



Gníomhaireacht Bainistíochta an Chisteáin Náisiúnta
National Treasury Management Agency

Human Resources – Staff Procedure

NTMA Child Protection Policy

Security Classification
Document Ref
Version
Status
Document Author
Document Owner

External
HR Staff Policy
1.0
3 March 2020
Senior HR Business Partner
Director HR, OD and L&D

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Introduction | 3 |
| 2. Objective | 3 |
| 3. Scope..... | 3 |
| 4. Policy Details | 5 |
| 5. Relevant Services | 6 |
| 6. Reporting Procedures and Responsibilities | 7 |
| 7. Communication Policy | 7 |
| 8. Parental/Guardian Consent and Legal Protections | 7 |
| Appendix 1: Child Safeguarding Statement (also published separately)..... | 9 |
| Appendix 2 : Designated Liaisons..... | 13 |
| Appendix 3 : Useful Support Numbers | 14 |
| Appendix 4 : Purpose of Engagement Statement (Transition Year Programme) | 15 |

1. Introduction

The National Treasury Management Agency and entities under its aegis (“NTMA”) are fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children with whom we engage as part of NTMA business. This policy on child protection reflects NTMA’s compliance with the requirements of the Children First Act of 2015 as may be amended from time to time (the “Act”) and *the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2017*. The NTMA is committed to promoting the rights of the child including the participation of children in matters that affect them.

This policy will be published on the NTMA’s intranet and internet pages and hard copies will be available on request.

2. Objective

The objective of this policy is to adopt the safest possible practices to minimise the risk of harm, or abuse, to children and to provide a guideline to staff that will ensure the safety of children¹. The NTMA aims to create a safe and healthy environment for children and is committed at all times to safeguarding their welfare as an organisation that, on occasion, invites children onsite.

The objectives of this policy are set out below:

- To foster a commitment to keep children safe from harm² and display a child safeguarding statement.
- To complete a risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child while visiting the NTMA and to use this in conjunction with the child safeguarding statement.
- To appoint relevant persons to be the first points of contact in respect of communicating the NTMA’s child safeguarding statement.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the NTMA. An employee of the NTMA is defined as anyone who has a contract of employment with the NTMA (including without limitation a fixed term or specified purpose contract) regardless of the entity or Business Unit within which they are assigned to work, and regardless of the hours they work.

This policy is also relevant to any person working on NTMA premises including NTMA service providers / contractors.

¹ In accordance with Section 2 of the Act, a child means a person under the age of 18 years, who is not or has not been married.

² “Harm” under the Act means, in relation to a child—

(a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or (b) sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances, or otherwise.

4. Policy Details

4.1 Compliance with the Act

The NTMA has a number of obligations as set down by the Act because it qualifies as the provider of a “relevant service” in respect of a limited number of activities which are incidental to NTMA’s day to day business and occur on an occasional basis for no commercial consideration.

A relevant service under the Act includes any work or activity, which consists of the provision of educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children, whether or not for commercial or any other consideration. Incidental educational activities of the NTMA are limited to, for example, education-based volunteering activities and the onsite work-experience of second-level students. Social activities may include, but are not limited to, events like the children’s Christmas visit or any family visit day/event, where children are occasionally and temporarily permitted onsite.

4.2 Commitment to Child Protection

As the provider of a relevant service on occasion, the NTMA has produced a risk assessment and child safeguarding statement (**Appendix 1**). It has further nominated relevant stakeholders to be the designated liaison in respect of Part 2 of the Act dealing with child safeguarding statements.

4.3 Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

The child safeguarding statement is a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as is practicable, that a child availing of the service is safe from harm.³

The statement will include a written assessment of the risks and specify the procedures in place to address specific issues identified in the Act.⁴

The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify any potential harm that a child could suffer while availing of the occasional relevant services, as explained in Section 5 below, in the NTMA. It should be noted that ‘risk’ in this context is the risk of harm as defined under the Act³, and not a general health and safety risk. The NTMA has used this risk assessment to prepare a child safeguarding statement that outlines how these risks will be managed. A risk assessment is an exercise where the NTMA examines all aspects of its provision of the relevant service from a safeguarding perspective to establish whether there are any practices or features that have the potential to put children at risk. The child safeguarding statement will be reviewed every two years and more frequently in response to changes in legislation or national guidance. It will be displayed on the NTMA intranet and publicly on the external website. It will further be made available to all parents and guardians, Tusla, and members of the public upon request.

³ Section 11(1) of the Act sets down the requirement for this written statement.

⁴ Section 11(3) of the Act sets down the requirement that the NTMA includes a written assessment of the risks of any potential for harm to a child while availing of the relevant service and specify the procedures that are in place to deal with issues as specified in Section 11(3) (a) to (g) in the Act.

4.4 Designated Liaisons

The designated liaison person and their deputies (“designated liaisons”) are the staff appointed by the NTMA to be the first point of contact in respect of the child safeguarding statement. They are responsible for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure is followed when reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse. The designated liaisons should record all reasonable concerns or allegations of abuse brought to their attention, and the actions taken in response to a concern or allegation of child abuse.

Please see **Appendix two** for a list of the designated liaisons. They will act as a liaison with outside agencies and as a resource person to any staff member who has child protection concerns. The designated liaison is responsible for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure (see **Section 6**) is followed when reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla).

In respect of child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm, designated liaisons have completed Tusla’s eLearning programme on the *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* and the Act. Second-level programme mentors have received a briefing from a designated liaison in advance of involvement in work experience programmes which will cover the NTMA Policy and Procedures and key points from Tusla’s e-learning programme. Periodic reminders in relation to the NTMA Policy and Procedures will be issued to staff and contractors both via email and an online communication tool.

5. Relevant Services

The NTMA does not provide services directly to children as part of its day to day business but may temporarily permit children on-site for occasional short-term social or educational activities which include, but are not limited to, the Transition Year Programme, Children’s Christmas visit or any family visit day where children are occasionally and temporarily permitted onsite. The NTMA is also involved in corporate social responsibility (“CSR”) activities that may bring staff into contact with children, in a limited capacity. This may involve, but is not limited to, activities that occur in education-based or volunteering settings supported by the NTMA. Members of Staff who agree to participate may be Garda vetted by the host organisation where they are volunteering, if required. When there is a scheduled CSR activity involving interaction between staff and children, the CSR co-ordinator will first contact the host organisation to ensure that they have their own child safeguarding statement and, further, that the NTMA volunteers are thus guided by the organisation’s child safeguarding policies, procedures, and the direction of the relevant organisation’s designated liaison personnel.

The NTMA supports the development of children and young people and may occasionally facilitate the placement of second-level students for short unpaid periods of work experience. These second-level students are usually under 18 years of age.

In the context of occasionally attending NTMA’s premises, children will not be left alone on-site and will be supervised at all times. On the occasion of social activities such as the Children’s Christmas visit or any family visit day, responsibility for the care and supervision of the children rests with the accompanying parent or guardian at all times.

6. Reporting Procedures and Responsibilities

The reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse is outlined in the following steps:

- Any staff member who has received a disclosure of child abuse, or who has reasonable concerns of abuse, should bring it to the attention of the designated liaison person or, in their absence, their deputies immediately. The NTMA Director of Human Resources, Organisational Development and Learning should also be informed of the situation.
- The designated liaison will assess and review the information that has been provided. The designated liaison may contact Tusla on a no-name basis for informal advice relating to the allegation, concern or disclosure.
- After consulting with Tusla, the designated liaison will then take one of two actions:
 - Report the allegation, concern or disclosure to Tusla. The designated liaison will always inform Tusla if reasonable grounds for concern exist, or;
 - Not make a formal report to Tusla, but keep a record of the concerns on file. Any actions taken because of a concern should be recorded. The reasons for not reporting the allegation, concern or disclosure will also be clearly recorded.
- The staff member who made the initial report will be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla. It is then open to them to make a formal report, directly to the relevant authority, if they feel this is necessary.

A report to Tusla can be made in person, by telephone, in writing, or by email. Contact numbers for all Tusla offices are contained in **Appendix 3** and are available on their website www.tusla.ie. In an emergency, where Tusla is not available, and there is a concern for the safety of a child, then a report should be made directly to An Garda Síochána. In making a report on suspected or actual child abuse, the individual must ensure that the first priority is always for the safety and welfare of the child. Parents/legal guardians of the child will be informed of the allegation, concern or disclosure unless doing so is likely to endanger the child. All records relating to any incident relating to this policy will be retained in a secure place. The designated liaison will have access to relevant records when required. The retention of records will be in accordance with standard HR practice and the NTMA's Data Protection Policy.

7. Communication Policy

Direct communication between NTMA staff and unrelated school children attending programmes or events in the NTMA is not permitted outside of the planned programme. All communication regarding school programmes will be made via the designated adult point of contact within the school.

8. Parental/Guardian Consent and Legal Protections

8.1 Parental/Guardian Consent

A Purpose of Engagement Statement (see **Appendix 4**) must be signed by a parent/guardian in advance of any second-level work placement in which they grant permission for their child to

participate in the agreed activity and sets out requirements regarding advising any absences from second-level programmes.

8.2 Legal Protections

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 makes provisions for certain protections from civil liability of persons who have formed their opinion and communicated child abuse concerns 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) or to any member of An Garda Síochána⁵. These protections apply to organisations as well as to individuals. This Act also extends certain protections to employees whereby employers may not penalise employees for forming opinions and communicating concerns 'reasonably and in good faith' also⁶.

Any abuse allegation must be dealt with sensitively, and support and, if necessary, counselling may be provided. While the primary goal must be to protect the child, care must be taken to ensure that the staff member is treated fairly. It is critical that a proportionate response is taken to each case that arises specifically because of the nature and type of abuse that could be the subject of the allegation.

⁵ Section 3 of Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998.

⁶ Section 4 of Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998.

Appendix 1: Child Safeguarding Statement (also published separately)

1. Introduction

This Child Safeguarding Statement is prepared in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2017* and sets out the procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as possible, that a child interacting with the National Treasury Management Agency (the “**NTMA**”) is safe from harm.

This Child Safeguarding Statement applies to all employees and contractors of the NTMA (irrespective of the business unit to which they are assigned) and includes all agencies and entities which are under the aegis of the NTMA.

2. Relevant Services Provided

The NTMA does not provide services directly to children as part of its day to day business but may temporally permit children on-site for social and educational activities which include, but are not limited to, the Children’s Christmas visit or any family visit day. The NTMA is also involved in corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities that may bring staff into contact with children, in a limited capacity. This may involve, but is not limited to, activities that occur in education-based or volunteering settings supported by the NTMA.

The NTMA supports the development of children and young people and may occasionally facilitate the placement of second-level students for short unpaid periods of work experience. These second-level students are usually under 18 years of age.

3. Relevant Person

The NTMA has appointed as relevant persons for the purposes of the Children First Act a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy Designated Liaison Persons (Deputy DLPs) in keeping with best practice in child safeguarding. They are the resource persons for any child protection concerns within the NTMA. They are responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures within the organisation are followed. They will act as a point of contact for reporting child protection concerns and will liaise with outside agencies, as required.

1. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Siobhan Keeling, Head of HR NTMA
Contact details: Phone: 01 238 4206 email: Siobhan.Keeling@ntma.ie
2. Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Geraldine Gillick,
HR Business Partner NTMA
Contact details: Phone: 01 238 4930: email: Geraldine.Gillick@ntma.ie
3. Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Angela Gallagher,
Senior HR Business Partner NTMA
Contact details: Phone: 01 238 4511: email: Angela.Gallagher@ntma.ie

4. Risk Assessment

| | Risk Identified | Procedure in place to manage risk |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Risk of harm to children from a member of staff | | |
| 1.1 | Child safety is not understood by staff. | The NTMA's Child Protection Policy and Procedures are available on the intranet with a periodic reminder to staff and contractors. In addition the following are in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Safeguarding Statement (copies of which are provided to all staff) • Code of Conduct for NTMA Employees • Code of Conduct for Officers of NAMA • NTMA Complaints Procedures • NTMA Dignity and Respect policy • Disciplinary Procedure |
| 1.2 | Designated liaisons are not appropriately assigned or may not recognise abuse or may not report a concern. | Designated Liaisons have completed Tusla's e-learning programme on the Children First Act 2015 and the <i>Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017</i> . |
| 1.3 | Work experience programme mentors/hosts/participants may not understand the requirements of the Act or report a concern. | Second-level programme mentors/hosts/participants have been briefed by a designated liaison in advance of joining the programme which covers the NTMA Policy and Procedure and key points from Tusla's e-learning programme. |
| 1.4 | Children may be alone while in the NTMA. | Children will be supervised at all times. Children will generally be located in open working areas unless attending a classroom style event. They will not be permitted to attend one to one meetings in meeting rooms or to visit levels -1 or -2, other than the restaurant, unless part of a group supervised by an adult staff member. Children of staff attending NTMA social events should be supervised by their parents/guardians at all times. |
| 1.5 | Risk of direct communication between NTMA staff and unrelated school children outside of programme attendance | Under the policy, direct communication between NTMA staff and unrelated school children attending programmes or events in the NTMA is not permitted outside of the planned programme. All communication regarding school programmes will be made via the designated adult point of contact within the school. |
| 2. Risk of absence of parental consent | | |
| 2.1 | No parental consent for child to be onsite for second level work placements. | Purpose of engagement form signed before placement. |
| 2.2 | Children may not arrive for the programme on a particular day or | Programme absences must be advised by the parent or guardian to the school and to NTMA (and |

| | | | |
|---|-----|--|--|
| | | request to leave early without parental consent | this is stated clearly on the parental/guardian consent form). |
| 3. Risk of harm to a child from a service user (adult or child), visitor or member of the public | | | |
| | 3.1 | Risk of harm to a child from a service user (adult or child), visitor or member of the public while on –site at NTMA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children supervised at all times while onsite • Receiving visitors procedure for all NTMA Agencies • Security Card Access System |
| | 3.2 | Children may not be adequately supervised during second-level programme excursions | Children will be supervised at all times. Minimum ratio of one adult per 10 children on excursions. |
| | 3.3 | During off-site volunteering activities, children may be left alone with Staff. | Off-site volunteering activities never occur on a one-to-one basis with a child and host organisation. Staff are Garda vetted (if required, by the host organisation) in advance of participation. Staff are further guided by the host organisations' child safeguarding statement. |
| 4. Risk of non-compliance with Children First Act 2015 and National Guidance | | | |
| | 4.1 | Risk of non-compliance with Children First Act 2015 and National Guidance | Governance Structures in place to support the implementation of Child Safeguarding Statement and associated documentation with mandatory periodic review. Training and awareness activities are described under 1 above. |
| | 4.2 | Children may not have the means to report abuse. | Children will be briefed on arrival in NTMA regarding designated liaisons and their location and contact details; they will also have access to phones and a designated contact for the duration of their placement. |

5. Procedures

In addition to the procedures outlined in the risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children availing of an NTMA relevant service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against NTMA staff by a child availing of our educational services – see Section 6 of the Child Protection Policy
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person - see Section 4.4 of the Child Protection Policy
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm - see Section 4.4 of the Child Protection Policy
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla (see Section 6 of the Child Protection Policy).

6. Employees under the age of 18 years

NTMA is committed to safeguarding all those under 18 years old working or training, in line with Children First legislation and best practice.

7. Implementation

The NTMA recognises that implementation is an ongoing process and is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures contained therein.

This Child Safeguarding Statement must, under Section 11(7) of the Children First Act 2015, be reviewed no later than 2 years from the date of publication. This document will be reviewed by 3 March 2022 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

For queries, please contact Siobhan Keeling, Head of HR NTMA at Siobhan.Keeling@ntma.ie.

Appendix 2 : Designated Liaisons

Designated Liaison Person

Siobhan Keeling,
Head of HR NTMA
Siobhan.Keeling@ntma.ie
+3531 238 4206

Deputy Designated Liaison Persons

Geraldine Gillick,
HR Business Partner
Geraldine.Gillick@ntma.ie
+353 1 238 4930

Angela Gallagher,
Senior HR Business Partner
Angela.Gallagher@ntma.ie
+353 1 238 4511

Appendix 3 : Useful Support Numbers

- ❖ Child and Family Agency (Tusla) : 01 771 8500
- ❖ Childline : 1800 666 666
- ❖ Parentline (support for parents/guardians under stress) : 1890 927 277
- ❖ Adult Counselling Services Free phone : 1800 23 4114
- ❖ Store Street Garda Station : 01 666 8000

Appendix 4 : Purpose of Engagement Statement (Transition Year Programme)

This document must be signed by a parent /guardian and is for the purpose of granting permission for their child to participate in the NTMA Transition Year work Experience Programme.

Your signature confirms:

- your acceptance and understanding of NTMA Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
- that any absence from attending the programme, including early departures, must be notified to the school and to NTMA (by phone or text to 087 295 4052) before 9am on the relevant day of absence; and
- that the participant and parent/guardian have read and understood the attached NTMA TY Programme Welcome Pack.

Name of child (capitals):

Age of child:

School:

Name of Parent / Guardian (capitals):

Programme Title: Transition Year Work Experience Programme [9-13 March 2020 inclusive]

Location: NTMA, Treasury Dock, North Wall Quay, Dublin 1 with short excursions to city centre sites

Date:

Signature of Parent/Guardian: