



CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

For Blakestown Community Crèche

Published by:

Blakestown Community Crèche

February 2018

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Child Safeguarding Statement

NAME OF SERVICE AND ACTIVITIES PROVIDED

Blakestown Community Crèche is registered pre-school providing the following services for children aged 24 months to 6 years:

We provide part-time and sessional care for children aged between 2 years and not older than 6 years. We are in the Blakestown Resource Centre. We occupy two rooms during term-time and one during all other times. Room one accommodates 11 children and room two accommodates 8 children. We have use of a large sports hall at times during the day and we also have an outdoor area available only to children using the service.

Our activities would range from ...

Construction

Arts and crafts

Reading

Physical activities

Sand and water play

Role play

Imaginative play

Creative play

Outdoor play

We have a level 6 member of staff in each room and one/two community employment staff (in training for level 5 and above) in each room. From time to time we would have a TUS worker also available. We have a crèche manager.

KEY INFORMATION

Opening hours:	9.00am – 4.45pm Monday to Friday
Sessional hours:	9.15am -12.15pm 1.00pm – 4.00pm
Part-time hours:	9.15am -12.45pm

	1.00pm- 4.45pm
Capacity:	30
Age Range:	2 years old – School going
Ratios:	2 – 3 years 1:6 3- 5.6 years 1:11
Address:	Blakestown Way, Blakestown, Dublin 15
Phone numbers:	01 8203096/0872831834
Email:	Blakestown@gmail.com
Website:	Blakestowncrc

Designated Liaison Persons

Crèche Manager: Verona Campbell	Ph: 01 8203096/0872831834
Deputy Crèche Manger: Anna Regan	Ph: 01 8203096
Chairperson: Susan Fox	Ph: 0879683020

Child Protection Social Work Services:

Child Protection Social Work Services, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Roselawn Health Centre, Roselawn Road, Dublin 15 Tel: 01 6464518

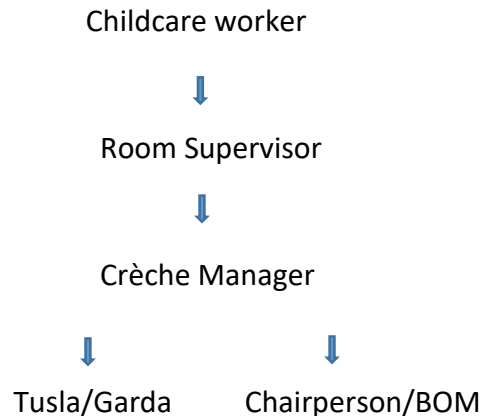
If the Duty Social Worker is not available at the time of contact the caller should give sufficient details to the secretary to enable the Duty Social Worker to prioritise a response.

Local Garda Station:

Blanchardstown Tel: 01 6667000

See appendix 1: Key Information

The management structure is:



Blakestown is committed to safeguarding children from harm...

- Our Service is committed to safeguarding the children in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can play, learn and develop.
- Our service believes that the welfare of the children attending our service is paramount. We are committed to child-centred practice in all our work with children.
- We are committed to upholding the rights of every child who attends our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to, and heard.
- Our policy and procedures to safeguard children reflect national policy and legislation and are underpinned by *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, DCYA, 2017, *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Practice and Procedure*, Tusla, 2018, and the *Children First Act 2015*.
- Our policy declaration applies to all paid staff, volunteers, committee/ board members and students on work placement within our organisation. All committee board members, staff, volunteers and students abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our child safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures.
- We will review our child safeguarding statement and accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures every 2 years or sooner if necessary, due to service issues or changes in legislation or national policy.
- **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)** for Child Protection

DLP: <i>Verona Campbell, Crèche Manager.</i> <i>Ph: 01 8203096/0872831834</i>	Deputy: <i>Anna Regan, crèche supervisor.</i> <i>Ph: 01 8203096</i>
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See appendix 2: Role and Duties of Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

See appendix 3: National guidance for the protection of children, CHILDREN FIRST ACT 2017

See appendix 4: Types of Abuse

See appendix 5: UN Rights of the Child

See appendix 6: Tusla Standard Report Form.

1. RISK ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the *Children First Act 2015*, the Board of Management/Service Provider has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the service or participating in service activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the service procedures for managing those risks is summarised below:

Risk Identified	Policies and/or Procedures in place to manage Risk
Staff/Volunteers/students	Garda vetting reference checking of staff supervision of volunteers and students
Public	All visitors must sign in and out at reception. All crèche door has a high lock on the inside only to be opened by staff. Only designated persons are allowed to collect children. If not the designated person or parent. Approval must be given to crèche staff by a parent on arrival. Outdoor area is securely lock at all times. Monitored CCTV
Maintenance personnel	Where possible this work is carried out in non-crèche hours or by centres own Garda vetted staff and under crèche staff supervision.
Visitors	All visitors must sign in to the building and have proof of ID.

Staff training	All staff are required to complete Children First training assessment. Staff are required to frequently review our protection policies and procedures.
Risk assessment/Policy review.	Risk assessment and policy reviews are carried out every two Years. All staff's Garda vetting is also renewed every two years.
Parents concerns	We have an open door policy for parents to come and express any concerns or issues they may have in relation to child protection.
Inappropriate and unauthorised use of Online images /resources	Internet/photographic/mobile phone policies are in strict use and checked daily.
Illness and infection to children and staff	Contiguous illness and healthy eating policies. Hygiene policy,
Collection/Non-collection or late collection.	Child registration form, Parental agreement and collection policy
Poor behaviour strategies where the self-respect of the child is challenged	Managing behaviour policy, key worker assignment, Staff training policy.
Lost or missing child	Missing child and outing policy implemented

2. CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As required by the *Children First Act 2015* and *Children First National Guidance for Protection and Welfare of Children*, 2017 the following safeguarding policies/procedures/measures are in place

- Procedure to maintain a list of mandated persons under the Children First Act, 2015
- A Relevant Person has been appointed
- A Designated Liaison Person and Deputy have been appointed
- Child Protection and Welfare Reporting Procedures
- Confidentiality Policy
- Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Against Employees
- Procedure for Managing Child Protection Records
- Recruitment Policy
- Garda Vetting Policy
- Code of Behaviour for Working with Children
- Induction Policy (which includes procedures to inform new staff about the Child Safeguarding Statement and accompanying safeguarding policies and procedures)
- All staff have completed the Tusla eLearning module – *Introduction to Children First* and relevant staff have attended Always Children First Child Protection Training.
- Staff have access to regular Supervision and Support in line with the service policy.
- Complaints Policy
- Policy for Managing Outings
- Policy for Managing Accidents and Incidents
- Social Media Management Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Garda Vetting Policy

- See appendix 1: Key information

See appendix 3: Guidelines for mandated persons

See appendix 7: Allegations Policy

- 8: Behaviour Policy
- 9: Complaints Policy
- 10: Confidently Policy
- 11: Garda Vetting Policy
- 12: Induction Policy
- 13: Managing Accidents Policy
- 14: Managing outings Policy
- 15: Mobile Phone Policy
- 16: Recruitment policy
- 17: Social Media Policy
- 18: Support and Supervision Policy
- 19: Wellbeing Policy

3. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.
- This Statement will be reviewed every 2 years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.
- This statement has been published on the service website and is displayed in the service. It has been provided to all staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla if requested.

See appendix 19: Statement checklist

Signed: _____ Date: February 2018

Signed: _____ Date: February 2018

For further information on this Statement, contact Relevant Person:

Verona Campbell, Crèche Manger.

Susan Fox, Chairperson, BOM Blakestown C.C.

Appendixes:

Appendix 1: Key Information and mandated persons in the service

Appendix 2: Role and Duties of Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Appendix 3: National guidance for the Protection Of Children, CHILDREN FIRST ACT 2017

Appendix 4: Types of Abuse and hoe to recognise them.

Appendix 5: UN Rights of the Child

Appendix 6: Tusla Standard Report Form.

Appendix 7-18: Policies

- ❖ *Allegation Policy*
- ❖ *Behaviour Policy*
- ❖ *Complaints Policy*
- ❖ *Confidently Policy*
- ❖ *Garda Vetting Policy*
- ❖ *Induction Policy*
- ❖ *Managing Accidents Policy*
- ❖ *Managing Outings Policy*
- ❖ *Managing Records Policy*
- ❖ *Mobile Phone Policy*
- ❖ *Recruitment policy*
- ❖ *Social Media Policy*
- ❖ *Support and Supervision Policy*

Appendix 19: Statement Checklist

Appendix 1: Key Information

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Local Garda Station:

Blanchardstown Tel: 01 6667000

Appendix 2: Role and duties of Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The Role of the Designated Liaison Persons is to:

- Establish contact with the Duty Social Worker responsible for child protection in the organisations catchment area and ensure that the organisation's child protection policy and procedures are followed where Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds are reached or Reasonable Grounds for Concern exist about individual children.
- Be accessible to all staff.
- Ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and welfare and that they undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments.
- Ensure the Child and Adult Protection Policy and procedures of the service are followed.
- Be responsible, as a mandated person, for reporting concerns about the protection and welfare of children to Tusla – Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochána.
- Ensure the appropriate information is included in the report to the Child and Family Agency and that the report is submitted in writing (under confidential cover) using the Standard Reporting Form See Appendix 1.
- To liaise with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, An Garda Síochána and other agencies as appropriate.
- To provide information and advice on child protection and training within the organisation.
- Keep relevant people within the organisation informed of relevant issues, whilst maintain confidentiality.
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken by the service, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome.
- Maintain a central log or record of all child protection and welfare concerns in the service.
- Ensure appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover.

Appendix 3:

National guidance for the Protection Of Children, CHILDREN FIRST ACT 2017

As a mandated person, under the legislation you are required to report any knowledge, belief or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect or sexual abuse, and covers single and multiple instances. The threshold of harm for each category of abuse at which mandated persons have a legal obligation to report concerns is outlined below.

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

EMOTIONAL ABUSE/ILL-TREATMENT: Ill-treatment is defined as ‘to abandon or cruelly treat the child, or to cause or procure or allow the child to be abandoned or cruelly treated’. Emotional abuse is covered in the definition of ill-treatment used in the Children First Act 2015. The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

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

SEXUAL ABUSE: If, as a mandated person, you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused, then you must report this to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015. Sexual abuse to be reported under the Children First Act 2015 [as amended by section 55 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017] is defined as an offence against the child, as listed in Schedule 3 of the Children First Act 2015.

As all sexual abuse falls within the category of seriously affecting a child’s health, welfare or development, you must submit all concerns about sexual abuse as a mandated report to Tusla. There is one exception, which deals with certain consensual sexual activity between teenagers, which is outlined on page 23 Children First (2017).

The service endorses that the Children First (2017) Guidelines advise that the ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on knowledge and information. It is important to note that child abuse is not always readily visible.

Reasonable Grounds for Concern

You should always inform Tusla when you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. If you ignore what may be symptoms of abuse, it could result in ongoing harm to the child. It is not necessary for you to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern to Tusla. All that is required is that you have reasonable grounds for concern. It is Tusla's role to assess concerns that are reported to it. If you report a concern, you can be assured that your information will be carefully considered with any other information available and a child protection assessment will be carried out where sufficient risk is identified.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused

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

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

If you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí without delay.

Recognising Concerns:

Staff and students may at times be concerned about the general welfare and development of children they work with and they can discuss any concerns with their manager and/ Designated Liaison Person at any time.

All staff and students should be familiar with the definitions of abuse and the signs and symptoms of abuse as outlined in Children's First (2017)

Disclosures of Abuse from a Child:

If, as a mandated person, you receive a disclosure of harm from a child, which is above the thresholds set out in Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds you must make a mandated report of the concern to Tusla. You are not required to judge the truth of the claims or the credibility of the child. If the concern does not meet the threshold to be reported as a mandated concern you should report it to Tusla as a reasonable concern. If you receive a disclosure of harm from a child, you may feel reluctant to report this for a number of reasons. For example, the child may say that they do not want the disclosure to be reported, or you may take the view that the child is now safe and that the involvement of Tusla may not be desired by either the child or their family. However, you need to inform Tusla of all risks to children above the threshold, as the removal of a risk to one child does not necessarily mean that there are no other children at risk. The information contained in a disclosure may be critical to Tusla's assessment of risk to another child either now or in the future.

You should deal with disclosures of abuse sensitively and professionally.

The following approach is suggested as best practice for dealing with these disclosures.

- React calmly
- Listen carefully and attentively
- Take the child seriously
- Reassure the child 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
- Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser
- Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible
- Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of Children First (2017) and legislation

Ongoing Support:

Following a disclosure by a child, it is important that Child Care staff continue in a supportive relationship with the child. Disclosure is a huge step for many children.

Workers should continue to offer support, particularly through:

- Maintaining a positive relationship with the child.
- Keeping lines of communication open by listening carefully to the child.
- Continue to include the child in the usual activities.
- Any further disclosure should be treated as a first disclosure and responded to as in Reporting Procedures in this policy.
-

Procedure when a referral is not made to the Child and Family Agency:

A suspicion which is not identified by Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds or Reasonable Grounds for Concern.

In this case,

- the concern and any informal consultation will be documented and kept confidentially and securely.
- The DLP will inform the member of staff or student who raised the concern that it is not being referred in writing, indicating the reasons. The DLP will advise the individual that they may make a report themselves see Mandated Persons and Making a Mandated Report. The provision of the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 will apply.

Persons reporting suspected child abuse or neglect should not interview the child or the child's parents/guardians in any detail about the alleged abuse. This may be more appropriately carried out by the TUSLA Duty Social Worker or An Garda Síochána.

If staff, students or volunteers have any concerns these should be discussed immediately with the Designated Liaison Person.

Making a Mandated Report

Chapter 3, Page 24 Children First (2017)

Section 14 of the Children First Act 2015 requires mandated persons to report a mandated concern to Tusla 'as soon as practicable'.

You should:

- Submit a report of a mandated concern to Tusla using the required report form, on which you should indicate that you are a mandated person and that your report is about a mandated concern.
- Include as much relevant information as possible in report as this will aid effective and early intervention for the child and may reduce the likelihood of Tusla needing to contact you for further information. You can find the report form and contact details on the Tusla website (www.tusla.ie). See APENDIX 6
- Post or submit electronically the mandated report form to Tusla.
- Not report the same concern more than once.

However, if you become aware of any additional information, a further report should be made to Tusla. In addition, you are not required to make a report where the sole basis for your knowledge, belief or suspicion of harm is as a result of becoming aware that another mandated person has made a report to Tusla about the child.

NOTE: If you feel the concern may require urgent intervention to make the child safe, section 14(7) of the Children First Act 2015 allows you to alert Tusla of the concern in advance of submitting a written report. You must then submit a mandated report to Tusla on the report form within three days. A mandated person who makes a report to an authorised person is protected from civil liability under the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998. Details on how Tusla deals with concerns received can be found in Chapter 5 of Children First (2017)

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk of harm pending intervention by Tusla. If you think the child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí.

Informing the Family That a Report is Being Made

Chapter 3, Page 25 Children First (2017)

The Children First Act 2015 does not require you to inform the family that a report under the legislation is being made to Tusla. However, it is good practice to tell the family that a report is being made and the reasons for the decision.

It is not necessary to inform the family that a report is being made if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment. Also, you do not need to inform the family if you reasonably believe that by doing so it may place you at risk of harm from the family.

Consequences of Non-reporting

Chapter 3, Page 2 Children First (2017)

The Children First Act 2015 does not impose criminal sanctions on mandated persons who fail to make a report to Tusla. However, you should be aware that there are possible consequences for a failure to report. There are a number of administrative actions that Tusla could take if, after an investigation, it emerges that you did not make a mandated report and a child was subsequently left at risk or harmed.

The Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 requires that any person who has information about a serious offence against a child, which may result in charges or prosecution, must report this to An Garda Síochána. Failure to report under the Act is a criminal offence under that legislation. This obligation is in addition to any obligations under the Children First Act 2015.

NOTE

Failure to report a child protection concern may invoke the Disciplinary Policy of this service.

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

- A child tells you or indicates that he/ she is being abused. This is called a disclosure.
- An admission or indication from alleged abuser.
- A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable.
- Information from someone who saw the child being abused.
- Evidence of an injury or behaviour that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way.
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from physical or emotional neglect.
- An injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse, but an innocent explanation is given.
- Concern about the behaviour or practice of a colleague

NOTE

All personnel are expected to consult Children First 2017 [Chapter 2, Page 07 Children First (2017)] and the Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook for detailed information on the signs and symptoms of abuse.

The Reporting Procedure:

As a mandated person, you should be aware that the legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 to report mandated concerns rest with you and not with the designated liaison person.

Any member of staff who has a concern about a child in the service currently being abused, abused in the past, or likely to be at risk of abuse, is obliged to verbally relay their concern to the Designated Liaison Person as a matter of urgency. See Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds.

The member of staff (mandated person), who has the concern should record in writing what the child has said, including as far as possible, the exact words utilised by the child.

The Member of staff (mandated person) must inform the Designated Liaison Person

Details must be recorded by the staff member (mandated person) on the TUSLA Standard Reporting Form, which is in the Forms Folder in the Office, which must then be signed by the person making the report. See Appendix 6 for Standard Reporting Form or <http://www.TUSLA.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/concerns> See Making a Mandated Report

Unless it would put the child at further risk to do so, the Designated Liaison Person or Manager will make every effort to contact the parents/guardians to discuss the concern made by the child. A written record will be kept of this meeting with the parents/guardians.

The Designated Liaison Person will examine the Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds or determine if Reasonable Grounds for Concern are present. Remember as a mandated person, you should be aware that the legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 to report mandated concerns rest with the mandated person and not with the designated liaison person.

Immediate action must be taken to protect the child in question and indeed any other children who may be considered at 'risk'.

A child will never be interviewed regarding the concern by any staff. However, all comments made by the child will be noted.

Allegations against staff will be dealt with separately and the disciplinary procedure will be followed as necessary

In cases of emergency, where a child is deemed to be at immediate and serious risk and a Duty Social worker is unavailable, An Garda Síochána should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending TUSLA intervention.

The service will take care to ensure that actions taken by them do not undermine or frustrate any investigations being conducted by TUSLA or An Garda Síochána. Close liaisons will be maintained with these authorities to achieve this.

Where there are reasonable grounds a report should be made to TUSLA See Making a Mandated Report. Each area has a social worker on duty for a certain number of hours each day. The duty social worker is available to meet with, or talk on the telephone, to persons wishing to report child protection concerns. The Duty Social Worker will assess the information available. See APPENDIX 4 Contact Details.

Once a report is submitted, the duty social worker may need to speak with the person who had the initial concern.

In the event that the Designated Liaison Person makes a decision not to report to TUSLA, full details of the decision must be recorded including the reasons for not reporting plus any action taken. This report should be stored as confidential by the Designated Liaison Person in the child's records and kept by the service in a secure place. Remember as a mandated person, you should be aware that the legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 to report mandated concerns rest with the mandated person and not with the designated liaison person.

Allegations or concerns should not be investigated by the Designated Liaison Person or a staff member but passed on to TUSLA /Garda to follow through.

Dealing with a Retrospective Disclosure by an Adult of Abuse as a Child:

Chapter 3, Page 23 Children First (2017)

Some adults may disclose abuse that took place during their childhood. Such disclosures may come to light when an adult attends counselling, or is being treated for a psychiatric or health problem. If you are, for example, a counsellor or health professional, and you receive a disclosure from a client that they were abused as a child, you should report this information to Tusla, as the alleged abuser may pose a current risk to children.

The reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015 apply only to information that you, as a mandated person, received or became aware of since the Act came into force, whether the harm occurred before or after that point. However, if you have a reasonable concern about past abuse, where information came to your attention before the Act and there is a possible continuing risk to children, you should report it to Tusla under Children First (2017) Guidance.

Confidentiality Statement:

The Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 do not prevent the sharing of information on a reasonable and proportionate basis for the purposes of child protection. Tusla has the

authority to share information concerning a child who is the subject of a risk assessment with a mandated person who has been asked to provide assistance. Tusla must only share what is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances of each individual case. Information that Tusla shares with the Mandated Person, if assisting it to carry out an assessment, must not be shared with a third party, unless Tusla considers it appropriate and authorises in writing that the information may be shared. Section 17 of the Children First Act 2015 makes it an offence for you to disclose information to a third party which has been shared by Tusla during the course of an assessment, unless Tusla has given you written authorisation to do so. If you fail to comply with this section, you may be liable to a fine or imprisonment for up to six months or both. This offence can also be applied to an organisation. Chapter 3, Page 27 Children First (2017)

At this service: BLAKESTOWN COMMUNITY CRECHE

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and extends to all areas of our service. Confidentiality is about treating sensitive information that arises in a trusting relationship and doing so in a manner that is respectful, professional and purposeful.

It is our policy to keep all personal information about our children, families, and staff private. Confidential and personal information about our children/parents/guardians will only be shared by the Manager and Designated Liaison Person in relation to child safety, in line with this Child Protection Policy. Any breach of confidentiality by any member of staff will lead to disciplinary action.

See appendix 7: Confidentiality Policy

Allegations Against Staff:

As the Manager is the designated liaison person the Board of Management should deal with the HR investigation. It is required to separate these issues and manage them independently. Therefore, the Board of Management may outsource this function to somebody with expertise outside the service. This allows the Manager to deal with TUSLA and the child's family.

Policy and Procedure on Response to Allegations of Abuse against Employees, Volunteers and Students: See appendix 7 for more information.

The following guidelines should be followed in the event of such an allegation of abuse against an employee during the execution of that employee's duties or where information about an employee in relation to a situation outside of the work context is reported.

Our first duty of care in this situation is to the child and our first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk.

- If an allegation is made against an employee or other person working within the service to another employee or other person, they must inform the Designated Liaison Persons verbally and simultaneously record what they have been told or what they may have observed. Action taken in reporting an

allegation of child abuse against an employee should be based on an opinion formed reasonably and in good faith.

- The details of this concern must be recorded on the Standard Reporting Form, which is in the Forms Folder in the Office, which must then be signed by the person making the report and they will be reminded of the need for confidentiality in this matter.
- The manager will inform the member of staff that an allegation has been made against them. The disciplinary procedure for staff will be followed in this instance.

The manager must privately inform the employee, about whom the allegation is made, of the following:

- The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her
- The nature of the allegation
- The employee should be afforded an opportunity to respond. The manager should note the response and pass on this information when making a formal report to TUSLA.
- The employee should also be informed of their right to an adjournment of the meeting until such time as they can seek appropriate representation (e.g. Union Rep. /Legal Rep.). The action will be guided by the agreed procedures (Disciplinary Procedure), the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. While adhering to the principle of natural justice enshrined within our constitution in relation to the rights of the accused, the vulnerability of the alleged victim must be foremost in our mind, therefore any postponement must be afforded within a reasonable time frame that is 24 hours.
- The parents/guardians of the alleged victim must be informed immediately by the Designated Liaison Person.
- The name or any identifying information of the reporting adult will not be given to the staff member or other worker against whom the allegation has been made by the manager, pending TUSLA advice or consultation.
- When an allegation is received it will be assessed promptly and carefully.
- The manager may then ask the member of staff who the allegation has been made against to leave the premises immediately and they will be suspended on full pay until the matter has been fully investigated.
- However, all allegations may not require a worker to be sent home i.e. allegations of poor practice where increased levels of supervision may be sufficient until matter is sorted out.
-

Poor practice will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure as necessary.

At this point in the process it will be necessary to decide whether a formal report should be made to TUSLA – this decision should be based on reasonable grounds for concern.

If it is felt that there are grounds for concern all matters relating to the allegations, it should be reported to the Duty Social Worker.

At this point the Disciplinary Procedure will be invoked. This will be a separate process and will be overseen by the manager, not the Designated Liaison Person.

Should a staff member, following the investigation, be re-instated with no disciplinary action this should be taken as evidence that no blame/fault/suspicion attaches to them.

Where the complaint is not upheld, management should ensure that the reputation and career prospects of the staff member concerned are not adversely affected by reason of the complaint having been brought against him/her. The staff member (who had the allegation made against them) should be offered counselling and any other support necessary to restore his/her confidence and morale.

The staff member who made the complaint should be reassured that management appreciates that the complaint was made in good faith. If required management will ensure that the staff member receives support e.g. external counselling, if requested or warranted.

Parents/Guardians and Allegations of Abuse or Neglect against Employees:

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

See appendix 7: Allegations against staff Policy

Appendix 4: Types of Abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger, and can be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children and you should follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

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

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

Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect. Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability. A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation
- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental

- issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- Lack of adequate clothing
- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Abandonment or desertion

Emotional abuse

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

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

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

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour. It

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

Physical abuse

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

Physical abuse can include the following:

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

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography. Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and in some instances occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members. Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

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

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse. Details on exemptions for mandated reporting of certain cases of underage consensual sexual activity can be found in Chapter 3 of Children First (2017)

Appendix 5:

THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (1989)

The Convention stipulates the following general principles:

- States shall ensure each child enjoys full rights without discrimination or distinctions of any kind.
- The child's best interests shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social institutions, courts, administrative authorities or legislative bodies.
- Every child has the right to life and states shall ensure, to the maximum extent possible, child survival and development.
- Children have the right to be heard.

The Convention stipulates the following substantive provisions:

Civil Rights and Freedom:

- The right to a name and a nationality.
- The right to a sense of identity.
- The right to freedom of expression.
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- The right to freedom of association.
- The right to privacy.
- No child shall be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Family Environment and Parental Guidance:

- States must respect the responsibilities of parents/guardians and extended family members to provide guidance for children.

- The convention gives parents/guardians a joint and primary responsibility for raising their children.
- Children should not be separated from their parents/guardians unless this is deemed to be in the child's best interests.
- Children and their parents/guardians have the right to leave any country and to enter their own for purposes of reunion.
- Children have the right to an adequate standard of living.
- The Convention obliges the state to provide special protection for children deprived of a family environment.
- The state has the obligation to prevent and remedy the kidnapping or retention of children abroad by a parent or third party.
- To protect children from all forms of abuse or neglect.
- It is the responsibility of the state to ensure – in cases of children victims of armed conflict, torture, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation – that they receive appropriate rehabilitative care and treatment to facilitate their recovery and social integration into society.
- A child placed by the state for reasons of care, protection or treatment is entitled to have that placement regularly evaluated.

Basic Health and Welfare of Children:

- Every child has the right to life.
- Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent the survival and development of the child.
- The child has the right to the highest attainable standard of health.
- Disabled children have the right to special treatment, education and care.
- Children have the right to benefit from social security.
- Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for the child's mental, physical, spiritual, value systems and social development.

Education, Leisure and Recreation:

- Children have the right to education.

- The aims of education are geared towards developing children's personalities as well as their mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent.
- Children have a right to enjoy leisure, recreation and cultural activities.

SPECIAL PROTECTION MEASURES:

(a) Situations of armed conflict:

- State parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that children under 15 years of age take no part in hostilities and that no child below 15 is recruited into the armed forces.
- State parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by armed conflict.
- Children have the right to appropriate treatment for their recovery and social reintegration.
- Special protection shall be given to refugee children or to a child seeking refugee status.

(b) In situations where children are in conflict with the law:

- Regarding the administration of juvenile justice, children who come in conflict with the law have the right to treatment that promotes their dignity and self-worth, and also takes into account the child's age and aims at his/her integration into society.
- Children are entitled to basic guarantees as well as legal or other assistance for their defence and judicial proceedings and institutional placements shall be provided wherever possible.
- Any child deprived of liberty shall not be kept apart from adults unless it is in the child's best interests to do so.
- A child who is detained shall have legal and other assistance as well as contact with his/her family.

(c) In situations of exploitation:


- Children have the right to be protected from economic exploitation and from work that threatens their health.
- Children have the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotropic drugs as well as from being involved in their production and distribution.
- Children have the right to protection from sexual exploitation, and abuse, including prostitution and pornography.
- It is the States obligation to make every effort to prevent the sale, trafficking and abduction of children.

(d) In situations of children belonging to a minority or indigenous group:

Children of minority communities and indigenous populations have the right to enjoy their own culture and to practice their own religion and language.

Appendix 6:

Tusla Standard Report Form



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Use block letters when filling out this form.
Fields marked with an * are mandatory.

1. Tusla Area (this is where the child resides)*	
---	--

2. Date of Report*	
---------------------------	--

3. Details of Child

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address*		Date of Birth*	
		Estimated Age*	
		School Name	
		School Address	
Eircode			

4. Details of Concerns*

Please complete the following section with as much detail about the specific child protection or welfare concern or allegation as possible. Include dates, times, incident details and names of anyone who observed any incident. Please include the parents and child's view, if known. Please attach additional sheets, if necessary

Please see 'Tusla Children First – A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns' for additional assistance on the steps to consider in making a report to Tusla

5. Type of Concern

Child Welfare Concern	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Emotional Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Abuse <input type="checkbox"/>
Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Abuse <input type="checkbox"/>

6. Details of Reporter

First Name	Surname
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address	Organisation
	Position Held
	Mobile No.
	Telephone No.
Eircode	Email Address



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
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Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is this a Mandated Report made under Sec 14, Children First Act 2015?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mandated Person's Type				

7. Details of Other Persons Where a Joint Report is Being Made

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

8. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to Tusla?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the parent/carer does not know, please indicate reasons:				

9. Relationships

Details of Mother			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
		Eircode	

Is the Mother a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Details of Father			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
		Eircode	



An Ghníomhaireacht um
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Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is the Father a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

10. Household Composition

First Name	Surname	Relationship	Date of Birth	Estimated Age	Additional Information e.g. school, occupation, other

11. Details of Person(s) Allegedly Causing Harm

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

12. Name and Address of Other Organisations, Personnel or Agencies Known to be Involved Currently or Previously with the Family

Profession	First Name	Surname	Address	Contact Number	Recent Contact e.g. 3/6/9 months ago
Social Worker					
Public Health Nurse					
GP					
Hospital					
School					
Gardaí					
Pre-school/ crèche					
Other					

13. Any Other Relevant Information, Including any Previous Contact with the Child or Family

--

Please ensure you have indicated if this is a mandated report in section 6.

Thank you for completing the report form.

In completing this report form you are providing details on yourself and on others. Details such as name, address and date of birth fall under the definition of 'Personal Data' in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. Tusla has a responsibility under these Acts in its capacity as a Data Controller to, amongst other things, obtain and process this data fairly; keep it safe and secure; and to keep it for a specified lawful purpose. That purpose is to fulfil our statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. Tusla may, during the course of the assessment of this report disclose such Personal Data to other agencies including An Garda Síochána. Further details about Tusla's responsibilities as a Data Controller and your rights as a Data Subject can be found on our website, www.tusla.ie. As you are providing Personal Data on others, you are a Data Processor. We ask that you only provide those details that are necessary for the report and that you keep this report and the Personal Data contained in it secure from unauthorised access, disclosure, destruction or accidental loss.

14. For Completion by Tusla Authorised Person on Receipt of Report

Report Received by				
First Name		Surname		Date

Mandated Report Acknowledgement by



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

*MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)*

First Name		Surname		Date Sent	
------------	--	---------	--	-----------	--

Authorised Person Signature*	
Date*	

Child Previously Known	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocated Case No				

Appendix 7: Allegations Policy

This policy applies to our management, staff, volunteers and students to the crèche.

Adults working in Blakestown C.C. are entitled to protection from harassment in the workplace, in the unlikely event of an allegation of abuse being lodged with Blakestown C.C., The service will take action to make sure the employee and the child are protected during the period of investigation into alleged abuse.

Suspension on full pay from the service while an alleged offence is under investigation is not viewed as evidence of guilt, rather as protection for both child and employee during a difficult and stressful episode.

Allegations of abuse or misconduct involving a child must be made in writing to the Board of Management by the parent/guardian of the child.

A copy of this will be given to the employee under investigation

Response to allegations of abuse against employees, volunteers, students

Allegations of abuse may be made against adults working with children, employees, volunteers, students and childminders.

The following guidelines should be followed in the event of such an allegation of abuse against an employee during the execution of that employee's duties or where information about an employee in relation to a situation outside of the work context is reported.

Our first duty of care in this situation is to the child and our first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk.

If an allegation is made against an employee or other person working within the service to another employee or other person, they must inform the Designated Liaison Persons verbally and simultaneously record what they have been told or what they may have observed. Action taken in reporting an allegation of child abuse against an employee should be based on an opinion formed reasonably and in good faith.

The details of this concern must be recorded on the Standard Reporting Form, which is in the Forms Folder in the Office, which must then be signed by the person making the report and they will be reminded of the need for confidentiality in this matter.

The manager will inform the member of staff that an allegation has been made against them. The disciplinary procedure for staff will be followed in this instance.

The manager must privately inform the employee, about whom the allegation is made, of the following:

- The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her
- The nature of the allegation
- The employee should be afforded an opportunity to respond. The manager should note the response and pass on this information when making a formal report to TUSLA.
- The employee should also be informed of their right to an adjournment of the meeting until such time as they can seek appropriate representation (e.g. Union Rep.

/Legal Rep.). The action will be guided by the agreed procedures (Disciplinary Procedure), the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. While adhering to the principle of natural justice enshrined within our constitution in relation to the rights of the accused, the vulnerability of the alleged victim must be foremost in our mind, therefore any postponement must be afforded within a reasonable time frame that is 24 hours.

- The parents/guardians of the alleged victim must be informed immediately by the Designated Liaison Person.
- The name or any identifying information of the reporting adult will not be given to the staff member or other worker against whom the allegation has been made by the manager, pending TUSLA advice or consultation.
- When an allegation is received it will be assessed promptly and carefully.
- The manager may then ask the member of staff who the allegation has been made against to leave the premises immediately and they will be suspended on full pay until the matter has been fully investigated.

However, all allegations may not require a worker to be sent home i.e. allegations of poor practice where increased levels of supervision may be sufficient until matter is sorted out. Poor practice will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure as necessary.

At this point in the process it will be necessary to decide whether a formal report should be made to TUSLA – this decision should be based on reasonable grounds for concern.

If it is felt that there are grounds for concern all matters relating to the allegations, it should be reported to the Duty Social Worker.

At this point the Disciplinary Procedure will be invoked. This will be a separate process and will be overseen by the manager, not the Designated Liaison Person.

Should a staff member, following the investigation, be re-instated with no disciplinary action this should be taken as evidence that no blame/fault/suspicion attaches to them.

Where the complaint is not upheld, management should ensure that the reputation and career prospects of the staff member concerned are not adversely affected by reason of the complaint having been brought against him/her. The staff member (who had the allegation made against them) should be offered counselling and any other support necessary to restore his/her confidence and morale.

The staff member who made the complaint should be reassured that management appreciates that the complaint was made in good faith. If required management will ensure that the staff member receives support e.g. external counselling, if requested or warranted.

Parents/Guardians and Allegations of Abuse or Neglect against Employees:

Parents/guardians have the right to contact the Tusla to report an allegation of abuse or neglect about the employee or service.

Parents/guardians of children who are named in an allegation of abuse or neglect will be kept informed of actions planned and taken, having regard to the rights of others concerned.

If there is any concern that a child may have been harmed, their parents/guardians will be informed immediately.

Appendix 8: Behaviour Policy (inc Code of Behaviour for staff)

Blakestown Community Crèche Behaviour Policy

We at Blakestown community crèche believe in promoting positive behaviour. Our ultimate aim is to work in partnership with parents to lay foundations from which children will grow into happy, self-confident, well-adjusted individuals.

Procedure:

- We aim to encourage self-discipline in the children by encouraging consideration for others children.
- Staff will always treat children with respect. A child will never be smacked or treated roughly. There are not circumstances in which such punishment can be justified. We do not believe that punishing children in any form ever helps them to become self-disciplined
- Crèche rules are concerned with safety, care and respect for others. Staffs are expected to model behaviour that they would expect from children.
- Appropriate limits will be set by staff and maintained consistently.
- How a particular type of behaviour is handled will depend on the child, the action or the circumstances. It may involve the child being asked to talk and think about what her or she had done. The child will also be asked to see if the person who was upset is all right and if they meant to do it, to say and show they are sorry.
- Children must be encouraged to recognise that bullying, fighting or hurtful comment are not acceptable behaviour. We want the children to make the right choices for the right reasons.
- We need to give children non-aggressive strategies to enable them to stand up for themselves so that adults and children listen to them by communication with children at an appropriate level.
-

Additional information on dealing with difficult behaviour is available in pages 22-25 of our policy folder.

Code of Behaviour for Staff:

- For the protection of staff, volunteers and children this code of behaviour has been introduced provide clarity on what is expected and what is not accepted, with respect to their behaviour as recommended in Our Duty to Care.

Our code of behaviour is kept under regular review.

- We recognise that children have an equal right to our service provision in line with the Equal Status Act and the National Disability Strategy.
- Workers should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities.
- While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring and showing concern for children, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all persons concerned.
- Workers should never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a child, nor should they even tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Workers should be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism, or becoming over involved or spending a lot of time with any one child
- Children should be encouraged to report cases of bullying to either a designated person, or a worker of their choice. Complaints must be brought to the attention of management.
- It is recommended that Child Care services develop a positive attitude amongst workers and children that respects the personal space, safety and privacy of individuals.
- It is not recommended that workers give lifts in their cars to individual children, especially for long journeys.

Visitors/Students:

- Visitors - including inspectors, workmen, students etc. should never be left alone with the children. If they are going to address the children it is incumbent upon the Management to check their credentials and to ensure that the content of the address is appropriate. All students will be carefully supervised and monitored by the manager.
- Secondary school pupils who come to the service for 'work experience' will also be carefully supervised and monitored but must not be left alone with the children.
- Under 18 years of age:
- If the service takes on a Transition Year student or student under 18 years of age their parent/guardian will be required to complete and sign a Garda Parent/Guardian Consent Form. This form gives consent for the NVB to report any convictions to the service.

We are committed to:

- Valuing and respecting all children as individuals.

- Listening to children.
- Involving children in decision making s appropriate.
- Encouraging children to express themselves.
- Working in partnership with parents/guardians.
- Promoting Positive Behaviour.
- Valuing differences.
- Implementing and adhering to all relevant policies to keep children safe.

Working in a safe environment – Protection of Adults and Children

Management will ensure a safe environment exists for staff and children by monitoring that all staff:

- Are listened to and any concerns expressed about unacceptable practice or behaviour of colleagues are followed up by management.
- Are supported when dealing with challenging behaviour of children and staff understand and follow positive behaviour management strategies

Appendix 9: Complaints Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Complaints Policy

It is the policy of Blakestown C C to take all complaints seriously and investigated.

Should anyone have a complaint in relation to your child or the service, they will be advised to report it to the crèche manager as soon as possible. All complaints will be recorded and acted upon within two weeks of receipt.

If the issue is not resolved the mange can be consulted. Every effort will be made to resolve any matter immediately and without prejudice.

Appendix 10: Confidentially Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Confidentiality Policy

It is paramount to the service provided by Blakestown Community Crèche to protect all our service users and staff. Our confidentiality policy for staff ensures all staff records are stored correctly and no information is readily available to others.

Our policy ensures that all information regarding a concern about child abuse or neglect should be shared on a need to know basis and the best interests of the child.

- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given and this should be made clear to staff and families using the service.
- The provision of information to the statutory agencies for the protection a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.
- Parents have a right to know if personal information is being shared unless doing so could put the child at further risk.
- Parents will always be informed if a report is being made to Tusla unless doing so would further endanger the child, or impair Tusla to carry out a risk assessment.
- Information shared by Tusla with our mandated person (childcare manager) shall not be disclosed to a third party unless Tusla has provided written authorisation to this effect.
- Parents will have access to records kept in the service, but only in relation to their own child.
- All new staff and volunteers will be informed of our confidentiality policy and procedures as part of their induction programme.
- Information held in the service in relation to Child Protection Concerns will be stored in a separate locked drawer and will be shared only on a need to know basis in line with our Child Protection Policy and with Data Protection Legislation.

Appendix 11: Garda Vetting Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Garda Vetting Policy

Garda vetting will be conducted in respect of all personnel working in the crèche. All personnel include, fulltime, part-time, voluntary or student placement, through which they have unsupervised access to children. No student or volunteer will be ever left alone with children, even with Garda vetting.

Garda Vetting is a procedure through which An Garda Síochána is asked, with a person's permission, to disclose any information held on Garda file. Personnel must complete and sign the appropriate form, giving the correct details and addresses. They must also provide a current photo id and proof of address.

In the case of staff that have lived outside the jurisdiction, it is their responsibility to obtain Vetting from the country/ies in which they resided or born. Vetting is needed if you have resided in another country for over three months. In these case a copy of the original vetting must be shown to the Crèche Manager, copied and kept on file.

All staff/volunteers will be re-vetted after a period of 3 years. The Organisation may also carry out random re-vetting of staff/volunteers at times that it deems appropriate.

Nominated Garda Vetting Contact Person the Nominated Garda Vetting Contact Person in the Crèche is Verona Campbell, the Crèche Manager. The Nominated Garda Vetting Contact Person is registered with the Early Childhood Ireland. It is their role to manage all Garda vetting applications submitted by the Crèche.

Garda Vetting Procedure the Nominated Contact Person will distribute Garda vetting forms to applicants. Once completed the forms will be checked for completeness by the Nominated Contact Person. In the event of an incomplete form, the form will be returned to the applicant to complete. The forms are then sent to the Authorised Signatory in Pobal for processing.

Original forms will be stores in the person's personnel file. Where they will remain while the person is employed in the service. After such time they will be put into storage for 5 years.

Once vetted, the original Garda Vetting application forms together with any disclosures are returned to the Nominated Contact Person.

Disputes Where an applicant disputes the accuracy of any detail contained in their Garda vetting disclosure, the following procedure should be followed:

The vetting Subject should outline in writing to the nominated Contact Person the exact basis on their dispute. The Nominated Contact Person should submit this along with the original application form to the Authorised Signatory; In any case where there has been an

error in completing the original application form, the Vetting subject should complete a new form and both the new and original forms should be submitted to the Authorised Signatory; The Authorised Signatory will submit the Vetting Subject's report along with the original application form to the GCVU for further checks; If following further checks, the Vetting Subject still disputes the accuracy of any detail contained in their disclosure, arrangements will be made for further enquiries to be conducted as appropriate.

The vetting contact person will then divulge the disclosure/s to the BOM for final decision.

A comprehensive record of the meeting of the board must be recorded and stored on file. The Vetting Subject will be informed of the BOM decision.

Data Protection Confidentiality is paramount. Any personal information relating to an applicant will be treated with the utmost care. Applicants will be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

The Crèche is committed to protect the rights and privacy of individuals and is in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003. "The Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 (the "Data Protection Acts") lay down strict rules about the way in which personal data is collected, accessed, used and disclosed. The Data Protection Acts permit individuals to access their personal data on request, and gives individuals the right to have their personal data amended if found to be incorrect."

Appendix 12: Recruitment & Induction Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Recruitment and Induction Policy:

The board of Management of Blakestown Community Crèche is committed to ensuring that our recruitment procedures are fair, open and transparent and comply with relevant employment legislation. Personal information received is dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Recruitment Procedures

A detailed job description is prepared before each post advertised and is available to all applicants. Each **job description** includes:

- Job title
- Location of the position
- Who the employee will report to
- Overall purpose of the job
- Duties and responsibilities
- Conditions of employment

The person **specification** outlines:

- Qualifications
- Skills
- Experience
- Other attributes required to carry out the job satisfactorily

Advertising All posts are publicly advertised in local/national newspapers or social media and state clearly that Blakestown Community Crèche is an equal opportunities employer.

All advertisements include the following:

Name and role of organisation

- Job Title
- Brief description of the job
- Location of position
- Qualifications and experience which are essential and which are desirable
- Whether the position is full time or part- time, temporary or permanent
- How to apply
- How to get further information
- Closing date for application

- Equal opportunities statement
- Logos as required

Short listing A short listing panel with a minimum of three people is set up to review all applications.

The selection criteria are based on the information in the advertisement and the job description. Assessment of applications is based only on information provided by the applicant. All applicants who meet the selection criteria are invited to attend an interview. A letter of regret is sent to all applicants who do not meet the selection criteria.

A complete report of the short listing process is prepared by the short listing panel.

An interview panel with a minimum of two people is selected by the BOM/Chairperson. Where possible both sexes are represented on the interview panel. Each member of the panel is supplied with the applications and CVs in advance. A list of interview questions based on the job description is prepared in advance of the interviews. The panel decides in advance who will cover each area. Each candidate is asked the same questions. At the end of each interview the candidate is invited to ask questions or to give any additional information. A marking system and score sheet are also prepared. When the interviews are completed a full report of the interview process is prepared by the interview panel. The report is signed by each member of the panel and is kept on file for at least one year, together with the short listing report and the interview score sheet.

Selection Process The position is offered to the candidate with the highest mark on the score sheet, subject to references being satisfactory.

A reference is always sought from the current or most recent employer. Both referees are contacted verbally by telephone and this is followed up with a written reference or completion of Blakestown reference sheet. Photo ID and original certificates of accredited training are sought before the successful candidate signs a contract of employment.

Letters of regret are sent to all unsuccessful candidates within one week of the interviews.

Garda Vetting Garda Vetting is sought for all employees, volunteers, students and any adults who may come in contact with children in our service.

Contract of Employment a written contract of employment is prepared for each new employee of Blakestown Community Crèche with individual terms of employment.

All contracts include:

- Commencement date of employment
- Duration of the contract
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Reporting procedures
- Salary
- Entitlement to travel and subsistence
- Working hours
- Annual Leave

- Details of sick pay
- Information on grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Information on codes of conduct
- Duration of probationary period

Induction is provided for all new employees.

Employees are provided with information about the role of Blakestown Community Crèche

- Further information about the employee's new role
- Information on the role of other employees
- Introduction to key personnel and agencies
- Contracts of employment
- Details of conditions of employment
- Details of salary scales
- Details of grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Details of codes of conduct

Full details of the Policies and Procedures of the Blakestown Childcare Service.

Employees are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Policies and Procedures of the service and to adhere to codes of behaviour as set out by the service.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT POLICY

The management committee of Blakestown Community Crèche is committed to promoting the participation of parents as volunteers in the service.

The management committee is committed to ensuring that the recruitment of parents and other volunteers is open and transparent and at all times gives precedence to the safety and welfare of the children attending the service.

A detailed description of the role of the volunteer is prepared in advance.

This includes:

- Overall role of the volunteer
- Location of the position
- Who the volunteer will report to
- Key area of work
- Duties and responsibilities

Each volunteer is required to complete an application form.

This form includes:

- Name, Address and telephone number of applicant.
- Previous experience.
- Reason for volunteering.
- Name, address and telephone number of 2 referees.

Garda Vetting is sought for all volunteers, students and any adults who may come in contact with children in our service.

An induction period is provided for all new volunteers. Volunteers are provided with...
Information about the role of the Childcare Service

- Further information about the volunteer's role
- Information on the role of other volunteers and employees
- Details of grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Details of codes of conduct
- Full details of the Policies and Procedures of the childcare service.

Volunteers are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Policies and Procedures of the service and to adhere to codes of behaviour as set out by the service.

STUDENT POLICY:

It is our policy, to assist students in developing their skills in childcare. Students will work closely with staff, to develop a professional and child-centred approach to working with children.

Procedures for Students on Placement:

- All students must be over the age of sixteen.
- As part of their induction, students are requested to read the policies and procedures of the service. Students are not included in the adult/child ratio and are never used in place of staff.
- Students are never left unsupervised with groups or individual children.
- Students are supported through regular supervision meetings. Support and information is also provided, if assistance is needed with projects or assignments.
- Manager/Management Committee decides on what information the students can have access to and what meetings they attend.
- Proof of Garda Vetting for each student is sought from the college

TRAINING POLICY

It is our policy that all staff will have access to ongoing in-service training, to keep them up to date and to develop their childcare and education skills.

All newly appointed staff/students/volunteers are provided with the basic information they need to settle into the job, this includes: health and safety, child protection procedures, conditions of employment, policies and procedures.

External training and attendance at conferences/workshops/seminars is supported.

At staff meetings, staff are given the opportunity to feed back the information from the conference/workshop/seminar they attended. Every effort will be made to hold staff meetings every six weeks, all staff must attend. They may also use this platform to bring forward any issues of concern.

All applicants/new recruitments will be made aware and reminded throughout the recruitment period that their application and the follow up process of recruitment will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence. The information supplied by the applicant and any other information supplied on their behalf should only be seen by persons directly involved in the recruitment procedure.

Applicants will receive a clear job description and information on the organisation. Additional information, including a copy of the crèche's Child Protection Policy is also be supplied to each applicant.

Each recruit will have a Personnel File, which is only accessible to management, funding bodies and Tusla.

An up to date and accurate personnel file is kept for each member of staff that includes the following records:

- Proof of identity and that the person is over 18 years of age.
- Proof of satisfactory Garda Vetting.
- Two validated references, including a reference from the most recent place of employment.
- Verification of qualifications.
- Investigation of any gaps of employment.

Induction:

As part of the induction process, all new management, staff, volunteers and students will be briefed on all the elements of the Child Protection and Welfare Policy including the ethos of the service, child centred practice and the Code of Behaviour, within the first week of employment.

All management, staff, volunteers and students will be required to commit to and abide by the Child & Adult Protection Policy. They are required to confirm that they have read and understand the Child Protection & Adult Protection Policy with their signature and a record will be kept on file.

The Code of Behaviour is given to all management staff, students and volunteers at induction and it is expected that all staff, students and volunteers are familiar with the code and they will raise any questions arising with the manager.

Appendix 13: Managing Accidents Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Accident and incident Policy

All accidents must be report to the crèche manager and recorded in the accident book.

- The following procedure should be followed:
- The manger should be altered.
- treatment given by a First Aider.
- Manager should call the ambulance if necessary
- Manager to contact parents
- Two members of staff to accompany child to medical aid, if parents are not available.
- Remaining staff will remain with other children and reassure them.
- If the accident does not warrant outside help the firs-aider must complete the accident form and it must be stores with the child's records until the child is 21.
- The incident is explained to parents of all children involved in the form signed by them.
- If necessary, a meeting may take place to ensure that it doesn't happen again.
- The first aid box must be accessible to all adults and it where about know.
- A least one member of staff must hold a valid first aid certificate.
- Records are accessible to staff in cases of emergency.
- In the case where a child is taken to a GP or A&E his/her record card must be taken with them.
- Al major accidents must be reported to the insurance company.

Appendix 14: Managing Outings Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Managing outings Policy

Management of Day Trips/Outings:

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

- Inform parents/guardians of the proposed outing, method of travel and supervision
- Seek written consent from the parents/guardians – children will not be able to participate in the activity unless this has been obtained
- Ensure adequate number of personnel are present and that the children are supervised at all times
- Ensure that the person in charge has access to a mobile in case of an emergency
- A risk assessment of the venue or facility will be carried out and reviewed annually
- Ensure that adequate insurance is in place for the outing
- Ensure staff are familiar with emergency procedures
- Ensure that the method of transport complies with relevant safety requirements and insurance
- We will ensure that the appropriate staff/child ratios are maintained in line with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and the risk assessment
- Where appropriate, parents/guardians may be invited to accompany their children on the outing
- Emergency contact details for all children will be brought on the trip
- Safety measures such as: frequent head counts/ roll calls and name tags will be used.
- A first aid box will be brought and a qualified first aider will be present
- The service does its utmost to minimise risk and ensure safety at all times. However, it is important that staff are prepared for any emergencies that may arise.

Additional information is available in our policy's folder,

- **What to do if a child is missing in your care.**
- **What to do when child is recovered.**
- **A checklist if planning an outing**

Appendix 15: Mobile Phone Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Mobile Phone Policy

The purpose and Importance of Mobile Phone Policy

Blakestown C C recognises that staff may need to have access to mobile phones on site during the working day. However, there have been a number of queries raised within the local authority and nationally regarding the use of mobile phones and other devices in educational settings.

The concerns are mainly based around these issues:

- Staff being distracted from their work with children
- The use of mobile phones around children
- The inappropriate use of mobile phones and Cameras

Ensuring the Safe and Appropriate Use of Mobile Phones

Blakestown C C allows staff to bring in mobile phones for their own personal use. However, they must be kept in their lockers at all times and are not allowed to be used in the classrooms, toilets, hall, changing rooms or in the play areas at any time. If staff fail to follow this guidance, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance to the crèche staff contract. If staff need to make an emergency call, they must do so either in the main or managers office. Staff must ensure that there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the device.

Mobile phone technology may NOT be used to take photographs anywhere within the nursery grounds. There are digital cameras available within the nursery and only these should be used to record visual information within the consent criteria guidelines of the crèche.

Members of staff may only contact a parent/carer on school approved mobile phones. When children undertake a school trip or journey, mobile phone use by adult leaders should be limited to contact with the school office or venues being visited, except in emergencies and then only by approved telephones.

Use of Mobile Phones for Volunteers and Visitors

Upon their initial visit volunteers and visitors are given information informing them they are NOT permitted to use mobile phones on the premises. If they wish to make or take an emergency call, they may use either the main or the manager's office. Neither are volunteers or visitors permitted to take photographs or recordings of the children without the manager, deputy manager permission.

Appendix 16: Recruitment policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Recruitment Policy

The board of Management of Blakestown Community Crèche is committed to ensuring that our recruitment procedures are fair, open and transparent and comply with relevant employment legislation. Personal information received is dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Recruitment Procedures

A detailed job description is prepared before each post advertised and is available to all applicants. Each **job description** includes:

- Job title
- Location of the position
- Who the employee will report to
- Overall purpose of the job
- Duties and responsibilities
- Conditions of employment

The person **specification** outlines:

- Qualifications
- Skills
- Experience
- Other attributes required to carry out the job satisfactorily

Advertising All posts are publicly advertised in local/national newspapers or social media and state clearly that Blakestown Community Crèche is an equal opportunities employer.

All advertisements include the following:

Name and role of organisation

- Job Title
- Brief description of the job
- Location of position
- Qualifications and experience which are essential and which are desirable
- Whether the position is full time or part- time, temporary or permanent
- How to apply
- How to get further information
- Closing date for application
- Equal opportunities statement
- Logos as required

Short listing A short listing panel with a minimum of three people is set up to review all applications.

The selection criteria are based on the information in the advertisement and the job description. Assessment of applications is based only on information provided by the applicant. All applicants who meet the selection criteria are invited to attend an interview. A letter of regret is sent to all applicants who do not meet the selection criteria.

A complete report of the short listing process is prepared by the short listing panel.

An interview panel with a minimum of two people is selected by the BOM/Chairperson. Where possible both sexes are represented on the interview panel. Each member of the panel is supplied with the applications and CVs in advance. A list of interview questions based on the job description is prepared in advance of the interviews. The panel decides in advance who will cover each area. Each candidate is asked the same questions. At the end of each interview the candidate is invited to ask questions or to give any additional information. A marking system and score sheet are also prepared. When the interviews are completed a full report of the interview process is prepared by the interview panel. The report is signed by each member of the panel and is kept on file for at least one year, together with the short listing report and the interview score sheet.

Selection Process The position is offered to the candidate with the highest mark on the score sheet, subject to references being satisfactory.

A reference is always sought from the current or most recent employer. Both referees are contacted verbally by telephone and this is followed up with a written reference or completion of Blakestown reference sheet. Photo ID and original certificates of accredited training are sought before the successful candidate signs a contract of employment.

Letters of regret are sent to all unsuccessful candidates within one week of the interviews.

Garda Vetting Garda Vetting is sought for all employees, volunteers, students and any adults who may come in contact with children in our service.

Contract of Employment a written contract of employment is prepared for each new employee of Blakestown Community Crèche with individual terms of employment.

All contracts include:

- Commencement date of employment
- Duration of the contract
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Reporting procedures
- Salary
- Entitlement to travel and subsistence
- Working hours
- Annual Leave
- Details of sick pay
- Information on grievance and disciplinary procedures

- Information on codes of conduct
- Duration of probationary period

Induction is provided for all new employees.

Employees are provided with information about the role of Blakestown Community Crèche

- Further information about the employee's new role
- Information on the role of other employees
- Introduction to key personnel and agencies
- Contracts of employment
- Details of conditions of employment
- Details of salary scales
- Details of grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Details of codes of conduct

Full details of the Policies and Procedures of the Blakestown Childcare Service.

Employees are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Policies and Procedures of the service and to adhere to codes of behaviour as set out by the service.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT POLICY

The management committee of Blakestown Community Crèche is committed to promoting the participation of parents as volunteers in the service.

The management committee is committed to ensuring that the recruitment of parents and other volunteers is open and transparent and at all times gives precedence to the safety and welfare of the children attending the service.

A detailed description of the role of the volunteer is prepared in advance.

This includes:

- Overall role of the volunteer
- Location of the position
- Who the volunteer will report to
- Key area of work
- Duties and responsibilities

Each volunteer is required to complete an application form.

This form includes:

- Name, Address and telephone number of applicant.
- Previous experience.
- Reason for volunteering.
- Name, address and telephone number of 2 referees.

Garda Vetting is sought for all volunteers, students and any adults who may come in contact with children in our service.

An induction period is provided for all new volunteers. Volunteers are provided with...

Information about the role of the Childcare Service

- Further information about the volunteer's role
- Information on the role of other volunteers and employees
- Details of grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Details of codes of conduct
- Full details of the Policies and Procedures of the childcare service.

Volunteers are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Policies and Procedures of the service and to adhere to codes of behaviour as set out by the service.

STUDENT POLICY:

It is our policy, to assist students in developing their skills in childcare. Students will work closely with staff, to develop a professional and child-centred approach to working with children.

Procedures for Students on Placement:

- All students must be over the age of sixteen.
- As part of their induction, students are requested to read the policies and procedures of the service. Students are not included in the adult/child ratio and are never used in place of staff.
- Students are never left unsupervised with groups or individual children.
- Students are supported through regular supervision meetings. Support and information is also provided, if assistance is needed with projects or assignments.
- Manager/Management Committee decides on what information the students can have access to and what meetings they attend.
- Proof of Garda Vetting for each student is sought from the college

TRAINING POLICY

It is our policy that all staff will have access to ongoing in-service training, to keep them up to date and to develop their childcare and education skills.

All newly appointed staff/students/volunteers are provided with the basic information they need to settle into the job, this includes: health and safety, child protection procedures, conditions of employment, policies and procedures.

External training and attendance at conferences/workshops/seminars is supported.

At staff meetings, staff are given the opportunity to feed back the information from the conference/workshop/seminar they attended. Every effort will be made to hold staff meetings every six weeks, all staff must attend. They may also use this platform to bring forward any issues of concern.

Appendix 17: Social Media Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Social Media Policy

Our **social media policy** provides a framework for using social media. Social media is a place where people exchange information, opinions and experiences to learn, develop and have fun. Whether employees are handling a corporate account or use one of their own, they should remain productive. This policy provides practical advice to avoid issues that might arise by careless use of social media in the workplace.

We expect all our employees, volunteers and parents to follow this policy

“Social media” refers to a variety of online communities like blogs, social networks, chat rooms and forums.

This policy covers all of them.

The use of the Blakestown community crèche social media account is to provide information, markets and gain feed in relation to the service.

Staff can only access their social media accounts during scheduled breaks.

If commenting on the crèche status should be...

- **Be respectful, polite and patient**, when engaging in conversations on our company’s behalf. They should be extra careful when making declarations or promises towards customers and stakeholders.
- **Avoid speaking on matters outside their field of expertise** when possible. Everyone should be careful not to answer questions or make statements that fall under somebody else’s responsibility.
- **Staff** should not personally contact or engage with children/parents who attend the service on social media platforms.
- Follow our [confidentiality policy](#), [mobile phone/camera usage policy](#) and [data protection policy](#) and observe laws on copyright, trademarks, plagiarism and fair use.

We may have to take disciplinary action leading up to and including termination if employees do not follow this policy's guidelines.

Examples of non-conformity with the employee social media policy include but are not limited to:

- Disclosing confidential information through personal or crèche accounts
- Directing offensive comments towards other members of the online community

Our administrator of our social media accounts is the crèche manager. They will be solely responsible for creating new information on all social media platforms.

It is the guiding principle of Blakestown Community crèche to refrain from posting any images of children on social media platforms.

Special Events:

During events parents will be asked to refrain from taken photos or posting photos on social media. Parents will be given opportunity to take photos after events.

However, we would ask them to...

- Always consider whether it is necessary to post the image of a child online. we are creating digital footprints for children which they are unable to consent to.
- Never post an image of a child with identifying information.
- Be mindful to other parents' wishes, they may not want images of their child on social media platforms.
- Ensure the child/ren is appropriately dressed.

Appendix 18: Support and Supervision Policy

Blakestown Community Crèche

Staff Supervision and Support Policy

It is the policy of Blakestown community crèche to provide regular supervision and support to all staff and volunteers, through one to one meetings or group meetings.

We have an open door policy here in Blakestown for parents and staff. Staff can at any time And speak to the manager or deputy manager.

It is our policy that all staff will have access to ongoing in-service training, to keep them up to date and to develop their childcare and education skills.

All newly appointed staff/students/volunteers are provided with the basic information they need to settle into the job, this includes: health and safety, child protection procedures, conditions of employment, policies and procedures.

External training and attendance at conferences/workshops/seminars is supported.

At staff meetings, staff are given the opportunity to feed back the information from the conference/workshop/seminar they attended. Every effort will be made to hold staff meetings every six weeks, all staff must attend. They may also use this platform to bring forward any issues of concern.

Staff must ensure all mandatory certificates are up to date and will be facilitated to renew them.

Staff will be supported while dealing with a child protection concern and outside support will be sought where necessary, the costs of this will be borne by the company.

Appendix 19: Statement Checklist

Has Management formally adopted Child Protection Procedures in this Child Protection Policy?	Yes/No
As part of their Policy, has the Board of Management formally adopted, without modification, these Procedures?	
Are there both a DLP and Deputy DLP currently appointed?	
Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochana) to hand?	
Has the DLP attended available Child Protection Training?	
Has the Deputy DLP attended available Child Protection Training?	
Has the services' Child Protection Policy identified other policies, practices and activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance?	
Has Management ensured that the Child Protection Policy is available to all staff?	
Is Board of Management satisfied that all staff have been made aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection Policy?	Yes/No
Since the last review, was the Board of Management informed of any child protection report made to Tusla/An Garda Síochana?	
Since the last review, was the board of Management informed of any cases where advice was sought from Tusla and, as a result of this advice, no report to Tusla was made?	
Is Board of Management satisfied that the Child Protection Procedures, in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochana, were appropriately followed?	
Is Board of Management satisfied that all records, relating to child protection, are appropriately filed and stored securely?	
Has the Board of Management ensured that the Child Protection Policy is available to parents, on request?	
Is the Board of Management satisfied that Garda Vetting requirements have been met in respect of all staff, employees and volunteers?	
Is the Board of Management satisfied that all staffs Garda Vetting and Child Protection cert have been checked and are currently in date.	
Is the Board of Management satisfied that requirements, in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking, have been met in respect of persons appointed to positions?	

Is the Board of Management satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied in relation to all staff, employees and volunteers?	
Is the Board of Management satisfied that the Child Protection Procedures are being fully and adequately implemented by the service?	
Has the Board of Management identified any aspect of the services' Child Protection Policy, and/or its' implementation, that require further improvement?	
Has the Board of Management put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the services' Child Protection Policy and/or its' implementation, that require further improvement?	Yes/No
Has the Board of Management ensured that any areas for improvement or amendment were identified in any previous review of the services' Child Protection Policy, have been adequately addressed?	
If yes by whom:	

Signed: Verona Farrell
Manager of Blakestown Community Crèche

Date: 13/3/18

Signed: Susan
Chairperson of Blakestown Board of Management

Date: 13/3/2018

