



**CHILD
SAFEGUARDING
STATEMENT
COMPLIANCE
UNIT**

**CSSCU Guidance for Providers of Relevant Services
on a Child Safeguarding Statement
Compliance Review**

TUSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Contents

1.0	Introduction.....	3
2.0	CSSCU	3
3.0	Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS).....	3
4.0	Providers of Relevant Services	4
5.0	CSS Requirements	4
6.0	CSS Implementation	5
7.0	CSSCU Assessment of CSS Compliance	6
8.0	CSS Public Register of Non-Compliance	10
9.0	Resources to Support CSS Development.....	10
10.0	Revision History	11
11.0	Appendix Listing	11

1.0 Introduction

This guidance document informs providers of Relevant Services to children or young people about a CSS compliance review with Tusla's Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit (CSSCU). It describes the expectations of a CSS document in relation to Section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015, and how the CSSCU reviews compliance with these requirements.

2.0 CSSCU

The Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit (CSSCU) is the dedicated Unit within Tusla set up to ensure that providers' Child Safeguarding Statements (CSS) are compliant with the requirements of Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015. All providers of relevant services (any work or activity as defined in Schedule 1 of the CFA, 2015) which are in operation for greater than three months are legally required to have a Child Safeguarding Statement in place.

The unit was established in March 2018 to provide both compliance support and enforcement in relation to Child Safeguarding Statement requirements (s.11). The CSSCU is responsible for Child Safeguarding Statement enforcement (s.12) and maintaining the Public Register of Non-Compliance (s.13).

3.0 Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS)

A Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) is a written statement describing the service being provided and a commitment to safeguarding principles and procedures to keep children safe. A CSS aims to ensure as far as practicable, that a child is safe from harm while availing of the service.

It must include details of any potential risks of "harm" to a child that are identified in a risk assessment and specify the procedures in place to manage and reduce the identified risks (Section 11 (3) of the Children First Act 2015). As defined in the Children First Act, 2015, "harm" means, in relation to a child 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 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.

This definition is understood as the harm caused to children by physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. In the context of safeguarding, it may also relate to the bullying of children, child trafficking and or sexual exploitation, or the harm caused to children through the misuse of digital technology or on internet platforms.

4.0 Providers of Relevant Services

Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015 provides a list of the types of work or activity defined as Relevant Services.

A provider of a relevant service is any organisation where more than one person works with children in a voluntary or paid capacity. A provider of a relevant service is defined under the Children First Act 2015 (No. 36 of 2015) as a person:

- a) who provides a relevant service, and
- b) who, in respect of the provision of such relevant service—
 - employs (whether under contract of employment or otherwise) one or more than one other person to undertake any work or activity that constitutes a relevant service,
 - enters into a contract for services with one or more than one other person for the provision by the person of a relevant service, or
 - permits one or more than one other person (whether or not for commercial or other consideration and whether or not as part of a course of education or training, including an internship scheme) to undertake any work or activity, on behalf of the person, that constitutes a relevant service.

Key responsibilities of organisations classed as providers of relevant services under the Children First Act 2015 are required to,

- Keep children safe from harm while they are using the service.
- Carry out a risk assessment to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed while availing of the service.
- Develop a Child Safeguarding Statement that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified.
- Appoint a relevant person to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement.
- All providers of relevant services are required to have a Child Safeguarding Statement in place.

5.0 CSS Requirements

The Children First Act, 2015 places statutory obligations on providers of relevant services to have a Child Safeguarding Statement in place. In addition to having a CSS in place there is expected content within a CSS to meet the requirements of section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015, which are assessed in a compliance review.



1. Child Safeguarding Statement is in place.
2. CSS provides details of the service and activities provided to children.
3. CSS identifies principles to safeguard children within the service.
4. CSS includes details of a risk assessment of potential harm to children and how identified risks are managed and prevented within the service.
5. CSS includes reference to six specified safeguarding procedures required in all relevant services.
6. CSS includes details of the Provider of the relevant service responsible for implementation of the statement, its commencement and review.
7. CSS includes the name and contact details for the Relevant Person within the service who is the first point of contact for the purpose of the statement.

6.0 CSS Implementation

A Child Safeguarding Statement compliant with the requirements can be verified by the information declared by a provider of a Relevant Service on a Child Safeguarding Statement document.

An effective Child Safeguarding Statement is underpinned by the implementation of accompanying child safeguarding policy and procedure documents that an organisation may have referenced in the CSS. The CSSCU may request clarification or evidence that the

declared safeguarding procedures are in place. However, the implementation of the safeguarding policy, procedures and practice declared by a Relevant Service in a CSS are not assessed by the CSSCU as part of a CSS compliance review. It is understood that the declaration outlined within a CSS demonstrates the service commitment to implement the safeguarding policies and procedures specified within the statement.

In addition to a compliant CSS document there are implementation requirements of Child Safeguarding Statements under Part 2, Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 that are expected of providers of relevant services.

- Appoint a relevant person as the first point of contact for the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Share a copy of the CSS with all staff/volunteers.
- Share a copy of the CSS with a parent/guardian, the Agency, or members of the public if requested.
- Display the CSS in a prominent and public place related to the relevant service and/or the location where the service is provided.
- Review the Child Safeguarding Statement and associated procedures at least every 24 months or as soon as practicable after there has been a change in the service provided or any matter to which the statement refers.

7.0 CSSCU Assessment of CSS Compliance

The Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit works on a supportive compliance basis. Referrals are received through voluntary submissions by providers, a formal request in response to unsolicited information, sector compliance reviews and referrals by colleagues within Tusla.

The Children First Act 2015, Section 11 is prescriptive in its definition of a Child Safeguarding Statement. CSSCU has developed a compliance review form that contains a checklist of verifications in relation to the expected content in line with the requirements Section 11. See list of requirements and verifications in the table below.

	Requirement	CSS Verification
1.	Relevant service has a Child Safeguarding Statement in place.	1.1. The document submitted for review is a Child Safeguarding Statement. 1.2. The document submitted for review is titled correctly as a Child Safeguarding Statement.
2.	Relevant service provides details of the service and	2.1. The name of the service is included on the CSS.

Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit

	activities provided to children and young people (under 18 years).	2.2. The CSS includes details of the nature of service and activities provided to children or young people.
3.	Relevant service specifies the principles to be observed to keep children and young people safe from harm while availing of the service.	3.1. The CSS includes details of how the service intends to safeguard children and young people from harm and the principles that will be followed to keep them safe while using the service.
4.	Relevant service has undertaken a written assessment of any potential risk of harm to a child or young person while availing of a service.	<p>4.1. The CSS includes details of a written assessment of risks of harm (assault, ill-treatment, neglect, or sexual abuse) as defined in the Children First Act, 2015.</p> <p>4.2. The CSS includes details of risks identified in the written assessment that consider all potential risks of harm that are sufficient, relevant, and realistic in relation to the purpose, function and nature of the service and activities being provided to children and young people.</p> <p>4.3. The CSS includes specific details of the procedures that are in place to manage any risk identified in the assessment of potential harm.</p>
5.	Relevant service has the specified safeguarding procedures required under the Children First Act, 2015 in place.	5.1. The CSS states that a 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 is in place. i.e. A procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct

Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit

		<p>against workers/volunteers is in place.</p> <p>5.2. The CSS states that a 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 is in place. i.e. A procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children or young people is in place.</p> <p>5.3. The CSS states that a 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 is in place.</p> <p>5.4. The CSS states that a 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 section 6. i.e. A reporting procedure is in place.</p> <p>5.5. The CSS states that a procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons is in place.</p> <p>5.6. The CSS states that a procedure for appointing a relevant person for the purposes of the Child Safeguarding Statement is in place.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Relevant service provider is responsible for the implementation, governance, and review of CSS.</p>	<p>6.1. The person responsible for providing the relevant service is identifiable on the CSS by name, role title or signature.</p>

		6.2. The CSS includes a date that the CSS was adopted or reviewed within a 24-month period.
7.	Relevant service appoints a Relevant Person for the purpose of being first point of contact for the CSS.	1.1. The CSS includes the name and contact details for the Relevant Person within the service who is the first point of contact for the purpose of the statement. It clearly states the person who holds the role of relevant person. E.g. For queries in relation to this statement, please contact Joe Bloggs (insert contact details), relevant person under the Children First Act, 2015.

The statement is reviewed to verify that that the requirements are declared on the CSS document. Each of the seven areas are assessed as compliant or non-compliant. All components on the checklist need to be verified on the CSS for the statement to be deemed compliant.

Feedback to the provider of the relevant service is recorded under two headings on the checklist review form (see appendix 1). The feedback is provided in relation to (a) reasons for areas of non-compliance requiring amendments within the CSS and (b) suggestions to improve the quality of the CSS for consideration.

Following a full review of the CSS and all requirements a compliance officer will assess a compliance review outcome.

There are two potential outcomes for a CSS compliance review, it is compliant or non-compliant.

1. **Compliant:** The information declared on the CSS document is compliant with requirements of Section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015.

Or

2. **Non-compliant:** The information declared on the CSS document is non-compliant with requirements of Section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015 and requires amendment.

Where a service is found to be non-compliant with the requirement to have a compliant Child Safeguarding Statement, CSSCU engages with the organisation, highlights areas requiring development in the statement, and affords them the opportunity to comply with requirements. If following compliance support a relevant service fails to have a

compliant Child Safeguarding Statement in place it may lead to escalation to enforcement procedures under Section 12 of the Children First Act, 2015.

8.0 CSS Public Register of Non-Compliance

Only when a process of supportive compliance engagement has been exhausted does the agency move to listing an organisation on the register of non-compliance (the final stage of enforcement).

Under the provision of the Children First Act, 2015, Tusla is responsible for operating and maintaining the required Register of Non-Compliance under Section 13, and the enforcement process leading up to being placed on the register under Section 12. Services who are found to be non-compliant with the requirement to have a compliant Child Safeguarding Statement in place will be placed on the Register of Non-Compliance. The Register is available publicly in the Tusla Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit Office and on the Tusla website.

9.0 Resources to Support CSS Development

To support services in the development and review of Child Safeguarding Statements, Tusla has published advice and guidance and a sample template to assist providers.

These resources are available on the [CSSCU](#) or [Children First](#) sections of the Tusla website or through the links below.

- [Children First Act, 2015.](#)
- [List of Relevant Services \(Schedule 1, Children First Act, 2015\).](#)
- [Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.](#)
- [Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children - Online Safety](#)
- [What is a Child Safeguarding Statement \(Video\)](#)
- [Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- [Template to develop a CSS](#)
- [Understanding Risk Assessments in Child Safeguarding Statements \(Video\)](#)
- [Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice](#)
- [Child Safeguarding Resource List](#)

10.0 Revision History

Version number	Nature of Changes	Author of Change	Date
V0.1	Draft Document.	MH	20/02/2024
V0.2	Incorporating comments MC & MMcG.	MH	07/05/2024
V1.0	Guidance document approved.	MC	07/05/2024
V1.0	Document implemented.	MC	01/07/2024

The procedure was amended as follows:

11.0 Appendix Listing

CSSCU CSS Compliance Review Form



CSS Compliance Review Form

CSSCU Review Records

Date of Review	01/07/2024
CSSCU Staff Member	
Reason for CSS Compliance Review	Choose an item.
Review Number	
CSSCU File Reference	

Relevant Service Details

Name of Service	
Name of Provider of Relevant Service	
Name of Relevant Person	
Relevant Service Type (as per Schedule 1, CFA, 2015)	Choose an item.
Nature of Service / Sector	Choose an item.
Affiliated Organisation	



CSS Compliance Review Form

CSSCU Review of Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance with Requirements of Section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015

Checklist for Compliance Review			Feedback to Relevant Service	
No.	CSS Compliance Requirements	Assessment	Reasons for areas of non-compliance requiring amendment within CSS	Suggestions to improve quality of CSS for consideration
1.1	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement s.11(1b)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has a Child Safeguarding Statement in place.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The document submitted for review is a Child Safeguarding Statement.</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

1.2.	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement s.11(1b)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has a Child Safeguarding Statement in place.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The document submitted for review is titled correctly as a Child Safeguarding Statement.</p>	Choose an item.		
2.1.	<p>Service Details s.11(1b)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service provides details of the service and activities provided to children and young people (under 18 years).</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	<p><i>Verification:</i> The name of the service is included on the CSS.</p>			
2.2.	<p>Service Details s.11(1b)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service provides details of the service and activities provided to children and young people.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS includes details of the nature of service and activities provided to children or young people.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		
3.1.	<p>Principles to Safeguard Children s.11(1b)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service specifies the principles to be</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	<p>observed to keep children and young people safe from harm while availing of the service.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS includes details of how the service intends to safeguard children and young people from harm and the principles that will be followed to keep them safe while using the service.</p>			
4.1.	<p>Risk Assessment s.11(1a)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has undertaken a written assessment of any potential risk of harm to a child or young person while availing of a service.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	<p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS includes details of a written assessment of risks of harm (assault, ill-treatment, neglect, or sexual abuse) as defined in the Children First Act, 2015.</p>			
4.2.	<p>Risk Assessment s.11(3a)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has undertaken a written assessment of any potential risk of harm to a child or young person while availing of a service.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS includes details of risks identified in the written assessment that consider all potential risks of harm that are sufficient, relevant, and realistic in relation to the purpose, function</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	and nature of the service and activities being provided to children and young people.			
4.3.	<p>Risk Assessment s.11(3a)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has undertaken a written assessment of any potential risk of harm to a child or young person while availing of a service.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS includes specific details of the procedures that are in place to manage any risk identified in the assessment of potential harm.</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

5.1.	<p>Specified Safeguarding Procedures s11(3b)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has in place a safeguarding 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.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS states that a procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers is in place.</p>	Choose an item.	
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CSS Compliance Review Form

5.2.	<p>Specified Safeguarding Procedures s.11(3c)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has in place a safeguarding 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.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS states that a procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children or young people is in place.</p>	Choose an item.		
5.3.	<p>Specified Safeguarding Procedures s11(3d)</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	<p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has in place a safeguarding 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.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS states that a procedure for the provision of safeguarding information and training is in place.</p>			
5.4.	<p>Specified Safeguarding Procedures s.11(3e)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has in place a safeguarding procedure for reporting to Tusla by the</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS states that a procedure for reporting child protection and welfare concerns to Tusla is in place.</p>			
5.5.	<p>Specified Safeguarding Procedures s.11(3f)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has in place a safeguarding procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	<p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS states that a procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons is in place.</p>			
5.6.	<p>Specified Safeguarding Procedures s.11(3g)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service has in place a safeguarding procedure for appointing a relevant person for the purposes of the Child Safeguarding.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS states that a procedure for appointing a relevant person is in place.</p>	Choose an item.		
6.1.	<p>Implementation s.11(1-10)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> A provider of a relevant service has responsibility</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	<p>for the implementation and governance of a CSS. These responsibilities include undertaking a risk assessment, preparing a written statement, appointing a relevant person, implementing the specified safeguarding procedures, conducting regular reviews, displaying the CSS within the service, and providing copies of the CSS to staff, parents/guardians, the agency, or members of the public on request.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The person responsible for providing the relevant service is identifiable on the CSS by name, role title or signature.</p>		
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CSS Compliance Review Form

6.2.	<p>Implementation s.11(7&8)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> CSS implementation includes a review of the statement every 24 months or as soon as there has been a material change in any of the issues to which it refers.</p> <p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS includes a date that the CSS was adopted or reviewed within a 24-month period.</p>	Choose an item.		
7.1.	<p>Relevant Person s.11(1c)</p> <p><i>Requirement:</i> Relevant service appoints a Relevant Person for the purpose of being first point of contact for the CSS.</p>	Choose an item.		



CSS Compliance Review Form

	<p><i>Verification:</i> The CSS includes the name and contact details for the Relevant Person within the service who is the first point of contact for the purpose of the statement. It clearly states the person who holds the role of relevant person.</p> <p>E.g. For queries in relation to this statement, please contact Joe Bloggs (insert contact details – phone/email), relevant person under the Children First Act, 2015.</p>			
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CSS Compliance Review Form

Compliance Review Outcome

Date of Review	Compliance Review Outcome	Recommendation	Signature
	<p>Compliant: The information declared on the CSS document is compliant with the requirements of Section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015.</p> <p>Non-compliant: The information declared on the CSS document is non-compliant with requirements of Section 11 of the Children First Act, 2015 and requires amendment.</p>		

Tusla's CSSCU advises providers of relevant services of their responsibility under section 10 of the Children First Act, 2015 to ensure, as far as practicable, that each child availing of the service from the provider is safe from harm while availing of that service. An effective Child Safeguarding Statement is underpinned by the implementation of safeguarding policies, procedures, and practice that may be referenced in the CSS. It is the responsibility of every organisation to regularly review their safeguarding statement, policies, procedures,



CSS Compliance Review Form

practice, and implementation frameworks against guidance provided in [Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children](#) and [Tusla Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice](#) to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm while availing of services. For more information please refer to the [CSSCU](#) and [Children First](#) sections of the Tusla website.