



June 2020

Procedures for sharing your guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures and involving parents, guardians, families, children and young people

'Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children states that it is everyone's business to protect children and young people and that we all need to do our best to keep them safe. It is important that families, communities and professionals can recognise when a child or young person is being harmed and that they know what action to take in response.'

Partnership with parents/guardians and families involves information sharing and consultation regarding all aspects of their child's participation in your service. Meaningful communication is essential in building a partnership with parents/guardians and families.

Good communication depends not only on how information is shared but what is being shared. Organisations can support children's and young people's rights by ensuring that children and their parents/guardians are kept informed of matters that concern them.

Parents/guardians should be made aware of your guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures on initial contact with your service. You should consider including your declaration of guiding principles in literature about your service and activities that you give to families (e.g. handbook for parents/guardians).

When communicating with parents/guardians, families, children and young people you should be mindful of possible literacy issues, language barriers and communication differences.

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Actions that evidence and promote best practice in Early Learning and Care Settings:

Action	Evidence
All parents/guardians have access to a copy of the guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures, including reporting procedures both within the organisation and to Tusla	Yes/No
Children and young people are empowered to understand their right to be protected, consulted, listened to and treated with respect appropriate to their age and developmental stage	Yes/No
Relevant and appropriate information is communicated to parents/guardians and children/young people to enhance working in partnership	Yes/No
Children and young people know how to raise concerns if they are unhappy or feel unsafe	Yes/No
Children, young people, parents and guardians know how to make a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the service being provided	Yes/No



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Best practice in working in partnership and communicating involves:

- Providing visual information on who works in your organisation e.g. a photograph of each worker/volunteer
- Having something that is clearly visible for parents/guardians that signposts information on safeguarding children/young people. Your statement of guiding principles and /or your Child Safeguarding Statement should be displayed
- Providing information about online safety and your procedures for ensuring children and young people are protected from online abuse while availing of your service
- Talking to parents/guardians informally on a regular basis
- Providing information in a format and language that can be easily understood by everyone, including children/young people, e.g. a leaflet with the main points of your declaration of guiding principles outlined in brief, newsletters, parents/guardian's handbook, etc. These should be translated to other languages where appropriate
- Having an open door policy, which allows parents/guardians to visit the service at any time
- Regularly providing information and feedback to parents/guardians verbally as well as in writing

Further Information and Supports are available:

Children First National Guidance 2017

https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf

Child Safeguarding; A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice

https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla_-_Child_Safeguarding_-_A_Guide_for_Policy_Procedure_and_Practice.pdf

Tusla Website; Children First

<https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/>