;
- ensure the rights and responsibilities of children, young people, and adult service users are enforced;
- maintain confidentiality about sensitive information;
- respect and listen to the opinions of children, young people, and adults service users;
- take time to explain instructions to ensure they are clearly understood;
- be a role model (disciplined/committed/time-keeping);
- avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children, young people, or adult service users out-of-sight/hearing of others.

Staff/volunteers must never:

- smoke or consume alcohol in the presence of children or young people during work-related activities;
- consume illegal drugs during work-related activities;
- use inappropriate language or discuss inappropriate topics during work-related activities;
- allow, encourage, or take part in any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or other inappropriate behaviours;
- let any allegations of abuse of any kind to go unchallenged or unrecorded;

- record incidents and accidents in accordance with The Language Body’s policy and procedures and inform parents/guardians/carers where appropriate;
- engage in any act of abuse or harm to children, young people, or adults.

To avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations, it is strongly recommended that staff/volunteers **do not** as part of their role, except in emergency situations:

- take children, young people, or adult service users to their home;
- have children, young people, or adult service users on their own in a vehicle;
- administer First Aid that involves removing the clothing of children, young people, or adults unless absolutely necessary and in the presence of others;
- go into the toilet with children, young people, or adult service users unless in exceptional circumstances to meet the needs of the person, and where possible another adult should be present.

Staff/volunteers must learn to recognise vulnerable safeguarding situations. There may be times when it is impossible to avoid such situations, in which case, the decision by staff/volunteers to place themselves in such a situation should be influenced by what is in the best interests of the child, young person, or adult service user’s welfare.

Staff/volunteers have a right to:

- access ongoing training and information on all aspects of working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, particularly on safeguarding;
- support to report suspected abuse;
- access to professional support services;
- fair and equitable treatment by management;
- be protected from abuse by children, young people or other adults;
- not to be left vulnerable when working with children, young people, or adult service users;

The safeguarding code of Behaviour aims to minimise poor practice and highlight behaviour to be avoided. These may include behaviours that staff/volunteers slip into through lack of experience or training. While not intentionally harmful, such behaviour might be misconstrued, which ultimately could lead to allegations of abuse being made. Examples may include:

- unnecessary lone working with children, young people, or adults service users in private or unobserved situations;
- encouraging children, young people, or adults service users to keep secrets;
- not treating children, young people, or adults with respect and dignity;
- failure to follow agreed guidelines e.g. if physical contact or support is needed;
- not seeking additional information, opinions and/or consent of a child, young person, adult service user, and/or parent/guardians/carers;
- not having the required skills, qualifications, and insurance for an activity;
- failing to involve or banning parents/guardians/carers in activities;
- criticising children, young people, or adults service users and/or giving negative feedback.

### ***Implications for staff/volunteers***

Upon any breach of the Safeguarding Codes of Behaviour, line managers will direct the staff/volunteer to the Safeguarding Policy and if necessary will report to the Designated Liaison Person who will record this incident. Persistent and serious breach of the codes will result in staff/volunteers being asked to withdraw

from the work, or suspended with pay, pending an investigation in line with policy and procedures. Dismissals can be appealed by staff with final decisions taken by senior management.

If an allegation of abuse against staff/volunteers has occurred, an investigation will be carried out in line with The Language Body's disciplinary procedure. The investigating officer will be required to liaise with the Designated Liaison Person to clarify if she/he has any relevant records of any other safeguarding children and young people information in relation to the individual.

If the investigation finds that staff/volunteers have acted inappropriately or not acted in the best interests of the child or young person or adult service users, the disciplinary procedure will be invoked.

Ulster-Scots Agency's Designated Liaison/Mandated Persons are:

<b>Designated Liaison Person:</b>	<b>Jane Wallace</b>	<a href="mailto:jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891786 / 07872 952 654
<b>Deputy Designated Liaison:</b>	<b>Gary Blair</b>	<a href="mailto:gblair@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">gblair@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891 784 / 07702 831 341

## Code of Behaviour for Children and Young People

The Language Body is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children and young people. The Language Body believes it is important that staff/volunteers and parents/guardians/carers associated with The Language Body should show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Therefore, children and young people are encouraged to be open and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of The Language Body with the staff/volunteers or the Designated Liaison Person.

Children and young people attending activities organised by The Language Body should have a positive experience where they can learn new things in a safe and positive environment.

As a child or young person associated with The Language Body you are expected to abide by the following code of behaviour.

Children and young people are expected to:

- be loyal and give their friends a second chance;
- be friendly and particularly welcoming to new members;
- be supportive and committed to other children and young people and offer comfort when required;
- not get involved in inappropriate peer pressure and push others into something they do not want to do;
- keep within the defined boundary of the designated activity area;
- behave and listen to instructions from the staff/volunteer leading the activity. Remain within the rules and respect the staff/volunteers and their decisions;
- take care of equipment owned by others, including The Language Body;
- all children and young people must respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all participants regardless of age, gender, ability, race, cultural background or religious beliefs, or sexual identity;
- not engage in the use of bad language or racial/sectarian references;
- not bully other children or young people, either face-to-face or online, e.g., using social media, messaging apps or texting;
- not engage in rough and dangerous play;
- keep to agreed timings for activities and inform staff/volunteers if they are going to be late;
- wear suitable clothing to suit the activity as agreed with staff/volunteers;
- pay any fees for activities promptly if required;
- show respect to others;
- keep themselves safe;
- report inappropriate behaviour or risky situations for others;
- be fair and be trustworthy;
- respect staff/volunteers;
- challenge and report the bullying of your peers;
- respect those from other organisations;
- not cheat or be violent/aggressive;
- help make your organisation a FUN place to be.



Children and young people are not allowed to smoke or consume alcohol or drugs of any kind on Language Body premises or those hired by The Language Body, whilst attending events organised by The Language Body or whilst representing The Language Body.

Children and young people have the right to:

- be safe and happy in their chosen activity;
- be listened to;
- be respected and treated fairly;
- privacy;
- enjoy your activity in a protective environment;
- be referred to professional help if needed;
- be protected from abuse by other members or outside sources;
- participate on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability;
- experience competition and the desire to win;
- be believed;
- ask for help.

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be addressed by staff/volunteers and reported to the Designated Liaison Person. Persistent misbehaviour will result in dismissal from The Language Body activities. Parents/guardians/carers will be informed at all stages. Dismissals can be appealed with final decisions taken by the organisation.

Ulster-Scots Agency's Designated Liaison/Mandated Persons are:

<b>Designated Liaison Person:</b>	<b>Jane Wallace</b>	<a href="mailto:jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891786 / 07872 952 654
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## Code of behaviour for Parents/Guardians/Carers

The Language Body is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all children, young people, adult service users, staff/volunteers, and parents/guardians/carers. The Language Body believes it is important that staff/volunteers and parents/guardians/carers associated with The Language Body show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others.

Parents/guardians/carers are encouraged to be open and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of The Language Body with the Designated Liaison Person.

Children, young people, or adult service users attending activities associated with The Language Body should have a positive experience where they can learn new things in a safe and positive environment. As a parent/guardian/carer of a child/young person/adult service user who attends activities organised by The Language Body you are expected to abide by the following Code of Behaviour.

Parents/ guardians/carers are expected to:

- positively reinforce their children, young people, or adult service user and show an interest in their chosen activity. Support your children, young people, or adult service users' involvement and help them to enjoy their activity;
- not place their children, young people, or adult service users under pressure or push them into activities they do not want to do;
- complete and return the Health and Consent Form pertaining to their children, young people, or adult service users' participation with activities organised by The Language Body;
- deliver and collect the children, young people, or adult service users punctually to and from activities;
- inform staff if their children, young people, or adult service users are being collected by someone else or left to travel home independently;
- ensure their children, young person, and or adult service users are properly and adequately attired for the weather conditions of the time;
- detail any health concerns pertaining to the children, young people, or adult service users on the consent form. Any changes in the state of the children, young people, or adults service user should be reported to staff/volunteers prior to activities;
- inform staff/volunteers prior to departure from an activity if the child, young person, or adult service user are to be collected early from an activity;
- encourage their children, young people, or adult service users to abide by the rules and teach them that they can only do their best;
- set a good example by recognising fair play and applauding good performances of all;
- behave responsibly; do not embarrass your children, young people, or adult service user;
- use correct and proper language;
- encourage and guide children, young people, and adult service users to accept responsibility for their own behaviour;
- show appreciation and support for staff/volunteers;
- ensure their children, young people, or adult service users are punctual;
- be realistic and supportive;
- provide their children, young people, or adult service users with proper clothing and equipment to suit activities;
- ensure their children, young people, or adult service users' hygiene and nutritional needs are met;

- acknowledge the importance and role of The Language Body’s staff/volunteers, who provide their time to facilitate children, young people, and adult service users’ participation in activities.

Parents/Guardians/Carers have the right to:

- know their children, young people, or adult service users are safe;
- be informed of problems or concerns relating to their children, young people, adult service users;
- be informed if their children, young people, or adult service users are injured;
- have their consent sought for issues such as trips, photography, media, etc;
- contribute to decisions within The Language Body;
- complain if they have concerns.

Any misdemeanours and breaches of this code of behaviour will be dealt with immediately by The Language Body. Should a parent/guardian/carer continue to breach the code of behaviour The Language Body may ask the children, young people, and/or adults service users to leave the activity organised by The Language Body.

Ulster-Scots Agency’s Designated Liaison/Mandated Persons are:

<b>Designated Liaison Person:</b>	<b>Jane Wallace</b>	<a href="mailto:jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891786 / 07872 952 654
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## Code of Behaviour for Adult Service Users

The Language Body is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, inclusive, and positive environment.

We are committed to the delivery of a quality service that promotes good practice and protects children, young people, and adults from harm.

We recognise the importance of involving our adult service users in achieving these aims. You are encouraged to share any concerns or complaints that you have about any aspect of The Language Body with the staff/volunteers or the Designated Liaison Person.

We feel it is important to set out the clear standards of behaviours that we expect from our adult service users: when you are involved in our activities or attending events organised by The Language Body you are expected to:

- treat everyone equally;
- respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all participants regardless of age, gender, ability, race, cultural background or religious beliefs, or sexual identity;
- report any safeguarding concerns or incidents to the Designated Liaison Person;
- respect and listen to the opinions of others, especially children and young people;
- listen to instructions from the staff/volunteers leading the activity. Remain within the rules and respect the staff/volunteers and their decisions;
- be a role model (disciplined/committed/time-keeping);
- avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or young people you have met through The Language Body.

When you are involved in our activities or attending our events, you must not:

- smoke or consume alcohol in the presence of children or young people;
- consume illegal drugs;
- use inappropriate language;
- allow, encourage, or take part in any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or other inappropriate behaviours;
- engage in any act of abuse or harm to children, young people, or other adults.

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be addressed by staff/volunteers and reported to the Designated Liaison Person. Persistent misbehaviour will result in dismissal from The Language Body's activities. Dismissals can be appealed with final decisions taken by the organisation.

Ulster-Scots Agency's Designated Liaison/Mandated Persons are:

<b>Designated Liaison Person:</b>	<b>Jane Wallace</b>	<a href="mailto:jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk">jwallace@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk</a>	028 90 891786 / 07872 952 654
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# SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES

## Anti-Bullying Guidelines

Bullying will not be accepted or condoned within The Language Body. All forms of bullying will be addressed whether they take place face-to-face or through digital technologies. Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying – children, young people, adult service users, parents/guardians/carers, and staff/volunteers.

Bullying can include:

- pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, etc;
- name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing;
- emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals;
- sectarian/racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- stealing from others;
- sexual comments and/or suggestions;
- unwanted physical contact.

Anyone can be bullied but those from ethnic and religious minorities, people with disabilities, and those from the LGBTQ+ community have increased vulnerability to bullying and may be specifically targeted and require additional support.

Appropriate forums may be established within the organisation, if deemed necessary, to address, monitor, and stop bullying. These forums will include, as appropriate, children, young people, adult service users, parents/guardians/carers, and staff/volunteers from The Language Body.

The Language Body are explicit in our commitment to the early identification of bullying and prompt, collective action to deal with it. Staff/volunteers, children, young people, and adult service users are encouraged to take a role in stopping bullying.

The Language Body will review all policy and practice in respect of anti-bullying regularly in the light of changing needs and changes adopted by other agencies.

In aiming to prevent bullying and to enable early identification The Language Body will:

- respect everyone's need for, and right to, an environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available;
- be respectful of every individual's feelings and views;
- recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special;
- show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions, and progress;
- ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see.

The Language Body have a support function to children, young people and adult service users, which will include:

- Children, young people and adult service users should know who will listen to and support them.
- Any advice and assistance should be given by an experienced staff/volunteers or the Designated Liaison Person.
- Children, young people and/or adult service users should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Children, young people and/or adult service users should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why.
- Systems should be established to open the door to children, young people and/or adult service

users wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them. Barriers to talking need to be broken down to enable children, young people and/or adult service users to approach staff/volunteers.

- Anyone who reports an alleged incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether this is the person at risk being bullied or the person who is bullying;
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved;
- Anyone who is being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development;
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying;
- Sanctions involving long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, should be avoided.

In respect of parents/guardians/carers, The Language Body will ensure:

- Parents/guardians/carers will be advised of The Language Body's guidance about bullying;
- any incident of bullying will be discussed with the parents/guardians/carers of the person being bullied and the alleged bully;
- Parental/carer advice on action will be sought and agreements made as to what action should be taken;
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be given;
- Support should be offered to the parents/guardians/carers including information on other agencies or support lines.

## **Physical Contact/Intimate Care Guidelines**

To keep children, young people and/or vulnerable adults safe within The Language Body, staff/volunteers should ensure that:

- any physical contact is appropriate, minimal and necessary for the task required only;
- children, young people and adult service users are encouraged to do as much for themselves as possible;
- an explanation for the need for physical contact should be given and consent should be sought from the child/young person/adult service user;
- If intimate care provision is an aspect of a role it will be carried out only by trained staff/volunteers sensitively and with respect for the individual's dignity and privacy;
- if concerned about anything during intimate care, staff/volunteers must report it to their Line Manager or the Designated Officer at the earliest opportunity.

## **Physical Intervention Guidelines**

The Language Body take a view that staff/volunteers should not physically intervene unless they have received the specific training to do so, and then only if it is in a circumstance where it is absolutely necessary. Staff/volunteers should:

- Seek to defuse the situation, thereby avoiding the need to use any form of physical intervention;
- Only physically intervene where it is absolutely necessary to protect from harm;
- Ensure any intervention is proportionate to the risk of harm;
- only use forms of physical intervention for which training has been received and which follows current best practice;

- record and report any physical intervention;
- review any situation that led to the need for physical intervention with a view to avoiding such need in the future.

## **Diversity and Additional needs**

The Language Body operate a policy of inclusion and equality. Staff/volunteers must be sensitive to diversity and any possible additional needs.

Staff/volunteers should:

- be open to and aware of diversity including diversity in the beliefs and practices of children, young people, adult service users, and their families;
- ask how the cultural needs of children, young people, and adult service users can be supported;
- encourage children, young people, and adult services users to be respectful and considerate to the needs of others;
- be aware of the difficulties posed by language barriers and other communication difficulties;
- never discriminate against children, young people, adult services users, and their families who have different cultural backgrounds and beliefs from their own;
- be aware that those from ethnic and religious minorities, people with disabilities, and those from the LGBTQ+ community have increased vulnerability to bullying and may be specifically targeted and may require additional support;
- be respectful of the LGBTQ+ community in your acts and speech. Avoid using homophobic or transphobic language. Respect the gender identity of individuals and use their requested pronouns;
- listen openly and try to understand if children, young people, and adult services users raise an issue about their behaviour in relation to diversity rather than acting defensively;
- report any acts of discrimination as outlined in the relevant agency's equal opportunity policy.

## **Handling Money**

As part of the role with The Language Body, staff/volunteers should:

- never borrow money from, or lend money to, children, young people and/or adult service users.
- avoid handling money belonging to those they meet through their work with The Language Body, especially children, young people, or adult service users. If this is unavoidable a written record should be maintained of when, how much, and why staff/volunteers handled money belonging to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- report any suspicions of financial abuse or improper handling of money.

## **Photography/Filming Guidelines**

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults through the use of photographs on websites and other publications. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children, young people and/or vulnerable adults when they are accompanied with personal information – this is X who lives at Y is a member of the Z club and who likes a certain music group. This information can make an individual vulnerable to someone who may wish to start to “groom” that child, young person and/or vulnerable adult for abuse. Secondly the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use.

The Language Body recognises the need for a policy in relation to the use of images of children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults on our website and in other publications. We have considered the type of images that are suitable and that appropriately represent our work, without putting children, young people and/or vulnerable adults at increased risk of harm. We will ensure parents/guardians/carers are

made aware of this policy. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of The Language Body work, the most important factor is the potential of inappropriate use of images of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.

By increasing the awareness of the potential risks and taking appropriate steps the potential for misuse of images can be reduced.

The Language Body will:

- consider using models or illustrations if we are promoting an activity
- avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside The Language Body.

The following guidance should be applied:

- If the child, young person and/or vulnerable adult is named, avoid using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the child, young person and/or vulnerable adult.
- Ask permission of the child, young person, adult service user or parents/guardian/carers (as appropriate) to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the images are to be used to represent The Language Body. A child, young person and/or adult's permission form is one way of achieving this.
- Only use images of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. With regard to the actual content it is difficult to specify exactly what is appropriate given the wide diversity of activities. However, there are clearly some activities, (i.e., swimming, gymnastics and outdoor events,) when the risk of potential misuse is much greater than for other events. With these activities the content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child, young person, and/or vulnerable adult and should avoid full face and body shots. For example, shots of children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults in a pool would be appropriate or if poolside, waist or shoulder up.
- the use of inappropriate images should be reported to the Designated Liaison Person, who will follow our safeguarding procedures and may refer to statutory agencies.

The Language Body has:

- established the type of images that appropriately represent the work of The Language Body for the web and other media
- thought about the level of consideration we give to the use of images of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults in other publications, for example, the processes involved in choosing appropriate images in any newsletters or magazines.
- applied an increased level of consideration to the images of children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults used in the web site.

### *Photography/filming at events*

To minimise safeguarding risks posed by photography/filming during our events and activities, The Language Body will:

- provide a clear brief to official photographers about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour;
- request that the official photographer wears identification at all times;
- inform the children, young people, adult service users, and parents/guardians that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs;



- not allow unsupervised access to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, or one-to-one photo sessions at events;
- not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at the homes of children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults;
- ensure that if parents/guardians/carers or others are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of our expectations;
- warn parents and spectators that there can be negative consequences to sharing images linked to information about their own or other people's children/young people on social media (Facebook, Twitter) – and care should be taken about 'tagging'
- inform children, young people and/or vulnerable adults and parents/guardians that if they have concerns they should report these to staff/volunteers;
- encourage anyone with concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography to report these to the event manager and these will be recorded in the same manner as any other safeguarding concern.

## **Sexually Explicit Images/Messages**

*All cases involving the creation, distribution or possession of explicit images of children or young people are potentially criminal and should be reported to An Garda Síochána.*

If staff/volunteers receive a sexually explicit image of a child/young person they must report this immediately to the Designated Liaison Person, who will contact the Gardaí.

***Do not delete the image*** but under no circumstances should you save the image or send it to another person (even the Designated Liaison Person) or show it to anyone else as you may be committing an offence. The Gardaí will advise what to do with the image once they have reviewed it.

If staff/volunteers receive a sexually explicit image or message from a vulnerable adult who they have met through their work at The Language Body, they should report this to the Designated Liaison Person. Do not save or share any images as you may be committing an offence.

If staff/volunteers receive a sexually explicit message from a child/young person they must report this immediately to the Designated Liaison Person.

In all instances, you should maintain confidentiality and only inform the Designated Liaison Person or relevant individuals.

## **Social Media, Text, and Email Guidelines**

The Language Body recognises that social media, text messaging, and emails are an important tool to communicate with our service users, especially young adults.

The use of social media, text messaging or email to communicate with service users increases the vulnerability of both the service user and staff/volunteers.

The decision to use social media, text messages, or email to communicate with service users should not be made by an organisation without internal discussion and written agreement, this will ensure that organisation's safeguarding expectations and requirements can be clarified.

The Language Body recognises the safeguarding risks to service users include:

- inappropriate access to, use of, or sharing of personal details (e.g. names, mobile phone numbers);
- unwanted contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults by adults with poor intent;

- text/cyber-bullying by peers;
- being sent offensive or otherwise inappropriate materials;
- online bullying by peers;
- grooming for sexual abuse;
- direct contact and actual abuse.

For staff/volunteers the safeguarding risks include:

- misinterpretation of their communication with children/young people/vulnerable adults;
- potential investigation (internal or by statutory authorities);
- potential disciplinary action.

## *Social Media*

Staff/volunteers' use of social media for purely personal reasons does not need approval but please be aware that you are in a position of trust, that you may be perceived as an ambassador for The Language Body and you are advised to exercise caution.

It is good practice to assume that everything you write is permanent and can be viewed by anyone at any time. Also, assume that everything can be traced back to you personally as well as to your colleagues or The Language Body

Inappropriate use of social media such as cyber bullying or sexting must be reported immediately to the Designated Liaison Person. If the Designated Liaison Person is targeted by such an incident they must notify the Deputy Designated Liaison Person immediately.

Staff/volunteers should ensure that their content or links to other content does not contain:

- Libellous, defamatory, bullying or harassing statements
- Breaches of copyright and data protection
- Material of an illegal nature
- Offensive sexual references
- Inappropriate language

Staff/volunteers are encouraged to ensure that adequate privacy settings are in place to restrict access to photos, personal information, comments about others, friends, and followers to the appropriate audiences.

Staff/volunteers should protect their privacy online. Staff/volunteers should carefully consider who they give access to their personal information online.

All staff/volunteers should ensure that there is a clear differentiation between any personal and professional profiles.

## *Contact with Children/Young People*

Staff/volunteers should not follow or befriend children or young people or vulnerable adults who they meet through their work at The Language Body. If they receive such a friend request from a child/young person/vulnerable adult they should not accept the request and report this to the Designated Liaison Person. In a personal context, The Language Body would advise staff/volunteers to only befriend or follow children or young people on social media with the knowledge and consent of their parents.

If staff/volunteers have a public social media account where they cannot control their followers (i.e. twitter, Instagram) and become aware that a child/young person/vulnerable adult who they have met

through The Language Body has followed their social media account, then staff/volunteers should report this to the Designated Liaison Person.

Staff/volunteers should not:

- use social media private messages to communicate official information about The Language Body's activities;
- accept friend/follow requests out of social network terms (i.e. under 13 years of age for Facebook);
- instigate a private message conversation with a child or young person or vulnerable adult they have met through The Language Body. If they received such a message from a child/young person/vulnerable adult they should not reply to the message and report this to the Designated Liaison Person.

### *Text and Email messaging*

To minimise the safeguarding risk associated with the use of text or email messages:

- organisations should take steps to identify where/when texting or emailing is required to communicate with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults and develop relevant procedures to suit the tailored needs of each organisation;
- texts or emails from staff/volunteers in the organisation should not be sent in isolation, there should be discussion and written agreement/ procedures;
- all emails sent must make it clear to the child/vulnerable adult receiving it which organisation has sent the message, rather than simply giving the issuing email address or name of an individual;
- copies of all messages should be sent to the Designated Officer within the organisation who can ensure that all messages are being used appropriately;
- parental consent must be obtained prior to sending children or young people text or email messages. Parents/guardians/carers must be given the option to be copied into any messages the service users may be sent;
- adult service users must consent to receiving text or emails. If the adult does not have the capacity to consent this should be obtained from a parent/carer. In such case Parents/guardians/carers must be given the option to be copied into any messages the service users may be sent;
- adult service users, parents/guardians/carers, and staff/volunteers should be given information on how to report any concerns relating to inappropriate texts or emails in line with the organisation's safeguarding policy;
- all mobile phone numbers and/or email address should be stored in either a locked secure cabinet or on a password protected electronic system with access only to the relevant staff/volunteers required to text the service users;
- the content of messages should relate solely to the business/activity of the organisation;
- the messages should never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language and care must be taken to avoid any over familiarity or language that could be misinterpreted or misconstrued;
- service users should not be encouraged to text back; ideally it should be used as a one-way communication channel;
- adult service users should be made aware that if they choose or need to text or email the organisation's representative that they should ensure the content of messages relates only to the matters relevant to the business/activity and that they are required to copy to their parents/guardians;
- all service users should be given the opportunity to withdraw from receiving any further texts or emails;
- consideration will be given to initiating the organisation's safeguarding policies and disciplinary procedures should any breaches of this guideline arise, including consultation with, or referral to, statutory organisations if indications of illegal activity (e.g. grooming for abuse) come to light.

## Transporting children, young people, or adult service users

Staff/volunteers should not, as part of their role, transport children, young people and/or vulnerable adults alone in their car.

If all alternatives have been exhausted and staff/volunteers must transport children, young people, or an vulnerable adult, there are a number of safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- the driver, like all staff who have access to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, should have agreed to a Garda Vetting check being carried out on them. The Language Body should also have had sight of the driver's license to ensure there are no unreasonable endorsements;
- parents/carers should be informed of the person who will transport the children, young people, or adult service user, the reasons why, and how long the journey will take;
- a person other than the planned driver should talk to the children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults about transport arrangements and to check if they are comfortable about the plans;
- the driver (and The Language Body) must ensure that they have insurance to carry others, particularly if they are in a paid position or claiming expenses;
- the driver should attempt to have more than one child, young person and/or vulnerable adult in the car;
- the person who leaves children, young people and/or vulnerable adults home should be alternated; this would reduce the risk of any one individual always being alone with the children, young people and/or vulnerable adults;
- the driver should have a point of contact and mobile phone should they break down;
- ensure that children, young people and/or adult service users are aware of their rights and they have someone to turn to or report any concerns they may have. If a culture of safety is created within The Language Body then the children, young people and/or vulnerable adults are more likely to talk to another person if they are feeling uncomfortable about a situation;
- children, young people and/or adults should wear seatbelts. The driver is legally responsible to ensure that a child under 14 wears a seatbelt (i.e., adult would have to pay any fine) but morally responsible to ensure all passengers wear seatbelts.

## Residential Trip Guidelines

Events and activities may involve residential workshops and time away from home. But even what may appear as the most straightforward of trips will require some level of planning. The following outlines what needs to be considered when organising trips with children, young people and/or adult service users

### *Communication*

- **children/ young people/adult service users** should be informed of the travel plans, venue, and time for collection, time of return, what they need to bring with them, and any costs. They should also have a clear understanding of what standard of behaviour is expected of them.
- **parents/guardians/carers** should be informed of the above and must have completed a consent form detailing any medical issues. Parents/guardians/carers should also have the name and contact details of the manager/identified leader in the case of an emergency.
- **staff/volunteers** need to be made aware of what their responsibilities are in advance of the trip. If the trip is a long journey, it is important that all staff/volunteers have an itinerary.

### *Transport*

- Ensure the driver has an appropriate and valid driving license
- Allow an appropriate length of time to complete the journey
- Consider the impact of traffic and weather conditions
- If using a mini-bus ensure that all seats are forward facing and they all have seat belts fitted if carrying children, young people.
- If transporting individuals with physical disabilities ensure that the vehicle is appropriate to their needs.
- The bus or coach has valid PSV/safety checks
- Ensure everyone wears seat belts
- Check there is appropriate insurance for the journey
- Check the driver is experienced in the chosen mode of travel
- Clarify supervision requirements with all staff/volunteers. The driver should not be considered as supervisor during the journey
- Ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy.

### *Ratios*

Dependant on the activity, the ratio of adult to child/young person may vary but whatever is considered appropriate would generally need to be increased when travelling away from home. Information about childcare ratios can be accessed at [www.earlychildhoodireland.ie](http://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie).

### *Insurance*

In addition to the mini-bus/car insurance, the manager needs to ensure that the relevant agency's general insurance covers travel to away events.

### *Emergencies*

Ensure that the vehicle has breakdown and recovery cover. At least one of the staff/volunteers should be trained in first aid procedures and a first aid kit should be available. The staff/volunteers should have access to a mobile phone and contact details for all the children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.

**The above are only basic points of advice and are not comprehensive guidelines.**

## APPENDIX 1

### Organisational goals

The aims of the Ulster-Scots Agency are to:

- Identify, interpret and animate Ulster-Scots heritage, language and culture.
- Work to ensure that learning about Ulster-Scots culture, heritage and language is integrated throughout the education system.
- Equip individuals and groups with knowledge and skills to engage with Ulster-Scots heritage, language and culture.
- Reach out locally and globally, to enhance friendship with people in Ulster whose primary identity is not Ulster-Scots: and foster kinship with people beyond Ulster who share our identity.

Therefore, staff/volunteers must be aware that the organisation exists solely to achieve these overall aims and objectives and that any action by staff/volunteers, including those relating to personal development, must always be taken in order to better achieve the aims and objectives of the organisation.

Staff/volunteers should be aware that how they present themselves might reflect on the credibility and perception of The Language Body by members of the public.

Staff/volunteers should carry out their duties with maximum efficiency and the minimum of costs and expenses chargeable to The Language Body.

Staff/volunteers should be aware that from time to time they represent The Language Body with a variety of community and voluntary groups in Ireland, North and South, and beyond on some occasions. In carrying out their duties in public, staff/volunteers should be, and be seen to be, wholly impartial, adhering to rules and regulations including codes of conduct, and acting in the best interests of achieving the aims and objectives of The Language Body.

Staff/volunteers should be familiar with the corporate and operational plans of the organisation and adhere to these and the strategies of parent Departments, the Language Body, and the North-South Ministerial Council.

## APPENDIX 2

### Linking to Board codes and standing orders

The Board Code applies to Chief Executive Officers, and staff/volunteers should be aware of how the expectations on them will contribute to the Board successfully fulfilling their obligations to the North-South Ministerial Council.

Staff/volunteers should be thoroughly familiar with the staff code of conduct and agree to it as guidelines for their service in the Ulster-Scots Agency, including the adherence to the principles and values of public life as identified above. Staff/volunteers should adhere to their duty of discharging their public functions reasonably and in accordance with the law, and recognise the ethical standards governing their role. They should thereby help the Board to ensure that the Ulster-Scots Agency complies with statutory and administrative requirements for the use of public funds and fulfils legal responsibilities imposed upon it. They should deal with the public efficiently and with empathy, maintaining the highest possible standard of conduct and service.

Staff/volunteers should ensure that they meet the adopted best practice guidelines:

- adhere to public service requirements regarding statutory, financial and administrative duties – help to ensure that the Ulster-Scots Agency operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority by the North South Ministerial Council, and according to conditions associated with the use of public funds;
- maintain high standards of integrity – and meet guidance issued by the North South Ministerial Council in reaching decisions;
- monitor performance and achievement of the corporate vision – do their best to help achieve the objectives set in the corporate and operational plans and the meeting of performance targets;
- act within statutory authority and any other conditions applied by parent departments – comply at all times by the codes approved by the North South Ministerial Council, and with the rules relating to the use of public funds;
- apply relevant standards and individual responsibility – both as individuals and relating to the highest standard of corporate governance.

And they should ensure that they abide by the following guidance:

- party political involvement – staff/volunteers may engage in political activity but should always be conscious of their public duties and exercise proper discretion. Staff/volunteers will not use their position in the Ulster-Scots Agency, for party political gain or personal political gain and will not deliberately associate themselves or the Ulster-Scots Agency, with any specific political party;
- equality issues – staff/volunteers should abide by the equality legislation applicable in both jurisdictions.

## Private interest/conflicts of interest

Staff/volunteers should be aware of the dangers associated with real or perceived conflict of interest while serving in the Ulster-Scots Agency, and the following guidelines apply to themselves and include close family members and those living in the same household. Guidelines include:

- rules for early identification – staff/volunteers should declare as soon as practically possible any direct or indirect interest (pecuniary or otherwise) that they believe relates to any aspect of their role that may be perceived to bias a judgement;
- declarations of interest – all staff/volunteers must declare any personal, community, or business interests that may conflict with their employment. This should be done at the start of their term of employment/volunteering and renewed on an annual basis thereafter;
- register of interests on an annual basis – a register of staff/volunteers' interests will be kept which should include a list of direct or indirect pecuniary interests and non-pecuniary interests;
- gifts/hospitality – staff/volunteers should be cautious when accepting [any] hospitality or gifts, especially from organisations or individuals that have, or may have in the future, a pecuniary or other interest in the operation of the Ulster-Scots Agency. Staff/volunteers should be of a view not to accept any such gift/hospitality. The Chief Executive or line manager should be approached for advice on gifts/hospitality if any staff member/volunteer has any direct or indirect concern regarding his or her own or others conduct.

In general hospitality, gifts and entertainment should only be offered or accepted if there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the organisation;

- openness – staff/volunteers must adhere to the Board's strategy and direction for the adherence to any code of practice on access to government information;
- protection of official information – staff/volunteers are required to protect official information held or received in confidence during duties as members of staff/volunteers and abide by any legal requirement to do so;
- disclosure of official information – staff/volunteers will not use/misuse information gained during their employment for their own/others private interest or for political interest, and will not promote their private interest or connected people, firms, businesses or other organisations;
- confidentiality – staff/volunteers shall not disclose confidential information or the detail of discussions conducted in the Ulster-Scots Agency;
- insurance and indemnity – the Chief Executive Officer shall ensure that the Ulster-Scots Agency's staff/volunteers have suitable insurance cover for the conduct of their employment/volunteering;
- outside employment – it is expected that staff will not undertake paid employment outside their role within the Ulster-Scots Agency, and in those circumstances staff should bring their employment to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer, through their appropriate line manager, for approval. Any additional employment undertaken should not interfere with their duties with the Ulster-Scots Agency.



### **Inclusiveness within the organisation**

In relation to its duties as an employer, the Ulster-Scots Agency will abide by the statutory obligations imposed on it by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) and the Employment Equality Act 1998 in the Republic of Ireland, which came into operation in October 1999, it repealed and replaced the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974 and the Employment Equality Act 1977.

Any issues relating to equality should be taken up with a staff/volunteer's line manager and ultimately may be taken up with the Chief Executive Officer in writing.

### **Terms and conditions**

The terms and conditions of employment as set out in employees' terms and conditions/volunteer agreement and job/role description will be adhered to at all times.

Employees and **where relevant**, volunteers will have from the Board and senior management, as a minimum:

- a clear understanding of the role of the Board;
- a clear understanding of their own responsibilities;
- a diagram showing staffing structure;
- head of terms;
- a person specification;
- a pay and policy structure;
- job description;
- terms and conditions for staff in writing;
- copy of the equal opportunities policy;
- copy of the training policy;
- copy of the appraisal system for staff;
- copy of the disciplinary, grievance, and appeals rules and procedures;
- copy of the health and safety policy;
- copy of policy on harassment;
- copy of whistle blowing policy;
- copy of safeguarding policy & procedures;
- copy of code of conduct for staff;
- copy of code of conduct for children & young people;
- copy of code of conduct for parents/guardians;
- copy of anti-bullying policy in relation to children & young people.

### **Disciplinary, grievance and appeals procedures**

Disciplinary, grievance, appeals procedures/problem solving are agreed by the Board of the Ulster-Scots Agency and should be adhered to at all times.

### **Health and safety issues**

Staff/volunteers shall ensure that they adhere to the health and safety policies of the Ulster-Scots Agency.

### **Reviews of the staff/volunteers' code**

Staff/volunteers Code of Conduct will be reviewed as appropriate with amendments agreed by the board where necessary.

## APPENDIX 3

### Safeguarding Incident Report Form

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE LANGUAGE BODY'S STANDARD FORM FOR REPORTING SAFEGUARDING AND/OR WELFARE CONCERNS.

#### SUSPECTED SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS REPORT FORM

Questions should be answered fully.

This report should remain confidential and be kept in a secure place BY THE DESIGNATED OFFICER

In case of Emergency or out of hours, contact should be made with HSC/HSE or PSNI/An Garda Síochána.

*Name of Person filing report:*

*Organisation Name:*

*Name of child/young person/vulnerable adult:*

*Age:*

*Parents /Carers Name:*

*Home Address:*

*Post Code*

*Phone No*

**CONCERN:**

*Please complete the box below if a child/young person/vulnerable adult has made a disclosure.*

**When was the disclosure/concern? (Include date / time)**

**Where was the disclosure/concern made?**

**What were the circumstances leading to the disclosure/concern?**

**Were there other people present at the time of the disclosure/concern?**

**Yes                      No**

**If Yes, please state names / positions**

**What was the nature of the disclosure/concern?**

**Please give the exact words of a child/young person/vulnerable adult**

**Describe any signs of physical injury evident on the child/young person/vulnerable adult**

**Describe any observed emotional or behaviour signs/changes in the child/young person/vulnerable adult**

**Has anyone been named or implicated as part of the allegations (if so, please record details)?**

**What future course of action has been agreed / decided upon?**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Referred to:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Designated Officer**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

The Language Body has developed guidance in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 (NI or ROI or both): and has agreed that records of referrals to statutory bodies regarding a safeguarding issue about a child/young person/vulnerable adult should be kept for up to seven years. This information should be locked away in a secure cabinet and access to the keys strictly controlled.

## APPENDIX 4

### Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template

	Identified Risk	Classification <i>(High, /Medium, /Low)</i>	Procedure in place to manage risk
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

# USEFUL CONTACTS

## TUSLA

Child and family Agency	Website: <a href="http://www.tusla.ie">www.tusla.ie</a> Phone: 01 7718500 Email: <a href="mailto:info@tusla.ie">info@tusla.ie</a>
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**An Garda Síochána** - In an emergency, please contact An Garda Síochána as Tulsa operates during normal office hours only.

<b>Emergency</b>	999
<b>Non-Emergency/General Enquires</b>	112

You should use this service if a crime or incident is happening or if anyone is in immediate danger.

## HSE Adult Safeguarding and Protection Teams

HSE Information Line on 1850 24 1850. The HSE information line is open Monday to Saturday, from 8.00 in the morning until 8.00 in the evening.	
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 9</b>	Ms. Anne O'Loughlin, St Mary's Hospital, Phoenix Park, Dublin 20 Tel: 01 6250447 Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding.cho9@hse.ie">Safeguarding.cho9@hse.ie</a>
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 8</b>	Ashbourne Primary Care Centre, Declan Street, Ashbourne, Co. Meath, Tel: 01 6914632
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 7</b>	Ms. Siobhan Nunn, Beech House, 101-102 Naas Business Park, Naas, Co. Kildare Tel: 045981810 Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding.CHO7@hse.ie">Safeguarding.CHO7@hse.ie</a>
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 6</b>	Mr. Tony McCusker, Ballinteer Health Centre, Ballinteer Avenue, Ballinteer, Dublin 16. Tel: 01 2164511 Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding.cho6@hse.ie">Safeguarding.cho6@hse.ie</a>
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 5</b>	Ms. Maura Seabrooke, HSE Offices, Dublin Road, Lacken, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny Tel: 056-7784325 Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding.cho5@hse.ie">Safeguarding.cho5@hse.ie</a>
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 4</b>	Ms. Kathleen O'Mahony, St. Finbarr's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork Tel: 021 4923967 Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding.cho4@hse.ie">Safeguarding.cho4@hse.ie</a>
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 3</b>	Ms. Maggie McNally, Tyone Health Centre, Tyone, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary Tel: 067 46470 Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding.cho3@hse.ie">Safeguarding.cho3@hse.ie</a>
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 2</b>	Ms. Pauline Levins, La Nua, Ballybane, Castlepark Road, Galway Tel: 091 748488 Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding.cho2@hse.ie">Safeguarding.cho2@hse.ie</a>
<b>HSE Community Healthcare Organisation - Area 1</b>	Ms. Donna Carroll, HSE Office, Community Health Care Organisation Area 1, Ballyshannon Health Campus, An Clochar, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal. Tel: <a href="tel:071-9834660">071-9834660</a> Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding.cho1@hse.ie">Safeguarding.cho1@hse.ie</a>

**Other support agencies:**

<b>Barnardos</b> www.barnardo.ie	<b>Children's Rights Alliance</b> www.childrensrights.ie
<b>Department of Children and Youth Affairs</b> www.dcy.a.ie	<b>Parentline</b> 1 890 927277 www.parentline.ie
<b>Health Service Executive</b> www.hse.ie	<b>Women's Aid Helpline</b> 1 800 341900 www.womensaid.ie
<b>Irish Government</b> www.gov.ie	<b>The Samaritans</b> 1 850 609090 www.samaritans.org
<b>ISPCC</b> www.ispcc.ie	<b>ChildLine</b> 1 800 666 666 www.childline.ie
<b>Early Childhood Ireland</b> www.earlychildhoodireland.ie	<b>Citizens' Information Centre</b> www.citizensinformation.ie
<b>Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (National)</b> 1800 778888  <b>Galway Rape Crisis Centre</b> <b>01800 355355</b> (Monday to Friday 10 am – 1pm and 3pm – 5.30pm)	<b>One in Four</b> Supports men and women who have experienced sexual violence, many of them during childhood. 01 662 4070 <a href="http://www.oneinfour.ie">www.oneinfour.ie</a>