



Youth Work Ireland
Tipperary

Child Safeguarding Policy

YWI Tipperary

Approval date: March 2020

Revision date: March 2022

This policy should be read in conjunction with Children First Act 2015, the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and other accompanying/relevant/associated documents' produced by TUSLA to support Children First.

1.Responsibility for approval of policy	<i>Board of Directors, CEO</i>
2.Responsibility for implementation	<i>CEO, Designated Liasion Team</i>
3.Responsibility for ensuring review	<i>CEO</i>

Contents:

Section 1:	Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection within Youth Work Ireland Tipperary
Section 2:	Key Roles and responsibilities relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection
Section 3:	Responding to and Reporting Child Protection or Welfare Concerns
Section 4:	Working Safely with Children and Young People
Appendix 1:	Safeguarding Statement
Appendix 2:	Statement of mandated persons and commitment to policy
Appendix 3:	Child Friendly Information on safeguarding
Appendix 4:	Legislative Framework for this policy
Appendix 5:	Role Description of DLP
Appendix 6:	Incident Reporting Template
Appendix 7:	Description of 4 Types of Abuse
Appendix 8:	Disciplinary and Grievance Policy
Appendix 9:	Flowchart dealing with allegations of abuse against staff members

Section 1:

Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection within Youth Work Ireland Tipperary

1.1 Introduction

This document sets out the Safeguarding policy, procedures and guidance for Youth Work Ireland Tipperary. The document has been created as a tool and support for our Board, Staff, Volunteers and member services. The document is based on and supports the principles of the Children First Act 2015, the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and other accompanying/relevant/associated documents' produced by TUSLA to support Children First.

1.2 Youth Work Ireland Tipperary

- Our key services

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary is a locally based community and voluntary organisation, which has been working in Co Tipperary and East Limerick consistently for the past 40 years. We work with the young people, families, communities and services of the county to provide an innovative, person centred service, which puts social inclusion, integration and the needs of the people that we work with at the heart of everything that we do. We have a long and productive tradition of partnership with local agencies, service providers and community groups throughout the county and have a range of experiences with local, national and international funders across a range of departments.

We have a voluntary board of 11 local people, and a staff complement of up to 50 people. We work with over 2000 children and families annually. We have youth clubs based around Tipperary and East Limerick, and six youth centres, in Thurles, Templemore, Cashel, Tipperary Town Fethard and Killenaule. We have a presence throughout Tipperary with a number of county based projects and have strong relationships with local schools and training centres.

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary is a community based youth work organisation operating an Integrated Youth Service Model providing services to young people, their families and communities in Tipperary and East Limerick, through a range of projects, locations and approaches. These include:

- **Youth Club Development:** volunteer led youth clubs work with children and young people across the region
- **Community Youth Projects:** youth projects engage with the local community to identify and respond to the needs of young people in their area.
- **Youth Justice Work:** projects that support young people to divert from crime and anti-social behaviour.

- **Youth Information Services:** provision of information, support and guidance to young people and the community through centre based and outreach service provision
- **Non formal Education, training and employment supports :** The provision of training, education and work experience to young people who are at risk or being unemployed, or who are not in employment.
- **One To One Supports:** For young people with additional needs, the organisation delivers tailored support on an individual basis where appropriate
- **Comhairle Na nÓg:** The facilitation of Tipperary Comhairle Na nOg (Child & Youth Council)
- **Substances Misuse Projects:** Community Based Drugs Initiative in Mid Tipperary responding to the specific issues at individual, family and community levels, created by substance misuse.
- **Family Support programmes:** for families who are at risk or experiencing challenges that impact on their children
- **International Youth work:** supporting young people on an individual and group basis to have new experiences and learn new skills in other countries.

Thurles Templemore Youth Project	Fethard Killenaule Youth Project
Tipperary Youth Project	Cashel NYP
North Tipperary Traveller youth Project	YWI Tipperary CE Scheme
TAR Youth Diversion Project	Templemore Family Support Project
Youth Information Tipperary	Mid Tipperary Drugs Initiative
ABILITY	Tipperary Resettlement Project
Tipperary Youth Employment initiative	South Tipperary Family Therapy Project
Tipperary Rural Outreach Project	Tipperary Comhairle Na nOG
Glocal	
Youth Centres	Youth Participation
Project Based Initiatives	One to one Supports
Specialised Delivery through Arts, Multi-media, Creativity, Health Promotion, Targeted work (LGBT young people, young people with additional needs, youth employment, youth mental health, health promotion, development education	

1.3 Youth Work Ireland Tipperary - Our Approach:

This document places a focus on supporting staff in their responsibilities with particular regard to reporting, confidentiality, making a record and the necessity to have a copy of the Safeguarding Statement (**Appendix 1**) prominently displayed at events particularly those involving young people. This child safeguarding policy and procedures support our legal obligations as the provider of a relevant service under the Children First Act 2015 and the risk assessment and the management of risk. Youth Work Ireland Tipperary has Produced a Safeguarding Statement, including a risk assessment in accordance with the Children First Act. This policy and procedures supports our intention and legal obligations to Safeguard young people and vulnerable persons engaging in any way with our services.

All staff and volunteers are required to complete a “Statement of commitment” to the policy once they have been informed of and have familiarised themselves with its contents and procedures (**Appendix 2**).

A user-friendly copy of the key relevant sections of the policy will be distributed to all staff / volunteers, along with Child Protection and Welfare information leaflet. Our Safeguarding Statement (see Appendix 1) must be displayed in all our buildings, at our events and activities and on online sites. A copy of the Statement will be furnished to all staff and is available upon request from the Relevant Person. Staff will, where practicable

supply a copy of the statement to any member of the public who requests a statement were this is not practicable the enquirers name and details will be acquired for the purposes of supplying the enquirer with a copy of the statement.

Safeguarding is about promoting the welfare of children who avail of our services. It is about creating a safe environment for both staff/volunteers and young people, where trust and willingness to listen to the young person is foremost. The developing of the policy and procedures is an enabling process, drawing on our current good practice with children. Such a policy is an invaluable tool in helping our staff/volunteers involved in working with young people to safeguard both the young person and themselves.

It is a requirement for all staff/volunteers to be furnished with, and to read, sign and comply with both the Safeguarding Statement, and our Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures as outlined in this policy. The parents/guardians of young people will also be informed of the contents of the policy. Parents/Guardians will be made aware of the steps they can take should they have a Child Protection concern and the person they can contact for advice and support. A youth-friendly handbook on Child Protection, based on this policy will be developed. This document will be presented and discussed with all young people using our services. Young People will be made aware of the steps they can take should they have a Child Protection concern and the person they can contact for advice and support (attached as **Appendix 3** Information on Safeguarding and Child Protection for young people using Youth Work Ireland Tipperary Services).

1.4 Policy Context

Our Safeguarding policy and procedure is based on the following :

2017 - Department of Children and Youth Affairs document **Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children**, which provides clarity and assists people in identifying and reporting Child Abuse to ensure best practice in Child Protection in statutory and voluntary agencies. Our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures document complies with **Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children**. Our safeguarding policy also integrates with other documents including Tusla's **Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice; Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement; Mandated Assisting Protocol for TUSLA in addition to Children First**.

Other supports have also been used include TUSLA Always Children First Training, the NYCI Board Briefing on Children First and the updated trainings and training manual for CPAP.

1.5 Legislative Framework and other relevant documents

There are a number of key International and National pieces of legislation, documents and policies underpinning this Child Protection Policy. See **Appendix 4** for details of each piece of legislation

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Children First Act 2015

NATIONAL VETTING BUREAU (CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS) ACT 2012-2016

Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016

The Child Care Act, 1991

Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children

Protection for Person's Reporting Abuse Act 2017

Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

Additional Youth Work Ireland Tipperary Related Policies having a bearing on Safeguarding:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Garda Vetting Policy and Procedures
- Recruitment and Selection Policy specified under the Children's First Act 2015
- Volunteer Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Freedom of Information Statement
- Alcohol Policy
- Equality Policy
- Social Media
- Communications policy

Additional supporting documents

- Staff Handbook
- Volunteer Policy
- Dealing with Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco in Youth Work Settings Guidelines for Youth Workers
- National Children's Strategy
- Better Outcomes, Brighter Future - National Policy Framework for Children and Youth People 2014 - 2020

1.6 Commitment to Safeguarding and our Guiding Principles

It is the policy of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary to safeguard the welfare of all children in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and other key guidance provided by DCYA and TUSLA. Our aim is to protect them from all forms of abuse and harm whilst engaged with our services, to report any concerns appropriately, to support any investigation as appropriate and to provide supports for young people through our work. Youth Work Ireland is committed to safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults and to providing a safe space for children and young people to grow, develop, learn and have fun.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- Having in place a formal Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy that sets out procedures and practices to ensure Child Safeguarding and Protection.
- Appointing a Relevant Person who discharges the responsibilities of the Relevant Person as outlined in Children First Act 2015.
- Ensuring all staff are informed and aware of their reporting responsibilities whether as a Mandated Person or non-Mandated
- Delivering Safeguarding and Child Protection training and support to all staff and volunteers that is commensurate and appropriate to their role, work and contact with young people specified under the Children's First Act 2015
- Maintaining appropriate records and information on issues relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection reports, procedures and documentation such as staff and volunteer information and records.
- Ensuring all Staff and Volunteers, and where appropriate, others are Vetted in line with Vetting Legislation and systems as set out by the NVB.
- Assisting An Garda Siochana with any Child Protection and Safeguarding investigations as requested.

- Ensuring that the welfare of the child is paramount in all decisions, activities and programmes involving children and young people.
- Adhering to the procedures set out for the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers as specified under the Children's First Act 2015
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Investigating complaints and allegations made against a member of Staff, Volunteer or agent engaged in or with young people through our organisation as specified under the Children's First Act 2015
- Adopting Safeguarding and Child Protection guidelines and reflecting these through our code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about Child Protection and good practice with children, parents / guardians, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information and working with relevant agencies as appropriate.
- Taking part in multi-disciplinary teams as appropriate.
- Managing the Garda Vetting process for all staff and volunteers on behalf of Member Youth Services and National Office Staff.
- Carry out an annual audit of Safeguarding and Child Protection compliance.

The Designated Person, the staff team and Board of Directors will review the Child Protection policy, procedures and practices on an annual basis and also in accordance with any changes in relevant legislation and national guidelines in relation to Child Protection and young people.

Who does the policy and guiding principles apply to?

The policy applies to all staff, volunteers, programme participants, visitors, facilitators, guests, student placements and contractors of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary. Those engaging with our services in such a way will receive a briefing and guidance on their responsibilities about Safeguarding and Child Protection during their engagement with us.

When Youth Work Ireland Tipperary are working in partnership with other organizations this policy will govern all operating as part of Youth Work Ireland. All partnership work should have in place a clear and formal agreement covering the nature of the partnership and clearly referencing the Safeguarding and Child Protection practice, management and reporting systems to be used. Where staff and/or volunteers are bringing young people to an event/activity put on by another agency; workers and volunteers must be clear of their duties and responsibilities in Loco Parentis care of any young people.

1.7 Principles for Best Practice in Safeguarding and Child Protection

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary is committed to the principles laid out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. We adopt these principles to encompass vulnerable adults also. These are:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm.
- Interventions by the State should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family.
- Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where it is necessary for the State to intervene to keep children safe, the minimum intervention necessary should be used.
- Children should only be separated from parents/carers when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted.

- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect, and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/carers and families.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.

These principles are supported by our approach which commits us to:

- Acknowledging the rights of children to be protected, treated with respect, listened to and have their own views taken into consideration.
- Recognising that the welfare of children must always come first, regardless of all other considerations.
- Developing a Safeguarding Statement including Risk Assessment that is shared and understood by all those engaging to support young people within Youth Work Ireland be they Staff/Volunteer and/or acting in another capacity with or on behalf of the organisation.
- Developing Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, procedures, systems, monitoring and review that raises awareness about the possibility of Child Abuse occurring and outlines the steps to be taken if there are issues of concern or where abuse is suspected.
- Adopting the safest possible practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take risks and leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect.
- Adopting and consistently apply clearly defined methods of recruiting staff and volunteers.
- Having clear systems in place for reporting all Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns Mandated or non-Mandated.
- Having clear systems in place where issues or concerns are raised in relation to a volunteer/staff/or other person engaged with Youth Work Ireland Tipperary.
- Providing Child Protection training/briefings for young people, staff and volunteers and others engaged without organisation. This should clarify the responsibilities of both organisation and individuals and clearly show the procedures to be followed if Child Abuse is suspected.
- Developing a policy of openness with parents/guardians that involve consulting them about everything that concerns their children and encouraging them to get involved with the organisation whenever possible.
- Providing appropriate Mandated Assisting as requested.
- Co-operating with other childcare and protection agencies and professionals by sharing information when necessary and working together towards the best possible outcome for the children concerned.
- Making links with other relevant organisations in order to promote Child Protection and welfare policies, procedures and practice.

It is the ethos of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary that valuing both young people and staff/volunteers and creating a safe working and learning environment, will make for a more rewarding and welcoming atmosphere.

1.8 The Rights of the Child

We recognise and endorse the rights of the child and we try to ensure those rights are supported by our practice and that young people and others are aware of those rights.

For the purpose of this policy “a child” means a person under the age of 18 years, who has not been married.

Ireland ratified the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** in 1992. The Convention is in essence a “**bill of rights**” for all children. It contains rights relating to every aspect of children’s lives including the right to survival, development, protection and participation.

The underlying principles of the Convention may be summarised as follows:

- I. **Non-Discrimination (Art. 2):**
All rights apply to all children without exception. The state is obliged to protect children from any form of discrimination and to take action to promote their rights.
- II. **Best Interests of the Child (Art. 3):**
All actions concerning the child shall take account of his or her best interests. The state shall provide the child with adequate care when parents or others charged with that responsibility fail to do so.
- III. **Survival and Development (Art. 6):**
Every child has the inherent right to life and the state has an obligation to ensure the child’s survival and development.
- IV. **The Child’s Opinion (Art. 12):**
The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child.

A number of articles of the Convention are of particular relevance to Child Protection:

- I. **Article 19** states that parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has care of the child.
- II. **Articles 34 and 35** refer respectively to the protection of children from sexual exploitation and from sale, trafficking and abduction.

Section 2:

Key Roles and responsibilities relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection

Everyone has a duty to report and all staff and volunteers are expected to report concerns in line with the processes set out in this document. However, some people have specific roles either named in law, practice, or that are part of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary's structures and supports for Safeguarding. This section will outline these key responsibilities.

2.1 Key posts in Safeguarding and Child protection in Youth Work Ireland Tipperary

Named Person

The guiding principles and Safeguarding Procedures are the responsibility of the HR and Safeguarding Sub Group of the board which is responsible for ensuring the update of the document and presenting the document to the Board of Directors. The Safeguarding Sub Group is serviced by the CEO who is the named person for the organisation for Youth Work Ireland. The named person will work with the Safeguarding Sub Group to ensure policies and procedures supporting best current practice are developed, monitored and reviewed.

The Board

Key responsibilities for the board have been outlined to the board in the sectoral agreed briefing for boards (developed by NYCI with the DCYA). The board works to a checklist of actions, receives reports and signs off on policies procedures and guidelines. New board members receive the Safeguarding briefing as part of their induction on to the Board. The Board has set up a specific Sub Group, the HR and Safe Guarding Sub Group to support its work in this area.

Other Sub Groups of the board (F&GP for instance) may deal with issues relating to these procedures.

The HR and Safeguarding Sub Group

The group is made up of board members, and the CEO and has a specific Terms of Reference. This subgroup does not make final decisions but rather supports the development of safeguarding policies and procedures on behalf of the board.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary fully recognises the importance of the role of Designated Liaison Person and has appointed the CEO as DLP until further notice. In addition, the LEAD workers and project club worker are also named as Deputy DLPs. The Project Club worker works particularly with the Youth Clubs of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary.

Accessibility and Availability: The DLP and Deputy DLPs are available by email and mobile to staff and volunteers. Where the organisation is conducting events on or offsite including young people, the DLPs should be informed of the event and will ensure that either they or a Deputy DLP is available in person or by phone to support staff should need arise. All events whether on site or offsite, regardless of time shall have a DLP available by contact or in person. The event organiser will ensure that staff and volunteers are Safeguarding and Child Protection briefed and aware of DLP contact for the day.

Role of the Designated Liaison Person. The DLP acts as a resource to the organisation matters relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection. The DLP has a primary role in ensuring that the Safeguarding policies and procedures of the organisation are followed and supporting the organisation to understand and implement proper Safeguarding and Child Protection. The DLP act as resource for the organisation, its Board, Management, Staff, Volunteers and Young People. The role of the DLP does not mitigate or take on any other responsibilities laid upon people, organisations are parts thereof (Boards, Management, Staff, volunteers, the Relevant Person, Mandated Persons and so on) by statute in current legislation.

The DLP will also:

- Be fully familiar with the organisations duties to safeguard young people
- Give advice and information on child protection and welfare
- Ensure that the organisations reporting procedures are followed in a timely manner
- Maintain appropriate links with TUSLA and the Gardai
- Receive child protection welfare concerns from workers/volunteers/others and consider if reasonable grounds for reporting to Tusla exist
- Where reasonable grounds exist ensure that a formal report to Tusla is made.
- Be a resource for Mandated Persons to support them in making mandated reports and reporting to Tusla jointly with the MP if required or otherwise, if not, ensuring that MPs inform DLP of their reports to Tusla.
- Where appropriate ensure that the child's parents/guardian should be informed that a report is being made (see reporting)
- Record all concerns or allegations brought to the DLP as well as action/inaction taken in response to those concerns
- Provide feedback to the referrer as appropriate
- Ensure secure filing system is in place to manage confidential records
- Keep the record of Mandated Reports (see Mandated Reporting below)
- Ensure all Board/managers/staff/volunteers/young people/others are supported through safeguarding and Child Protection Processes they are involved with in Youth Work Ireland. It is not the role of the DLP to carry out any HR investigations that may arise within the organisation, the HR process is separate from Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- Ensure procedures are followed
- Ensure there are support structures and training for all involved in Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Ensure Board is briefed, and new Board Members receive Safeguarding Briefing.
- Maintain proper records on all referred cases in a secure and confidential manner. To ensure information required through Mandated Assisting is made available either as directly requested or by the relevant Mandated Person.
- Make regular reports to the Board and Management of Youth work Ireland Tipperary on the volume of reports within Youth Work Ireland Tipperary. To make recommendations to the Board on necessary changes to procedures, systems, practice and or guidelines.
- Inform TUSLA or AGS of relevant concerns about the organisation if Board and/or management fail to deliver within the guidelines of Children First 2015 and the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.
- Maintain other appropriate external relationships.
- Keep informed about current developments regarding the provision, practice, support services, legal obligations

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary Designated Persons:

Catherine Doyle 087 6188075 (Deputy)

Cora Horgan 087 7720111 (DLP)
Donal Kelly 086 7744564 (Deputy)
Cate O Connor 087 9100727 (Clubs)

The Designated Person and the Deputy Designated person should endeavour where possible to develop strong and trusting working relationships with members of the Local Social Worker Department in order to have a good resource, support, information and advice structure in place.

The Designated Person is accessible to everyone in the organisation and is supported by on-going training and supervision. A role description is in place for the DLP (**see Appendix 5**). It is important to stress that the role of the DLP is not all embracing and that the board, managers, staff and others engaging with Youth Work Ireland Tipperary have clear responsibilities for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

The Role of the Relevant Person

The relevant Person is appointed by the Board under the terms of the Children First Act 2015. The Relevant Person is the first point of contact in respect of the organisations Child Safeguarding Statement. The Relevant Person will be named in the Child Safeguarding Statement and their duties are:

- Upon request to furnish anyone requesting the organisations Child Safeguarding Statement with a copy of the statement.
- Upon Request to furnish any State agency requesting the organisations Child Safeguarding Statement with a copy of the statement
- To remind the board when the statement is due for review (every two years). If there are changes or review needed due to changes to legislation, changes in guidance from Tusla or for any other reasons the DLP will notify the Board.

The statement may be copied to anyone or any agency so requesting in hard copy by post or hand as is most convenient, or by email. A record of requests will be kept. Staff may respond to requests for copy of the statement for example at events but should also log the request and inform the Relevant Person.

Relevant Person for YWI Tipperary: Laura Ryan (0504) 23426

Mandated Persons

The Children First Act 2015 identifies several professions and roles, known as Mandated Persons (see appendix 7 Schedule of Mandated Persons Under the Children First Act, appendix 2 to Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children) where people in these professions and roles have a statutory duty to report concerns which meet or exceed a required threshold of harm to Tusla. Mandated Persons are also required to assist with Tusla in the assessment of assessment of Mandated Reports.

As provider of a relevant service Youth Work Ireland Tipperary has reviewed it's staffing and identified Mandated Persons. A list is held through the Finance office. Staff who are mandated persons have been informed of their role and duties and received the mandated persons briefing. All new posts are reviewed to determine if they are mandated posts by Youth Work Ireland Tipperary as the relevant provider.

All Other Staff, Volunteers, Board Members:

All staff/volunteers/Board Members, including mandated persons, who have any concerns should discuss their concerns with the DLP. as set out in Section 3: Responding to and Reporting Child Protection or Welfare Concerns, of this document. The DLP will determine and make any formal report to Tusla. This will be a joint report for staff who are not mandated persons. For mandated persons where the threshold of harm has been met or exceeded, this can either be a a joint report or can be a lone report by the MP but the DLP is informed and holds the records. If the individual(s) making the report are not happy where a report is not forwarded to Tusla by the DLP, they may make report of their concern to Tusla of their own accord, where the concern has reached the threshold of reasonable grounds for concern. Where the DLP does not forward a report a record of the report and action/non-action will be kept See section 3 of this document.

Section 3.

Responding to and Reporting Child Protection or Welfare Concerns

3.1 Responsibility to Report

All workers and volunteers (including students on placement or work experience) have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people and must report any concerns they have for the protection and/or welfare of a child/young person. Where a worker or volunteer has any concern, they should raise the issue with the DLP. The DLP will discuss the concern and the grounds for those concerns with the reportee. Where there are reasonable grounds for concern the DLP will make a report from the organisation on behalf of the Mandated Person to Tusla, or support a mandated person to make their report. All reports of concern will be recorded and kept on file by the DLP. Not all reports by Mandated Persons will reach the threshold of harm and be reported under the CF Act – mandated persons can make also non-mandated reports. If the reportee is not happy by the decision not to report, they may independently make a report to Tusla. The DLP may discuss a case (informally) with a TUSLA Social Worker prior to deciding to report. The DLP will inform the reportee in writing that a report has or has not been made and where a report has not been made will indicate why.

All staff must know who the DLP is and how to contact them (See Section 2). At out of hours and off-site events staff and volunteers must know who the DLP contact is and how to contact them on the day. The DLP must be informed of all events that include young people.

Mandated Persons have statutory duties laid out in the Children First Act 2015. Mandated Persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns that reach or are above a defined threshold of harm (see section 14 of the Children First Act 2015) and to assist with Tusla in the assessment of mandated reports, where requested to do so. All mandated reports must be copied to the DLP at the time of making the report. The DLP will keep a file of any mandated report, this should be the main case file unless there are clear grounds to keep a separate file copy. Tusla have a responsibility for the protection and welfare of the child, An Garda Síochána have responsibility for investigating suspected crime. Where a concern is of a criminal nature (a crime has been committed against a young person), AGS must be informed, as per the provisions of the Withholding of Information Act.

NB Mandated Persons can make non-mandated reports, like everyone else, through their DLP where Reasonable Grounds for Concern exist. Where the threshold of harm has been reached or exceeded, they can make a joint report with their DLP – or inform the DLP that they have made a report under the Act. It is important to remember that the Mandated Person also needs the support of the DLP and to use them as a resource.

3.2 Reasonable grounds for concern

You may be concerned about the wellbeing/welfare or protection of a child for any number of reasons. TUSLA must be informed where there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being or is at significant risk of being abused or neglected. Where you have a concern, including if

you are a mandated person the issue should be discussed with the DLP. In most instances the DLP will make any necessary report on your behalf, except:

1. You are a mandated person making a mandated report
2. You have immediate concerns for the safety of the young person and it has not been possible to contact the DLP, Deputy DLP

The safety and best interest of the Child are paramount at all times.

Children may be abused by members of their own family, by those in a position of responsibility or care (Teacher, Sports Coach), by peers, by strangers or by some in our organisation. Abuse can occur remotely for example using online platforms, texting and or other social media.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern and should be reported:

- 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 is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
- Admission by an adult or child of an alleged abuse they have committed
- An account by a person who saw the child being abused.
- Evidence, such as injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely, to be caused another way.
- Direct witness to an action or behaviour

Where possible issues should be checked with parents/guardians when considering whether a concern exists, unless doing so would further endanger the child, or person considering making the report, or impede Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment. A suspicion, which is not supported by any objective signs of abuse, would not constitute a reasonable suspicion, or reasonable grounds for concern. However, these suspicions should be reported to the Designated Liasion Person who will record them internally as future suspicions or concerns may lead to the decision to make a report. In such a case further reports and observations may lead to reasonable grounds for concern and report to TUSLA.

3.3 Direct disclosure by a young person

Should a young person disclose abuse to you the following important points should be taken into consideration:

- Take what the young person says **seriously**.
- Be as calm and as natural as possible. Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked. Do not panic.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the young person.
- **Reassure the young person that it was right to talk to you** about what happened and that they have done nothing wrong.
- Remember that the young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- **Listen to what the young person has to say.** Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to. Do not pressure the young person. Allow him/her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.

- Ask questions for/of clarification only. **Your job is not to investigate** but to support the young person. Do not ask leading questions such as whether a specific person carried out the abuse, or whether specific acts mentioned by the young person occurred. Such questions may complicate an official investigation.
- Check back with the child to make sure you have understood what they have said.
- **Do not express any opinion** about the alleged abuser to the young person.
- It may be necessary to reassure the young person that your feelings towards him/her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what he / she has disclosed.
- **Do not promise to keep secrets.** At the earliest opportunity tell the young person that you acknowledge that they have come to you because they trust you. Tell him / her that there are secrets which are not helpful and should not be kept because they make matters worse. Such secrets hide things that need to be known if people are to be helped and protected from further on-going hurt. By refusing to make a commitment to secrecy to the young person, you do run the risk that they may not tell you everything or indeed anything, there and then. However, it is better to do this than to tell a lie and ruin the young person's confidence in yet another adult. By being honest, it is more likely that he/she will return to you at another time.
- Ensure the child understands the process
- At the earliest possible opportunity **record in writing** what the young person has said, including as far as possible, the exact words uttered by him / her. Record facts only, no opinions or hearsay. Records should be factual, they can be made on what is available but where possible on the incident report form (**Appendix 6**). Key dates, names and contact details recorded. Note any action taken at the time and any follow up action (See Section 2)
- **If you are not a mandated person pass on all information to the Designated Liaison Person.** As above, mandated person can use DLP as a resource and make a joint report if the **Mandated Person** decides that the threshold of harm has been reached or exceeded. **If you are a mandated person making a mandated report directly to Tusla on the appropriate reporting form (see Mandated Reporting Below). If you are mandated person and your report will not be mandatory report through the DLP. If you have any doubts or concern discuss with either your DLP or Tusla and report appropriately. If you are unhappy with a decision not to report, you can report the matter directly to Tusla.** Do not discuss this disclosure to any other third party, as disclosures are on a need to know basis only.
- For non-mandated reports the Designated Liaison Person will carry out the necessary steps in making a referral to the Tusla.
- Treat the information confidentially. Information should be shared on a need to know basis.

3.4 Ongoing Support

Following a disclosure by a child, it is important that Youth Work Ireland Tipperary staff and volunteers continue in a supportive relationship with the child. Once disclosure to Tusla has been made by the DLP or a Mandated person our role is to support the young person, not the disclosure. Disclosure is a huge step for many children and support should be continued through:

- Maintaining a positive relationship with the child
- Keeping lines of communication open by listening to the child
- Continuing to include the child in the usual activities

Any further disclosures should be treated as a first disclosure and responded to accordingly.

3.5 Dealing with a Suspicion of Child Abuse

In situations where a suspicion / concern may be deemed vague i.e. where there is no specific allegation but there is some concern based on the emotional behaviour and/or physical presentation or behaviour of the child, then staff/volunteers should consult the Designated Liaison Person for advice. The Designated Person will establish if there are Reasonable Grounds for Concern and whether or not a report is warranted and will seek the advice of TUSLA if required. Details of the consultation will be recorded and filed. A formal report to TUSLA may follow as advised.

3.6 Mandated Reporting:

A mandated report is made by a mandate person directly to Tusla based whether the threshold of harm has been met or exceeded as defined in the Children First Act 2015. Staff are Mandated as set out in Appendix 2: Schedule of Mandated Persons Under the Children First Act 2015. Mandated persons are identified based on their role and profession by Youth Work Ireland Tipperary as the provider of a relevant service and will have been notified in writing that they are a mandated person. All mandated persons will have been given the briefing for mandated persons by the DLP. A list of mandated persons is maintained on file by the organisation (HR/ Finance).

Mandated Persons have two legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015. These are:

1. To report the harm of children at or above a defined threshold directly Tusla;
2. To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been subject of a mandated report.

Section 14(1) of the Children First Act states:

“...where a mandated person knows, believed or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information he or she has received, acquired or become aware of in the course of his or her employment or profession as such a mandated person, that a child-

- a) Has been harmed,
- b) Is being harmed, or
- c) Is at risk of being harmed

He or she shall, as soon as practicable, report that knowledge, belief or suspicion, as the case may be, to the Agency.”

Section 14(2) of the Children First Act 2015 also places obligations on a mandated person to report any disclosures made by a child:

“where a child believes that he or she_

- a) Has been harmed
- b) Is being harmed, or
- c) Is at risk of being harmed,

And discloses this belief to a mandated person in the course of a mandated persons employment or profession as such a person, the mandated person shall, ... as soon as practicable, report that disclosure to the Agency.”

Section 2 of the Children First Act 2015 defines Harm as follows:

“harm means in relation to a child-

- a) Assault, ill treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or,
- b) Sexual abuse of the child.”

As a mandated person, under the legislation you are required to report any knowledge, belief or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect or sexual abuse, and covers single and multiple instances. The four types of abuse are described in Chapter 2 of Children First National Guidance for the protection and Welfare and Children and are set out in **Appendix 7** of this document. Symptoms and signs of abuse are also covered in the CPAP and other trainings such as Children First Level 2 (TUSLA). The threshold of harm for each category of abuse at which mandated persons have a legal obligation to report concerns is outlined below.

3.7 Definitions, Signs and Indicators of Abuse

If you are in doubt about whether your concern reaches the legal definition of harm for making a mandated report, discuss the matter with your DLP, or Tusla. If your concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but you feel it is a reasonable concern, the concern should be brought to the DLP. The DLP will make a non-mandated report or inform the reportee as to why no report is being made. If the reportee still feels a report should be made they should make a non-mandated report. The following definitions are from the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

NEGLECT

Neglect is defined as ‘to deprive a child of adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, supervision, safety or medical care’. The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child’s needs have been neglected, are being neglected, or are at risk of being neglected to the point where **the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.**

EMOTIONAL ABUSE/ILL-TREATMENT

Ill-treatment is defined as ‘to abandon or cruelly treat the child, or to cause or procure or allow the child to be abandoned or cruelly treated’. Emotional abuse is covered in the definition of ill-treatment used in the Children First Act 2015.

The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where **the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.**

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is covered in the references to assault in the Children First Act 2015. The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being assaulted and that as a result **the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.**

SEXUAL ABUSE

If, as a mandated person, you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused, then you must report this to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015.

Sexual abuse to be reported under the Children First Act 2015 [as amended by section 55 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017] is defined as an offence against the child, as listed in Schedule 3 of the Children First Act 2015.

A full list of relevant offences against the child which are considered sexual abuse is set out in **Appendix 7** of this Guidance as set out in the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children

As all sexual abuse falls within the category of seriously affecting a child's health, welfare or development, you must submit all concerns about sexual abuse as a mandated report to Tusla. There is one exception, which deals with certain consensual sexual activity between teenagers, which is outlined on page 23 of the National Guidance:

Exemptions from requirements to report

UNDERAGE CONSENSUAL SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Under the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006 the legal age of consent is 17 years. While a sexual relationship where one or both parties is under 17 years of age is illegal, when making a mandated report to Tusla, it might not be regarded as child sexual abuse.

There are certain exemptions from reporting underage consensual sexual activity under section 14(3) of the Children First Act 2015. If you are satisfied that all of the following criteria are met, you are not required to make a report to Tusla:

- The young person(s) concerned are between 15 and 17 years old
- The age difference between them is not more than 24 months
- There is no material difference in their maturity or capacity to consent
- The relationship between the people engaged in the sexual activity does not involve intimidation or exploitation of either person
- The young persons concerned state clearly that they do not want any information about the activity to be disclosed to Tusla

In effect, this means that if all of the above criteria are met, you as a mandated person do not have to report consensual sexual activity between older teenagers as sexual abuse to Tusla. You can discuss a concern with your DLP and or Tusla to help clarify if you report or not.

The legal element of the act only applies to your professional work or employment and does not apply to information you become aware of or acquire outside of work. If you have any concerns arising outside of the workplace and your professional responsibilities you should report to Tusla as a concerned citizen, this report will not be a mandated report.

Mandated reports are made directly to Tusla preferable in conjunction with the DLP or if not then copied to the DLP. Reports can be made in writing on the appropriate (attached as appendix 9), Reports to be posted to the appropriate Tusla contact (see the Tusla Website www.tusla.ie form). You must indicate on the form that you are making a mandated report. **The Web Portal is the preferred method of reporting to Tusla.**

If your concern is urgent you can report directly by phone or in person to Tusla and follow up in writing within 3 three days. If you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, contact the Gardai. Please note out-of-hours phone numbers for Mandated Persons 0818776315

3.8 Risk Factors for Consideration in Child Protection

3.8.1 Complicating Factors in Child Protection

Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Young people recognises some Children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others there may also be a number of known risk factors that need to be considered when responding to child protection concerns. Risk factors are features of a child's circumstances that are known to be associated with heightened risk to health, development and welfare. Risk Factors associated with child abuse and maltreatment can broadly be grouped into four domains: parent or caregiver factors, family factors, child factors, environmental factors.

Alongside the signs and symptoms of abuse there may also be a number of known risk factors that need to be considered when responding to child protection concerns. Risk factors are features of a child's circumstances that are known to be associated with heightened risk to health, development and welfare.

Risk Factors associated with child abuse and maltreatment can broadly be grouped into four domains: parent or caregiver factors, family factors, child factors, environmental factors.

In addition, other risk factors that need to be considered are:

- Age of the child
- Domestic violence/sexual violence
- Homes where other children are subject to care orders
- Parental mental health problems
- Parental substance misuse
- Parental intellectual disability
- Unknown and multiple partners
- Families who are 'uncooperative' or 'hard to engage'
- Poverty and social exclusion
- *Potential risk* to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable.

Note – this is not an exhaustive list and often many children & their families can experience more than one of these risk factors or a combination of a number of them.

3.8.2 Children and Young People with Additional Vulnerabilities

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

3.9 Considering whether there is a Welfare Concern

Listed below are questions that may help staff when they are concerned about a child's or young person's welfare:

- Is the child or young person behaving normally for his or her age and stage of development?
- Does the child or young person present a change in behaviour?
- For how long has this behaviour been observed?
- How often does it occur? Where?
- Has something happened that explain the child's or young person's behaviour?
- Is the child or young person showing signs of distress? If so, describe (e.g. behavioural, emotional, physical signs).
- Does the behaviour happen everywhere or just in the school, childcare or youth work setting?
- Is the child or young person suffering?
- Does the behaviour restrict the child or young person socially?
- Does the behaviour interfere with the child's or young person's development?
- What effect, if any, does it have on others (e.g. other children or young people)?
- What are the child's or young person's parents(s) /guardian(s) views, if known?

Note – this is not an exhaustive list and often many children & their families can experience more than one of these risk factors or a combination of a number of them.

3.10 Joint Reporting

The mandated person may make a report jointly with any other person whether that person is mandated or not. **Ideally the DLP will also be involved in making the report.** This could arise at an event where they are working with another provider, or member service, or where they and a caretaker are working and jointly party to a matter of concern.

3.11 Informing the parents

As with any report, parents should be informed except were to do so might put the child at further risk or doing so could impair TUSLA's ability to carry out a risk assessment. You do not have inform parents if you reasonably believe doing so may place you at risk of harm from the family.

3.12 Retrospective Reports.

Where you become aware of an historical or retrospective issue of abuse the procedures outlined above should be followed. Where there is a risk that an abuser may still be able to harm children report should be made following the appropriate procedure but if a report is made the Retrospective Reporting form should be used on the web portal. You may wish to discuss the concern with the DLP or Tusla. Reports should be made without delay. Services working with particular groups (young adult parents, family's services, counselling service will need to bear in mind the increased likelihood of Retrospective Reports in their risk assessment and procedures.

All mandated reports if not made in conjunction with the DLP must be copied immediately to the DLP.

3.13 Reporting suspected Crime to the Gardai

Consideration must be given to responsibilities under the Criminal Justice act (withholding Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, these are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015. Where a worker is aware of a crime being committed they must in addition to reporting their concerns to TUSLA make report to An Garda Siochana.

3.14 Confidentiality

This section outlines and provides guidance on Youth Work Ireland Tipperary's Code on Confidentiality. Youth work involves the development of trusting relationships where it may be common for children and young people to divulge personal information. Therefore, all staff and volunteers need to be aware that a young person or a colleague may disclose that they are being abused or know of someone who is being abused.

Confidentiality is about managing sensitive information in a manner that is respectful, professional and purposeful. All information provided to Youth Work Ireland by a child or young person, volunteer or staff member must be treated in a confidential manner. All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to handle all sensitive information in line with Youth Work Ireland's Code on Confidentiality.

3.14.1 Code of Confidentiality

1. All information regarding a Child Protection concern or suspected case of Child Abuse must be only shared on a 'need to know basis' and always in the best interests of the child's general welfare and safety. The subject should never be discussed with other persons in the organisation, including staff, volunteers or young people if they are not directly involved.
2. In the case of a Child Protection concern, no member of staff or volunteer should promise a person they can keep a secret to any person disclosing the information. The person receiving the information should also never state that they would keep a secret if the organisation did not have a policy on this. This could give the person who made the disclosure the impression that the information is not that serious or infer a range of mixed messages. It must be made clear to the person(s) making the disclosure that secrets cannot be kept but that the information will only be shared with the appropriate person who will handle the information sensitively.
3. Sharing information with the designated person or Tusla (where seeking advice or making a mandated report) for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality. Codes of confidentiality do not intend to prevent the exchange of information between individuals who have a responsibility to protect children.
4. Personal information, which is gathered for a specific purpose, should never be used for any other purpose without consulting the person who provided that information.
5. Parents Guardians have right to know if personal information about them is being shared, unless doing so could put the child at further risk, or may put the reporter at risk,

All staff and volunteers working with children must have some training on understanding the importance of confidentiality and the limitations of confidentiality in relation to Child Protection.

3.15 Allegations against a Staff Member or Volunteer

If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer in Youth Work Ireland Tipperary or its clubs, that issue will be dealt with in accordance with this Child Protection policy. Legal advice will also be sought at this time. This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the Disciplinary Section of the Youth Work Ireland Tipperary Staff Handbook and **Appendix 9** of this policy.

3.15.1 Allegations against staff or volunteers

If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer, then two separate procedures will be followed:

- The reporting procedure in respect of the child
- The disciplinary procedure for dealing with the staff member or volunteer
- The matter may need to be referred to the Gardai if a criminal offence against a child is alleged

These procedures should be followed in the event of suspicion or disclosure of abuse against an employee or volunteer. Where the DLP is informed of an allegation against a member of staff/volunteer the DLP should immediately report to Tusla, as per normal reporting procedures and also inform the CEO/Chairperson as appropriate. In this situation, Youth Work Ireland Tipperary must have due regard for the rights and interest of the child. The organisation also needs to ensure natural justice for a person against whom the allegation is made and to deal with the matter in a timely way enabling a quick resolution to disciplinary process. All stages of the process must be recorded. Where appropriate close liaison between TUSLA, the Gardai and the employer should be maintained.

The CEO of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary will deal with the staff member / volunteer in question, while the Deputy Designated Person will have the responsibility of dealing with the reporting issue and supporting the child. Staff / volunteers may be subjected to erroneous or malicious allegations; therefore, any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively and support provided for staff as well as the child, including counselling where necessary. However, the primary goal is to protect the child while taking care to treat the staff member/volunteer fairly.

When the CEO of the Youth Work Ireland Tipperary becomes aware of an allegation of abuse of a child or children by a staff member / volunteer, they will need to decide if the person needs to be suspended from work/face to face duties. Decisions should be made in the best interests of the child. Decision should be proportionate to the level of risk posed to the young person/other young people. Such protective measures do not presume guilt.

The CEO should meet privately with the member of staff/volunteer to inform that person of the following:

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

If an allegation is made against a staff member/volunteer TUSLA will be notified through the reporting procedures.

The staff member/volunteer will be afforded an opportunity to respond to the allegation. At this meeting the staff/member should be afforded the opportunity to have representation. The CEO Director will note the response and pass this information if a formal report has or is being made to

Tusla. Normal investigatory procedures as outlined in the Staff Handbook for Disciplinary procedures will then be followed.

It is important to note that “**The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998**” applies equally to organisations provided they report the matter “**reasonably and in good faith**”.

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary accepts the possibility that a number of factors may have a bearing on the organisation and will need to be considered:

- Possible reactions of other members of staff / volunteers including anger, disbelief, doubt, fear, guilt, shock, anxiety and confusion.
- The effects on the alleged abuser of the internal disciplinary proceedings, the Child Protection investigation and the criminal investigation.
- The reactions of other staff / volunteers and the other children towards the young person who has been abused or whose allegation is being investigated.
- The reaction of parents / carers, other organisations and other family members of the young person.

Through a series of basic Child Protection awareness training programmes, all persons involved in Youth Work Ireland will be given the opportunity to discuss such issues in an open and non-threatening environment.

NOTE: Should an allegation be made against the CEO of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary, the Chairperson of the Board will step in to deal with the situation. (Note Appendix 10 Flowchart for dealing with allegations against a member of staff)

Procedures for Dealing with Employees and Employer’s Duty of Care to Children or Child Abuse.

Any internal disciplinary held should not interfere with the Tusla and/or Gardai investigation. Pending the outcome of the investigation by the TUSLA and/or Gardaí the staff member / volunteer may:

- Be re-assigned to duties that do not involve contact or access to children / young people, depending on the nature of the allegation
- Be suspended with pay

The staff member / volunteer will be offered counselling, should the need arise.

3.15.2 Working with other providers in partnership.

A partnership agreement or governing document (such as an MOU) should be in place and this document should refer to the procedures to be followed. Where two workers or more from different organisations are aware of an issue the workers should inform their respective DLP’s of the incident and concerns through the organisations reporting system, this can be a shared/joint report. The DLP’s may contact each other to discuss the concern and either make a joint report, or separate reports. In the unlikely one DLP decides not to report whilst the other reports each organisation must follow its own procedures ensuring the reason for not/reporting are logged.

Where one party to the concern is a mandated person that person will need to determine if the threshold of harm has been reached/exceeded where this is the case, they will make a mandated

report, which will be a joint report with the other worker/volunteer. The mandated report will be copied to both DLP's as a joint report. Where one worker only witnesses or is made aware of abuse, they will use their system for reporting. The DLP will alert the DLP of the partner organisation(s) that a report has been made but no further information should be disclosed unless there is a need to know.

Where an allegation concerns a worker/volunteer from another organisation the person must report their concern appropriately through their child protection reporting procedures making a report to the DLP or making a mandated report. In this instance the DLP will speak to the DLP in the worker's own organisation informing them that a report has been made and the grounds of the report.

Where Youth Work Ireland Tipperary is in receipt of such a report the CEO will follow the procedure for staff outlined above.

3.16 Exchange of Information

All staff and volunteers should be aware that ensuring that safeguarding of children is only possible in the organisation if all staff and volunteers share relevant information. Also to ensure Child Protection, the organisation must work in partnership with TUSLA and the Gardaí.

Any person who receives information from colleagues about possible or actual Child Abuse must treat it as having been given in confidence and follow the organisation's reporting procedures.

It is also necessary that any records of incidents, disclosures, or concerns of a Child Protection or welfare nature are only accessible to those who should have access to the records because of a need to know.

Reports that are made to the Designated Liaison Person can still be followed up on after being shared with the statutory agencies. However, it should be noted that not giving the name of the person making the report can make it more difficult to assess a situation.

Records relating to Safeguarding need to be kept in perpetuity this has a number of knock on effects for organisations working with young people including developing adequate storage and retrieval systems are in place.

Any requests for information should be assessed and determined on the questions set out below. A record of the assessment should be kept. The best interests of the child are paramount.

- Is passing the information on in the best interests of the child?
- Is there a clear legal basis for the information to be passed to a third party?
- Has consent been gained to pass the information on to a third party?
- Is the information sought confidential?
- Is the recipient a bona fide person/organisation
- Is the information sought under the terms of an MOU or other contractual arrangement?
- In some instances, Legal advice may need to be taken
- A risk based approach should be taken using the questions above as a guide.
- In case conferences workers may be discussing issues that are not know to other parties, see section 3.13 on confidentiality.

Summary Reporting Procedure

- Internally, the staff member/ volunteer should consult with and report the concern to the Designated Liaison Person ASAP.
- For mandated persons, they need to consider whether the concern reaches or exceeds the threshold for 'harm' as defined in the Act. Consultation with the DLP may happen, or a direct report may take place to TUSLA with a copy sent to the DLP.
- Recording – All staff are obliged to record the details of the concern and the decisions and actions taken.
- If there is an immediate risk to the child TUSLA and the Gardai should be contacted immediately.
- If the allegation involved allegations of abuse by a child – where the person allegedly causing harm to a child is another child (peer abuse), reports should be made to TUSLA for both children.
- Talking to parent(s). It is best practice to inform parents/guardians that you are reporting a concern about a child, however, they do not need to be informed that a report is being made if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or if the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment. Also, it is not necessary to inform the family if the person making the report reasonably believes it may place them at risk of harm from the family. Consideration should be given to who is the most appropriate person to talk to parents/guardians. Support and guidance from the DLP in this instance is available.
- Informal consultation is strongly recommended with TUSLA in terms of seeking advice and guidance from the Tusla social work office in the child/young person's area when the Designated Liaison Person or worker/volunteer is unsure whether a report should be made.
- Please refer to above in order to identify reasonable grounds for concern
- It is the DLP or mandated person's responsibility to Child Protection and Welfare Report Form or Retrospective Abuse Report Form – DLP or mandated person's responsibility to complete the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form or the Retrospective Report Form and forward it to the TUSLA Duty Social Worker. Where mandated persons are making a report under the Children First Act 2015 they can make a joint report with their DLP. Reports to Tusla should be made without delay. The form is available on Tusla's website, www.tusla.ie.
- If you do not report to Tusla there is still a requirement that concerns are noted and tracked – the DLP will act as co-ordinator in such cases.

Section 4.

Working Safely with Children and Young People

4.1 Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary Recruitment and Selection procedures are contained in the HR Manual. This is a specified procedure the relevant sections of this document should be read in conjunction with this Safeguarding policy, as should the Child Safeguarding Statement, and Risk Assessment. Youth Work Ireland Tipperary adopts safe recruitment and selection practices outlined in both **Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children**. The procedures are designed to be clear, unambiguous and equitable and in the best interest of young people and adults alike.

Safe practice starts with safe recruitment procedures and involves:

- Advertise all positions openly and transparently
- Apply thorough selection procedures
- Devise an Application Form for each position
- Have an up to date Job Description and a Job Specification for each position
- Create an Essential Qualifications/Skills and a Desired Qualifications/Skills criteria for each position
- Inform candidates at application stage that they will be subject to garda vetting
- Ask candidates to sign a declaration of suitability stating that there is no reason why they would be unsuitable to work with young people. The Declaration of Suitability is included in both the Staff and Volunteer application forms. as part of the application form.
- Follow due course, ie open date/closing date for applications, maintain applicants' details closed and confidential until the Interview Panel meet to discuss all applications together to undertake the shortlisting procedure
- Decide if the application process is to be followed soft/hard copy or both
- Decide you want to see an applicant's CV or only a written letter of application to accompany the Application Form
- Judge the suitability of applicants in relation to a broad range of predetermined matters
- Create the Interview Question List
- Invite candidates to interview
- Hold interviews, with a panel which has at least three interviewers if possible, taking experience of interviewers and gender balance into account.
- Hold a second interview where appropriate with board members attending
- Select the best candidate for the position and inform them that the offer of the position is subject to satisfactory provision of 2 x references AND acceptable Garda Clearance
- Follow up on references (2), one who must be the current or last employer/Line Manager
- Ensure preferred candidate provides original photographic ID and proof of current address (to be photocopied and returned to candidate)
- Ensure the preferred candidate undertakes the Garda Vetting
- Ensure the preferred candidate provides original documentation to prove qualifications (these will be photocopied and returned to candidate)

- Upon successful receipt of References (2) and acceptable Garda Clearance a letter of offer can be made
- Induction (including guiding principles, safeguarding procedures, and code of conduct) will be carried out on the first day of employment
- TUSLA e-learning will be undertaken by the successful candidate
- Provide relevant training as required by the organisation, including CPAP and provide ongoing support & supervision
- Ensure that a contract is given to the successful candidate
- Adhere to good practice by having a probationary meeting set

Full details of the recruitment process are contained in the HR manual. The Staff/Volunteer Code of Conduct sets out expectations of both staff and Volunteers

4.2 Garda Vetting

It is the policy of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary to vet all staff and volunteers as all roles in Youth Work Ireland will involve contact with young people and/or personal information. No post whether staff or volunteer, paid or unpaid will be confirmed until References and Garda Vetting Process is complete. In some instances, information from the Vetting and or reference returns could lead to potential cessation of the appointment process. Where either specified information or other information is raised to us through the vetting process the individual will be contacted to discuss the information in the first instance. If the information is challenged the dispute process will be followed. The fact that someone has a conviction does not necessarily mean they are not appointable depending on the nature of the offence and other mitigating factors.

At all times the Garda Vetting process will be followed as set out in the Garda Vetting section of the HR policy.

At all times our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment should be taken into consideration.

4.3 Safeguarding Training in Youth Work Ireland

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary has identified minimum standards of training for Staff and Volunteers:

- All staff must complete the TUSLA, (or for those HSE funded project workers HSE land) Safeguarding E-learning Module as part of their induction
- All staff to be briefed on their Safeguarding duties and responsibilities, either by their line manager or the DLP (the induction briefing for staff should cover the code of conduct, these procedures, and the role of the mandated person if that person is a mandated person)
- NYCI CPAP course will be delivered by a current registered trainer.
- All staff must complete Level 2 foundation training from TUSLA
- All volunteers are recommended to undertake the TUSLA (or HSE land for HSE funded projects) E-learning module
- All volunteers must complete the NYCI CPAP training delivered by a registered trainer prior to taking up any role as part of their induction (see Volunteer Handbook)
- All mandated staff will in addition have had the Mandated Persons Briefing
- All board members must complete the E-Learning Module (TUSLA or HSE Land) and have completed the NYCI (DCYA) approved Board Safeguarding Briefing delivered by an approved person (list available from National Office)

- Any staff member being appointed to the role of DLP must undergo a briefing with the CEO, and complete the NYCI/ TUSLA DLP training in addition to the trainings above.
- CPAP trainers must have completed the NYCI CPAP Trainers course, be registered with Youth Work Ireland (and NYCI) and are subject to the CPAP monitoring scheme and licence arrangements made with NYCI

It is the responsibility of management to identify essential training for staff that is essential to the delivery of services. Managers together with staff members should identify both individual and common training needs of staff and volunteers. Youth Work Ireland Tipperary strives to meet the training needs of all staff/volunteers, where possible. Staff and volunteers are also encouraged to identify any gaps in training and to discuss them with the appropriate manager. Training is discussed in staff meetings, supervision and on an ongoing basis.

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary has committed to having all personnel trained and kept up to date regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection. Further training is available for Designated Liaison Persons, Mandated Persons, and for experienced trainers wishing to offer the CPAP course. Training also consists of staff meetings and briefings and cascade of information.

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary will ensure all staff, volunteers and board members have had the appropriate training. Training information for staff, Board members and volunteers is held on file as part of the personnel file. The record will include Trainings attended and the Trainer, a record of any briefings attended, induction details and sign off on the probationary period as outlined in the staff handbook. Staff and Volunteers including Board Members must supply their E-Learning Certificate to their Line Manager or key staff contact. E-Learning Certs are filed by finance office.

The National Office of Youth Work Ireland has the responsibility of co-ordinating, registering and recording the CPAP Training for the whole Organisation Youth Work Ireland registered CPAP courses are separately registered and lists of all staff and volunteers held by National Office. Each region will maintain a training record for its staff, volunteers and board members.

4.4 Support and Supervision

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary's staff support, and supervision policy is outlined in the HR manual. This section of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines should be read in conjunction with this document.

For the purposes of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidance "staff" means all full time or part time permanent or temporary staff, and those on Government Funded schemes such as Jobs Bridge, TUS, Community Employment and Interns.

Supervision may be made available to volunteers as appropriate and where identified as required. Student Placements and Internships will be subject to supervision in line with that for other staff, but may be subject to additional conditions set by their college (joint meetings, observing learning outcomes, recording for example)

Volunteering and working with children is both worthwhile and fulfilling, but also challenging. Once recruited, all staff and volunteers of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary will be well informed, trained, supervised and supported, so that they are less likely to become involved in actions which can lead to harm, or can be misunderstood.

The following processes will apply:

Induction

All applicants will go through an initial induction period, which will enable them to get to know the organisation, the staff/volunteers, their role and responsibilities. Contracts of employment, where applicable, will be discussed and signed. The induction period will also cover expectations, conditions and procedures for dealing with discipline, grievances and allegations and the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures amongst others.

Supervision and Support

Staff and volunteers (and Student Placements) participate in support and supervision sessions with their youth worker /line manager on an agreed basis as set out in the Supervision Policy. Interim sessions can be arranged should the need arise and there is access to email/telephone support as needed. Team/area support meetings are also held on a scheduled basis throughout the organisation. The support and supervision sessions ensure that Youth Work Ireland Tipperary personnel are supported in their work and given the appropriate guidance and assistance to develop professionally within best practice guidelines.

Supervision sessions include regular reviews of performance/activity with personnel in order to:

- Ensure that the requirements of the role are fulfilled
- Give / receive feedback on person / work performance
- Identify any additional training and development needs
- Plan objectives for the weeks / months / years ahead
- Mediation to ensure healthy engagement with, and communication between the individual and the organisation.

Support and supervision provide personnel with the opportunity to discuss their work in a structured and supportive environment. It is a process for encouraging and enabling personal development through dialogue. Support and supervision also involve monitoring and directing work undertaken to ensure accountability to the organisation.

External Support and supervision

All core staff are allocated 4 external supervision sessions per annum. It is not a mandatory requirement for staff to attend external supervision. The aim of External Supervision is to provide extra regular support by providing :

- a safe, neutral and professional space
- for staff to reflect on their work
- and the impact it has on them.

External supervision will compliment the existing internal supervision with line manager/ supervisor, which will remain in place. Each staff can access 4 sessions per year, to use when needed (there will be a budget allocated to projects). Individual staff can negotiate further sessions in conjunction with Management. A panel of supervisors will be made available to staff with contact details

As with all Youth Work Ireland Tipperary internal policies, Child Protection, training, information and policies will be regularly updated and communicated to all parties involved in the organisations once approved by the Board.

4.5 Safe Management of Activities

The child-centred ethos of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary creates an environment in which children are valued, encouraged and listened to. We respect the rights of young people as individuals in society. Through training and education, we ensure that young people know their rights and responsibilities. All activities must be planned, and a risk assessment conducted there are supports and guidelines for clubs, volunteers, young people and staff on planning activities, programmes, events and trips. If planning an offsite, residential, overseas and or trip and/or an unfamiliar/hazardous activity particular care is needed. General Advice can be requested from your line manager/CEO. Advice on Insurance for clubs is contained in the Insurance handbook.

Participation in Youth Work Ireland Tipperary is based on informed consent given by the parent/guardian for young people Under 18 years of age and for vulnerable adults. The consent puts responsibility for care of the young person with the service, its staff, volunteers and other agents. The duty of care is known as loco parentis meaning that a standard of care and diligence is put in place that is the same as reasonable parent would do. Loco Parentis also allows some decisions to be made on behalf of the child when parents cannot be contacted (normally emergency and medical situations). Young people over the age of 18 self-consent and this confers a duty of care and in some circumstances the right to make decisions on behalf of the participant (normally in emergency and/or medical situations).

Know your Young People

All young people engaging with Youth Work Ireland Tipperary do so based on voluntary informed consent whether engaged in a programme, consultation or voluntary club:

- A list of members/participants is maintained by projects. Once off programmes will also require a list of participants and consent to participate in said activity. Membership criteria are clearly set out. Young people complete either the project registration or club membership registration form.
- An attendance record is kept of all activities/programmes/club nights/events/consultation and or other activity.
- Membership records should include appropriately signed consent form. The consent form must have parental/guardian contact details and emergency contact details if these are different at any time. The consent form should indicate any medical issues and is should clearly give leaders loco parentis rights and responsibilities in an emergency.
- Club and Project consent forms only cover what can be described as the normal activity of a club or project where a third party is coming in to deliver a talk or activity, where an activity is away from the normal base (is off site), or involves activities that are not part of the normal offer and/or can be considered hazardous or sensitive (for example sexual health) additional informed consent should be sought (see trips and activities).
- Contact details must be kept safe and secure but also be accessible to the leader(s) in charge.
- A copy of Consent forms will be taken on offsite and residential trips and be held by the leader in charge.
- Staff/Volunteers will not have young people's personal contact details on their phone; instead contact details will be via the parent/guardian.
- Clear times for activities, programmes, clubs, trips are set out and clear for young people and parents/guardians
- A record should be kept of contact with parents
- Arrangements for young people leaving activities, programmes, clubs, trips etc should be clear to and for parents, young people and leaders,
- Where plans change due to delays or other reason that is not an emergency a system for informing Parents/Guardians and the organisation should be in place.

- An emergency procedure should be in place and understood for use if there is an emergency or Critical Incident See Critical Incident Plan
- Any Accident/Incident must be logged, and a record made.
- Critical incidents must be reviewed initially by the Board to determine appropriate pathway.
- Complaints or grievances must be logged and dealt with in line with the Complaints Policy and Staff Handbook respectively.
- All staff and volunteers must be aware of the procedures for dealing with challenging behaviour (see challenging behaviour below)

4.5.i Health and Safety

Health and Safety responsibilities must be discharged, and organisations comply with the Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and other related acts (see Health and Safety Policy):

Leaders and the organisation must ensure that:

- Planned activities are appropriate to the group
- Adequate risk assessments are carried out and any actions identified are carried out before an activity/programme/event commences
- Adequate informed Parental/Guardian consent is in place for all participants
- Any buildings being used are safe, secure and meet required standards. All occupied parts of the building should be monitored and parts not in use should be isolated or secured.
- There is sufficient heating and ventilation
- Any food preparation areas where they exist are sanitary and meet food safety requirements
- Toilets, shower and washing areas are to standard and meet accessibility requirements of all members
- Fire precautions are in place and are understood by staff/volunteers/young people
- That there is adequate first aid cover and equipment in place as appropriate to the venue/activity and location
- There is access to a phone
- Emergency procedures are in place
- Appropriate and adequate insurances are in place
- That any activity is appropriately and adequately supervised (in some instances this may entail staff and/or volunteers with the appropriate training/skills/experience)

4.5.ii Safe Supervision

Adequate supervision should be in place for activities in order that a safe environment is maintained, and any incidents/accidents dealt with. A specified staff/volunteer compliment should be agreed, but is normally 1 staff to 8 young people and 2 staff minimum with any group and 2 years age gap between staff and young people. The staff compliment or ratio will vary and is based on a number of factors making up a risk assessment but include:

- Age and Ability of young people
- Relevant policy guidelines
- Other advice (for example legislative requirements, insurers advice)
- Overall risk consideration for the building and activities
- Other factors (familiarity or lack of with a venue, group, activity or other significant factor.
- The minimum guidelines will be maintained to and the minimum number of adult volunteers is normally 2. This does not mean that one to one work cannot take place, however one to

one work should never happen in an environment where other staff/volunteers are not immediately available. Where one to one work is taking place see appropriate supporting procedures.

- Staff/volunteers are not permitted to give lifts in their cars to individual young people.

A work schedule should be displayed so that everyone knows who is on duty/volunteering. The leader in charge should be known to young people/parents/staff and volunteers, where responsibility is delegated to another for whatever reason it should be made clear to young people/staff/volunteers of the change of leadership responsibility. Where possible there should be an appropriate gender balance of staff/volunteers. Staff and volunteers should know where and what young people are doing at all times of their engagement with the club/project/activity/event/consultation/residential or trip. Any activity involving potentially dangerous equipment and/or processes are under constant adult supervision.

Dangerous Behaviour by any person is never allowed.

It is important that accidents and incident are logged, recorded and the procedures followed.

4.5.iii Staff and Volunteer Code of Behaviour

The Child Centred Ethos of Youth Work Ireland Tipperary creates an environment in which young people are valued, encouraged and listened to. We respect the right of young people as individuals in society. Through our ethos, training, and education we ensure young people know their rights and responsibilities.

The following code of behaviour is established to provide a clear understanding of the standards of behaviour of all staff / volunteers / students who work with Youth Work Ireland Tipperary for the purpose of the safe care of children and young people. It will help foster an environment where young people feel secure and are treated with dignity and respect.

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary Code of Behaviour

- Staff and Young people should be encouraged to report cases of bullying to a staff member/volunteer of their choice.
- Volunteers will always respect young people
- Staff and Volunteers will listen to young people
- Staff will undertake appropriate trainings, attend appropriate meetings and briefings to support their development and understanding of Youth Work
- Staff will always operate in professional manner
- Young people should be encouraged to report cases of concern/welfare and/or child abuse to a staff member/volunteer of their choice.
- Staff and volunteers should never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a child, nor should jokes of a sexual nature be told to or in the presence of a young person.
- Physical force should not be used, except in circumstances where such force is the only means of protecting a child, young person or adult from injury.
- Under no circumstances give alcohol, tobacco or drugs to children or young people. (see guidelines of the administration of prescribed medicines)
- Do not use alcohol, tobacco or drugs in the company of children or young people.
- Always use only age appropriate language media products and activities in working with children and young people.
- Do not take pictures of children or young people unless you have prior parental consent to do so.

- All staff /volunteers are required to maintain a positive attitude towards young people that respects the personal space, safety and privacy of individuals.
- Never engage in suggestive or lewd acts.
- If taking a group of young people away on a day trip, or sporting activity, you must ensure you have proper transport, adequate insurance cover, enough supervision and written parental consent. Facts must also be obtained of any specific medical conditions a young person may suffer from and plans in place to deal with such, should the need arise. (See guidelines for Residential Trips)
- Never do anything of a personal nature for children and young people which they can do for themselves.
- Personal contact outside of youth work business should not be made with children and young people.
- Staff/volunteers must be sensitive to the possibility of becoming over involved or spending a great deal of time with any one young person. We need to be clear about the purpose and nature of the relationship with any young person e.g. is the relationship constructive in building up the independence and autonomy of the person or is it being used to satisfy our own agenda.
- Staff members and volunteers should always be respectful of the privacy of young people in dormitories, changing rooms, showers and toilets. When present in such area's workers are advised not to spend time alone with a young person and as much as is practically possible, work in pairs of appropriate gender.

4.5.iv Situational Guidelines

Dormitory and Changing Room Supervision

- Voluntary adult leaders and staff will be particularly careful in dormitory and changing room supervision of young people. Be respectful of the privacy and dignity of young people in such situations.
- Supervision of dormitories and changing rooms will be carried out by voluntary adult leaders, mentors and staff of the appropriate gender.
- Voluntary adult leaders and staff will avoid situations where they are alone with young people in dormitories and changing rooms. Wherever practicable, there will be two or more voluntary adult leaders or staff present in dormitories and changing rooms. If a voluntary adult leader or staff person must be alone in a dormitory or a changing room with a young person, they must be of the same gender, and another adult should be informed of the situation.
- Voluntary adult leaders and staff will not sleep in rooms/dormitories with young people.
- The voluntary adult leader, mentor or staff person's room/cubicle is off limits for young people.
- Voluntary adult leaders, mentors and staff will exercise discretion and respect in relation to entering young people's cubicles or sleeping areas.
- In changing rooms and washrooms, ensure that supervision is adequate but be mindful of the privacy of the young person.
- Ensure that arrangements have been made for non-binary/transgender participants
- Staff members and volunteers must be sensitive to the risks in participating in some contact sports with young people and ensure that the young people are treated with dignity and respect.

4.5.v Physical contact must be appropriate and in the interest of the young person

As part of a normal healthy relationship between a voluntary adult leader/mentor or a staff person and a young person, socially acceptable physical contact will occur from time to time. This will include a handshake, a pat on the back, an affirmation, a comforting arm on the shoulder in times of distress, etc. These contacts will be made with integrity and respect for the young person, and in response to the needs of the young person. Inappropriate physical contact with the young people must be avoided at all times. Any discomfort or resistance on the part of the young person must be respected.

The most informal physical gestures e.g. putting a hand on a shoulder or arm, could be misconstrued by a young person or an observer, especially if they are continually repeated with the same young person.

There are particular conditions within which appropriate physical contact may take place. They include, when in a group situation:

- In open view
- With at least one other adult present
- With other young people present
- When the young person is clearly informed of the process to be followed and freely gives their permission e.g. administering first aid

4.5.vi Internet and social media

Internet, smart phones, smart technologies, computers etc are part of everyday life and are another medium that young people engage with. In her announcement of 18th January 2019, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs released the following press release:

“Online safety risks must be assessed by Organisations working with children and young people. Minister Zappone publishes Addendum to Children First Guidance”

Youth Work Ireland Tipperary has been cognisant of the potential risks of online engagement by young people and adults.

- Voluntary adult leaders and staff will not be linked to young people through personal social network sites such as the leader’s own Facebook page.
- Voluntary adult leaders and staff must encourage young people to be respectful of other people in their comments and actions online.
- Voluntary adult leaders and staff will ensure that young people in their care are supervised during their use of Internet access.
- If it is wrong offline it is wrong online.
- There are a range of supports and trainings on use of social media as per our Social Media policy.

4.5.vii Individual Work and one to one work

One to one mentoring/individual work practices will be conducted in an open manner following the correct procedures

There can be great value to a young person from a relationship with a supportive adult, and this can be facilitated through one to one individual work and other means where there is training support and supervision to support this developmental relationship. (See the one to one working guidelines).

Individual work is defined as ‘planned one to one work between a staff member or volunteer and an identified young person for a specific purpose over a specific period of time to achieve agreed outcomes.

Individual work may be carried out with a young person when:

- The benefit/appropriateness to the young person is greater than that of having them participate in a group programme.
- A young person, parent or appropriate professional requests a one to one programme for a young person to address a specific issue, i.e. separation, personal development, crisis situation arises, etc and meets the referral criteria for Youth Work Ireland member organisation.
- It is identified that a young person needs additional support about a topic/ issue.
- A young person will not attend a group programme but will engage on a one to one level.
- It is the best way to get to know a young person.
- It is the best way to enable the young person to develop skills and confidence to participate in a group setting.

All staff and volunteers are required to follow the above code of behaviour, thus providing a safe, comfortable and positive environment for staff / volunteers and young people. Individual working must happen within the context of the work environment and in place, time and space that is appropriate. Individual work does not mean isolated work and safe practice should always be ensured. Individual working must be logged and recorded.

4.5.viii Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Challenging behaviour can be defined as 'behaviour which threatens staff / volunteers, other people or the child / young person themselves, in a verbal and / or physical manner'. When confronted with such behaviour staff / volunteers must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Challenge the behaviour of the child / young person and not the person themselves.
- Try to remain as calm as possible and avoid becoming emotionally charged in dealing with the situation.
- Behaviour management must always emphasise positive approaches and prohibit any harsh or degrading actions.
- Consideration needs to be given to the developmental age of the child / young person.
- Be aware of signals that may trigger further outbursts in the child / young person, such as change in tone of voice, body language etc.
- If the challenging behaviour presents itself with others around, either remove yourself and the child / young person away from others so you can talk in a calmer environment, or, ask another staff member / volunteer to take the others to an alternative location.
- It is always advisable to seek the support of another staff member / volunteer when confronting challenging behaviour.
- Outline to the child / young person the sanctions for their behaviour and discuss with them possible techniques they may adopt to avoid such situations in the future.
- Ensure you place yourself in an area with a clear escape route, should violence erupt.
- Given the nature of the situation and the extent of the challenging behaviour, the parents / guardians of the child / young person may need to be contacted and asked to collect the individual to take them home. If any sanction has been agreed or put in place this should be communicated to the parents/guardians.
- Adequate time should be allowed for the child / young person to calm down and only then should their behaviour be discussed any supports and / or sanctions be imposed. Sanctions imposed must be fair and consistent at all times and understood by the child/ young person.
- Should your safety feel compromised and / or in danger, seek support from management and/ or An Garda Síochána.
- All incidents will be recorded in the Incident Report Book statement form (**Appendix 6**).

- Incidents may be discussed in supervision with a view to analysing any factors that could have led to conflict de-escalation. Workers and volunteers will be genuinely reflective if they wish to develop their practice, managers need to be supportive of this. Such review and support may be challenging as conflict is always a tale of perspectives, analysis of classroom conflict has identified behaviours of teachers as triggers to conflict escalation.

4.5.ix Concern regarding another member of Staff/volunteer

Staff and volunteers who have concerns about the behaviour of another worker/volunteer must report their concern to the DLP. Where the concern relates to the DLP concern should be raised with the CEO.

Where staff have a genuine concern regarding:

- Breaches of this policy and guidance document
- Breaches of the code of conduct
- Suspected or witnessed abuse.

Any concerns brought to the attention of a member of staff/volunteer/manager must be reported on regardless of the source to either a senior manager or the DLP. If the concern relates to poor practice it should be discussed with the relevant manager or leader in charge. If the concern involves suspected or witnessed abusive behaviour, this should be reported without delay to the DLP in accordance with the reporting procedure outlined in Section 3 of this document. If no action is taken a note to this effect will be made.

The DLP will follow the reporting procedures as outlined in Section 3 of this document.

Where disclosure has been to a line manager, they may determine that the DLP needs to be contacted, otherwise they will seek to raise the concern with the employee/volunteer or their manager/club as appropriate.

If the person reporting is not happy that a matter has not been referred to Tusla/An Garda Síochána they may report the concern directly to Tusla.