

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### ***Introduction***

### ***Principles informing the child protection policy***

### ***College's duties in relation to child protection***

### ***College Child Protection Officer***

### ***Duty to report***

Duty to report

Duty of confidentiality

Duty to employee/volunteer against whom an allegation of abuse is made

### ***Partner organizations***

### ***Referral of potential volunteers to external organisations***

### ***Child protection training***

## **APPENDICES**

### ***A. Code of behaviour for employees/students working, learning or volunteering with children***

### ***B. Safe recruitment practices in respect of employees***

### ***C1. Safe recruitment practices in respect of volunteers***

### ***C2 Volunteer registration form***

### ***C3. Volunteer reference form***

### ***D. Safe recruitment practices in respect of students working with children***

### ***E. Declaration form for College personnel***

### ***F. Safe management practices and policies with regard to children***

### ***G. Guidelines on how to respond to accidents involving children***

### ***H. Guidelines on child abuse, neglect***

Defining abuse, neglect

Guidelines on how to respond to suspected child abuse

Signs and symptoms of child abuse

***I. Standard reporting procedure***

***J. HSE Dublin contact details***

***K. Records Management***



## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

### Introduction

**Para. 1** - Trinity College Dublin is committed to providing the best possible care for children under its care and supervision. To that end, it has adopted this Child Protection Policy which is designed to promote best practice in child protection within College. This policy is based on the recommendations contained in **Children First – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children** (2011) and **Our Duty to Care – The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People**. This policy shall complement existing child protection policies adopted by individual academic and administrative departments in College and shall be reviewed at least once every three years by the College Child Protection Officer. In the event of any conflict between this policy and existing child protection policies adopted by individual academic and administrative departments in College, College shall apply whichever policy is considered by the Child Protection Officer to provide the best protection for children and where both policies provide equal measures of protection, the College policy shall apply.

**1.2** In this policy,

‘abuse’ refers to physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect and is further defined in section 1 of Appendix H of this policy;

‘Bullying’ is repeated aggression, whether verbal, psychological or physical, that is conducted by an individual or group against others;

‘child’ is any person under the age of 18 other than a person under the age of 18 who is or has been married. The categories of children protected by this policy include:

Children with whom staff and students work in an academic, support or voluntary capacity;

children who are the subjects of academic research;

children using College facilities such as the Day Nursery, Sports Centre and Science Gallery;

children attending summer schools or other programmes organised for children by College;

children attending Open Days;

children living in College accommodation during the vacations;

children on work experience placements in College, e.g., Transition Year students;

children visiting College for any other reason;

children at risk of whom members of the College community, acting in their capacity as College employees, students or volunteers, become aware, e.g. siblings of College students;

children who are registered students under the age of 18.

'College support services' means the College Health Service, the Student Counselling Service and the Disability Service (including Unilink);

'College personnel' may, depending on the context, include members of staff, students and volunteers;

'student' means any registered student in College, any student given permission by the Senior Lecturer either to intermit studies or to go off books, and any SU or GSU sabbatical officer;

'volunteer' means any student or member of staff or other person who engages in extra-curricular activity with any College body or with any student club or society recognised by or affiliated to College which entails or may entail access to children.

## **PRINCIPLES INFORMING THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**Para. 2** - College's Child Protection Policy is based on the following principles:

In all matters relating to children, the welfare of children is of paramount importance.

A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/guardians/carers and families but where there is conflict, the child's welfare comes first.

Children have a right to be heard, listened to and to be taken seriously and taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.

Within the context of this policy which is designed to protect children from abuse, parents/guardians/carers should be consulted and involved in matters concerning

their children. In particular, parents/guardians should be informed if the College's Child Protection Officer intends to report concerns of possible child abuse or neglect to the relevant authorities unless providing such information to the parents/guardians might place the child at risk.

Actions taken to protect a child should not in themselves be abusive or cause the child unnecessary distress and every action and procedure should consider the overall needs of the child.

The criminal dimension of any action cannot be ignored.

Effective child protection requires familiarity with child protection guidelines and procedures and clarity of responsibility for staff and students who have substantial unsupervised access to children as part of their work, formal studies or College affiliated extra-curricular activities.

## **COLLEGE'S DUTIES IN RELATION TO CHILD PROTECTION**

**Para. 3.1** - In discharge of its duty to safeguard children, College undertakes to:

- promote the general welfare, health, development and safety of children;
- adopt a code of behaviour for employees/students working, learning or volunteering with children – see Appendix A
- adopt and consistently apply safe and clearly defined methods of recruiting, selecting or assigning staff, volunteers and students on placements or undertaking research with children – see Appendices B, C and D respectively;
- adopt and consistently apply safe management policies and practices with regard to child protection – see Appendix F;
- raise awareness within College about potential risks to children's safety and welfare;
- develop effective procedures for responding to accidents and complaints involving children – see Appendix G;
- develop procedures to provide specific guidance to staff and volunteers who may have reasonable grounds for concern about the safety and welfare of children involved with the organization;
- appoint a Child Protection Officer to act as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns.

**3.2** - In particular, staff in the College support services who are treating a person with a mental health and/or addiction problem must also consider the welfare and safety of any children in the person's family. Where it is considered that a person's mental health and/or addiction problems have serious implications for the safety and welfare of children, this information must be reported to the College Child Protection Officer who has responsibility for contacting the relevant State agencies and/or head of academic unit/line manager as appropriate.

**3.3** - Staff in the College support services professionally assessing a person with a known history of harming or abusing children must consider the potential risk to any children with whom this person may have contact. Where the individual concerned is deemed to present a current risk to children, this information must be reported to the College Child Protection Officer who has responsibility for contacting the relevant State agencies and/or head of academic unit/line manager as appropriate.

### **CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER**

**Para. 4.1** -The College will appoint a Child Protection Officer to act as a liaison with outside agencies and as a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns. College shall also appoint a deputy Child Protection Officer who shall discharge the duties and functions of the Child Protection Officer in the absence of the Child Protection Officer.

**4.2** - The Child Protection Officer is responsible for the implementation of College's Child Protection Policy and procedures should include the name of this person, his/her role and responsibilities and how s/he can be contacted. The Child Protection Officer is responsible, in particular, for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure is followed, so that suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are referred promptly to the designated person in the HSE Children and Family Services, or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of the HSE, to An Garda Síochána.

**4.3** - The role of the Child Protection Officer is to:

- Establish contact with the senior member of Community Services responsible for child protection in the College's catchment area, i.e. Child Care Manager or Principal Social Worker;
- Provide information and advice on child protection within the College;
- Ensure that College's child protection policy and procedures are followed and reviewed at least once every three years;
- Report reasonable allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the HSE, any other relevant statutory authority and/or An Garda Síochána and maintain College

records in relation to any such report (except in those cases where responsibility for reporting such allegations or suspicions and maintaining appropriate records rests with partner organisations as described in paras.6.1-3 below.) The Child Protection Officer shall also report to the appropriate College officer any reasonable suspicion or allegation of child abuse or neglect held or made in respect of a member of the College personnel, the appropriate College officer being, in the case of a student, the Junior Dean, in the case of an academic member of staff, the Senior Dean, and in the case of a non-academic member of staff, the Director of Human Resources.

- Convene meetings of such staff as are deemed appropriate to advise the Child Protection Officer on, e.g. how to assess an allegation of child abuse made against a student or member of staff, what steps, if any, to take to protect children apart from referring the allegation to the HSE/Gardaí, etc. participants in such meetings to be bound by the requirements of this policy, specifically in relation to the duty of confidentiality;
- Following the reporting of suspected child abuse to the civil authorities, inform the parents/guardians of a child of concerns that their child may have been harmed or abused and that the matter has been reported to the authorities unless it is the case that so notifying the parents/guardians might pose a risk of harm to the child or any other child. A decision not to inform the parents/guardians should be recorded in writing together with the reasons for not doing so and the relevant civil authorities should be notified that the parents/guardians have not been informed;
- Ensure appropriate information is available at the time of referral of child protection concerns to the appropriate authorities and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover;
- Liaise with Community Services/An Garda Síochána and other agencies as appropriate;
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken by the College, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome;
- Ensure that any person reporting alleged child abuse is aware of the supports available to him/her from College;
- Advise the College of child protection training needs;
- Ensure 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. See Appendix K on records management.

**4.4** Where the Child Protection Officer decides not to make a formal report to the HSE and/or An Garda Síochána, s/he shall keep a record of the concerns on file, shall record the reasons for not reporting the matter and shall give the person who made the initial report a clear written statement of the reasons why a formal report is not being made to the civil authorities. That person should also be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, the State authorities – see below para.5.5 - and that the provisions of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply once they communicate ‘reasonably and in good faith’.

## **DUTY TO REPORT**

### ***Duty to report abuse***

**Para. 5.1** – The HSE Children and Family Services 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. The guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse are as follows:

1. The safety and well-being of the child or young person must take priority.
2. Reports should normally be made without delay to the College Child Protection Officer who will relay them promptly to the HSE and/or the Gardaí where there are reasonable grounds for concern. Where a person is concerned that a child may be at immediate risk or where such a person is dissatisfied with College’s response to an allegation of abuse or neglect, s/he should consult with or report to the HSE Children and Family Services, contact details for which (as at October 2011) in the Dublin area are set out in Appendix J or the Gardaí at any Garda station. For contact details for HSE child protection services nationally (as of October 2011), see here - [http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find\\_a\\_Service/Children\\_and\\_Family\\_Services/c\\_hildrenfirst/adviceguidancesupports/](http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find_a_Service/Children_and_Family_Services/c_hildrenfirst/adviceguidancesupports/)
3. While the basis for concern must be established as comprehensively as possible, it is not the role of the Child Protection Officer to investigate or interview relevant parties in relation to suspected child abuse or neglect.

Guidelines on defining, identifying and responding to child abuse or neglect are set out in Appendix H.

**5.2** - The following examples constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- (i) specific indication from the child that (s)he was abused;



- (ii) an account by a person who saw the child being abused;
- (iii) evidence, such as *an injury or behaviour* which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way;
- (iv) an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse. An example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour;
- (v) consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

A suspicion which is not supported by any objective indication of abuse or neglect would not constitute a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern.

**5.3** Subject to para.5.1.2 above, concerns should be reported to the College's Child Protection Officer either directly or through the child protection officer of the relevant College club, society, department or administrative unit, (although where the concern arises in the context of an arrangement with a partner organisation as described in paras.6.1-3 below, the concern should be reported to the Child Protection Officer of the partner organisation.) If College's Child Protection Officer considers that there are reasonable grounds for concern, s/he should promptly notify the HSE and/or the Gardaí. Where the Child Protection Officer has reasonable grounds for considering that a child is or has been abused, the Officer should, where appropriate, also inform the child's family of his/her concerns. The Child Protection Officer will develop clear procedures for the purpose of this paragraph, which procedures will then be set out in a Schedule to this policy.

**5.4** - The person reporting a concern about child abuse should be kept informed by the College Child Protection Officer about the post-disclosure process, so that they can be reassured about what to expect. Such person should also be informed by the Child Protection Officer of the supports available to him/her through the College Health Service, Student Counselling Service or Employment Assistance Programme as appropriate.

**5.5** – In accordance with the national guidelines, everyone must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be being abused or neglected. Any College personnel making a report of suspected child abuse or neglect may contact the Child Protection Officer for information about the supports available to him or her from College through the Employment Assistance Programme or the Student Counselling Service. It is important to note that the *Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998* provides that a person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith"

to designated officers of the HSE, to any member of An Garda Síochána or, in the case of an employee, to an appropriate person in the employee's organization, cannot be sued for damages. This means that, even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, the person accused of abuse who took legal proceedings would have to prove that the person reporting the abuse had acted unreasonably and in bad faith in making the report. In addition, a person who makes a report in good faith and in the child's best interests may also be protected at common law by the defence of qualified privilege. However deliberately making a false report of child abuse to the authorities is an offence under the 1998 Act.

**5.6** - Where an adult makes a disclosure to staff in the College support services of abuse that occurred during his or her childhood, it is essential to establish whether there is any current risk to any child who may be in contact with the alleged abuser revealed in such disclosures. If any such risk is deemed to exist, the allegation should be reported to the HSE Children and Family Services without delay.

**5.7** - A Standard Form for Reporting Child Protection and/or Welfare Concerns to the HSE is to be found at Appendix I.

### ***Duty of confidentiality***

**5.8** - All information or allegations regarding a child protection concern should be shared only on "a need to know" basis in the best interests of the child.

No undertakings regarding secrecy can 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 full account of legal requirements.

Ethical and statutory codes concerned with confidentiality and data protection (including College's Records Management Policy and Data Protection Policy) provide general guidance. They are not intended to limit or prevent the exchange of information between different professional staff who have a responsibility for ensuring the protection of children. The provision of information to the statutory agencies for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.

It must be clearly understood that information which is gathered for one purpose must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided that information.

The issue of confidentiality should be part of the general training of staff who work with children and College shall prepare a written policy in this regard.

### ***Duty to College personnel against whom an allegation of abuse is made***

**5.9** - The College will investigate in a timely and thorough manner any disclosures, reports of abuse or matters arising from recruitment and employment checks. Contemporaneous notes of conversations must be taken where possible, and always kept secure. It is important that College personnel do not discuss disclosures or reports of abuse with others unless specifically authorised by the Child Protection Officer, by this Policy, by College's Garda Vetting policies or by the Child Protection Procedures. All College personnel will act in accordance with this Policy and in line with the Child Protection Procedures. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

**5.10** - If an allegation against a member of College personnel has been made, all action will be guided by the rules of natural justice and the procedural and contractual arrangements in force at the time. The most important consideration to be taken into account by the Child Protection Officer and College is the protection of children and their safety and wellbeing must be a priority. However, College also has duties to any member of the College personnel against whom allegations of child abuse or neglect are made. Such allegations may be erroneous or malicious. Therefore any allegation of abuse must be dealt with sensitively and the accused person treated fairly. This includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair enquiry.

Where an allegation is not referred on by the Child Protection Officer to the HSE and/or An Garda Síochána, College will ensure that the reputation and career prospects of College Personnel concerned are not adversely affected by reason of the complaint having been brought against him/her. The member of the College Personnel will be offered counselling and any other support necessary to restore his/her confidence and morale. The member of the College Personnel who made the complaint should be reassured that College management appreciates that the complaint was made in good faith. However, where it is found that a report of abuse was brought maliciously, the member of College Personnel who made the complaint should be dealt with under the relevant disciplinary procedures.

**5.11** - The appropriate College officer as defined in para.4.3 shall make every reasonable effort to advise the person against whom an allegation of child abuse or neglect has been made of the following:

- the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her; and
- available details of the nature of the allegation.

The person accused shall be afforded an opportunity to respond and shall be told that his/her response may also have to be passed on to the HSE if there is a reasonable ground for the allegation.

**5.12** – The follow up of an allegation of abuse or neglect against a member of College personnel shall be made in consultation with the HSE and An Garda Síochána. An immediate meeting should be arranged with these two agencies for this purpose. In the event of an emergency (i.e. where a child's immediate safety is deemed to be at risk) or non-availability of the HSE for any reason, a report should be made immediately to An Garda Síochána at any Garda station.

**5.13** – It is important to note if an allegation is made against a member of College personnel, there are two procedures to be followed:

- i) the reporting procedure in respect of the allegation;
- ii) where appropriate, the relevant College disciplinary procedures applicable to staff and students as set out in the College Statutes.

The Child Protection Officer has responsibility for reporting the allegation to the HSE and the Gardaí. Responsibility for operating the relevant College disciplinary procedures is determined by the College Statutes.

## **ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**

**Para. 6.1** - Any agreement or arrangement entered into by College for the placement of Trinity students as part of their formal education in circumstances in which the students may encounter children must be subject to the conditions that the organization providing the placement has full responsibility for ensuring that appropriate child protection policies and practices complying with national guidelines are in place and that that organization will notify the College Child Protection Officer of any complaints of which the organization is aware made against a Trinity student concerning child welfare issues.

**6.2** - Where it is proposed that Trinity students organized through a College club or society should work with children as part of an arrangement with a partner organization in the wider community, such an arrangement must be approved by the CSC or DUCAC as appropriate and must be subject to the conditions that the partner organization has full responsibility for ensuring that appropriate child protection policies and practices complying with national guidelines are in place and that the partner organization will

notify the College Child Protection Officer of any complaints of which the organization is aware made against a Trinity student concerning child welfare issues.

**6.3** - Where it is proposed that Trinity students organized through College programmes or services such as Trinity Access Programme, Bridge to College, Civic Engagement Officer, etc., should work with children as part of an arrangement with a partner organization in the wider community, such an arrangement must be subject to the conditions that the partner organization has full responsibility for ensuring that appropriate child protection policies and practices complying with national guidelines are in place and that the partner organization will notify the College Child Protection Officer of any complaints of which the organization is aware made against a Trinity student concerning child welfare issues.

### **REFERRAL OF POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

**Para 7.1** - Where members of the College community interested in volunteering are put in contact with external community voluntary organizations through any College office, club or society, the external community voluntary organization has full responsibility for ensuring that appropriate child protection policies and practices complying with national guidelines are in place. Screening, vetting or background checks will not be conducted by Trinity for this purpose and irrespective of any referral, it remains the responsibility of the community voluntary organization to operate safe recruitment procedures and take all due care to ensure that any volunteers accepted are suited to the roles assigned, particularly where the volunteers have access to children.

**7.2** - Should a member of College staff explicitly act as a referee in support of the application of a person to volunteer with an external community voluntary organization, this reference should be understood as reflecting the referee's personal interactions with the applicant only and is not indicative of the position of Trinity College as a whole.

**7.3** – A member of College staff asked to provide a reference for a member of College personnel seeking to engage in voluntary work that may involve regular or ongoing unsupervised access to children must consult with the Child Protection Officer before providing such a reference.

### **PROVISION OF CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING**

**Para.8** – The Child Protection Officer should undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments. In addition, College staff and

volunteers will be trained appropriately in child protection procedures. The Child Protection Officer will work with line management and appropriate bodies such as the CSC, DUCAC and the College Civic Engagement Officer to identify specific groups of staff, students and volunteers who may require training.

New employees shall be informed of this policy at induction and students shall be informed during Orientation Week. Reference to the child protection policy will be included in the annual message sent by the College secretary to members of staff and to students about College policies. College personnel who sanction the participation of volunteers in College activities involving children must inform such volunteers of this policy.

**Para 9 –** The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed at least once every three years by the Child Protection Officer and the Dean of Students and a report thereon will be made to the Student Services Committee.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A - CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR COLLEGE PERSONNEL WORKING, LEARNING OR VOLUNTEERING WITH CHILDREN

College employees and students in contact with children should:

- Be familiar with and follow the College's policies on child protection, dignity and respect, mental health and social networking and social media and participate in related induction and training programmes provided within the department/activity.
- Treat all children fairly and as individuals.
- Treat all children equally and with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Be inclusive of children with special needs.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability).
- Listen carefully to what children say and want to say.<sup>1</sup>
- Involve children in decision-making where appropriate and encourage feedback
- Respect each child's boundaries, personal space and privacy and help them to develop their own sense of rights as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel there is a problem.
- Physical contact of a comforting and reassuring nature is a valid way of expressing concern and care for children, where such contact is acceptable and comfortable to all persons concerned. Physical contact should be open (never secretive or hidden), occur for a good reason and should be initiated by the young person.
- Be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in some contact sports and exercise particular caution in areas such as swimming pools, showers, etc.
- Be visible to others when working with children whenever possible.<sup>2</sup>
- Be sensitive to the possibility of becoming over involved or spending a great deal of time with any one young person.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> If dealing with a disclosure of child abuse, ask questions only for the purpose of clarification. Be supportive but do not ask leading questions or seek intimate details beyond those volunteered by the child. Detailed investigative interviews will, if necessary, be carried out by HSE staff or members of an Garda Síochána.

<sup>2</sup> It is recognized that College staff may, on occasion, have to meet on their own with registered students under the age of 18 in order to respect the student's right to privacy and confidentiality.

<sup>3</sup> Any concerns in this regard should be discussed with a supervisor or experienced colleague. Similarly, any long term 'helping' or 'support' relationships that arise in one's work, learning or volunteering situation should also be reviewed on a regular basis.

- Prepare a child with whom you have worked over a period of time for the conclusion of the interaction.
- Use age-appropriate activities, teaching aids and materials.
- Set an example of appropriate behaviour (use of language, appropriate dress etc).
- Agree boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions with children and their organisation leaders/primary carers from the outset.
- Challenge and report inappropriate or potentially abusive behavior. Seek assistance when required.
- Encourage children to report cases of bullying and bring complaints of bullying to the attention of the appropriate line manager, activity coordinator or College Child Protection Officer.
- Record and report any incidents, accidents or child protection concerns to the appropriate person.
  
- **Avoid** using sarcasm, discrimination, negative criticism, labeling.<sup>4</sup>
- **Avoid** using language or behaviour of a sexual, suggestive or inappropriate nature in front of children.
- **Avoid** doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
- **Avoid** being alone with a child where this is practicable. If necessary, consider leaving the door slightly ajar or informing another adult that you will be alone in the room with the individual in question.
- **Avoid** giving lifts to individual young people, especially for car long journeys.
  
- **Do not** single out a particular child for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule or unwelcome focus or attention.
- **Never** physically punish or verbally abuse a child or act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade.
- **Do not** exchange personal contact details with children unless this is required by the activity.<sup>5</sup> **Do not** add a child with whom you are working as a friend on Facebook or other social network medium.

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<sup>4</sup> If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.

<sup>5</sup> Should your work, volunteering or learning activity require the exchange of contact details, use only a mobile phone number or e-mail address and, except where the child is a registered student under the age of 18, obtain the written consent of the child's primary carer.



- **Do not** take a child to your own home or room, especially where they will be alone with you.
- **Do not** allow or engage in suggestive remarks, gestures or touching of a kind which could be misunderstood.
- **Do not** provide children with alcohol, cigarettes or illegal drugs.
- **Do not** permit abusive youth peer activities such as bullying.
- **Do not** allow any physically rough or sexually provocative games, or inappropriate talking or touching, by anyone in any group for which you have responsibility.
- **Do not** trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues.
- **Do not** believe a disclosure “could never happen to me”.
- **Do not** ‘do nothing’ in relation to child protection concern and if you consider that a child is at immediate risk, contact the HSE or Gardaí immediately (24 hours per day) (see Appendix J for contact details).
- **Do not** under any circumstances attempt to deal with any problems alone. Never promise to keep a secret in relation to a child protection concern.

## **Appendix B - SAFE RECRUITMENT PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYEES**

**Para. 1** - College will provide a clear definition of the role of employees, clarifying and agreeing expectations regarding the role of a new worker and identifying the minimum level of personal qualities and skills required to fill the post.

**Para.2** - College staff working with children shall be trained appropriately in child protection procedures and College's Child Protection Officer shall work with appropriate bodies in College to identify specific groups of staff who require such training.

**Para. 3** - Trinity College Dublin commits to upholding the highest possible standards in recruitment of employees as laid out in the College Recruitment Procedures (available here - [http://www.tcd.ie/hr/assets/pdf/recruitment\\_procedures.pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/hr/assets/pdf/recruitment_procedures.pdf) ).

**Para. 4** - In addition to the rigours of the recruitment process and verification of references, all job applicants who are intended to be employed in an area where they will have unsupervised access to children and/or vulnerable adults in the course of their employment/engagement must complete the Garda Vetting Form (See Appendix J) and authorise TCD to conduct a background check via the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU). The vetting process will be carried out by College Human Resources.

**Para.5** - TCD uses the services of Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU) in conjunction with Overseas Clearance Certificates to conduct background checks on job applicants for certain positions in which they would have unsupervised access to children and/or vulnerable adults in the course of their employment/engagement. This process enables TCD to assess the suitability of applicants. TCD may also require applicants to provide an enhanced disclosure by the completion of an affidavit at the time an offer of employment is made. (The College Garda Vetting Policy in respect of employees is available here **LINK NEEDED**)

**Para.6** - Individuals who are not directly employed by TCD, but who are employed by contractors (or sub-contractors) of TCD and who will have unsupervised access to children and/or vulnerable adults in the course of their duties will also be required to undergo the vetting process. While TCD will carry out Garda vetting in respect of contractors / sub-contractors, the University will also ensure that these obligations are reflected, to the extent possible, in any contract between TCD and the contractor and/or sub-contractor and as appropriate form part of the criteria required in any procurement process

**Para. 7** - All applicants for paid work with children shall be required to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be unsuitable to work with young people and declaring any past criminal convictions or cases pending against them. See sample declaration in Appendix E.

**Para. 8** – College will ensure that applicants for employment with College that entails having unsupervised access to, or contact with, children or mentally impaired people are aware of Section 26 of the Sex Offenders Act 2001 which makes it an offence for a sex offender convicted of offences committed in Ireland or abroad to ‘apply for work or to perform a service ... which involves having unsupervised access to, or contact with, children or mentally impaired people without telling the prospective employer or contractor that [s/he is] a sex offender.’ The term ‘mentally impaired’ is defined in s.5 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1993 as ‘suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether through mental handicap or mental illness, which is of such a nature or degree as to render a person incapable of living an independent life or of guarding against serious exploitation.’

**Para.9** - College shall ensure that the identity of the applicant is confirmed against some documentation (ID card, driving licence or passport) which gives his or her full name, address together with a signature or photograph. This should be compared with the written application.

## APPENDIX C.1 – SAFE RECRUITMENT PRACTICES FOR VOLUNTEERS

1 Volunteers who will have access to children shall, at a minimum, complete and submit a registration form, the information included on which shall be reviewed and stored in such a way as to respect the applicant's right to confidentiality. A sample registration form is set out in Appendix C2.

It should also be noted that s.26 of the Sex Offenders Act 2001 which makes it an offence for a sex offender convicted of offences committed in Ireland or abroad to 'apply for work or to perform a service ... which involves having unsupervised access to, or contact with, children or mentally impaired people without telling the prospective employer or contractor that [s/he is] a sex offender' is applicable to voluntary work.

2 - All candidates for voluntary work which entails regular or ongoing unsupervised access to children shall be subject to Garda Vetting or, in so far as possible, equivalent police check. (***INSERT LINK TO PROPOSED POLICY ON GARDA VETTING OF VOLUNTEERS***) which will also address data protection, confidentiality concerns) The Garda Vetting form (or equivalent) must be submitted in advance of commencing voluntary activity which includes access to children. Whether or not volunteers may work in a supervised capacity before their Garda Vetting has come through is at the discretion of the individual volunteer programme. However no volunteer may have regular or ongoing unsupervised access prior to the Garda Vetting coming through satisfactorily. No volunteer should be placed in the role of activity leader or supervisor or equivalent unless their Garda Vetting has come through satisfactorily.

If the information provided on the Garda Vetting form or the response from the Garda Central Vetting Unit raises a concern in relation to the volunteer's suitability to work with children, the procedures outlined in the College's proposed Garda Vetting Policy and Procedures for volunteers will come into operation and in serious cases, the volunteer may be asked to withdraw from the volunteering programme or activity and/or undertake not to volunteer with any other organization or programme which would involve access to children or vulnerable persons.

3 The College affiliated volunteer-involving activity or programme, (which includes volunteering within College Centres and administrative areas), shall ensure that before commencing any activity with children, all volunteers receive an induction appropriate to their role and are made familiar with the relevant child protection procedures and the standards of conduct which are expected of them when working with children as per the

Code of Behaviour (Appendix A).

4 The relevant College club/society or other College grouping shall ensure that the identity of the registered volunteer who may have unsupervised access to children is confirmed against their College ID card.

## Appendix C2 – Registration form

### C o n f i d e n t i a l

Surname

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Forename

---

Course and Year (if student)

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Department and Position (if staff)

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\*Address (if not a current student/staff member) \_\_\_\_\_

\*A letter from a referee must accompany your registration form if you are not a current student/staff member. Your referee must be your current employer or social worker or a current staff member of Trinity College.

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

College E-mail Address:

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\*\*Can you commit to this voluntary activity for (specify commitment required e.g two hours each week during Michaelmas term between 6pm and 8pm on a Monday)?

Is there any reason why you cannot or should not work with children? Yes/No

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am aware of my rights as a Trinity College Dublin Volunteer and agree to uphold my corresponding responsibilities as set out in the TCD Volunteer Charter [attached, should be appendix- will be modified to reflect CP policy] when volunteering with \_\_\_\_\_ (NAME OF PROJECT/ORGANISATION).

To the best of my knowledge, all information within this application is accurate and correct. [Submit if online, signature and date if hard copy]

\*\*optional

### Appendix C.3 – Volunteer reference form

#### C o n f i d e n t i a l

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\_\_\_\_\_ has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer with this club/organisation and has given your name as a referee.

This post involves substantial access to children and as an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children or young people?

Yes ■ No ■

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.

If you are happy to complete this reference, all information contained on the form will remain confidential, subject to compliance with statutory obligations and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor, should they be offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate you being extremely candid in your evaluation of this person. Please note that information provided by you is liable to be released to the subject of the reference, where a request is made under relevant legislation (including the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 and the Data Protections Acts 1988 and 2003).

How long have you known this person?

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In what capacity?

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What attributes does this person have which you would consider makes them a suitable volunteer?

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How would you describe their personality?

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Please rate this person on the following (please tick)

	Poor	Average	Good	V/Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self-motivation					
Motivation of Others					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

Signed:

---

Date:

---

Occupation:

---

## **APPENDIX D - SAFE RECRUITMENT PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS ON PLACEMENTS OR UNDERTAKING RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN**

**Para.1** - Any student offered a place on a course that requires students to undertake placements with external agencies which will bring them into contact with the public and in which they will assume positions of trust shall be required to undergo police vetting in accordance with College's Garda Vetting Policy for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students, 2009.

**Para.2** - Any student undertaking research with children shall likewise be required to undergo police vetting in accordance with College's Garda Vetting Policy for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students, 2009.

**Para. 3** - All applicants for placements or research positions that entail work with children shall be required to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be unsuitable to work with young people and declaring any past criminal convictions or cases pending against them. See sample declaration in Appendix E.

Para.4 - In the event that a student fails to complete the Garda Vetting Procedure, or the College deems the student unfit for a placement or for undertaking research with children based on information provided through the Vetting process, the offer of the place on the course or the offer to undertake research with children will no longer be valid and will be withdrawn.

Para.5 – A student will be permitted to commence a placement or to undertake research with children in advance of the issuing of vetting certification due the current lengthy processing time. During this time, the student must ensure that s/he does not have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults within the confines of the student's role. Any breach of this will result in immediate termination of the placement or research position.



**Appendix E –DECLARATION FORM FOR COLLEGE PERSONNEL ENGAGED IN  
PAID WORK, PLACEMENTS OR RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG  
PEOPLE**

**C o n f i d e n t i a l**

Surname:

Forename

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

Any other name previously known as

1. Have you ever been convicted of an criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order?

Yes ■ No ■

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s):

Nature of offence

Date of offence

Nature of offence	Date of offence

Signed:

Date:

## **APPENDIX F - SAFE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND POLICIES WITH REGARD TO CHILDREN**

**Para.1** - Where Trinity students organized through a College club or society work with children as part of an arrangement with a partner organization in the wider community, responsibility for ensuring safe management practices and policies with regard to children lies with the partner organization. In all other cases where staff and/or students engage with children, responsibility for ensuring such safe management practices and policies rests with College.

**2** - Insofar as is possible, College staff, clubs and societies shall keep a record of relevant medical details, any special needs and emergency contact telephone numbers, for each child with whom they are working. Records shall also be kept of attendance, accidents, consent forms and any complaints or grievances relating to such children. Appropriate care shall be taken of such records having regard to the privacy of the children concerned – See Appendix K on records management.

**3** - Health and safety – College must ensure that premises being used by children comply with prescribed health and safety standards. In particular, there must be sufficient heating and ventilation; toilets, shower areas and washing facilities must be up to standard; fire precautions must be in place; there must be adequate first aid facilities and equipment and access to a phone; equipment must be checked regularly and insurance cover must be adequate.

**4** - Supervision of children (other than students) - Children must be properly supervised in all activities. In particular, children should not normally be left unattended; in so far as is possible, adequate numbers of College personnel of both sexes should be available to supervise activities; such personnel must know at all times where children are and what they are doing; any activity using potentially dangerous equipment must have constant adult supervision; and dangerous behaviour must not be tolerated. Written parental consent must be obtained before children may use potentially dangerous equipment. If the activities involve travelling away, safe methods of transport must be used; adequate insurance covering all aspects of the trip must be provided and written parental consent for each individual trip must be obtained. If the activities involve staying away from home overnight, College personnel must obtain any information about the children that may be relevant to staying away overnight, such as allergies, medical problems or special needs; appropriate and well supervised sleeping arrangements must be provided; and such personnel must ensure respect for the privacy of children in dormitories, changing rooms, showers and toilets.

**5 - Discipline** - The use of discipline with children should, as far as possible, be in the form of positive reinforcement and should comply with College's policy on Dignity and Respect. Sanctions should be implemented fairly and firmly and not used as threats, and children should be helped to understand why they are being imposed. College personnel should be trained for coping with disruptive and challenging behaviour and more than one worker or volunteer should be present when such behaviour is being dealt with. In relation to challenging behaviour, a record should be kept in an incident book describing what happened, the circumstances, who was involved, any injury to person or property and how the situation was resolved.

**6 - Supervision and support of College personnel** – Staff and volunteers should be consulted by managers or club/society leaders at least once a year about the operation of child protection practices and a brief, written record should be kept of the outcome of the discussion. College should also maintain a system of written review of College personnel so that they can be given recognition for the good work they are doing and helped to develop their skills further.

**7 - Children as research subjects** – Parental consent must be obtained before any research activity is conducted with children. Any research activity must respect the child's right to confidentiality and comply with any relevant code of ethics applicable to the type of research being conducted. Researchers must undergo police vetting where s/he may be working alone with children. Information provided to participants or the guardians of participants in research involving children should state that the researcher(s) operate under College's Child Protection Policy.

**8 - Photographs and images** – Where College personnel wish to use photographs, film or video of children, the consent of the children and their parents/guardians/guardians/carers must be obtained and all such media must be stored safely. College personnel should be aware of the risk of people taking inappropriate images of children in vulnerable positions, particularly at sporting events, and should immediately report any concerns to the Child Protection Officer.

## **APPENDIX G - GUIDELINES ON HOW TO RESPOND TO ACCIDENTS INVOLVING CHILDREN**

Procedures for dealing with accidents and complaints should ensure that:

- Emergency numbers are prominently displayed
- Everyone knows where the nearest phone is
- Someone has knowledge and /or training to deal with foreseeable medical and accidental incidents
- The first aid box is easy to find
- There are appropriate incident or report forms
- There is a formal complaints procedure for children and parents/guardians
- College personnel know what information will be needed.

***[SUPPLY LINK TO PUBLIC VERSION OF COLLEGE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN HERE]***

## APPENDIX H - GUIDELINES ON CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT

### ***1 Defining abuse and neglect***

Abuse may consist of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the *relationship* between a care-giver and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become *typical* of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others. (In this context, it should be noted that the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17.)

It is worth noting that child abuse may occur over the internet. The internet may be used in such a way as to inflict emotional abuse and may also, in some circumstances, lead to physical and/or sexual abuse.

Neglect can be defined in terms of an *omission*, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care. *Harm* can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is *significant* is determined by his/her health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age. The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

### ***2 - Guidelines on how to respond to suspected child abuse***

When abuse is disclosed to a member of staff, student or volunteer engaged in College activity or in activity recognised by or affiliated to College, he or she must:

- React calmly, as over-reacting may alarm the young person and compound feelings of anxiety and guilt:
- Listen carefully and attentively; take the young person seriously;
- Reassure the young person that they have taken the right action in telling;
- Inform whoever has made the disclosure that the information cannot be kept completely confidential as it will have to be passed on to the appropriate authorities;
- Do not ask the young person to repeat the story unnecessarily.
- Ask questions only for the purpose of clarification. Be supportive, but do not ask leading questions or seek intimate details beyond those volunteered by the child. Detailed investigative interviews will, if necessary, be carried out by HSE staff or members of an Garda Síochána;
- Check with the young person to ensure that what has been heard and understood by you is accurate;
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser;
- Record the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible; [(use the child's own words – do not synopsise)]
- Sign and date the record;
- Explain and ensure that the young person understands the procedures which will follow [explanation should be age-appropriate]
- Inform the Child Protection Officer of the relevant College club, society, department or administrative unit or the College Child Protection Officer about the disclosure immediately (not more than 24 hours afterwards). The Child Protection Officer of a club, society, College department or administrative unit should treat the matter as an urgent priority and liaise with the College Child Protection Officer. Where the disclosure is made in the context of an approved arrangement with a partner organisation in the wider community whereby Trinity students work with children as part of a formal placement or volunteer with children as part of the student's extra-curricular activity, the Child Protection Officer of the partner organisation should be informed immediately.
- Treat the information confidentially, sharing it only with persons who have a right to hear it.
- Not take any further action or discuss the matter further with anyone else unless advised otherwise.

### **3 – Signs and symptoms of child abuse, neglect**

Guidance in relation to the signs and symptoms of child abuse or neglect may be found in Appendix 1 of ChildrenFirst – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children) (2011), available here -

[http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/child\\_welfare\\_protection/ChildrenFirst.pdf](http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/child_welfare_protection/ChildrenFirst.pdf)

## **Appendix I –Standard Reporting Procedure:**

Suggested template for the reporting of child protection and welfare concerns to the HSE. In cases of emergency, or outside office hours, reports should be made directly to An Garda Síochána.



**STANDARD REPORT FORM***(For reporting CP&W Concerns to HSE)*

A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Date of Report**

**2. Details of Child**

Name:		Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address:		DOB		Age	
		School			
Alias		Correspondence address (if different)			

**3. Details of Persons Reporting Concern(s)**

Name:		Telephone No.	
Address:		Occupation:	
		Relationship to client:	
Reporter wishes to remain anonymous	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reporter discussed with parents/guardians	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4. Parents Aware of Report**

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to the HSE?	Yes	No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**5. Details of Report**

*(Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.)*

FORM NUMBER: CC01:01:00

## STANDARD REPORT FORM

(For reporting CP&W Concerns to HSE)



### 6. Relationships

Details of Mother		Details of Father	
Name:		Name:	
Address: (if different to child)		Address: (if different to child)	
Telephone Nos.		Telephone Nos.	

### 7. Household composition

Name	Relationship	DOB	Additional information, e.g. school/occupation/other

### 8. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child:

	Name	Address
Social Worker		
PHN		
GP		
Hospital		
School		
Gardaí		
Pre-School/Crèche/YG		
Other ( <i>specify</i> ):		

### 9. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child

Relationship to child:		Age	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name:		Occupation:				
Address:						

### 10. Details of person completing form

Name:		Occupation:	
Signed		Date:	

## APPENDIX J – HSE DUBLIN CONTACT DETAILS (as of October 2011)

Also listed on HSE website

[http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find\\_a\\_Service/Children\\_and\\_Family\\_Services/childrenfirst/adviceguidancesupports/Dublin\\_Child\\_Protection\\_Services.html](http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find_a_Service/Children_and_Family_Services/childrenfirst/adviceguidancesupports/Dublin_Child_Protection_Services.html) and from HSE LoCall Tel. 1850 241850. These contact numbers may be updated from time to time. Please check HSE website for latest information.

### **Dublin North Child Protection Services**

Social Work Department, 180-189 Lake Shore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords Tel: (01) 8708000

Health Centre, Cromcastle Road, Coolock, Dublin 5. Tel: (01) 816 4200 / 44

Social Work Office, 22 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1. Tel: (01) 855 6871

### **Dublin North Central**

Ballymun Civic Centre Dublin 9. Tel: (01) 846 7236

Office Hours 9.30am to 5pm

Outside office hours all child protection concerns should be referred to the Gardaí

The HSE operates an out-of hours Crisis Intervention Service in the Dublin area, which can be accessed by emergency services like Hospitals and the Garda Siochana outside of office hours. Crisis Intervention Service: Office Hours Tel (01) 838 7122

### **Dublin North West Child Protection Services**

Health Centre, Wellmount Park, Finglas, Dublin 11. Tel: (01) 856 7704

Rathdown Road, Dublin 7. Tel: (01) 882 5000

**Office Hours 9.30am to 5pm**

Outside office hours all child protection concerns should be referred to the Gardaí

The HSE operates an out-of hours Crisis Intervention Service in the Dublin area, which can be accessed by emergency services like Hospitals and the Garda Siochana outside of office hours. Crisis Intervention Service: Office Hours Tel (01) 838 7122

### **Dublin South East Child Protection Services**

Vergemount Hall, Clonskeagh, Dublin 6. Tel: (01) 268 0320

**Office Hours 9.00am to 1pm and 2.15-5pm**

Outside office hours all child protection concerns should be referred to the Gardaí

The HSE operates an out-of hours Crisis Intervention Service in the Dublin area, which can be accessed by emergency services like Hospitals and the Garda Siochana outside of office hours. Crisis Intervention Service: Office Hours Tel (01) 838 7122

### **Dublin South City Child Protection Services**

Duty Social Work Carnegie Centre, 21-25 Lord Edward Street, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 648 6555

Public Health Nursing, 21-25 Lord Edward Street, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 648 6500

Family Support Service, Donore Avenue Tel: (01) 416 4441

**Office Hours** 9.00am to 1pm and 2.15-5pm

Outside office hours all child protection concerns should be referred to the Gardaí  
The HSE operates an out-of hours Crisis Intervention Service in the Dublin area, which can be accessed by emergency services like Hospitals and the Garda Siochana outside of office hours.Crisis Intervention Service: Office Hours Tel (01) 838 7122

### **Dublin South West Child Protection Services**

Social Work Department, Old County Rd, Crumlin, Dublin 12, Tel: (01) 415 4700

Millbrook Lawn, Tallaght, Dublin 24. Tel: (01) 452 0666

**Office Hours:** 9.00am - 1.00pm 2.15pm - 5.00pm

Outside office hours all child protection concerns should be referred to the Gardaí  
The HSE operates an out-of hours Crisis Intervention Service in the Dublin area, which can be accessed by emergency services like Hospitals and the Garda Siochana outside of office hours.Crisis Intervention Service: Office Hours Tel (01) 838 7122

### **Dublin West Child Protection Services**

Social Work Department, Cherry Orchard Hospital, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10. Tel: (01) 620 6387

**Office Hours:** 9.00 - 1.00 2.15 - 5.00

Outside office hours all child protection concerns should be referred to the Gardaí  
The HSE operates an out-of hours Crisis Intervention Service in the Dublin area, which can be accessed by emergency services like Hospitals and the Garda Siochana outside of office hours.Crisis Intervention Service: Office Hours Tel (01) 838 7122

### **Dun Laoghaire Child Protection Services**

Tivoli Road,Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. Tel: (01) 284 3579

102 Patrick Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin Tel: (01) 236 5120

**Office Hours:** 9.00am - 1.00pm 2.15pm - 5.00pm

Outside office hours all child protection concerns should be referred to the Gardaí  
The HSE operates an out-of hours Crisis Intervention Service in the Dublin area, which can be accessed by emergency services like Hospitals and the Garda Siochana outside of office hours.

**APPENDIX K – RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

*(to be drafted)*