



Urlingford
Community Centre

Child Safeguarding Policy

Urlingford Community Centre is a multi-use, inter-generational community facility that is widely used by residents of Urlingford and surrounding areas. While some activities at the Centre are carried out directly by Urlingford Community Centre Volunteers and Staff, many activities are carried out by individuals, clubs and organisations who hire out our facilities, some of whom have children as their primary audience. Activities involving children include Dance Classes, Yoga, Study Hub, Community Cinema.

Urlingford Community Centre is committed to a child centred approach to all activities involving children and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment where the best interests and welfare of children and young people is of paramount importance.

Guiding Principles

We believe that all children attending the centre have the right to be protected from harm, treated with dignity and respect, listened to and to have their views taken into consideration in all decisions affecting them in an age-appropriate way. We believe that all children and young people using the centre should be treated equally regardless of gender, social or ethnic background, family status, sexual orientation, religion or disability.

Our guiding principles are underpinned by:

- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children
- Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Diocese of Ossory Child Safeguarding Guidelines
- All current legislation including:
 - the Children First Act 2015
 - Child Care Act 1991
 - Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
 - National Vetting Bureau Act 2012.

Our guiding principles apply to everyone in our organisation including but not limited to all paid staff, volunteers, committee members, board members, persons on Community Employment, TUS or Work Placement schemes, and students on work placement within our organisation as well as any independent tutors or facilitators delivering programmes on behalf of Urlingford Community Centre or other agencies using the centre.

Urlingford Town Team Company Limited by Guarantee

Registered Office: Main Street, Urlingford, Co. Kilkenny. E41 P299

Place of Registration: Dublin, Ireland | **Registration Number:** 721736 | **Tax Registration Number:** IE4003479MH

Directors: D. Hayes, M. Doyle, J. Hayes, A. Ryan, D. Norton, J. Butler, M. Joyce, P. Ryan, M. Power

It is a condition of using the centre that any Individuals, Independent groups or Clubs who use our premises adhere to our Guiding Principles and are fully compliant with their obligations under the Child protection Guidelines and Legislation as outlined above.

As stated in our Operational Framework:

- **Safeguarding & Child Protection Compliance:** Any user working with children or vulnerable people must:
 - Provide a Child Safeguarding Statement or equivalent policy.
 - Ensure all leaders/coaches are Garda Vetted.
 - Adhere to Children First legislation and the Urlingford Town Team Child Safeguarding Policy. <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-guidance-and-legislation/> and to the Diocese of Ossory guidelines as set out by the Diocesan website: <https://ossory.ie/safeguarding-in-our-diocese/>.
 - Demonstrate appropriate adult-to-child supervision ratios.
 - Failure to meet safeguarding requirements results in automatic rejection of approval.
 - Approved users will be subject to periodic randomised audits by the Management Committee to ensure users are complying with the policies.

Our Named person is Ms Sinead Curran who will be responsible for the development of our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures in line best practice as outlined in Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.

Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ms Sinead Curran

Contact details Mob: 087 294 3889

Our Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLp) is Ms Marie Doyle

Contact details Mob: 087 232 6122

Responsibilities of Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person:

- Be fully familiar with Urlingford Community Centres responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding of children.
- Have good knowledge of Urlingford Community Centres guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures.

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- Ensure that Urlingford Community Centres reporting procedure is followed, so that child protection and welfare concerns are referred promptly to Tusla.
- Receive child protection and welfare concerns from workers, volunteers and other users and consider if reasonable grounds for reporting to Tusla exist.
- Consult informally with a Tusla Duty Social Worker through the Designated Contact Point, if necessary.
- Where appropriate, make a formal report of a child protection or welfare concern to Tusla on behalf of Urlingford Community Centres, using the Tusla Web Portal or the Tusla Child Protection and Welfare Report Form.
- Inform the child's parents/guardians that a report is to be submitted to Tusla or The Garda Síochána, unless:
 - Informing the parents/guardians is likely to endanger the child or young person.
 - Informing the parents/guardians may place you as the reporter at risk of harm from the family.
 - The family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment.
- Record all child protection or welfare concerns, or allegations of child abuse, brought to our attention as well as any action taken in response to these concerns.
- Provide feedback to the referrer, as appropriate.
- Ensure that a secure system is in place to manage and store confidential records.
- Act as a liaison with Tusla and The Garda Síochána, as appropriate.
- Where appropriate, jointly report with a Mandated Person

Mandated Persons

Currently the Mandated Persons in our Organization are Fr Eamon O'Gorman and Ms Sinead Curran.

This list will be updated should other Mandated Persons join our organization in any capacity or leave the organization for any reason.

Any person seeking to Provide a service of any kind at the Centre will be asked to confirm their status as a Mandated Person and will be added to this list when appropriate and removed from the list when no longer required.

List of Mandate persons Under the Children First Act 2015 see Appendix (i).

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It is the responsibility of everyone using Urlingford Community Centre to ensure that Children and Young people using the Centre are safe and free from harm. If you have any concerns regarding the safety or welfare of a child or young person at the centre, please bring your concerns without delay to the attention of our Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

Designated Liaison Person (DLP) Ms Sinead Curran

Contact details Mob: 087 294 3889

And in her absence to the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)

Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP) is Ms Marie Doyle

Contact details Mob: 087 232 6122

Definitions of child abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types of abuse:

- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual abuse.

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.

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.

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food, or erratic feeding

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- 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

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 is not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver.

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

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

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- 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

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

Please Note: Under The Children First Act 2015 the defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings no longer applies.

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

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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 are outlined below.

If you are satisfied that all of the following criteria are met, you are not required to make a report to Tusla:

- The young person(s) concerned are between 15 and 17 years old.
- The age difference between them is not more than 24 months.
- There is no material difference in their maturity or capacity to consent.
- The relationship between the people engaged in the sexual activity does not involve intimidation or exploitation of either person.

Reporting procedure

Child safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone using Urlingford Community Centre.

Any concerns which any individual has regarding the protection or welfare of a child or young person, regardless of how that concern came to their attention, must report their concern to the Designated Liaison Person.

The Designated Liaison Person, in consultation with the person who raised the concern will decide if reasonable grounds for concern exist. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, the Designated Liaison Person will report to Tusla through either the Tusla Web Portal or relevant Designated Contact Point.

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Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include but is not limited to:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, which 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.

If in doubt as to whether a report should be made the DLP or the concerned individual can consult informally with a Social Worker at Tusla's Designated Contact Point which is:

St Dymphna's Hospital
Athy Road
Carlow
R93X9C2
Mob: 059 912 9502

If the DLP decides not to make a report, the worker/volunteer or individual with the reasonable concern is still entitled to make a report to Tusla under Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, should they wish to do so.

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

- The reasons for not reporting will be recorded
- If any actions are taken as a result of the concern, these will be recorded
- The worker or volunteer who raised the concern will be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla
- The worker or volunteer will be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla or The Garda Síochána
- The worker or volunteer who raised the concern will also be reassured that if they do choose to report to Tusla, they are covered by the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

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Mandated Persons

Mandated persons have a statutory responsibility to report directly to Tusla concerns above the threshold of “harm”. Where a Mandated Report is made the Mandated Person should inform the DLP that a report has been made and give a copy of the Report to the DLP.

Where a mandated person has a concern that they believe does not reach the threshold of harm for a mandated report, they should consider whether their concern meets reasonable grounds for concern and if so they should report the concern to their DLP and should jointly consider if a report to Tusla under Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children should be made.

The mandated person retains their right to report independently, should the DLP choose not to report the concern. The provisions of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 would apply in this circumstance.

Where a report is being made to Tusla the DLP or Mandated Person will meet with parents/guardians to inform them of this unless doing so might further endanger the child, impair Tulsa’s ability to carry out an assessment or put the reporter at risk of harm.

Where a report is not being made to Tusla, but where concerns exist it is best practice to speak to parents/guardians to discuss these concerns.

See Appendix (ii) for guidance in speaking to parents.

Important: if a child is in immediate danger, **call An Garda Síochána immediately on 999 or 112**
Do not hesitate, do not delay.

Responding to a child/young person who discloses abuse.

If child or young person discloses to a trusted worker or volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused:

- Be as calm and natural as possible. Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked.
- Do not panic.

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- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child/young person.
- Remember, the child or young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child/young person has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child/young person. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief. Accept what the child or young person has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child/young person quite possibly may love or strongly like the alleged abuser while also disliking what was done to them. It is important therefore to avoid expressing any judgement of, or anger towards the alleged perpetrator while talking with the child/young person.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child/young person that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you.
- Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only. Do not ask leading questions.
- Explain to the child/young person that this information will only be shared with people who can help. By refusing to make a commitment to secrecy to the child/young person, you do run the risk that they may not tell you everything (or, indeed, anything) there and then. However, it is better to do this than to tell a lie and ruin the child/young person's confidence in yet another adult. By being honest, it is more likely that the child/young person will return to you at another time.

At the earliest possible opportunity:

- Record in writing, in a factual manner, what the child/young person has said, including, as far as possible, the exact words used by the child/young person.
- Inform the DLP immediately and agree measures to protect the child/young person, e.g. report the matter directly to Tusla.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

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On-going support

Following a disclosure by a child/young person, it is important that the worker/volunteer continues in a supportive relationship with the child/young person.

Disclosure is a huge step for a child/young person. Workers/volunteers should continue to offer support, particularly by:

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

Any further disclosure should be treated as a first disclosure and responded to as indicated above. Where necessary, immediate action should be taken to ensure the child/young person's safety.

Responding to allegations of abuse made against workers/volunteers or other persons using the centre.

In all instances where an allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour is made against workers/volunteers or other persons using the centre the safety of the child/young person is paramount.

An allegation of abuse may relate to a person who has:

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child/young person,
- Possibly committed a criminal offence in relation to a child/young person.
- Behaved towards a child/young person or children/young people in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child/young person.
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to the organisation's code of behaviour for workers and volunteers and other users of the Centre.
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to professional practice guidelines.

If an allegation is made against a worker/volunteer we will ensure that everyone involved is dealt with appropriately, in accordance with our organisation's guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures, the rules of natural justice and any relevant employment legislation.

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As we have a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and the worker/volunteer.

Two separate procedures will be followed:

The DLP will assess the complaint to determine if it meets the threshold for making a report to Tusla in respect of the alleged abuse. If in any doubt the DLP will seek the guidance of a Tusla Social worker. In all cases the DLP will keep the Centres Manager and the Chair of the Board fully informed and ensure that there is a detailed record of the complaint and the actions taken.

Parents/guardians will be informed of any action taken or planned while having regard to the rights to confidentiality and safety of others, such as the person against whom the allegation has been made.

The Centre manager in consultation with the Chair of the Board will deal with the internal personnel procedure for dealing with the worker/volunteer or centre user against whom a complaint has been made and while the presumption of innocence must be maintained the safety of the child/young person is paramount. Legal advice may be sought as to the most appropriate action to be taken.

Where a complaint meets the threshold for a report to Tusla the worker or volunteer will be placed on administrative leave on full pay where applicable pending the outcome of the report.

Where a report is not made to Tusla and where concerns still exist the centre manager together with the chair of the board will meet with the person about whom the complaint has been made and agree a course of action to ensure that all interactions with a child are in line with the centres guiding principles and all relevant guidelines and legislation, this may include additional training and additional supervision.

In the case of a complaint against a person renting space in the centre or using the centre where the complaint meets the threshold for a report to Tusla access to the Centre will be prohibited subject to the outcome of the Tusla investigation.

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Where the threshold has not been met for a complaint to Tusla, but where concerns still exist The Centre manager together with the chair of the board will meet with the person in question and agree a course of action which will include additional supervision for an agreed period to ensure that agreed actions are implemented.

Policies and Procedures

In addition to the implementation of our guiding principles on safeguarding Urlingford Community centre will endeavour to ensure that all procedures and practice are child centred.

We have carried out a risk assessment and have identified the following potential areas of risks to children using our Community Centre:

- **Abuse and Neglect:** Risk of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse from staff, volunteers, visitors or others running activities at the Centre.
- **Physical Risks:** Risk of injury when participating in activities at the centre.
- **Inadequate Supervision:** Risk of harm to children if not properly supervised at all times .
- **Physical and Environmental Factors:** Risks due to Physical hazards within the building.
- **Online Risks:** Risk of Children accessing Inappropriate material when using the centre.

Policies and Procedures to ensure Best Practice and Mitigate Potential Risks

When recruiting staff or Volunteers to work at Urlingford Community Centre:

- A clear description of the Role of the staff member or volunteer will be provided together with guidance on their obligations under our Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Child Safeguarding Legislation and National Child Safeguarding Guidelines.
- Reference Checks will be carried out.
- All staff and Volunteers working with children at Urlingford Community Centre will be Garda Vetted prior to being appointed.
- An Induction program will be provided for all staff and Volunteers on our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures.

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Where Staff or Volunteers will be working with Children they will be required to complete Children First E Learning Programme from Tusla in addition to the above. A register of trained personnel will be maintained, and training will be completed every 3 years to ensure that certification is up to date.

In addition to all of the practices and procedures outlined above we will promote an awareness of behaviours by a worker/volunteer that may cause concern and actively encourage the reporting of such actions or behaviours to the DLP.

Behaviours by a worker/volunteer that may cause concern include when a worker:

- Breaches the organisation's code of behaviour (this could be a one-off serious breach, or subtle continuous breaches, even after these have been addressed through supervision).
- Is secretive and evasive about their activities and/or contact with children and young people.
- Creates opportunities to spend significant amounts of time away from other workers/volunteers and with a single child or children/young people on a regular basis, e.g. invites child or young person to their home or is in online contact with a child outside of professional avenues of communication.
- Seeks out vulnerable children and young people.
- Sidesteps one-to-one supervision and management of work.
- Has an unusual amount of physical contact with a child or children.
- Touches a child or children in an inappropriate way.
- Talks to a child or children in an inappropriate way.
- Excludes a particular child or children from activities.
- Disciplines a child or children inappropriately or punishes a child or children harshly.
- Handles children/young people roughly.
- Teases, taunts, insults or makes derogatory remarks about or to a child/young person.
- Restrains a child/young person as a way of punishment.
- Sexually harasses or uses sexual innuendo.
- Humiliates and/or embarrasses children/young people.
- Deprives children/young people of their basic rights.
- Inappropriately uses social media or mobile phones to connect with or share information about children.
- Bullies children/young people.

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Running activities involving Children

As part of our responsibility to keep children and young people safe and reducing the likelihood of harm we will endeavour to ensure that:

- Activities being undertaken are suitable for the abilities, ages and experience levels of all participants.
- Equipment and facilities meet appropriate safety and quality standards and are appropriate to the needs of the participants.
- Activities are risk assessed and appropriate responses to identified risks are planned and implemented.
- Where protective equipment is deemed necessary, it should be used.
- Any injuries should be recorded with a note of the action taken. We will maintain an incident/incident book in which any incidents are recorded by workers/volunteers; these records will be maintained in accordance with GDPR regulations.
- Parents/guardians will be notified by the appropriate person of injuries/illnesses which occur while children/young people are participating in an activity.
- Insurance cover is adequate to the organisation's needs.
- When planning and running activities involving Children we will:
 - Keep a register of children and young people participating in the event including address, family contact numbers and any relevant medical information
 - Have a consent form completed by parents or guardians.
 - Ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place.

Safe Supervision of Children and Young People

We will endeavour to ensure that children/young people are properly supervised when using the centre to avoid incidents or incidents that might cause harm. Requirements for users of the centre who are working with children are clearly stated in our Operational Framework as referred to above.

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Activities will be organised to maximise participation, fun and learning in a way that minimises risk by ensuring that:

- Adequate numbers of workers/volunteers are available to supervise the activities (children under 12, one adult per 8 children plus an additional adult, Children from 13-18, one adult per 10 children plus an additional adult) where participants are both male and female we will ensure that male and female workers/volunteers are present to supervise activities.
- Children and Young people are never left unattended.
- Workers/volunteers always know where children/young people are and what they are doing.
- Online activities are age appropriate and monitored.
- Any activity using potentially dangerous equipment has constant adult supervision.
- Dangerous behaviour is never allowed.

Health and safety responsibilities

Urlingford Community Centre will ensure that:

- Our buildings are safe and meet required standards.
- There is sufficient heating and ventilation.
- Food preparation areas meet food safety requirements.
- Toilets facilities are to standard and meet the accessibility requirements of all users
- Fire precautions are in place.
- First aid facilities and equipment are adequate.
- There is access to a phone.
- Equipment is checked regularly.
- Insurance cover is adequate.

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Online Safety

Where activities at the centre involve Children under the age of 16 access to Wi-Fi will be restricted to the adult leading the group and will be linked to their door access. Please note that while we will endeavour to ensure that Children are supervised at all times when using the Centre, It is not possible to guarantee that inappropriate content will not be accessed using mobile data. It is therefore advisable that Parents and Guardians set up Parental Controls on Smart Phones and Tablets. Similarly it is advisable to set up Parental Controls on Internet Browsers and on Search Engines See: <https://www.webwise.ie/> for guidance.

Persons Renting our premises

When individuals or organisations rent our premises for child centered activities they will be required to adhere to our guiding principles regarding child safety and demonstrate that they are fully compliant with all child safeguarding Legislation and National Guidelines, that they have the requisite insurance in place and adhere to safe supervision ratios.

In all instances where child centred activities are provided by a third party renting our premises, responsibility for child safeguarding passes to that person or organisation and they will be required to ensure that parents and guardians are aware of this and understand the clear distinction between the two services.

A signed agreement will be put in place to reflect all of the above. See Appendix (iii) Tusla Guidance when external Organisations or groups use our facilities.

Supervision of Staff Volunteers and others providing a Service at Urlingford Community Centre

As a small voluntary community group, it needs to be recognised that formal Supervision of all activities as might be implemented by the Human Resources department in a large organisation will not be possible.

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Supervision will therefore be less formal and implemented through members of the management committee and senior volunteers checking in on a regular basis with workers/volunteers, children/young people as well as groups, organisations and individuals providing services in the centre to see how things are going. Where any concerns raised or observed are brought to the attention of the management committee these will be passed on to the DLP as soon as possible.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on best practice in child safeguarding but more importantly to create an awareness of child safeguarding issues and the responsibilities which each of us have to keep every child safe and to create a culture where child safeguarding is written into our DNA, in line with our UTT vision statement to create a sustainable community in Urlingford that is an Attractive Safe, Prosperous, Inclusive, Respectful and Empowering place where we can grow up and grow old.

Appendix (i) List of Mandate persons Under the Children First Act 2015

Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies the following classes of persons as mandated persons for the purposes of the Act:

1. Registered medical practitioner within the meaning of section 2 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007.
2. Registered nurse or registered midwife within the meaning of section 2(1) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011.
3. Physiotherapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
4. Speech and language therapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
5. Occupational therapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
6. Registered dentist within the meaning of section 2 of the Dentists Act 1985.
7. Psychologist who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in the register (if any) of members of that profession.
8. Social care worker who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register of that profession.
9. Social worker who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register (if any) of that profession.

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10. Emergency medical technician, paramedic and advanced paramedic registered with the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council under the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (Establishment) Order 2000 (S.I. No. 109 of 2000).
11. Probation officer within the meaning of section 1 of the Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act 1983.
12. Teacher registered with the Teaching Council.
13. Member of The Garda Síochána.
14. Guardian ad litem appointed in accordance with section 26 of the Child Care Act 1991.
15. Person employed in any of the following capacities:
 - a. manager of a domestic violence shelter.
 - b. manager of homeless provision or emergency accommodation facility.
 - c. manager of asylum seeker accommodation (direct provision) centre.
 - d. addiction counsellor employed by a body funded, wholly or partly, out of monies provided by the Oireachtas.
 - e. psychotherapist or a person providing counselling who is registered with one of the voluntary professional bodies.
 - f. manager of a language school or other recreational school where children reside away from home.
 - g. member of the clergy (howsoever described) or pastoral care worker (howsoever described) of a church or other religious community.
 - h. director of any institution where a child is detained by an order of a court.
 - i. safeguarding officer, child protection officer or other person (howsoever described) who is employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection function of religious, sporting, recreational, cultural, educational and other bodies and organisations offering services to children.
 - j. childcare staff member employed in a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991.
 - k. person responsible for the care or management of a youth work service within the meaning of section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.
16. Youth worker who:
 - a. holds a professional qualification that is recognised by the National Qualifications Authority in youth work within the meaning of section 3 of the Youth Work Act 2001 or a related discipline, and
 - b. is employed in a youth work service within the meaning of section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.

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17. Foster carer registered with Tusla.
18. A person carrying on a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991.

Appendix (ii) Guidelines for talking to parents and guardians

Talking to parents/guardians about child protection or welfare concerns

Workers/volunteers may feel uncomfortable approaching a parent about a concern. The following best practice tips may be useful:

- Make sure parents/guardians have prior awareness of your guiding principles, procedures and duties to safeguard children.
- Be straightforward and clearly explain the nature of the concern or issue, e.g. by using facts and records of observations made.
- Think about the time and place to have the conversation. Find a time when parents/guardians are not in a hurry.
- Find a place that is quiet and allows privacy.
- Consider arranging to meet parents/guardians.
- Consider with the DLP who is best placed to have the conversation with the parents/guardians.
- Use a calm and gentle tone, consider the language used.
- Start with positive comments and observations about the child/young person.
- Ensure that the parents/guardians know that you care about the welfare of their child and recognise their strengths.
- Refer to how the situation may be affecting the child/young person.
- Start with positive comments and observations about the parents/guardians. Most parents/guardians are trying to do their best for their children and will appreciate your acknowledgement of how challenging parenting can be at times.
- Give the parents/ guardians an opportunity to talk; ask them for an explanation and acknowledge their feelings.
- Take the approach that you are working together to address any issues in the best interests of the child/young person.

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- Don't blame, don't get defensive and don't take things personally.
- Ensure that you are supportive but also address the issue.
- Refer to your guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures for support.
- Offer possible solutions, where appropriate.
- Advise parents/guardians how you plan to follow up and keep them informed and involved, where appropriate.

Where it is not possible to contact the parents/guardians to discuss a concern you may need to discuss the concern with the DLP or Tusla duty social worker through the Designated Contact Point.

Remember if a report needs to be made to Tusla, do not delay.

It is best practice that parents/guardians are informed if a report is to be made to Tusla, unless doing so might further endanger the child, impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment or put the reporter at risk of harm .

Appendix(iii) Guidance when external Organisations or groups use our facilities

External organisations using our facilities

This guidance was prepared by Tusla for organisations that allow other groups to use their facilities, such as renting out meeting rooms or community halls.

The advice is based on the assumption that the external group is not providing services in conjunction with your organisation.

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If the external group is using your facilities outside the hours your service operates (for example: your service operates 9am to 6pm and the external group is using your facilities after 6pm) you should ensure, where applicable:

- That the external group has appropriate insurance cover.
- That the group is aware of Children First and has confirmed it has appropriate policies in place.
- That the group has informed parents/guardians of their agreement with your service and that there is a clear distinction between the two services.

If the external group is using your facilities during the hours that your service operates you should ensure, where applicable:

- That you include this factor when carrying out a risk assessment of harm that may occur to children availing of your service if you are a provider of a relevant service under the Children First Act, 2015.
- That you have adequate policies and procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding of children while availing of your service.
- The group is aware of your guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures
- The group has appropriate insurance cover.
- The group is aware of your organisation's principles and values.
- The group is aware of Children First and has confirmed that they have appropriate policies in place.
- There is a signed agreement between the two parties.

If the group is delivering a service to children and families in partnership with your organisation, then it is essential that governance issues are clarified and agreed prior to the service commencing.