


## Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

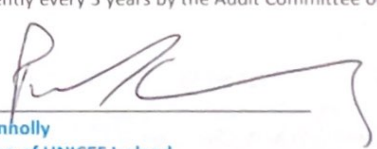
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Origination	Nikita White	2014
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### Version Control

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Date	Reviewed by	Action Taken	Initials	Next date for review
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June 21	Safeguarding Committee	Review and update of Policy	VP	2022
Sept 22	Safeguarding Committee	Review and update of Policy	VP	2024

This document has been approved by the Board of Directors by way of formal resolution on 22 September 2022. It will be reviewed after 1 year initially and then subsequently every 3 years by the Audit Committee or when changes in legislation occur.

Signed:   
**Peter Power**  
 Executive Director of UNICEF Ireland

Signed:   
**Paul Connolly**  
 Chairman of UNICEF Ireland

Date:

22/9/2022

Date:

22/9/2022

## Safeguarding Children and Young People.

The aim and purpose of this Policy is to ensure children, young people, families and staff are kept safe and protected from harm. To do this we are committed to:

- Ensuring the best interests and safety of children is the paramount consideration in all our actions.
- Providing the principles, procedures and clear guidance, to implement good safeguarding practices, to UNICEF Ireland board members, staff, interns, volunteers and third parties.
- Ensuring everyone is aware of their responsibilities and know what to do when concerns arise about children.

### 1. UNICEF's Work with Children:

UNICEF is the world's leading organisation for children in over 190 countries. UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.

UNICEF Ireland works in our national context to uphold these rights for every child. Our direct work with children is through our Child Rights Education and Youth Engagement programmes. These programmes provide children and young people with opportunities to learn about their world, gain skills to advocate for themselves and platforms to be listened to by government, decision-makers and the wider community.

### 2. UNICEF Ireland is guided by:

UNICEF Ireland is guided by the *United Nation's [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)*, the most relevant statements for guidance on this policy include:

- **Article 2:** Children have the right to protection without any form of discrimination.
- **Article 3:** Adults should always do what is best for a child
- **Article 12:** Children have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously.
- **Article 16:** Children have a right to privacy
- **Article 19:** Children have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated.

UNICEF Ireland is committed to adhering to the highest standards of behaviour when working with children in accordance with the [Children First Act 2015](#), [The Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017](#) and the Tusla Children First–Child Safeguarding Guide 2017. All have been used to inform this policy.

### 3. UNICEF Ireland adheres to the following principles:

- 3.1 Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- 3.2 In most circumstances, children are less powerful than adults and this makes them inherently more vulnerable. Therefore, it is the responsibility and duty of adults to protect children from harm and respond in situations where children are at risk.
- 3.3 Safety concerns will be dealt with in a robust and transparent process ensuring information is managed confidentially and only shared without consent where the duty to protect the child/young person supersedes and individual's right to privacy.
- 3.4 Anyone working on behalf of UNICEF Ireland will be subject to safeguarding checks and Garda vetting when eligible, will undergo safeguarding training appropriate to their role and responsibilities and will conduct themselves in line with our Code of Conduct.

### 4. Risk Assessment

- 4.1 UNICEF Ireland's **direct** contact with children and young people mainly occurs through our Advocacy and Child Rights Education programme. Direct contact with children also occurs during events run by the Communications and Fundraising Departments.

UNICEF Ireland's **indirect** work with children includes processing their data, sharing their stories, images and content and contact via third parties

The [Child Safeguarding Toolkit](#) identifies procedures to follow to mitigate risks that may present in the following identified scenarios:

- Where children attend events, workshops or activities hosted by UNICEF Ireland or attended by representatives of UNICEF Ireland.
- Where children travel with UNICEF Ireland to participate at events, conferences, activities.
- Where children are working in the offices of UNICEF Ireland (as volunteers, transition year students or interns) or children are present in the offices for other reasons such as visitors or children of staff members.
- Where representatives of UNICEF Ireland (both direct or indirect through third party contact) come in to contact with children.
- Where children are in direct or indirect communication with representatives of UNICEF Ireland
- Where children's stories and images are used by representatives of UNICEF Ireland
- Where children's data is used

4.2 Child/young person safeguarding risk management processes involve:

- Mitigating the risk (i.e. developing strategies to minimize or address the risk, reducing the likelihood of harm and abuse from occurring).
- Clearly assigning responsibilities in the mitigation strategy.
- Regularly reviewing risks and mitigation strategies, especially when conditions/contexts change.

5. UNICEF Ireland will keep children safe by:

- 5.1 Appointing two Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) for child safeguarding together with a board director who will be a "*champion*" for child safeguarding at board level.
- 5.2 Appointing a Child Safeguarding Executive Team comprised of the Executive Director (ED), two members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) to ensure effective implementation and review of this policy.
- 5.3 Appointing a Child Safeguarding Committee comprised of the 2 DLPs, 1 member of the Executive Child Safeguarding Team, 1 UNICEF PFP Focal Point to ensure responsibility for safeguarding decisions are jointly shared and to provide effective management and information for staff, volunteers and activists through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures.
- 5.4 Adopting child protection and safeguarding strategy, procedures and a code of conduct for adults.
- 5.5 Following legislative requirements and our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with Tusla, An Garda Síochána and other agencies as appropriate and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- 5.6 Providing guidance for staff, volunteers and third parties on how to engage with children in a safe way.
- 5.7 Recording and storing information professionally and securely.
- 5.8 Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers.
- 5.9 Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff, volunteers and third parties appropriately.
- 5.10 Ensuring safeguarding decisions are made in a timely manner.
- 5.11 Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.

- 5.12 Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children, young people, staff and volunteers, by carrying out appropriate risk assessments and applying our procedures along with health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- 5.13 Ensuring all our staff, volunteers and board members conduct themselves/ourselves in a manner that respects the dignity, pride and identity of children or young people as outlined in the code of conduct for adults.
- 5.14 Ensuring that all staff, and volunteers are aware of this policy and the procedures through which they may raise concerns and express their concerns about the welfare of children/young people.
- 5.15 Ensuring all staff, volunteers, board members are subjected to safer recruitment procedures and relevant Garda vetting checks.
- 5.16 Co-operating where possible with other agencies to ensure that the safety and welfare of the children/young people comes first.
- 5.17 Requiring individuals whose role within the organisation does not normally have direct contact with children, shall not contact a child on behalf of the organisation without first consulting with the DLP.
- 5.18 Ensuring that all organisations who work with UNICEF Ireland and are in direct or indirect contact with children have a safeguarding policy that meets legislative requirements and is fit for purpose. Failing this, the organisation undertakes to follow to UNICEF's Policy and Procedures, disclosure and confidentiality.
- 5.19 5.19 If a child/young person comes to any UNICEF Ireland staff, activist, volunteer or board member with an abuse disclosure/or there is any suspicion that abuse has or may take place: the individual should take immediate action in accordance with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and will work in cooperation with the statutory authorities including the Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána.
- 5.20 5.20 As far as possible, confidentiality is crucial - but the welfare of any child/young person is paramount. The law requires you within limits, to disclose the information to the appropriate body whether it is the management, social services or the police.

## 6. Procedures

- 6.1 The latest procedural guidance on the application of this policy is contained in the UNICEF Ireland Safeguarding Toolkit. Please refer to the appropriate document listed below in carrying out your obligations as stated under this policy. This toolkit will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Safeguarding Committee.

- [Code of Conduct for Children and Young People](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Adults](#)
- [Procedures and Guidelines for Child Images, Content and Communication](#)
  - [Corporate Partner image use](#)
  - [Media Engagement and Interactions](#)
  - [Managing Public Facing Comms Channels](#)
  - [Multimedia – Photo and Video](#)
  - [Websites, Social Media Digital Applications](#)
- [Procedures and Guidelines for Child Participation](#)
- [Procedures and Guidelines for Chaperones](#)
- [Procedures and Guidelines for Field Visits](#)
- [Procedures and Guidelines for Recruitment](#)
- [Procedures and Guidelines for Reporting](#)
- [Risk Assessment Template](#)

## 7. Implementation

- 7.1 UNICEF Ireland is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed by the Audit Committee every two years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

## 8. Definitions

- 8.1 In this document the term **Child Safeguarding** pertains to all actions that we take to keep children/young people we come in to contact with safe from harm, while the term **Child Protection** relates to the response and support mechanisms that are in place, should an allegation and/or incident of abuse or harm arise. A **child** is defined as anyone under the age of 18
- 8.2 **Child abuse** can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse.
- Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and/or medical care.
  - Emotional abuse occurs when a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.
  - Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust.
  - Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.