



# CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT COMPLIANCE UNIT

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT SECTOR COMPLIANCE REVIEW: YOUTH SERVICES

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## Executive Summary

The Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit (CSSCU) is the dedicated Unit within Tusla set up to ensure that all providers' Child Safeguarding Statements (CSS) are compliant with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015. The unit was established in March 2018 to provide both compliance support and enforcement. The CSSCU is responsible for the enforcement of section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and maintaining the Public Register of Non-Compliance.

The Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit works on a supportive compliance basis. Referrals are received through voluntary submissions by providers, unsolicited information, sector compliance reviews and referrals by colleagues within Tusla. Where a service is found to be non-compliant with the requirement to have a compliant Child Safeguarding Statement, Tusla engages with the organisation, highlights areas requiring development in the statement, and affords them the opportunity to comply with requirements. Only when this avenue has been exhausted does the agency move to listing an organisation on the register of non-compliance (the final stage of enforcement).

Under Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015, Tusla's statutory role is to ensure that each organisation who is required to do so, prepares a written statement (referred to as a "child safeguarding statement") specifying the service being provided and the child safeguarding principles and procedures to be observed to ensure as far as practicable, that a child, while availing of the services, is safe from harm.

The Child Safeguarding Statement is underpinned by the implementation of the required safeguarding policies, procedures, and practice that may be referenced in the statement. The CSSCU does not have oversight of the policies and procedures, but it is expected that they would be in line with the Children First Guidelines 2017 and implemented consistently by the Relevant Service.

This report outlines the process of engagement with relevant services to children and youth in the youth sector, the methodology utilised in a CSS Sector Compliance Review, an overview and analysis of findings in relation to CSS compliance and recommendations to enhance Child Safeguarding Statement compliance within the sector. The information and findings contribute to an improved understanding of CSS compliance within the youth sector. The recommendations emerging from the sector compliance review aim to support relevant services in developing and reviewing Child Safeguarding Statements.

Overall, the compliance review received positive engagement from relevant services who volunteered to engage with the project. The standard of Child Safeguarding Statements submitted by providers of youth services were generally acceptable, but amendments were required in the majority. Much of the feedback provided to the services in respect of required improvements related to the services needing to provide more specific details in relation to the service provided or to expand on the information provided in the CSS. This is to ensure that the risk assessment is adequate to meet the service being provided.

There are 7 recommendations.

#### **For the Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit**

1.	Share learning from the CSS sector compliance review with youth services through a sector briefing and circulation of report published to the Tusla website.
2.	Liaise with the National Youth Council of Ireland in the update of guidance documentation for the youth sector in relation to CSS compliance.
3.	Support youth services on the use of corporate or template Child Safeguarding Statements to ensure that they are accessible and adapted to local contexts.

#### **For Youth Services**

4.	Relevant persons in organisations to share learning from the sector compliance review within services and consider findings and recommendations when reviewing Child Safeguarding Statements as is required.
5.	Services to consider the strengths of statements that are service specific; provide the required information; and are presented clearly and concisely when developing or reviewing CSSs.
6.	Services to consider the commonly occurring areas of CSS noncompliance as outlined in the findings and analysis sections when developing or reviewing a CSS for a relevant service. Particular attention is advised in relation to developing the risk assessment, providing details for relevant persons and service contacts, and specifying dates for CSS commencement.
7.	Services to liaise with information, advice, and training support services to strengthen the implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures specified in the Child Safeguarding Statement if required. E.g., NYCI Child Protection Team or Tusla's Children First Information and Advice Service.

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) and Tusla's Children First Information and Advice Service (CFIAS) for their support in this project.

## 1.0 Introduction

The CSSCU prioritises supporting Child Safeguarding Statement compliance by working in partnership with providers of relevant services and sectors to ensure these groups are meeting their obligations to have CSSs in place. As part of this compliance support, the CSSCU voluntarily engaged with 38 Youth services in conjunction with the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) in 2023.

Youth services are relevant services under Schedule 1, section 5 of the Children First Act, 2015 which refers to any work or activity which consists of the provision of—

- a) educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children,
- b) care or supervision of children, or
- c) formal consultation with, or formal participation by, a child in respect of matters that affect his or her life.

The purpose of the engagement was to conduct a sectoral review of services to ensure that they had compliant Child Safeguarding Statements in place.

This report outlines the process of engagement with services, methodology utilised in the sector compliance review, an overview and analysis of findings in relation to CSS compliance and recommendations to enhance CSS compliance within the sector. The report is intended to contribute to an improved understanding of Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) compliance within the Youth sector.

## 2.0 Context

A key strategic objective of the Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit is to advance children's safety, development, and wellbeing by strengthening partnerships with providers of relevant services (as defined under schedule 1, Children First Act 2015).

Youth work, as defined in the Youth Work Act 2001 is a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young people through their voluntary involvement, and which is complementary to their formal, academic, or vocational education and training and provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations. It can particularly affect the lives of young people who are vulnerable and disadvantaged or are most challenged by school. Youth work is often defined as 'non-formal education' that is provided primarily by voluntary organisations, with statutory support from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Education and Training Boards.

The National Youth Council of Ireland is a membership-led umbrella organisation that represents and supports the interests of voluntary youth organisations. In 2022, the CSSCU collaborated with the National Youth Council of Ireland and Tusla's Children First Information and Advice Service to conduct a pilot sector compliance review with NYCI members to promote and support the youth sector in the review of Child Safeguarding Statements, Policies and Procedures in line with requirements of the Children First Act, 2015 and the Children First National Guidance, 2017.

Six youth services voluntarily participated in the pilot compliance review in 2022. The findings of that review informed a briefing to the sector and prompted further collaboration with NYCI

in relation to CSS compliance support. This resulted in an invitation to the wider Youth sector to engage in this sector compliance review in March 2023.

The sector is diverse, and services can range in size from small local youth clubs to large national organisations. However, all services tend to fit the criteria of relevant services based on the activities listed in section 5 of Schedule 1 of the Children First Act, 2015. A provider of a relevant service is any organisation where more than one person works with children or young people in a voluntary or paid capacity to deliver the service or activities. Key responsibilities of providers of relevant services are to keep children safe from harm; to assess risks of harm; to develop Child Safeguarding Statements; to have procedures in place to manage risks and to appoint a relevant person for the purpose of the CSS. All providers of relevant services are required to have a Child Safeguarding Statement in place.

Harm as defined in the Children First Act 2015, 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'.

### **3.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this sectoral compliance review of Child Safeguarding Statements is to provide information, key learning, and support to the sector in relation to CSS compliance with requirements of Section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015.

This report is published on the TUSLA website and provides generalised information to parents, children, young people, and service users in respect of the overall CSS compliance level within a sector. This aims to contribute to a greater level of confidence by interested parties in the safety of services children are using.

### **4.0 Methodology**

This report is based on data generated from Child Safeguarding Statements voluntarily provided by 38 Youth Work Services to be included in a sector compliance review with the CSSCU. The types of youth work services that engaged in the review included a combination of education and training; national, regional, and community-based youth services; and youth clubs throughout Ireland.

A process of engagement with relevant services within the sector began in January and concluded in May 2023. The process included communication to Youth services; a sector briefing; voluntary submissions; and feedback on CSS compliance review and support to relevant services to achieve compliance with the requirements of the Children First act, 2015.

#### **4.1. Communication to Relevant Services**

The National Youth Council of Ireland circulated a written communication through Child Protection Trainers and to a mailing list inclusive of NYCI members and non-members providing relevant services to Youth. The communication informed relevant services of the project and intention of CSSCU to support a Youth sector compliance review in relation to Child Safeguarding Statement compliance. The communication invited services to an online briefing session and to voluntarily participate in the review.

#### **4.2. Sector Briefing**

A joint briefing to the Youth sector was delivered in March 2023. The briefing was a collaboration between the National Youth Council of Ireland, Tusla's Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit and Tusla's Children First Information and Advice Service. 185 participants registered for the briefing and 134 attended the briefing representing 115 Youth organisations.

The content of the briefing was based on Tusla's Child Safeguarding Guidance, the Children First Act 2015, and Children First National Guidance 2017 and included the following.

1. An Introduction to NYCI support to the Youth Sector in relation to Child Safeguarding.
2. Information from Tusla's Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit (CSSCU) on Child Safeguarding Statement requirements under the Children First Act, 2015 and recommendations for the sector following the pilot in 2022.
3. Information from Tusla's Children First Information & Advice Service (CFIAS) on child safeguarding policy and procedures which create a safer environment for children and young people and recommendations for the sector following the pilot in 2022.
4. An outline of plans for further Child Safeguarding support to Youth services in 2023.
5. Links to safeguarding resources (see Appendix 1).

Relevant services were advised that CSSCU always begin engagement from the perspective of supportive compliance and aims to support organisations to meet the requirements of Part 11 of the Children First Act 2015 to ensure all children availing of the service are safe from harm. However, the CSSCU also has enforcement responsibilities in relation to CSS compliance and may initiate escalation to enforcement procedures if required.

#### **4.3. Voluntary Submissions**

Youth services voluntarily engaged with the sector compliance review by expressing interest and submitting copies of Child Safeguarding Statements (CSSs) to NYCIs Child Protection Manager between the 1<sup>st</sup> of March and the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2023. The Child Protection Manager then forwarded the statements to the CSSCU for compliance review and support.

#### **4.4. CSS Compliance Review & Support**

Upon receipt of a Child Safeguarding Statement, the CSSCU utilised a proforma assessment tool (see Appendix 2) to conduct a desktop review and to record areas of compliance or noncompliance within the CSS document. Feedback was issued to all relevant services on the outcome of the review. For those where amendments were required, CSSCU staff engaged with relevant services to support them in achieving compliance with the requirements of

Section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015. Where appropriate subsequent review feedback was issued to relevant services.

## 5.0 Findings

The findings of this sector review consider the types of youth work services that volunteered to participate; the location of services; the initial status of Child Safeguarding Statement compliance on first review of statements; and the areas of non-compliance identified.

### 5.1. Types of Youth Work Services

Child Safeguarding Statements were voluntarily provided by 38 youth work services for review. The types of youth work services that engaged in this sector review tended to be related to three core areas:

1. 40% related to **education and training** and included Community Training Centres (CTCs) and Education and Training Board College of Further Education and Training services.
2. 40% related to **youth services** and included national, regional, and community-based youth services, Family Resource Centres and School Completion Projects.
3. 20% related to **youth clubs** and included arts, religion, and Irish language groups.

### 5.2. Location of Services

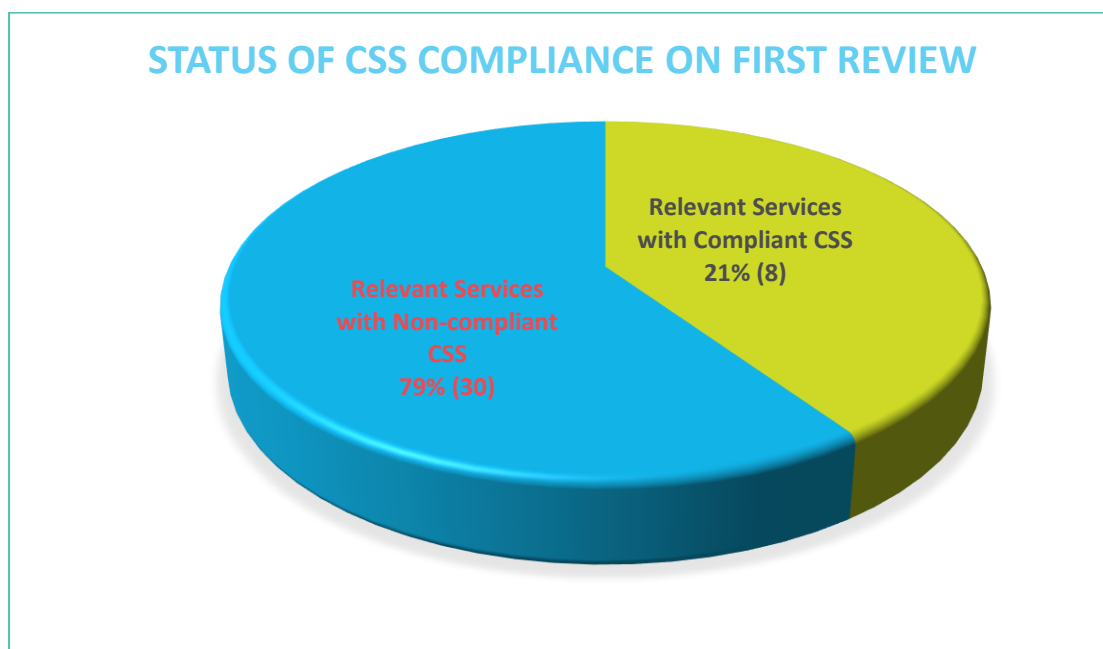
The services that engaged were geographically located throughout Ireland as outlined in the table below:

<i>Location of Service</i>	<i>Number of Services</i>
<i>Carlow</i>	1
<i>Cavan</i>	1
<i>Cork</i>	2
<i>Donegal</i>	1
<i>Dublin</i>	14
<i>Kerry</i>	1
<i>Kilkenny</i>	2
<i>Limerick</i>	3
<i>Louth</i>	1
<i>Mayo</i>	2
<i>Meath</i>	2
<i>Sligo</i>	2
<i>Tipperary</i>	2
<i>Waterford</i>	2
<i>Westmeath</i>	1
<i>Wexford</i>	1



### 5.3. Initial Compliance Review

The initial status of Child Safeguarding Statement compliance on the first review of the 38 statements indicated that 21% of CSSs were compliant. 79% were non-compliant on first review and required support in updating the CSS to achieve compliance.



### 5.4. Areas of Non-Compliance

Areas of non-compliance identified with 30 relevant services during the sector compliance review are outlined in the table below.

Description of Non-Compliance	Number of services applicable <sup>1</sup>
Insufficient detail on the nature of the service or activities provided in CSS.	7
Insufficient detail on principles to safeguard children from harm in CSS.	4
No risk assessment included in CSS.	8
Risk assessment included in CSS did not adequately reflect the service being provided nor the risk posed to children and required more detail.	9
A risk description recorded in the CSS did not specify the risk of harm to a child.	8

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<sup>1</sup> Each service may have had more than one area of non-compliance and so this table is not cumulative.

Insufficient detail on CSS that the procedures as specified in s.11(3), Children First Act 2015 are in place. <i>*Two procedures most omitted were the procedure for appointing a relevant person and the procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons.</i>	5
Insufficient details on CSS commencement - no date for adoption (5) or expired review date (11).	16
Insufficient detail provided in relation to the relevant person for the CSS.	18
Name or address of service not provided on CSS.	18

The most frequent recurring areas of noncompliance were in relation to risk assessment, relevant persons, service contact details and CSS commencement.

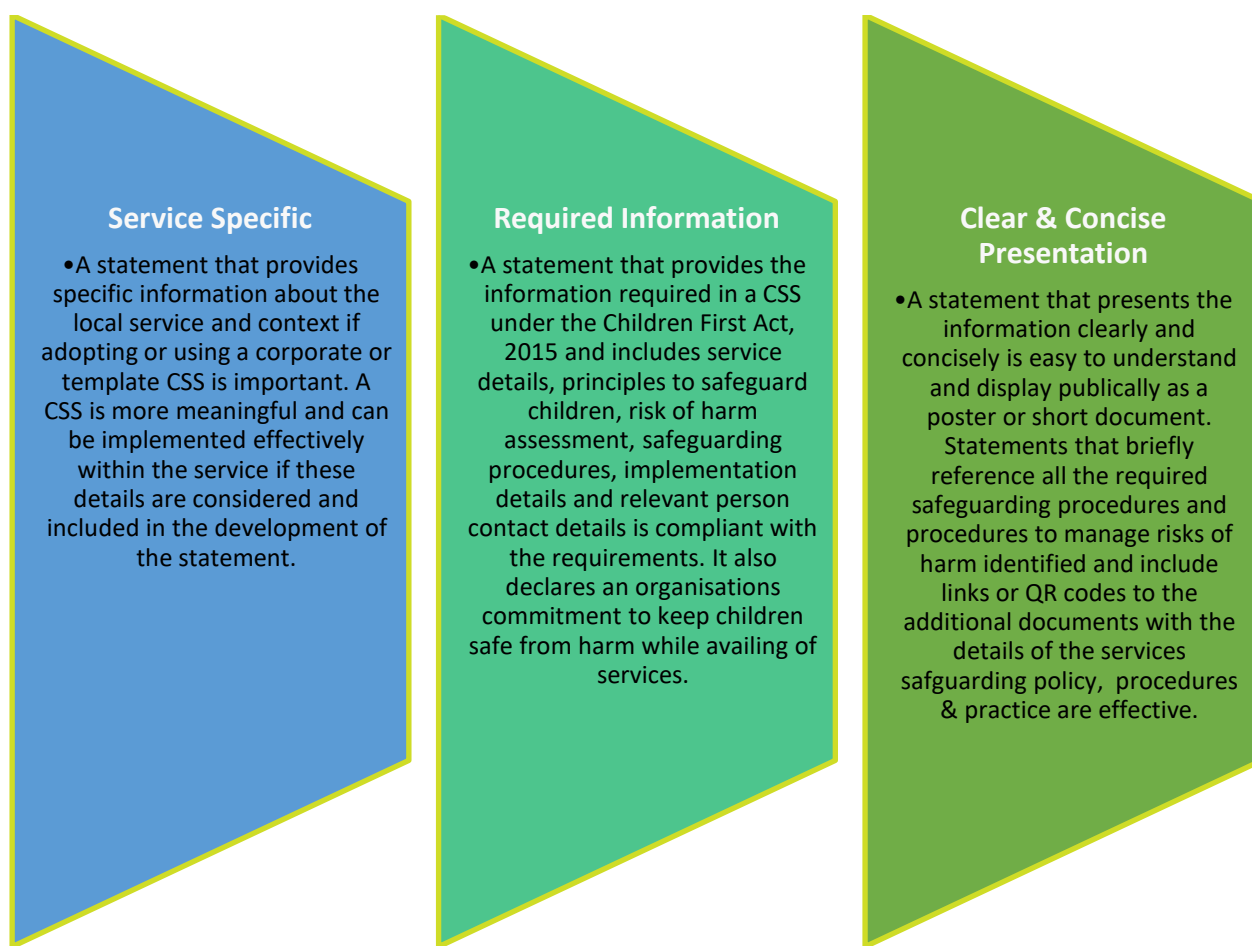
## 6.0 Analysis

Overall, the sector compliance review received positive engagement from relevant services who volunteered to participate. The standard of Child Safeguarding Statements submitted by providers of youth services were generally of a reasonable standard but with amendments required in the majority. Amendments required were primarily to provide more specific details or to expand on the information already provided within the CSS document.

### 6.1. Strengths of a Compliant CSS

A compliant Child Safeguarding Statement must reflect the specific service being provided and set out clear principles of safeguarding. It must identify possible risks of harm to a child as defined in the Children First Act, 2015 and the procedures in place to mitigate against those risks. These risks should correlate with the service being provided to assist assessment of any potential harm that a child or young person may experience in that specific service. The CSS must state that required safeguarding procedures are in place and implemented. Service contact details, plans for CSS review and details of the relevant person must be clearly provided on the CSS. All information provided within the CSS must be assessable to service users, children, parents, and members of the public.

Therefore, the strengths of compliant statements were those that are service specific; provide the required information; and are presented clearly and concisely.



## 6.2. Challenges of a Non-Compliant CSS

A non-compliant Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) can impact the safety of children and young people while availing of a youth service. Without a clear commitment to keeping children safe from harm, a risk assessment and appropriate procedures in place, lack of clarity may arise within a service causing confusion for staff and volunteers in respect of how to prevent harm or how to respond to any child welfare or protection concerns. Omissions in a CSS document can also indicate potential gaps in training and subsequent implementation of safeguarding practice within services if a required procedure is not known. Additional challenges related to different parts of the CSS are expanded on in the analysis of findings below.

## 6.3. Analysis of Findings

Analysis of the findings in part five identified a pattern of frequency of noncompliance in relation to the statements of 30 Youth services involved in the sector compliance review. The list below outlines the percentage of relevant services deemed non-compliant on first review that were required to make amendments in particular areas within the CSS to achieve compliance.



#### **6.3.1. Risk Assessment**

83% of services with a noncompliant CSS required amendments in relation to the risk assessment. Some amendments required the inclusion of an omitted risk assessment; a review of the risks identified to ensure that the assessment adequately considered risks of harm associated with the service or activities being provided; and to provide clarity in the description of risks about the potential harm to a child or young person e.g., a risk of harm from a member of staff/volunteer or risk of harm through unauthorised photography.

If potential risks of harm are omitted from a CSS, there can be limited awareness or understanding amongst personnel (staff/volunteers) that a particular risk may occur. The identification of a particular risk also prompts the development and implementation of appropriate safeguarding procedures to mitigate against the risk and to ensure that children and young people availing of the service are safe from harm.

#### **6.3.2. Relevant Person Details**

60% of services with a noncompliant CSS required amendments to the information provided in relation to the relevant person in the CSS.

A relevant person is appointed for the purpose of being the first point of contact in relation to the Child Safeguarding Statement. Having the name and contact details clearly identified on the CSS assists the relevant service in being assessable to children, young people, parents, or members of the public who may have a query or concern related to the Child Safeguarding Statement. When the relevant person is not clearly identified with contact details on the publicly displayed CSS it can make it difficult for an agency, parent, or member of the public to request further information about the CSS.

### **6.3.3. Service Contact Details**

60% of services with a noncompliant CSS required amendments to include the address of the service provided on the CSS.

### **6.3.4. CSS Commencement**

53% of services with a noncompliant CSS required amendments to include details in relation to CSS commencement such as a date for adoption or review of the CSS.

All relevant services as specified in schedule 1 of the Children First Act, 2015 are required to have an adopted CSS in place within the first three months of service delivery. It is also a requirement that a CSS is reviewed at least every two years or as soon as there is a material change to the service being provided. Therefore, all CSSs must be up to date and appropriate for the service currently being provided.

### **6.3.5. Nature of Service & Activities**

23% of services with a noncompliant CSS required amendments to provide more detail in relation to the nature of the service or activities provided in the CSS.

A comprehensive description of the nature of the services and activities being provided allows the relevant service to consider all possible risks of harm to a child or young person while availing of a service.

### **6.3.6. Safeguarding Procedures**

17% of services with a noncompliant CSS required amendments in relation to six safeguarding procedures as specified in s.11(3), Children First Act 2015. Two procedures most omitted were the procedure for appointing a relevant person and the procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons.

The Children First Act, 2015 specifies that the following procedures must be both referenced in a Child Safeguarding Statement as being in place and implemented in practice within the service. These documents were not requested as part of this project and services self-declared that they were in place.

1. Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers.
2. Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children.
3. Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
4. Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla.
5. Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
6. Procedure for appointing a relevant person for the purpose of the statement.

Having these procedures in place supports services in reducing risks of harm to children or young people and to respond appropriately if an incident occurs and is a statutory requirement.

### 6.3.7. Safeguarding Principles

13% of services with a noncompliant CSS required amendments to provide more detail on principles to safeguard children and young people from harm in the CSS.

A description of the services commitment to safeguarding principles supports the relevant service in communicating to children, young people, parents, and members of the public that the responsibility to safeguard children and young people while availing of the service is a priority and taken seriously.

## 7.0 Recommendations

To continue to strengthen the safeguarding of children and young people in youth services there are seven core recommendations.

For the Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit	
8.	Share learning from the CSS sector compliance review with youth services through a sector briefing and circulation of report published to the Tusla website.
9.	Liaise with the National Youth Council of Ireland in the update of guidance documentation for the youth sector in relation to CSS compliance.
10.	Support youth services on the use of corporate or template Child Safeguarding Statements to ensure that they are accessible and adapted to local contexts.

For Youth Services	
11.	Relevant persons in organisations to share learning from the sector compliance review within services and consider findings and recommendations when reviewing Child Safeguarding Statements as is required.
12.	Services to consider the strengths of statements that are service specific; provide the required information; and are presented clearly and concisely when developing or reviewing CSSs.
13.	Services to consider the commonly occurring areas of CSS noncompliance as outlined in the findings and analysis sections when developing or reviewing a CSS for a relevant service. Particular attention is advised in relation to developing the risk assessment, providing details for relevant persons and service contacts, and specifying dates for CSS commencement.
14.	Services to liaise with information, advice, and training support services to strengthen the implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures specified in the Child Safeguarding Statement if required. E.g., NYCI Child Protection Team or Tusla's Children First Information and Advice Service.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

This report outlines the process of engagement with relevant services, the methodology utilised in a CSS sector compliance review, an overview and analysis of findings in relation to CSS compliance and recommendations to enhance Child Safeguarding Statement compliance within the sector. The information contributes to an improved understanding of CSS compliance within the Youth sector. The recommendations emerging from the sector compliance review aim to support relevant services in developing and reviewing Child Safeguarding Statements.

## **9.0 Appendices**

**Appendix 1: CSS Information & Resources**

**Appendix 2: CSSCU Review Outcome Form**

## **Appendix 1: CSS Information & Resources**

Tusla has published advice and guidance to assist providers in developing a Child Safeguarding Statement and implementing child safeguarding policies, procedures and practice which are available through the [CSSCU](#) or [Children First](#) sections of the Tusla website or through the links below:

- [What is a Child Safeguarding Statement](#) (Video)
- [Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- [Template to develop a CSS](#)
- [CSSCU Review Outcome Form](#)
- [Understanding Risk Assessments in Child Safeguarding Statements](#) (Video)
- [Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice](#)



## Appendix 2: CSSCU Review Outcome Form

<b>Date of Review by CSSCU</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Name of CSSCU Staff Member undertaking review</b>	
<b>Reason for Review (Provided Voluntarily / Resubmission as change to CSS/ Requested by CSSCU following UI/ Implementation Review/Referred by other Internal Dept.)</b>	Choose an item.
<b>Review Number (First / Second etc)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>Case ID</b>	

<b>Organisation Name</b>	
<b>Setting (e.g., Sports Club; Educational Setting)</b>	
<b>Affiliated Organisation</b>	
<b>Funding Body (If available)</b>	
<b>Relevant Person Name</b>	
<b>Overall Purpose and Function</b>	

<b>PART 1: REVIEW OF CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE CHILDREN FIRST ACT 2015</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Checklist Review Lines of Investigation</b>	<b>Yes (✓)</b>	<b>No (✓)</b>	<b>Rationale (If "No" only)</b>
1.	Is the CSS titled correctly? (Must be titled Child Safeguarding Statement)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	Does the CSS include the name of the service to which the CSS refers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	Are there clear Principles and evidence of a commitment to safeguard children from harm (i.e., how they intend to safeguard children)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	Has the service provider specified the service being provided? (If more clarity needed, choose "No")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.	Does the Statement include that a risk assessment has been completed to identify any potential for harm (as defined in the Act) to a child while availing of their services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.	Are the risks identified sufficient, relevant, and realistic, based on the nature of the service? (If there are obvious gaps in risk identification, choose "No")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7.	Are the procedures in place to manage the risks identified, specified in the statement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

8.	<p>Are the procedures below (s.11(3), Children First Act 2015) specified as being in place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “[Procedure] for reporting to [Tusla] by the provider or a member of staff of the provider (whether a mandated person or otherwise) in accordance with this Act or the [Children First] guidelines issued by the Minister under <i>section 6</i>” i.e. A reporting procedure.</li> <li>• “[Procedure] in respect of any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of the relevant service” i.e. A procedure for managing allegations of abuse against staff.</li> <li>• Procedure for selection or recruitment of any person as a member of staff of the provider with regard to that person’s suitability to work with children.</li> <li>• Procedure for the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training to members of staff of the provider in relation to the identification of the occurrence of harm.</li> <li>• Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.</li> <li>• Procedure for appointing a relevant person for the purposes of the [Statement].</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9.	Is there either a date for adoption or review of the CSS? (Either is acceptable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10.	Is the relevant person clearly identified and their name and contact details provided in the CSS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>PART 1 TOTAL SCORES (No. of Yes / No results out of a possible 15)</b>		/15	/15	

<b>PART 2: Suggested and recommended amendments that would improve the quality of the CSS</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Checklist for improved quality</b>	<b>Yes (✓)</b>	<b>No (✓)</b>	<b>Rationale (If "No" only)</b>
<b>11.</b>	Does the Child Safeguarding Statement include the definition of harm as set out in the Children First Act 2015?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>12.</b>	Is the name and address of the provider included?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>13.</b>	Does the Child Safeguarding Statement set out a commitment that all children will be equally protected from harm regardless of race, ability, ethnicity, or sexual orientation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**TOTAL NUMBER OF YES ANSWERS (Out of a Possible 16)**

**/15**

<b>Score (Out of 11)</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
15/15 (100%)	Compliant
< 15	Non-Compliant

<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>REVIEW OF STATEMENT: COMPLIANCE OUTCOME</b>	<b>Signature</b>

### **Guidance Notes**

This review tool is used by Tusla's Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit (CSSCU) when reviewing child safeguarding statements (CSS) which have been provided to the CSSCU, either voluntarily or in response to a request from the CSSCU. Providers of relevant services, under the Children First Act 2015, are required to prepare a CSS. Tusla has published [general guidance to assist providers](#) in writing their CSS, as well as a [CSS Sample Template](#). Tusla has also worked with a number of service sectors and government departments to assist them in developing tailored templates for particular contexts.

It may be helpful to providers of relevant services, when either developing or reviewing their CSS, to refer to the CSSCU Review Outcome Form to assist them to assess their compliance with the safeguarding requirements set out in the Children First Act 2015.

### **Specific Guidance for Reviewers:**

- **Affiliate Organisation** – this applies when a provider is a member of a larger umbrella body. This could include registering bodies such as HIQA, or membership organisations such as National Youth Council of Ireland, Sport Ireland, a National Governing Body of Sport, etc.
- **Overall Purpose and Function** – should be copied from the CSS section on service provided.

#### **Part 1 Guidance:**

- **CSS Title** – All CSS must be titled **Child Safeguarding Statement**.
- **Principles** – The CSS must include principles to keep children safe from harm, such as the right to be consulted, the right to protection, and adherence to inclusion/anti-discriminatory practice.
- **Service being provided** – the CSS must outline the service provided to children by the service provider.
- **Risk assessment** – the risks identified must be specific to the services provided, listed in the previous section. They must relate to the protection of the child/children from harm, as defined in the Children First Act 2015. Services can include an abridged list of the main risks identified and develop a more detailed secondary risk assessment document. Where a secondary risk assessment document is developed, this must be noted on the CSS and provided with the CSS whenever the CSS is requested.
- **Risks sufficient, relevant, and realistic** – while a reviewing officer is not expected to know the nuances of every service whose CSS is being reviewed, there are certain general risks which it is reasonable to expect would be in place in most services. These include
  - Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by a member of staff/volunteer from things they have done (e.g. hurt a child) or failed to do (e.g. not report a concern);
  - Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) caused by lack of supervision;
  - Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) by a visitor to the service (workers, parents, placements, etc.);
  - Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) by another child in the service;
  - Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child on outings by a member of staff/volunteer/stranger/peer;
  - Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) through access to ICT / unauthorised photography (e.g., social media or web access, electronic contact, etc).

This is not a comprehensive or definitive list. Reviewers are expected to use their discretion and professional judgement when assessing risk assessments for compliance with the requirements of the Act. Service providers are responsible for carrying out a comprehensive assessment of the risk of harm to children while availing of their service.
- **Specified procedures** – all six specified procedures must be included in the CSS. It is not a requirement that they are listed separately to the risk assessment. It is not a requirement that the titles are verbatim as they

are presented in the Act (e.g., Recruitment and selection procedures or reporting procedure for child protection or welfare concerns would both be acceptable).

- **Date for review – the CSS must specify either the date it was introduced/ratified or the proposed date for review. Either are acceptable.**
- **Name and address of the provider – this information must be included as the Act places numerous responsibilities associated with the CSS directly on the Provider. For services operating at multiple sites, if they are using a single corporate CSS, address of provider can be head office.**
- **Name and contact details for Designated Person – this information must be included, as well as a clear designation that the person named is the designated person.**
- **It is not a requirement that the CSS is signed by the provider**
- **CSS submitted should be final versions.**

Where the CSSCU reviews a CSS, all requisite components must be present and in line with the guidance to be deemed compliant.

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