



EPA CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Background

The Children First Act 2015 requires organisations that are providers of 'relevant services' to publish a Child Safeguarding Statement (Schedule 1 of the Act provides a list of work or activities that constitute a 'relevant service').

This Statement details the relevant services provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the principles and procedures in place to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of these services is safe from harm.

The Statement will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there has been a material change in any of the services to which it refers.

Relevant Services provided by the EPA:

In preparing this Child Safeguarding Statement, the EPA undertook a review of all services provided to identify those that fall under the definition of a relevant service as defined by the Children First Act 2015.

One service was identified, and a risk assessment was undertaken. This statement details the nature of the service, the principles, and procedures in place to safeguard children from harm while availing of the service and the risk assessment.

The service identified was:

- 1. Transition Year / Young Persons Placement Programme*

Transition Year / Young Persons Placement Programme

The EPA provides a placement programme for Transition Year secondary school students and other young persons on request. This service falls under the relevant service outlined in the Children First Act 2015, Schedule 1, 5(a): *Any work or activity*

which consists of the provision of educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Addendum to Children First (2019) and Tulsa's Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the EPA Board of Directors have agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

The EPA is aware of its responsibilities under the legislation and will adhere to the following principles of best practice.

The EPA will:

- comply with statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children.
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents; and
- provide information and where necessary, instruction and training including Tulsa's *Introduction to Children First* online module, to identified EPA staff members who are supervising young people.

This statement will be published on the EPA's website, and a copy will be made available to all staff members and contractors.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks. In undertaking this risk assessment, the EPA has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that may be relevant and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage those risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1.	Risk of harm to a child from a member of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>EPA Child Safeguarding Procedure, Guidelines and Code of Practice.</i> • Appointment of a Designated Liaison Person (DLP); • Completion of Tusla Training 'Introduction to Children First' for relevant staff. • Supervision/ accompaniment/ admission/ public access policies as relevant.
2.	Risk of harm by a visitor (site workers, contractors, parents, placements, etc.):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision/ accompaniment/ admission/ public access policies as relevant.
3.	Non-compliance with the Children First Act 2015 and Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>EPA Child Safeguarding, Procedure Guidelines and Code of Practice.</i> • Appointment of DLP to advise, ensure compliance and provide appropriate reporting structures within EPA.
4.	Risk of harm or concern not being recognised or reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>EPA Child Safeguarding, Procedure Guidelines and Code of Practice.</i> • Completion of Tusla Training 'Introduction to Children First' for relevant staff.
5.	Risk of harm to a child through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Staff are provided with the EPA's

	<p>use of ICT and social media, and inappropriate use of photography and imagery</p>	<p>Policies and procedures governing Information Security, ICT Acceptable Use, ICT Communications Technology Acceptable Use. In addition, software is in place that automatically blocks access to certain website categories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision/ accompaniment throughout placement.
--	--	---

EPA Procedures to address the risks identified:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.

Staff have been made aware of this Child Safeguarding Statement which is available on our website.

Implementation and Review

The EPA is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement, and accompanying *Procedure, Guidelines and Code of Practice, and other relevant procedures* that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our services.

The EPA has appointed a Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person as the relevant persons under the Children First Act 2015:

- **Designated Liaison Person:** Yvonne Clooney y.clooney@epa.ie
- **Deputy Designated Liaison person:** Elaine Kehoe e.kehoe2@epa.ie

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every two years, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the EPA Board of Directors on 24th March 2026.

Signed: 

Darragh Page, Director