



County Kildare
LEADER PARTNERSHIP

Child Safeguarding Policy

December 2022

Company Overview

Organisation Detail & Legal Description	
Name	County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG
Contact Name	Pat Leogue
Position	Chief Executive Officer
Postal Address	Kildare Community Development Centre Meadow Road Kildare Town, Co. Kildare R51 RF88
Telephone No:	045 895450
Email Address	info@countykildarelp.ie
Website	www.countykildarelp.ie
Date of Establishment	30 th November 2007
Legal Structure	Company Limited by Guarantee

Mission Statement

“To facilitate individuals and communities to participate fully in social, economic and cultural activity by supporting a vibrant and inclusive society in County Kildare.”

The company provides a single point of contact for a variety of programmes and initiatives, which are available to individuals, families, communities, and businesses in County Kildare.

Programmes

County Kildare LEADER Partnership is responsible for managing a number of programmes on behalf of Government Departments and agencies. The Company also acts as host organisation for the employment of staff and administration of a wider range of projects which have similar objectives to the Company itself.

Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

CKLP is the Programme Implementer for SICAP in County Kildare. In this role the Company is contracted to Kildare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and is funded by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund for the period 2018 – 2023. SICAP has two Goals: Goal 1 Supporting Communities and Goal 2 Supporting Individuals.

Rural Development Programme

CKLP is the Implementing Partner for the Rural Development Programme and was responsible for the delivery of the Rural Development Programme (2014 – 2020). The focus of the LEADER Programme is “To promote social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.”

TÚS Programme: CKLP is the Implementing Body for the Tus Programme in County Kildare, CKLP is responsible for the placement of unemployed individuals with a range of community and voluntary groups, groups working with disadvantaged communities and local organisations that normally would not have access to employment schemes. Each individual is employed by CKLP on a fixed term contract for a maximum period of twelve months and is supported with an exit programme to progress on to alternative employment opportunities at the end of their contract. Team Leaders are employed to supervise the schemes in various locations around the county.

Rural Social Scheme is a labour market programme for individuals who are in receipt of a Farm Assist payment and who hold a herd number. The scheme employs participants and a supervisor, providing supports to Community Groups throughout the county.

DARA Project

The DARA Project is the only drug free programme in County Kildare for adults who are in rehabilitation from drug and alcohol misuse. The project operates as a Community Employment Scheme with three staff based in Athy. The project provides a range of soft skills training and accredited education and training and is funded by the Department of Social Protection. The project has a capacity for 30 CE participants and is a collaboration with DSP and the Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force. The McVerry Trust is also a patron of the Project.

Enterprise Skills Programme

The Enterprise Skills Programme is a CE scheme which provides a 14 week start your own business course for unemployed individuals in receipt of a welfare payment. Three groups of participants are catered for each year and on successful completion participants can progress onto the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme or Short-Term Enterprise Allowance if they are eligible. This CE scheme also runs the Kildare Small Jobs Service which carries out small maintenance tasks for older people aged 65 and over.

Heads Up Programme: CKLP manages the Heads-Up Programme which provides wellness, recovery and life skills supports for men who are in distress. The project is funded by HSE and a range of local organisations including CKLP through SICAP.

Older Voices Kildare:

CKLP manages the Older Voices Kildare Project which has a vision of creating a Kildare where older people are included and empowered within a vibrant community. HSE is the primary funder for Older Voices Kildare which benefits from the active involvement of a pool of volunteers who assist with the Befriending service.

Asylum and Migrant Integration Fund (AMIF)

The Kildare Integration Project is funded by the Department of Justice under the Asylum Migration & Integration Fund with co-funding from Kildare County Council.

The AMIF Kildare Integration Project works with individuals and families currently in the Direct Provision Centres in County Kildare to build their capacity to live independently when they receive their immigration status. It also supports practical integration through a range of targeted programmes.

Roma Employment Programme

The Kildare Roma Employment Support Programme has been funded by the Department of Justice and Equality and aims to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion of Roma people in County Kildare. The programme engages with the Roma community throughout County Kildare to offer opportunities for training, and pre-employment supports.

Roma Health Support

CKLP employs a Roma Health Support Worker to assist Roma families in County Kildare. Funding for this post is provided by HSE.

Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme

Under the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme CKLP is funded to run three programmes:

- the employment of a Social Prescribing Links Worker to engage with individuals referred primarily by health services and to source social opportunities for the individuals referred
- the employment of a Healthy Food Made Easy Coordinator to deliver Healthy Food Made Easy programmes
- the delivery of We Can Quit programmes for smoking cessation

The Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme is primarily focused on the Athy Municipal District.

Empowering Communities Programme

The Empowering Communities Programme is a new initiative launched by the Department of Rural and Community Development in 2022 to engage with local communities in very disadvantaged areas. The Programme will commence in County Kildare in 2023 and will be focused on a number of housing estates in the Athy West Urban Area.

Hosting Role:

CKLP acts as host organisation for the employment of staff for the following projects:

- **Kildare Sports Partnership** funded by Dormant Accounts Fund through Kildare County Council
- **Kildare Public Participation Network (PPN)** funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development through Kildare County Council

- **Individual Placement Service** funded by HSE

Policy Intent

All organisations involved with children have an obligation to provide them with the highest possible standard of care to promote their well-being and safeguard them from abuse.

All statutory, voluntary and community organisations working with and in direct contact with children should have procedures and guidelines derived from and consistent with the current *Children First Act 2015* for their staff and volunteers.

County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG., is committed to safeguarding the children in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can play, learn, and develop.

We do this by having in place Child Safeguarding Statement & Policy and Procedures in place. The aim of this policy is to inform all staff, volunteers, students, and parents of our commitment to safeguarding children in our care.

The Statement & policy will detail the role and responsibilities of the organisation in safeguarding the children from harm and in dealing with child protection issues or concerns.

The policy will include detailed information on the definitions and recognition of child abuse and the procedure to be followed in reporting concerns for mandated and non-mandated staff/volunteers if the individual suspects that a child is being neglected or abused.

We are committed to child centred practice in all our work with children and full compliance with Children First and Our Duty to Care.

We recognise the right of children to be protected from harm, treated with respect, listened to, and have their views taken into consideration in matters that affect them.

Management, staff, volunteers, and students in this company recognise that the welfare of children is paramount, and our company will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Ensuring that there are clear procedures to recognise, respond to and report concerns about children's protection and welfare.
- Promoting the general welfare, health, development, and safety of children
- Developing guidance and procedures for staff who are mandated and may have reasonable grounds for concern about the safety and welfare of children involved with the organisation
- Appoint both a Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Liaison person to act as a liaison with outside agencies who will be a resource person to all mandated and non-mandated staff or volunteer who have child protection and welfare concerns. (See Page 16) The designated liaison person is responsible for reporting allegations or concerns of child abuse, along with mandated staff to TUSLA Children and Family Agency or to An Garda Síochána.
- Appoint a Relevant Person to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement
- Ensuring all staff are aware and adhere to our confidentiality policy
- Ensuring all staff should be aware of and sign our code of behaviour for management, employees, students, and volunteers.
- Having a safe recruitment procedure – adopting and consistently applying a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers
- Provide induction training on the Child Protection and Welfare Policy to all staff, volunteers, students, and members of the board of management
- Continually Raising awareness within the organisation about potential risks to children's safety and welfare.
- Provide supervision and support for staff and volunteers in contact with children
- Ensure that staff attend child protection training as appropriate

- Developing effective procedures for responding to accidents, incidents, and complaints.
- Ensuring that the organisation has clear written procedures on the action to be taken if allegations of abuse against employees / volunteers are received
- Ensuring that clear procedures in relation to record keeping of child protection and welfare concerns are in place and are operating effectively, taking appropriate account of the need to ensure that such records are kept securely
- Share information about the Child Protection and Welfare Policy with families and children
- Ensuring that this policy will be shared with parents on enrolment with our service

Overall Responsibility of all Employees, Board Members, Volunteers and Students:

Although the Designated Liaison Person has a lead on issues relating to the protection and welfare of children, it is the responsibility of all company personnel to ensure the safety, protection, and well-being of children in the care of the company.

All staff, management, board members, relief staff and volunteers are required to read, understand, and sign off on the Child Protection and Welfare Policy. It is expected that if staff, board members or volunteers have any questions about the policy or its implementation they speak with the Designated Liaison Person.

We will ensure that all personnel:

Are aware of their responsibilities and their obligations under Children First

Are aware of their responsibilities for reporting concerns and/or incidents regarding the safety or well-being of children to the Designated Liaison Person

This policy is applicable at all times when children are in the care of the company, including on day trips and outings.

We will ensure this policy is observed by:

- Staff
- Board of Directors
- Volunteers
- Students on placement
- Visitors to the Company
- Children/ Vulnerable Adults (depending on the age)

Definition of a Child For the purpose of this policy, a 'child' means anyone who is under 18 years of age.

This policy will be reviewed each time an incident is reported or every 2 years if that is sooner (include information about who is responsible for carrying out this review) We will work and cooperate with the relevant statutory agencies as required

Recognising Child Protection & Welfare Concerns

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard children and to report child protection and welfare concerns in line with the policy outlined below.

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

All staff and volunteers should be familiar with the definitions of abuse as outlined in Children First, National Guidance, 2017.

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND HOW THEY MAY BE RECOGNISED

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger and can be an adult or another child.

In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children, and you should follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer.

The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this section are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties.

The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

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

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

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food, or erratic feeding
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e., a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation

- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- Lack of adequate clothing Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- Persistent failure to attend school Abandonment or desertion

Emotional abuse:

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

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

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

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

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment,

unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.

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

Physical abuse:

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

Physical abuse can include the following:

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

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child.

The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

Sexual abuse:

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

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and, in some instances, occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

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

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

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse.

Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm:

If you are dealing with children, you need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children you come in contact with. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives.

In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

The following list is intended to help you identify the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect.

It is important for you to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Parent or carer factors:

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Addiction, including gambling
- Mental health issues
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability
- Conflictual relationships
- Domestic violence
- Adolescent parents

Child factors:

- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide
- Communication difficulties
- Trafficked/Exploited
- Previous abuse
- Young care

Community factors:

- Cultural, ethnic, religious, or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction
- Culture-specific practices, including:
 - Female genital mutilation
 - Forced marriage
 - Honour-based violence
 - Radicalisation

Environmental factors:

- Housing issues
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently
- Poverty/Begging
- Bullying
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage:

- Non-attendance at appointments
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans

All these factors should be considered as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla.

BULLYING

It is recognised that bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children/ Vulnerable Adults and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it is verbal, psychological, or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others.

It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyberbullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion.

Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity, and religious factors. With developments in modern

technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet, and other personal devices.

While bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable.

These include:

- children with disabilities or special educational needs.
- those from ethnic minority and migrant groups.
- from the Traveller community.
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) children and those perceived to be LGBT.
- children of minority religious faiths.

There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying among children with special educational needs. This is particularly so among those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating.

Some children with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly. Such children may be more vulnerable because they do not have the same social skills or capacity as others to recognise and defend themselves against bullying behaviour.

County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG., has a code of behaviour and an antibullying policy in place

Reasonable Grounds for Concern

Children First: National Guidance, 2017 states that:

*'Tusla should always be informed when a person has **reasonable grounds for concern** that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected.'*

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

A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable, should also be communicated to the TUSLA The Child and Family Agency.

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

(1) the safety and well-being of the child must take priority

(II) reports should be made without delay to the Child and Family Agency.

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

Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 introduced the criminal charge of reckless endangerment of children. It states:

‘A person, having authority or control over a child or abuser, who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by – (a) causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse, or (b) failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation, is guilty of an offence.’

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

A concern could come to your attention in a number of ways:

- A child tells you or indicates that she/he is being abused. This is called a disclosure (see Appendix 1 for guidance on responding to a disclosure from a child)
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse
- Information from someone who saw the child being abused
- An injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting a concern that it may be a case of abuse.
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- Evidence (e.g., injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to have been caused in any other way.

In our organisation we strive for high standards of practice, which in the area of child welfare, are promoted and implemented. Workers are advised to actively listen to children and to be aware of their responsibility as a mandated person:

- Any reasonable concern or suspicion of abuse or neglect must elicit a response. Ignoring the signals or failing to intervene may result in ongoing or further harm to the child.
- They are familiar with the definitions of abuse as outlined in Children First: National Guidance 2017.

Under no circumstances should leave a child in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk pending Child & Family Agency intervention. In the event of an emergency and the unavailability of a Duty Social Worker, the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána

- If a child has made a disclosure, a written record will be made. If there are other grounds for concern that the child has been abused or neglected, a written record will be made
- If there are reasonable grounds for concern the DLP will complete the Standard Report Form without delay and send it to the Duty Social Work Team in the Child & Family Agency (see below for contact details).
- Under the Children First Act, 2015 Mandated Persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns which reach a particular threshold (as defined in section 2 of the Children First Act, 2015) to Tusla.
- Mandated Persons should be familiar with the threshold of harm for each form of abuse as outlined in Children First: National Guidance 2017.
- All child protection concerns should be brought to the attention of the Designated Liaison Person without delay.

All staff and volunteers are expected to bring any child protection concern which meets reasonable grounds for concern to the attention of the DLP and to seek their advice and guidance if unsure.

Response to a Child Disclosing Child Abuse

- Be as calm and natural as possible. Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked. Do not panic.
- Be aware that disclosure can be very difficult for the child.
- Remember the child may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child has to say. Give them time and opportunity to tell you as much as they are able and wish to. Do not pressurise the child. Allow him/her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Be careful when asking questions. Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification. Avoid leading questions such as asking whether a specific person carried out the abuse. Also, avoid asking about intimate

details or suggesting that something else could have happened other than what you have been told. Such questions and suggestions could complicate the official investigation.

- Assure the child that you believe them. False disclosures are very rare. It is important that the adult differentiate in their own mind between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child, quite possibly, may love or strongly like the alleged abuser while also disliking what was done to him/her.
- It is important therefore to avoid expressing any judgement on, or anger towards, the alleged perpetrator, while talking with the child.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child that your feelings towards him/her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what s/he has disclosed.
- Do not promise to keep secrets. At the earliest opportunity tell the child that:
- You acknowledge that they have come to you because they trust you.
- 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 ongoing hurt.

By refusing to make a commitment to secrecy to the child, 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 child's confidence in yet another adult. By being honest, it is more likely that the child will return to you at another time. Promises that cannot be kept should not be made to children.

At the earliest possible opportunity:

1. Record in writing what the child has said, including, as far as possible, the exact words uttered by the child.
2. Inform your designated officer and agree measures to protect the child / Vulnerable Adults, i.e., report the matter directly to TUSLA. Mandated reports will be made jointly by the Mandated staff who raised the concern and the DLP, using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (available on www.tusla.ie). The form must clearly indicate that the report is a mandated report. (Please see section on mandated person reporting)
3. Maintain appropriate confidentiality. Following a disclosure by a child, it is important that the staff continue in a supportive relationship with the child.

Disclosure is a huge step for many children. Staff should continue to offer support, particularly through:

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

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

Failure to report following a disclosure by a child could result in the adult being charged under Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006, of **Reckless Endangerment of Children**, it states:

“A person, having authority or control over a child or abuser, who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by –

a) Causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim serious harm or sexual abuse, or

b) Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation, is guilty of an offence”

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

Reporting Procedure–All Staff and Volunteers (including Designated Liaison Person, and Mandated Persons):

Child abuse is a difficult subject, and it is understandable that people may at times be reluctant to acknowledge its existence. Members of the public or professionals may be afraid of being thought insensitive, afraid of breaking confidence or afraid of being disloyal if they report suspected child abuse. However, early intervention may reduce the risk of serious harm occurring to a child in the future.

When a staff member or volunteer (including a Mandated Person) has a child protection or welfare concern they should speak to the Designated Liaison Person without delay. This includes concerns which reach the threshold for a mandated report under the Children First Act, 2015. See Appendices 2 and 3 (pp. 56–58).

This will enable them to decide whether or not to make a formal report.

Designated Liaison Person - Role and Responsibility:

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is responsible for dealing with child protection and welfare concerns in accordance with *Children First: National Guidance 2017*

Designated Liaison Person: Adrian Brown – 086 0436149

Deputy Designated Liaison Person: Siobhan Doody-King 087 9163776

The Role of the DLP is to:

- Be a resource person for staff, students and volunteers who have a child protection concern
- Be accessible to all staff, students, and volunteers
- Be knowledgeable about child protection and welfare and undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments
- Ensure that the child protection and welfare reporting procedures of the company are followed so that child protection and welfare concerns are referred promptly to Tusla
- Keep an updated list of mandated personal on file. They are responsible for updating and maintaining the list. It is available on request
- Be responsible for reporting child protection concerns to Tusla or to An Garda Síochána either with the Mandated Person (for referrals under the Children First Act, 2015), or, directly for all other referrals

Key Roles in DLP Safeguarding:

- Ensure that appropriate information is included in the referral and that it is submitted using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (available on www.tusla.ie)
- Liaise with Tusla, An Garda Síochána and other agencies as appropriate
- Keep appropriate people within the organisation informed of relevant issues, whilst maintaining confidentiality
- Ensure that an individual record is maintained of the action taken by the company, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome
- Advise the organisation of child protection training needs
- Maintain a central log or record of all child protection and welfare concerns in the company.
- Maintain a list of all mandated people within the company, (available on demand)

Relevant Person

In accordance with the Children First Act, 2015 a relevant person has been appointed. Their role is to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement.

Mandated Persons

The Children First Act, 2015 places a legal obligation on mandated persons to report child protection concerns, at or above a defined threshold, to Tusla.

Under the Children First Act, 2015 you are a Mandated Person if you are:

- A person carrying on a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991
- A childcare staff member employed in a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991
- Mandated Persons have a responsibility to understand their obligations as set out in the Children First Act, 2015 and chapter 3 of Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.
- Mandated Persons will make child protection referrals to Tusla, jointly, with the Designated Liaison Person.
- Mandated Persons who do not fulfil their legal obligations may be subject to the Disciplinary Policy.
- Mandated Persons have a legal obligation to report child protection concerns over a certain threshold to Tusla.

These mandated persons must also assist Tusla, On request, in its assessment of child protection concerns about children / Vulnerable Adults who have been the subject of a mandated report.

All staff and volunteers (included Mandated Persons) should follow the procedures in this section when they have a concern that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused, harmed, or neglected. Mandated Persons should also consult the section below.

Mandated Persons should also consult the section below, “Reporting Procedures – Mandated Persons Only”.

- When a staff member or volunteer (including a Mandated Person) has a child protection or welfare concern they should speak to the Designated Liaison Person without delay. This includes concerns which reach the threshold for mandated report under the Children First Act, 2015.
- The DLP will report the following child protection and welfare concerns using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form to Tusla (available on www.tusla.ie)
- Child protection and welfare concerns that meet reasonable grounds for concern but do not meet the threshold for mandated reporting.

- Child protection and welfare concerns that meet reasonable grounds for concern and have been passed to them by persons who are not Mandated Persons.
- If the DLP is unsure if a child protection concern meets the reasonable grounds for concern, they should contact the Tusla Duty Social Work Team for advice and guidance using the informal consultation process.

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk pending intervention from Tusla. In the event of an emergency and the unavailability of a Tusla Duty Social Worker, the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána.

Duty Social Work Team – In Kildare is located in:
 Building 2, Vista Primary Care Centre, Ballymore Road, Naas, Co. Kildare.
 W91 HT2X 045 839300

An Garda Síochána – Sergeant in Naas Garda Station 045-884300

In addition to a report to Tusla, if there is a criminal or suspected criminal aspect to the child protection concern, An Garda Síochána will be notified by the DLP or Mandated Person as appropriate.

- The chairperson of the board of management will be informed when a report is made to Tusla and An Garda Síochána under this policy.
- In accordance with the confidentiality policy, identifying information about the child and family is only shared with them on a need-to-know basis.

Reporting Procedures – Mandated Staff Only

Under the Children First Act, 2015 Mandated Staff are legally 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 to Tusla.

Mandated Staff should bring any child protection concerns to the attention of the DLP without delay as stated above.

If the child protection concern reaches the threshold of harm as defined in the Children First Act, 2015 it is a mandated report

- The Mandated staff may seek advice and guidance from the DLP in relation to the child protection concern and the threshold of harm
- Mandated reports will be made jointly by the Mandated staff who raised the concern and the DLP, using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (available on www.tusla.ie). The form must clearly indicate that the report is a mandated report
- If the child protection concern requires a more urgent intervention to make the child safe, the Children First Act, 2015 allows Mandated staff to alert Tusla of the concern, by telephone or in person, in advance of submitting a written report
- The mandated report must then be submitted to Tusla using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form within 3 days
- The statutory obligation of Mandated staff to report under the Children First Act, 2015 must be discharged by the Mandated staff and cannot be discharged by the Designated Liaison Person on their behalf
- Mandated Staff can, however, report jointly with another person
- Where the Mandated staff or DLP is unsure if the report meets the threshold of harm as outlined in the Children First Act, 2015 advice and guidance should be sought through informal consultation with the Tusla Duty Social Work Team
- If a child protection concern does not meet the criteria for a mandated report, it may meet reasonable grounds for concern for a report to Tusla and this possibility must be considered. If Reasonable Grounds for Concern exist, a report to Tusla will be made by the DLP
- Mandated Staff may submit the report to Tusla solely; however, the DLP must be informed that the report has been made and be given a copy of the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form
- If a child protection concern has come to the attention of a number of Mandated Staff the report may be submitted jointly by a number of Mandated Staff.
- Mandated staff are not required to make a report to Tusla where the sole basis of their knowledge, belief or suspicion of harm is because of becoming aware that another mandated staff has made a report to Tusla.

If the child protection concern requires a more urgent intervention to make the child safe, the Children First Act, 2015 allows Mandated Staff to alert Tusla of

the concern, by telephone or in person, in advance of submitting a written report.

Informing Parents about Child Protection and Welfare Concerns

We will communicate with parents to ensure the best outcomes for children and any concerns about the health and well-being of a child will always be discussed with parents from the outset.

Parents will always be informed by the DLP if a report is to be made to Tusla, unless doing so would further endanger the child, impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment, or put the reporter at risk of harm. The DLP may seek guidance from the Tusla Duty Social Work Team in relation to this.

Responding to a Retrospective Disclosure

A retrospective disclosure is a disclosure from an adult about abuse that happened while they were a child. It is imperative that all child protection and welfare concerns are examined and addressed when a retrospective disclosure is made.

If a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of a retrospective child protection concern, they should follow the reporting procedures as outlined above.

If any risk is deemed to exist to a child who may be in contact with an alleged abuser, the company will report the concern to Tusla without delay using the Retrospective Abuse Report Form (available on www.tusla.ie).

Child Protection Concerns that are Not Reported to Tusla

If the Designated Liaison Person decides not to report a concern to Tusla, the following steps will be taken:

- The reasons for not reporting will be recorded
- Any actions taken as a result of the concern will be recorded.
- The staff member or volunteer who raised the concern will be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla.

- The staff member or volunteer will be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla or An Garda Síochána. The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 will apply to any staff member who wishes to make a report to Tusla.

Recording Child Protection Concerns

Written records will be kept of all child protection concerns (including those not reported to Tusla) and these will be managed by the DLP. Information will include:

- details of the concern,
- who raised it,
- who was contacted,
- details regarding informal consultation, any action taken, details regarding informing parents.

If a child has made a disclosure of abuse, a written record will be made. If there are other grounds for concern that the child has been abused or neglected, a written record will be made.

Records will be stored securely in line with the company's Record Policy and the Pre-school Regulations 2016

Confidentiality:

- All information regarding a concern about child abuse or neglect should be shared on a need-to-know basis in the best interests of the child
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given and this should be made clear to children and families using the service
- The provision of information to the statutory agencies for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection
- Parents and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child at further risk
- Parents will always be informed if a report is being made to Tusla unless doing so would further endanger the child, impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment or put the reporter at risk of harm
- Under the Children First Act, 2015, information shared by Tusla with a Mandated person a Mandated Report, shall not be disclosed to a third party unless Tusla has provided written authorisation to this Person in the course of carrying out an assessment, arising from effect

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect against Employees, Students or Volunteers

The protection and welfare of the children in the company are paramount and their safety and well-being is the priority. However, the service also has a duty and responsibility, as an employer, in respect of its employees.

There are two procedures that will be followed when an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against an employee:

- Reporting procedure in respect of any child protection and welfare concern
- The procedure in respect of the allegation against the employee.
- It is the Designated Liaison Person who is responsible for any issues under the companies Child Protection and Welfare Reporting Procedures (such as reporting the matter to Tusla) The first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. The designated liaison person should as a matter of urgency take any necessary protective measures
- While the employer is responsible for addressing the employment issues. These measures should be proportionate to the level of risk and should not unreasonably penalise the employee, financially or otherwise unless it is necessary to protect children. Where protective measures, such as suspension, do penalise the worker it is important that early consideration be given to the case.
- *Our Duty to Care (2002)* recommends that the same person should not have responsibility for dealing with the reporting issues and the employment/contractual issues. It is preferable to separate these issues and manage them independently.
- It will be necessary for the designated officer to decide whether a formal report should be made to the TUSLA Children and Family Agency, and this decision should be based on reasonable grounds for concern. Action taken in reporting an allegation of child abuse against an employee will be based on opinion formed reasonably and in good faith.
- The Head of the organisation i.e., Chairperson of the Voluntary Board of Management should be informed about the allegation as soon as possible.
- All staff and volunteers in the company should be aware of who to contact should they become aware of an allegation of abuse or neglect against any employee in the company.
- Written records are very important. If a disclosure is made by a child, a written record of the disclosure should be made as soon as possible by the person receiving it. Where an allegation of abuse or neglect is made by an adult, a written record of the allegation should be made, and a written statement should be sought from this person.

When the designated officer becomes aware of an allegation of abuse of a child or children by a worker in the County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG., the designated officer will inform the worker of the following:

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

The employee should be afforded the opportunity to respond, the response should be noted and passed onto Tusla with the formal report.

- All stages of the process should be recorded.
- An investigation may be required, and the policy should note who will carry this out, the time involved and any appeal process.
- Whether or not the matter is being reported to Tusla, the employer is always informed of an allegation of abuse or neglect against an employee.

Confidentiality: It is essential that at all times the matter is treated in the strictest confidence and that the identity of the employee is not disclosed other than as required under the procedures within the policy

Protective measures may be required while the allegation is being investigated. The principles of natural justice, the presumption of innocence and fair procedures should be adhered to. It is very important to note that protective measures are intended to be precautionary and not disciplinary

The employer should maintain regular and close liaison with Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána and ensure that no action by the company frustrates or undermines any investigation.

Further action will be guided by employment legislation, the contract of employment, the other policies, and procedures of the company (including the disciplinary policy) and the advice of the investigating agencies.

Parents and Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Against Employees

- Parents have the right to contact Tusla to report an allegation of abuse or neglect about the employee or company.
- Parents of children who are named in an allegation of abuse or neglect will be kept informed of actions planned and taken, having regard to the rights of others concerned.
- If there is any concern that a child may have been harmed, their parents will be informed immediately.

RECORD KEEPING

This company will ensure that clear procedures in relation to record-keeping of child welfare and protection concerns are in place and operating effectively.

- This company will ensure that all records of concerns, allegations or disclosures are stored securely and are only shared on a “need to know” basis.
- Any concerns or allegations about the welfare of a child will (1) be recorded by the worker and (2) be discussed immediately with one of the designated officers.
- The concerns will then be documented and filed securely by the designated officer.
- Under the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, accurate and up to date records in relation to children, staff and company provision must be kept. The Early Years (Pre-school) Inspectorate will have access to files for inspection purposes.
- Parents may have access to the files and records of their own children on request but may not have access to information about any other child.
- Only employees involved with a particular child should have access to confidential files.
- Where there are child protection or welfare concerns, observations/records will be kept on an ongoing basis and information shared with Tusla as appropriate.
- This company will ensure that all records of concerns, allegations or disclosures are stored securely and are only shared on a “need to know” basis, any records will be stored securely in the DLP office and access will be limited to the Designated Liaison Persons and any other relevant professional
- No undertakings regarding secrecy will be given. Those working with a child and family should make this clear to all parties involved, although they can be assured that all information will be handled taking account of legal requirements.
- Procedures are in place for archiving records.
- All records should be managed in line with the Company’s Data Protection Policy.

SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES FOR WORKERS

Under the Children First Act, 2015, our Child Safeguarding Statement must include procedures for the selection or recruitment of staff with regard to that person's suitability to work with children.

The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 also require preschools to have a recruitment policy for hiring employees and unpaid workers, including the steps the company must undertake to check and verify references, qualifications, and vetting procedure before the commencing employment,

Selection of Workers:

- All new positions will be advertised on recruitment websites and in local media.
- The role of each worker will be clearly set out in a job description and defined in terms of skills required to perform the tasks.
- All new staff will be required to provide Photo Identification which includes Name and Address and Signature.
- All workers will be given a copy of the Behaviour Management and Child Protection and welfare Policy.
- All workers will be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement.
- All workers are expected to comply with the companies Code of behaviour for Childcare staff. See attached.
- All workers will be Garda Vetted.
- Police checks will be required for any new workers that have lived outside of Ireland.
- Representatives working on behalf of the Board of Management will conduct an interview to explore information contained in the application form with reference to the kinds of qualities and skills needed in the post being offered.
- References from two people who are not family members are required. One from which needs to have first hand knowledge of the applicants' previous work or contact with children. References will be required in writing.
- References will be validated by a representative of the Board of Management either in person or by telephone. Records will be kept on file.
Prior to commencement in post, satisfactory Garda vetting must be obtained, in line with the company's Garda Vetting Policy
- Appointments will not be commenced until Garda vetting procedure has been carried with positive verification, validation of references and successful completion of a trial period, the length of which will be stipulated at the time of appointment.

Garda Vetting Policy:

Under the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016, it is a crime to employ someone in certain work or activities without undertaking Garda Vetting.

The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 also require companies to ensure satisfactory Garda vetting for every worker both paid and unpaid.

- All staff including, board members and volunteers will have applied to NVB and hold a satisfactory Garda vetting on file, before commencement of employment, service on VBOM or volunteering.
- Students on placement will also be subject to the same Garda Vetting procedure before commencing placement.
- (Please see our Garda Vetting Policy & Procedures which includes handling a negative disclosure from NVB)
- It is a requirement that all staff, board members and volunteers are reverted every 3 years

Induction, Training, Supervision and Support of Staff

Induction: All new employees will be provided with an induction pack which will contain the following documents

1. Safeguarding policies
2. Code of behaviour for childcare staff
3. Behavioural management policy
4. company handbook
5. Confidentiality Agreement

All new employees will be expected to confirm with their signature that they have read and understood them.

All new employees are expected to take the time to read and understand fully all policies in relation to their employment.

Support & Supervision:

Workers will be seen at regular intervals on an individual basis and room and team meetings will be held on a monthly basis to assess performance and to provide an opportunity to talk through questions, problems and any difficulties that may arise.

Training for Workers

Will include:

- Information on the County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG.,
- Familiarisation of the work expected and other workers.
- Induction in the companies Child safeguarding policy
- Familiarisation and understanding of the company's policies and procedures.
- All workers will receive Child Protection Training.
- Identification of training needs will be ongoing, and a portion of the company's budget will be allocated to child protection training for staff.
- All workers are encouraged to participate in continual professional development.
- Record of all training will be kept on file.

*** The term worker includes paid staff, volunteers, and students on work experience.**

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR CHILDCARE STAFF & BEHAVIOURAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

It is the policy of County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG., to listen to all children, to value and respect children as individuals, involve children in decision making when appropriate and to praise and encourage children for their efforts as well as their achievements.

It is important that all staff, volunteers, children, and young people have guidelines on what is expected of them and what is not accepted, with respect to their behaviour. All employees have a duty to adhere to the Code of Behaviour and to bring breaches of the code to the attention of their line manager. Breaches of the Code of Behaviour are dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

ALL STAFF ARE GIVEN A COPY OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR & BEHAVIOURAL MANAGEMENT POLICY BELOW, AND ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN ACCEPTANCE OF THE CODE

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR STAFF

For the protection of all concerned it is important that everyone follows the following guidelines:

- Workers should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities.
- While physically contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring, and showing concern for children, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all persons concerned.

- Workers should never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a child, nor should they even tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Workers should be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism or becoming over involved or spending a great deal of time with any one child.
- Children should be encouraged to report cases of bullying to either a designated person, or a worker of their choice.
- Complaints must be brought to the attention of the management.
- It is Company policy that workers do NOT give lifts in their cars to individual young people.
- It is recommended that each group within the County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG., develops a positive attitude amongst workers and children that respects the personal space, safety, and privacy of individuals.

Communication:

Do:

- Listen to children; speak kindly and warmly to children.
- Encourage and praise children.
- Treat children with dignity and respect
- Use age-appropriate language
- Talk to children at their level.
- Make eye contact
- Be conscious of your body language
- Know how to deal with a concern about a colleague's behaviour.

Don't:

- Shout at children
- Ignore children
- Use sarcasm,
- Make jokes about children,
- Use put-downs
- Use inappropriate language in front of children.

Managing and supervising activities

Do:

- Ensure activities are child centred, well planned and have contingency plans.
- Ensure that the required resources are available.
- Ensure that staff with appropriate skills and interest are in charge or lead activity.
- Always ensure that adult/child ratios are strictly adhered to.
- Involve the children in decision making and planning.
- As appropriate ensure all children can participate in an inclusive manner.

- Review and record key learning for the next time.
- Staff should always spread out when outside with the children to ensure adequate supervision of the children

Don't:

- Do an activity only because staff likes it.
- Try a new activity without adequate planning.
- Leave children unattended.
- Allow rough play.
- Show favouritism towards any one child and become overly involved with one child.
- Hold conversations about personal lives, or other staff, or families when working with the children.
- Gather in groups when outside with the children.

Use of Technology and Images (photograph/video)

Do:

- Ensure written parent permission to take and use images of children.
- Ensure images of children are not exploitative or demeaning in any way.
- Report use of inappropriate images.

Don't:

- Use the child's name and image together
- Use mobile phones in the playrooms
- Contact children or parents on social networking sites

One-to one work

Do:

- Be clear about the purpose of the work
- Written agreement with parent in place as to the details: time, duration, etc, line management, support and supervision, regular review within supervision and with child/ parent.

Don't:

- Take a child alone on a car journey
- Take a child into a room with a locked door.

Touch

Do:

- Touch should be age and developmentally appropriate (for example, infants and toddlers being held, sitting on laps, cuddling)
- Touch should be in response to the needs of the child and not the adult. Resistance from a child should be respected.
- In general contact with children should take place in an open environment. However, where intimate care is required, (i.e., washing, changing, feeding, dressing, safety, first-aid, comforting) workers should ensure that the privacy and dignity of the child is respected and that their managers/fellow workers are informed when they are carrying out intimate care with a child.
- All intimate care arrangements should be agreed with the parents and the child (as age appropriate) and reviewed on a regular basis.

Don't:

- Engage in inappropriate touch such as Rough Handling, Caressing, and forcing affection on a child.
- Touch private areas (breasts, buttocks, and groin) – unless this is part of intimate care / first Aid
- Any Physical chastising such as slapping, spanking is not appropriate at any time.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the provisions of this Code of Behaviour: Any breach of this Code of Behaviour will result in the activation of CKLP Disciplinary procedures.

Employee

SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Policy Statement

County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG’s aim is to support and guide all children to manage their own behaviour and learn to resolve conflicts that arise.

Children attending our services or company are here for new learning experiences which may test their own coping strategies.

All staff will support the children to regulate their behaviour and will have a number of strategies to deal with both positive and challenging behaviour.

Pre School Regulations. 2016 Part V, Article 2. “A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the services. We have adapted this regulation for our Afterschool services also.

“A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful to or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the services”

(This also applies to children in our Afterschool/ Out of School services)

- (a) “Supports positive behaviour by the pre-school/ afterschool children attending the services and assisting the child to manage his or her behaviour as appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child;”

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT / SHARING INFORMATION

County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG., recognises parents as the primary educators of their children and wishes to work in equal and respectful partnership with parents when supporting their child.

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR WORKERS PARENTS & CHILDREN:
Procedures for Responding to a Complaint:**

- We undertake to ensure all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly, impartially, and confidentially.
- We will endeavour to quickly and informally resolve complaints through discussion with parents and members of staff as appropriate.
- Parents will be made aware that there is a complaints procedure in operation as part of enrolment/intake.
- If we find that we have made a mistake or that something could have been done better, we will change the way we do things to avoid making the same mistake in future
- Complaints can be made by parents, guardians, and other advocates on behalf of children

Please see our Complaints Policy, available at www.countykildarelp.ie or info@countykildarelp.ie or from reception at County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG office.

OUTINGS / TRIPS AWAY:

This company aims to provide children with a varied and wide experience and from time to time the service may organise day trips and outings. It is our policy to ensure the safety and well-being of children during these activities through planning, risk assessment, management, and supervision of the activity.

We operate in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

At County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG., we believe in encouraging children to become familiar with their environment and to explore new situations. We aim to further enhance the Childs learning experience through the organisation of outings. Age-appropriate outings will be organised for the children, these outings will vary and range from short local trips to bus trips. We will ensure when bringing children on outings the appropriate adult/child ratios apply, according to our insurance policy.

- Parents will be given notice for all outings and must sign a consent form prior to the outing.
- Where possible the childcare manager will visit the facility /area to be visited in advance of the outing. This is to explain to the management of

the facility what our groups' needs, or requirements will be and also ensure that the facility is age appropriate and to identify any possible hazards or difficulties that may occur.

- Additional fees will be charged for outings to contribute towards the costs.
- Adult / child ratios for outings will be as follows:
 - 1 adult – 3 children for playschool children
 - 1 adult – 2 children for crèche children.
- Each adult will have responsibility for a particular group of children for the duration of the outing
- Parents will be asked to accompany us on outings in order to achieve correct adult/child ratios. In certain circumstances it may be essential that a parent/guardian would accompany their child on the outing. This would be arranged with the Manager in advance of the outing.
- At least two staff members on any outing will be qualified to administer first aid.
- Staff will bring a first aid kit, children's medications and inhalers and mobile phone on outings.
- Staff will be aware of and notify facilities of any food allergies in advance of the outing.
- This service will ensure that when transporting children on outings each child will have an individual seat belt.
- Parents will be asked to supply a booster seat for their child in compliance with legislation.
- A headcount will be carried out by the Manager before leaving, regularly during the outing and before returning home. This will involve calling each child by his/her name and marking them on an attendance sheet (see appendix).
- Records of all outings containing signed consent forms and headcounts will be kept on file.

Sample Headcount Record

Date of outing:

Destination:

CHILDS NAME	Count 1 Time:	Count 2 Time:	Count 3 Time:	Count 4 Time:	Count 5 Time:
Name					
Name					

Signed by: Staff Member					

Policy for Managing Accidents and Incidents.

Policy Statement

It is our policy to promote the health, well-being, and safety of all the children in our service through the implementation of robust policies and procedures and by developing and regularly reviewing accident prevention procedures and fire safety. Although we adhere to the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and all safety precautions and guidelines, accidents may occur.

Procedures for Responding to an Accident/Incident

- We will ensure that all personnel are aware of emergency numbers and that they are prominently displayed.
- We will ensure that all relevant personnel have up to date First Aid Training and that a complete First Aid Box is accessible.
- The safety and welfare of the child is always the first consideration if a child is injured, or an accident occurs.
- After an accident, as soon as practicable, the Accident Report Form is completed and recorded in the Accident Book/Log.
- The manager/owner/chairperson is informed of serious accidents or incidents.

- The Early Years Inspectorate are informed of serious incidents in line with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, as soon as practicable
- Parents are always informed of incidents or accidents involving their child and requested to sign the relevant form.
- The manager will review the accident and incident reports annually.

Social Media Use:

Statement of Intent:

At County Kildare LEADER Partnership CLG., we respect the privacy of children and their families, staff, and volunteers. All information relating to children and their families, staff and volunteers will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Administration:

- The social media site is set up with a maximum of two administrators to approve and monitor activity on the social media site.
- All posts are verified in advance of being placed on the social media site by parents.
- All inappropriate posts are removed from the social media site and the user will be reported and blocked from the site.
- Staff should not contact or engage with children who attend the company outings on social media platforms.
- Staff should not use their personal social media accounts (for example, Facebook, Twitter) to make or have contact with children who use the service or their families, to comment, tagged, message or share in any conversation/pictures, or videos.
- Administrator must ensure that all comments are positive and in the best interest of the company.
- All negative comments should be requested to make contact with the company for clarification and verification.

Communication:

Communication for staff, committee, or parents. Images, videos/media packages:

- All images or videos will only be kept on the site for a maximum of 2 years; a review will be completed each year to remove old images or videos past the expiry date.

Implementing of our Child Safeguarding Statement:

The Child Safeguarding Statement must be reviewed every two years, or sooner if there has been a change in any of the elements to which it refers.

This Child Safeguarding Policy was approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting on 15th December 2022.

Pat Leogue

Signed: _____

Chief Executive Officer