

# CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

## **BORRISOKANE GPs AT PRIMARY CARE CENTRE, BORRISOKANE**

This is a General Medical practice providing primary care to the local community.

We have daily contact with children necessitating physical examinations. We in the practice are committed to safeguarding children as a core part of our work. Children will be given the same respect as all other patients but their physical safety is primarily the responsibility of the parent/guardian while on the premises.

### **What is the objective of this policy?**

To keep children safe while attending the GP surgery at Primary Care Centre, Borrisokane.

### **What is children First?**

It promotes the protection and welfare of children and outlines how to protect them from harm or abuse.

### **Risk assessment (specific to minors):**

#### **Risk identified:**

1. Unaccompanied minors attending doctor or nurse.
2. Unaccompanied children in waiting room.

#### **Procedure to manage risk:**

All people under 15 years of age need to be accompanied by parent, guardian, or other adult verbally designated to us by the parent/guardian. People aged 15-18 are encouraged to have parental consent/knowledge of their visit here.

Where possible children should accompany their parent to the doctor/nurses room but, if this is impractical, eg, due to lack of space or privacy, then another family member should be present, if possible, in the waiting room. The reception staff cannot be responsible for unaccompanied children.

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| 3. Physical risk in the waiting or clinical room.            | A risk assessment has been carried out and hazards identified and minimised as far as possible but, again, the parent/guardian is primarily responsible for maintaining the child's safety on the premises.  |
| 4. Unaccompanied physical examination of minors.             | Physical examination of minors will only take place with parent or guardian present and aware of reason for examination.   |
| 5. Other risks as brought to our attention by the public.    | We will endeavour to assess and manage any other risks as far as possible.   |
| 6. Risk of harm to a child from a member of staff.           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Pre-employment check in place for new employees and Garda Vetting.</li> <li>ii) Professional standards for healthcare staff.</li> <li>iii) Professional registration for healthcare professionals.</li> <li>iv) Code of Behaviour for staff.</li> <li>v) Staff information, supervision and training.</li> </ul> |
| 7. Risk of harm or concern not being recognised or reported. | Review of child protection every 2 years.  |

**Procedure for reporting Child Protection or Welfare Concerns:**

Please refer to <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/mandated-persons/making-a-mandated-report/>

1. The employee who has received a disclosure of child abuse or who has concerns about a child should bring them to the attention of the GP. The GP will be responsible for ensuring that the child protection guidelines are appropriately implemented.
2. In making a report on suspected or actual child abuse the GP must ensure that priority is always for the safety and welfare of the child/ young person.



**Procedure to appoint a relevant person to oversee the assessment of risk and development of service specific Child Safeguarding Statement as required.**

**Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children:**

- A minimum of two references (one from the most recent employer) will be taken up followed by a telephone reference check.
- Garda Vetting will be undertaken for all staff at the Surgery, Borrisokane.
- All employees will sign the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The GP Surgery, Borrisokane will not knowingly employ, contract or involve as a volunteer, any person to work with children/ young adults who has a criminal conviction for offences deemed inappropriate in relation to work with children.

**An Introduction to Children First mandatory e-learning training:**

All staff employed will participate in appropriate Child Protection training at specified intervals. This is currently available at: <https://childrenfirst.hseland.ie/>

**Policy to investigate allegations made against a staff member:**

The practice policy is to adhere to *Tusla's National Policy and Procedure for Responding to Allegations of Abuse and Neglect* which will be implemented in the case of an allegation made against staff member.

Upon receipt of an allegation relating to a staff member the GP Partners, (also known as the 'Designated Liaison People'), will immediately be made aware. If the allegation relates to one of the GP Partners, all GP Partners will immediately be made aware.

If an allegation is made against an employee or a GP Partner there are two different procedures to follow:

1. The reporting procedure in respect of the child.
  - a) The safety of the child is the first priority and all necessary measures will be taken to ensure that the child and other children/young people are safe.
  - b). The GP Partners will deal with the procedure involving the child/young person and the reporting to Tusla, child and family agency.
2. The procedure for dealing with the employees.
  - a) In making an immediate decision about the employee's presence in the organisation the GP Partners should, as a matter of urgency, take any

measures necessary to protect the child/young person. These should be proportionate to the level of risk to them. 'Protective Measures' do not presume guilt.

- b) The GP Partners should privately inform the employee that an allegation has been made against them and the nature of the allegation.
- c) If a formal report is being made, the GP Partners will notify the employee that an allegation has been made and the nature of the allegation. The employee has a right to respond and this response should be documented and retained. Furthermore, they will be considered innocent until proven guilty.
- d) While Tusla will not provide advice on employment matters, advice and consultation with regard to risk to children/young people can be sought from the local Tusla social work office. The GP Partners can also seek the support of their external HR company.
- e) The GP Partners will liaise closely with the HSE Children and Family Services/ An Garda Siochana to ensure that the actions taken by the doctors will not undermine or frustrate any investigations.
- f) The protective measures which can be taken to ensure the safety and young people can include the following:
  - Suspension of duties of the person accused.
  - Re-assignment of duties where the accused will not have contact with children/ young people.
  - Working under increased supervision during the period of the investigation.
  - Other measures as deemed appropriate.

#### **List of Mandated Persons:**

Mandated persons are people who have contact with children and/or families who, by virtue of their qualifications, training and experience, are in a key position to help protect children from harm.

As at November 2023 the Mandated persons at Borrisokane Surgery are:

Dr. Rory Glynn

Dr. Paul Scully

Practice Nurse Maria Dunne

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



In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service (private discussion with complainant and referral onwards to Tusla).
- Procedure for safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children (all relevant staff have been garda vetted).
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including identification of the occurrence of harm (all relevant staff have completed Children First training).
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla (referral by phone and in writing as necessary).
- Procedure for maintaining a list of persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons (the GPs and the practice nurse).
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

**Implementation:**

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our services. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on, or as soon as practicable, after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers, otherwise this statement will be reviewed every two years.

Signed:

Dr. Rory Glynn..... 

Dr. Paul Sculley..... 

Nurse Maria Dunne..... 

Dated: 30th November 2023.