POLICY COVERSHEET

This policy does not form part of the employment contract. Dyslexia Ireland may amend this policy from time to time at its sole discretion. Dyslexia Ireland may also vary the policy, as appropriate in any case.

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1. Introduction

Dyslexia Ireland is committed to safeguarding the well-being of all the children and young people with whom our staff come into contact. Our policy on child protection is in accordance with the Children First Act, 2015, "Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children" (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017) and "Our Duty to Care" - The principles of good practice for the protection for children and young people". (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2002).

We are committed to promoting the rights of the child to be protected, to be listened to and to have their own views taken into consideration.

Ensuring that children enjoy a safe and secure learning environment in education settings is a key concern for everyone who supports the development of children. Dyslexia Ireland acknowledges the strong culture of child protection that exists in our organisation nationally, and takes our responsibilities in relation to child protection and welfare very seriously.

Dyslexia Ireland has an important oversight role to play in ensuring that all children in our care receive the highest quality of care and protection.

The Children First Act 2015 placed certain statutory obligations on organisations working with children. Organisations, through their Designated Liaison Person(s), are required to report concerns of child abuse at or above a threshold of harm, directly to TUSLA. All sections of the Children First Act 2015 came into effect on 11 December 2017. Children First National Guidance outlines the statutory obligations that apply to mandated persons and the statutory obligations that apply to organisations under the Children First Act 2015. Children First National Guidance also sets out the best practice, non-statutory obligations which are in place for all individuals, and for all sectors of society. The statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 operate side by side with the best practice, non-statutory obligations.

2. Our Policy

This policy is underpinned by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers who have contact with children and young people on Dyslexia Ireland premises or through their work on behalf of Dyslexia Ireland.

It is of high importance to ensure all employees/ volunteers have an ability to recognise abuse, as it can be defined in many ways. Please see the appendices for the Definitions of Abuse.

All employees, and volunteers of Dyslexia Ireland, will be made aware of, and be familiar with, our child protection policy through in-house induction and on-going training, and they will sign up to the overall child protection policy of Dyslexia Ireland. All staff and volunteers will be required to complete Tusla's Children First free online training programme on child protection (https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/). All staff and volunteers will also be required to renew Tusla's Children First free online training programme on child protection when their Garda vetting is renewed. A copy of the certificate of completion must be sent to the Designated Liaison Person within 4 weeks of commencement.

The Designated Liaison Person(s) acts as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns. The Designated Liaison Person(s) is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions to the Child and Family Agency Tusla or An Garda Síochana. (See Children First 3.3)

Dyslexia Ireland has put in place a standard reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse. Dyslexia Ireland has appointed two Designated Liaison Persons, namely the CEO and the National Workshop Manager.

3. Principles which underlie this policy:

- The welfare of children, and of vulnerable adults, will always be the paramount consideration.
- The rights of any person who is the subject of an abuse complaint will be respected.
- The safest possible practices must be adopted in all programmes and activities in order to minimise harm.
- All members of the Dyslexia Ireland community share a responsibility to promote welfare, avoid causing harm, and to not place themselves or others in situations of unnecessary risk.

4. Reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse

I. The employee or volunteer who has received a disclosure of child abuse or who has concerns about a child should bring them to the attention of their line manager and the Designated Liaison Person immediately.

II. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes them to harm or at risk of harm pending Tusla intervention. In the event of an emergency where you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot get in contact with Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí. This may be done through any Garda station.

III. Where the Designated Liaison Person considers that a child protection or welfare concern meets the reasonable grounds for concern criteria outlined below, then the Designated Liaison Person can refer to Tusla.

IV. Mandated Persons are also legally obliged under the Children First Act, 2015, to report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla; and to assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

Examples of reasonable grounds for concern are:

- specific indication from the child that he/she was abused;
- an account by the person who saw the child being abused;
- evidence, such as an injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in another way
- an injury or behaviour which is consistent 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;
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect. See Appendix 1 or also visit: FAQ on www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/children-first/

V. Where the Designated Liaison Person remains uncertain, they should contact the Child and Family Agency Tusla for informal advice relating to the allegation, concern or disclosure.

VI. The Designated Liaison Person will advise parents that a report has been made to Tusla unless to do so would be likely to endanger the child.

VII. After consultation with the Duty Social Worker the Designated Liaison Person will then take one of two options:

- Report the allegation, concern or disclosure to the relevant authority (e.g. Tusla, An Garda Síochána, etc.) using the standard reporting form

from Children First, and in the case of out of hours or immediate danger contact An Garda Síochana.

- In those cases where Dyslexia Ireland decides not to report concerns to Tusla or An Garda Síochana, the individual employee or volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written statement of the reasons why Dyslexia Ireland is not taking such action. The employee or volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, Tusla or An Garda Síochana. The provisions of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply once they communicate 'reasonably and in good faith' (see Chapter 2, p.16 of Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children).

In making a report of suspected or actual child abuse, the Designated Liaison Person must ensure that the first priority is always for the safety and welfare of the child/ young person and that no child/ young person is ever left in a situation that could place a child/young person in immediate danger.

5. How to Make a Report

If the report is in relation to the safety and welfare of children / young people, the report should be made to the Designated Liaison Person
Guiding principles to reporting child abuse:

- The safety and well-being of the child or young person must take priority;
- Reports should be made without delay to the Child and Family Agency Tusla, Local Health Office area where the child resides.
- A suspicion, which is not supported by an objective indication of abuse or neglect, would not constitute a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern.
- However, these suspicions should be recorded or noted internally by the Designated Liaison Person as future suspicions may lead to the decision to make a report and earlier suspicions may provide important information for the statutory child protection agency or An Garda Síochana.

6. Who can make a report?

Reports can be made by:

- Children / young people
- Parents / guardians
- Employees, volunteers of Dyslexia Ireland
- Other advocates on behalf of children / young people

7. How to Handle a Report of Abuse by a Child / Young Person

In the event of a child / young person disclosing an incident of abuse it is essential that this is dealt with sensitively and professionally by the employee / volunteer involved. In such circumstances, the employee / volunteer should:

- React calmly;
- Listen carefully and attentively; take the young person seriously;
- Reassure the young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you;
- Do NOT promise to keep anything secret;
- Ask questions for clarification only. Do not ask leading questions, this is not an interview, but rather receiving a disclosure from a child;
- Check back with the child/young person that what you have heard is correct and understood;
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser;
- Record the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible. Sign and date the record;
- Ensure that the child/young person understands the procedures which will follow;
- Pass the information to the Designated Liaison Person. Do not attempt to deal with the problem alone;
- Treat the information confidentially.

8. Retrospective Disclosures by Adults

Parents and staff who are working with children and young adults or who attend child protection training may disclose abuse which took place during their childhood. A disclosure of abuse by an adult which took place during their childhood must be noted or recorded.

In these cases, it is essential that consideration is given to the current risk to any child who may be in contact with the alleged abuser. If any risk is deemed to exist to any child who may be in contact with the alleged abuser, a report of the allegation should be made to the Child and Family Agency Tusla without delay. Investigation of disclosures by adult victims of past abuse frequently uncovers current incidents of abuse and is therefore an effective means of stopping the cycle of abuse.

If any risk is deemed to exist to a child who may be in contact with an alleged abuser, the Designated Liaison Person should report the allegation to the Child and Family Agency Tusla without delay.

The National Counselling Service is in place to listen to, value and understand those who have been abused in childhood. The service is a professional, confidential counselling and psychotherapy service and is available free of charge in all regions of the country (see . https://www2.hse.ie/mental-health/services-support/ncs/. The service can be accessed either through healthcare professionals or by way of self-referral.

9. Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998*

Dyslexia Ireland wishes to draw the attention of staff and volunteers to this Act (Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998) which provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to the HSE or An Garda Síochána. Section 3(1) of the Act states:

"*A person who, apart from this section, would be so liable shall not be liable in damages in respect of the communication, whether in writing or otherwise, by him or her to an appropriate person of his or her opinion that—*

- *a child has been or is being assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or*
- *a child's health, development or welfare has been or is being avoidably impaired or neglected, unless it is proved that he or she has not acted reasonably and in good faith in forming that opinion and communicating it to the appropriate person".*

This protection applies to Dyslexia Ireland and to individuals.

10. Designated Liaison Person(s)

Dyslexia Ireland has nominated two Designated Liaison Persons. They are the CEO and the National Workshop Manager.

11. Role of the Designated Liaison Person(s)

The Designated Liaison Person(s) in Dyslexia Ireland has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the child protection and welfare policy is promoted and implemented.
The role of each Designated Liaison Person involves the following duties:

- To be familiar with "Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children" and "Our Duty to Care: the principles of good practice for the protection of children & young people", and to have responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the child protection policy;
- To provide support to employees or volunteers who are dealing with/have dealt with a child protection concern or disclosure.

- To receive reports of alleged / suspected or actual child abuse and act on these in accordance with the guidelines;
- To ensure that training is provided for all new and existing staff in Dyslexia Ireland on the child protection policy;
- To build a working relationship with the Child and Family Agency Tusla, An Garda Síochána and other agencies, as appropriate;
- To ensure that supports are put in place for the young person, employees or volunteers in cases of allegations being made;
- To keep up to date and undertake relevant training on child protection policy and practice, in order to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of Dyslexia Ireland policy and procedures in this area;
- To review the Dyslexia Ireland policy and procedures on child protection on an annual basis and amend as appropriate;
- To ensure that systems are in place for recording and retaining all relevant documentation in relation to child protection issues.
- To maintain a register of reports / concerns for audit purposes and update the board on relevant matters.

12. Mandated Persons

Where Mandated Persons are also employed by Dyslexia Ireland, it is important to note that the statutory obligation of Mandated Persons to report under the Children First Act, 2015 must be discharged by the Mandated Person and cannot be discharged by the Designated Liaison Person on their behalf.

If a Mandated Person also has the role of Designated Liaison Person in Dyslexia Ireland, they must fulfil the statutory obligations of a Mandated Person. This means that if a Designated Liaison Person is made aware of a concern about a child that meets or exceeds the thresholds of harm for mandated reporting, and the Designated Liaison Person is also a Mandated Person, they have a statutory obligation to make a report to Tusla.

Mandated Persons (in accordance with the provisions of the Children First Act 2015) are people who have contact with children or adults and who, because of their qualifications, training and employment role, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Mandated Persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act, 2015. These are:

- To report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla;
- To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

Under the legislation, Mandated Persons who are employed by Dyslexia Ireland , or Mandated Persons who are providing services to Dyslexia Ireland, have a statutory obligation to report any knowledge, belief or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect or sexual abuse, and covers single and multiple instances. The description of these four types of abuse, and the threshold of harm for each category of abuse at which Mandated Persons have a legal obligation to report concerns, is set out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017). The attention of Mandated Persons is also drawn to the sections in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) which deal with:

- Mandated Persons who work with adults;
- Dealing with a retrospective allegation;
- Making a mandated report; and
- Consequences of non-reporting.

Mandated Persons are not required to judge the truth of the claims or the credibility of the child/adult.

The obligation to report is discharged by mandated persons making a joint report with a Designated Liaison Person to Tusla.

Dyslexia Ireland recognises that Tusla's ability to make good-quality evidence-based decisions about a child's welfare and/or protection is enhanced by co-operation and information-sharing about a child. In this regard, Dyslexia Ireland expects that all relevant staff will share relevant information, if requested (the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 do not prevent the sharing of information on a reasonable and proportionate basis for the purposes of child protection).

Mandated Persons in Dyslexia Ireland are staff who are employed by Dyslexia Ireland in any of the roles listed below, as well as persons who provide services to Dyslexia Ireland in any of the roles listed below:

- Psychologist
- Registered teachers and members of the Teaching Council

13. Confidentiality

In matters of child abuse, an employee / volunteer should never promise to keep secret any information which is divulged. It should be explained to the child/young person (or adult in the case of an adult disclosure of child abuse) that this information cannot be kept secret but only those who need to know in order to safeguard the child, or other children who may potentially be at risk, will be told.

It is essential in reporting any case of alleged / suspected abuse that the principle of confidentiality applies. The information should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis which means sharing information with persons who have a need to know in order to safeguard a child/young person is not a breach of confidentiality. The number of people that need to be informed should be kept to a minimum.

If an employee has any doubt as to whether a report should be made, he / she should consult with Dyslexia Ireland's Designated Liaison Person.

14. Record Keeping

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 every person has a right to establish the existence of personal data, to have access to any such data relating to him and to have inaccurate data rectified or erased. The Dyslexia Ireland Data Controller will ensure that data is collected fairly, is accurate and up-to-date, is kept for lawful purposes and is not used or disclosed in any manner incompatible with those. This will be kept in the office of the Designated Liaison Person. Only the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person will have access to this information. All data in relation to child protection records collected must be stored in a safe and confidential manner in a secure locked cabinet, or on an encrypted computer.

15. Recruitment and Child Protection

All advertisements, screening and recruitment for vacant posts within Dyslexia Ireland will reflect Dyslexia Ireland's commitment to equality. We will ensure that interviewers conduct interviews in a non-discriminatory way. Interviews will be undertaken by a minimum of two representatives of Dyslexia Ireland using an agreed set of questions. Advertisements will be posted on the Dyslexia Ireland website, recruitment websites and newspapers where applicable (national or local). All applicants will be provided with:

- Details of Dyslexia Ireland
- A Job Description

A minimum of two references (one from the most recent employer) will be gathered followed by a telephone reference, or e-mail to verify. In the case of workshop tutors, one reference from their current or most recent employer will suffice. References should be in writing and no references from family or relatives will be accepted.

Successful candidates will be offered a Contract of Employment in accordance with Employment legislation requirements and each contract will include a probationary period.

All employees' contracts will include signing up to the Dyslexia Ireland's Child Protection and Vetting Policies, as will any Volunteer Agreement.

These guidelines will apply both to the recruitment of new employees and to the selection of internal candidates for promotion or job change.

Dyslexia Ireland will not employ, contract or involve as a volunteer, any person to work with children or young adults who has a criminal conviction for violent crime, sexual crime, drugs related offences, or any other offences deemed inappropriate in relation to work with children.

All workers employed, contracted to work, or volunteering to work with children through Dyslexia Ireland will be required to sign a declaration form outlining any previous criminal convictions and granting permission for vetting from An Garda Síochána to be sought. Garda Vetting will be undertaken for all Dyslexia Ireland staff and volunteers in line with national Vetting legislation.

16. Guidelines for Management of Staff

In accordance with the Dyslexia Ireland Employee Manual all staff will undergo an induction process including the Child Protection Policy and will confirm in writing that the induction process has taken place.

The Dyslexia Ireland Child Protection Policy will be rolled out to existing staff through an in-house training programme. On-going training will be provided following annual review or statutory/ guideline changes.

17. Allegations Against an Employee/Volunteer

Upon receipt of an allegation, the Designated Liaison Person will notify the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. If the allegation relates to the CEO or Chairperson, the Designated Liaison Person will notify the Board of Directors of the allegation. If the allegation relates to a Designated Liaison Person, then the other Designated Liaison Person will notify the Chairperson.

If an allegation is made against an employee, or volunteer, there are two parts to the process, i.e. dealing with the allegation of abuse and dealing with the employee/volunteer. Where possible these two pieces should be dealt with by two different people.

There are two different procedures that are followed:
1. The reporting procedure in respect of the child

- The safety of the child is the first priority of Dyslexia Ireland and all necessary measures will be taken to ensure that the child and other children/young people are safe.
- The Designated Liaison Person will deal with the procedure involving the child/young person and the reporting to the Child and Family Agency, Tusla.

2. The procedure for dealing with the employee or volunteer:

- The Designated Liaison Person and the Chairperson will work in close co-operation with each other and with Tusla and An Garda Síochana.
- If a formal report is being made, the CEO will notify the employee that an allegation has been made and the nature of the allegation. The employee has a right to respond to this and this response should be documented and retained. Furthermore, Dyslexia Ireland will ensure that the principle of 'natural justice' will apply whereby a person is considered innocent until proven otherwise.
- The CEO may suspend the employee / volunteer with pay (where appropriate). In the case where the worker is not suspended the level of supervision of the worker will be increased.
- The CEO will liaise closely with Tusla/An Garda Síochana to ensure that the actions taken by Dyslexia Ireland will not undermine or frustrate any investigations.

The protective measures which can be taken to ensure the safety of children and young people may include the following:

- suspension of duties of the person accused,
- re-assignment of duties so that the accused will not have contact with children / young people,
- working under increased supervision during the period of the investigation
- and/or other measures as deemed appropriate.

18. Code of Behaviour in Relation to Child Safeguarding

Good safeguarding practice is about protecting children and those in positions of trust in respect of children.

Interaction with children in programmes and activities may, even inadvertently, have adverse consequences and compromise children's welfare. Consequently, it is important that all members of the Dyslexia Ireland community consider how children's welfare can be promoted by anticipating the potential for risk and taking appropriate mitigating actions to address such risks in all programmes and activities.

All employees and volunteers of Dyslexia Ireland must make themselves aware of Dyslexia Ireland's code of behaviour and must be familiar with the overall child protection policy of

Dyslexia Ireland and sign up to it. Parents of children involved with our work must also be informed of our policy and procedures.

A code of behaviour serves to protect children and members of the Dyslexia Ireland community, by ensuring clarity regarding unacceptable behaviour and boundaries. Each individual is accountable for his/her own actions, and members of the Dyslexia Ireland community are collectively accountable for upholding standards of behaviour and for compliance with all applicable laws and policies. Raising concerns about the welfare of children is a service to the Dyslexia Ireland community.

Behavioural Expectations

Staff members and volunteers should;

- When acting in a position of trust with children, be mindful that they are acting as a role model and therefore should demonstrate exemplary behaviour.
- Take care to ensure conduct is appropriate to each circumstance and environment.
- Be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in some contact sports and exercise.
- Have due regard to cultural differences.
- Be alert and tackle inappropriate behaviour in others including peer to peer behaviours.
- Take care that language is not open to sexual or racist connotations.
- Maintain the highest standards of personal behaviour when interacting with children and maintain boundaries appropriate to the professional relationship.
- Treat children with respect and dignity and in a consistent and fair manner.
- Never agree to meet a child on their own (i.e. avoiding private or unobserved situations). This does not apply to normal academic or mentoring meetings or interactions.
- Not be left alone with a child. (Again, this does not apply to normal academic or mentoring meetings or interactions).
- Avoid developing relationships beyond the professional roles or interaction which breaches the boundaries of such roles, such as private communication or personal relationships.
- Consult with the Designated Liaison Person if concerns arise.
- Report any safeguarding concern or complaint to the Designated Liaison Person.

All children at Dyslexia Ireland events and activities must be appropriately supervised at all times.

Staff members and volunteers should not:

- Use inappropriate language, or allow others to use it without challenging it.
- Engage in any inappropriate physical touching or relationship.

- Give personal contact information or use any such route to communicate or interact in a personal capacity outside the professional activity including through any form of social media.
- Take photographs, or make other recordings without specific written communication consent from a parent or guardian.
- Communicate or behave in a discriminatory manner.
- Provide or use alcohol or drugs while involved with children.
- Participate in or condone behaviour that is illegal, unsafe or abusive, or which could be construed as bullying, or which could put anyone at risk.
- Allow or engage in any form of suggestive comments.
- Collude with any person to suppress concerns.

Dyslexia Ireland has put in place an anti-bullying policy. Dyslexia Ireland will not tolerate any bullying behaviour by children/young people or adults and will deal with any incidents immediately in accordance with the Dyslexia Ireland anti-bullying policy when working with children and young people. Where bullying amounts to any form of abuse it will be treated as such and be recorded and reported as appropriate; (see appendix 2).

19. Policy Sign Off and Review

Dyslexia Ireland will review their Child Protection Policy on an annual basis. Notification of our policy and any changes devised will be displayed on the Dyslexia Ireland website.

Date: 07.05.2026



Signed by: Rosie Bissett, CEO on behalf of Dyslexia Ireland

This Policy will be reviewed in April 2027.

APPENDIX 1

Definitions of Child Abuse

Child abuse is complicated and can take different forms, but usually consists of one or more of the following signs and symptoms:

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, and/ or medical care.

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. "Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child whose height or weight is significantly below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school may be deprived of intellectual stimulation".

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. Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning e.g. 'anxious' attachment, non-organic failure to thrive, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour.
Examples may include:

- the imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;
- emotional unavailability of the child's parent/carer;
- unresponsiveness of the parent/carer and/or inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
- unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way;
- under- or over-protection of the child;
- failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the child's cognitive and emotional development
- use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
- exposure to domestic violence;
- exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology

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 the parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Physical abuse can involve:

- severe physical punishment;
- beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;
- pushing, shaking or throwing;
- pinching, biting, choking or hair pulling
- terrorising with threats;
- observing violence;
- use of excessive force in handling;
- deliberate poisoning;
- suffocation;
- fabricated/induced illness;
- allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child.

Sexual abuse occurs when "*a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others*".

Examples of Child Sexual Abuse include:

- exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child;
- intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of the sexual arousal or gratification;
- masturbation in the presence of the child;
- sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal,
- sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse;
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person. In relation to child sexual abuse it should be noted that, for the purposes of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. An Garda Síochana will deal with the criminal aspects of the case under the relevant legislation.

Reckless Endangerment is when a person having authority or control over a child, or an abuser, intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by:

- 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
- Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation, is an offence.

The above are some of the examples of abuse; for more information see section 2 of Children First.

APPENDIX 2

The Dyslexia Ireland Anti-Bullying Policy is available at: https://dyslexia.ie/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Anti-Bullying-Policy-20260212.pdf

APPENDIX 3

Please follow the links below:
Child Protection & Welfare Practice Handbook-
https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/CF_WelfarePracticehandbook.pdf
Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children -
https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf
Our Duty to Care -
https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/our_duty_to_care.pdf
The Complaints Policy and Procedure is available at:
https://dyslexia.ie/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Complaints-Policy-Procedure-20251211.pdf

APPENDIX 4 - Contact details for Statutory Services

TUSLA, Child and Family Agency
Heuston South Quarter, St John's Rd W, Kilmainham, Dublin 8. Tel. (01) 771 8500
Tusla operates an out-of-hours social work service, which is available by contacting An Garda Síochána. This service deals with any emergencies that occur outside of office hours. If there are concerns for the immediate safety of a child, please contact An Garda Síochána in an out-of-hours situation. The out-of-hours service deals with cases that come to the attention of An Garda Síochána, where a child is at immediate risk of harm.
A report can be made to Tusla in person, by telephone or in writing to the local duty social work service, these can be found on the Tusla website, www.tusla.ie, in the area where the child lives. If the report is made verbally it should be followed up by completing the Child Protection and Welfare report form available on the Tusla website.

An Garda Síochána Protective Services Unit
https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/organised-serious-crime/garda-national-protective-services-bureau-gnpsb-/