

Child Safeguarding Statement

Bus Éireann in accordance with our legislative requirements under the *Children First Act 2015*, the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), and Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedures and Practice has developed this Child Safeguarding Statement. This statement is binding to all BÉ staff, and includes apprentices’, interns, students on work placement, contractors, and their nominated employees/drivers.



Bus Éireann transports thousands of children nationwide every day on public services and under the School Transport Scheme on behalf of the Department of Education, including Primary and Post Primary transport. This Scheme also supports the transport to and from school of children with special educational needs that come from a diagnosed disability. Keeping our customers safe, especially children, is a core element of our culture. This extends to children availing of our services, on our premises and specific off-site locations.

Keeping children safe while in our care is central to the ethos of Bus Éireann; their welfare and safety is of paramount importance to us. We promote an environment where children are welcomed, respected, cared for and, as far as practicable, protected from harm. All children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. Bus Éireann staff, contractors and their employees have a duty and responsibility to safeguard children and support their general welfare, development and safety, promoting the protection of children in line with our **Child Safeguarding Policy**. As a matter of policy, they must be alert to the possibility of child abuse/harm and of their obligation to convey any concerns to the mandated Designated Liaison Person (DLP), who will treat such concerns in an appropriate manner in accordance with legislative requirements.

RISK ASSESSMENT: Bus Éireann has adopted safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents to children. and has completed an assessment of the potential risk of harm to children while availing of our services, on our premises or engaged within our organisation. The risk will be assessed on a continuous basis and this process will form part of Bus Éireann’s overall Risk Assessment.

RISK IDENTIFIED:

RISK IDENTIFIED	PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO MANAGE RISK IDENTIFIED
<p>Risk of harm including assault, ill treatment, or neglect of a child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare or sexual abuse of a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a member of staff, including contractors, their employees/drivers, and/or other passengers By another child/passenger and/or member of the public on our services and/or premises On a business-related trip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Éireann Child Safeguarding Policy Bus Éireann Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet Recruitment and Selection Procedures Code of Conduct for relevant staff, contractors and their employees working with children Relevant Consent Forms
<p>Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a staff member, including contractors and their employees/drivers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Éireann Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet Bus Éireann Child Safeguarding Report form “An Introduction to Children First” mandatory eLearning training for all relevant Bus Éireann staff
<p>Risk of harm to a child due to a child protection or welfare concern not being recognised or reported by a child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Éireann Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet Bus Éireann Child Safeguarding Report form
<p>Non-Compliance with the <i>Children First Act 2015</i> and Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures for maintaining a list of mandated persons Procedure for appointing a Relevant Person
<p>Children Attending Promotional Events Promotional Material/Photoshoots with Children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Éireann Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet Relevant Consent Form
<p>Harm to a child using IT infrastructure and software/social media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT Acceptable Use Policy Bus Éireann Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet Relevant Consent Forms

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Risk of harm re Non-Vetted Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Éireann adheres to the requirements of the National Vetting Bureau Children and Vulnerable Person Act 2016
<p>Note: The definition of harm in relation to a child is defined in the <i>Children First Act 2015</i> as follows: “harm” 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 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.</p>	

PROCEDURES: Bus Éireann has adopted safe practices and procedures to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents to children. The following procedures are in place to manage risk:

- Display the Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet on our public website.
- Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet is provided to all Bus Éireann staff via our Bus Éireann Online internal website.
- All staff, contractors and their employees receive a copy of our Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet.
- Bus Éireann School Bus Drivers are issued with our Code of Conduct, Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet, and comprehensive Drivers Handbook.
- Bus Éireann School Bus Contractors and their Approved Nominated Drivers will be issued with our Code of Conduct and Child Safeguarding Policy Booklet.
- Procedures for reporting child safeguarding or welfare concerns are documented in our Child Safeguarding Policy/Policy Booklet.
- Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, contractor and/or their employee/driver are documented in our Child Safeguarding Policy/Booklet.
- Recruitment and selection process will include Garda Vetting, where applicable.
- Provision of information regarding Child Safeguarding.
- Child Safeguarding Officer/Designated Liaison Person to maintain awareness and provide support to staff regarding Child Safeguarding principles and best practice.
- Bus Éireann School Bus Drivers and relevant staff are required to submit a successfully completed ‘*Introduction to Children First E-Learning Programme*’ Certificate (awarded online by Tusla).
- Procedure for maintaining a list of Mandated Persons.
- Procedure for appointing a Relevant Persons.

The Chief Executive Officer has authorised the below Mandated Persons to act as a liaison with outside agencies and as a resource person for staff. The Mandated Persons also fulfil the role of Child Safeguarding Officer (CSO)/Designated Liaison Persons (DLP). The Mandated Persons can be contacted by email at childprotection@buseireann.ie.

Ms. Dorothy McGill	Mandated Person/CSO/DLP	☎ 01 703 3414
Ms. Aisling Harte	Mandated Person/CSO/DLP	☎ 01 703 4786
Mr. Gerry Gannon	Mandated Person/CSO/DLP	☎ 01 703 3346

The above individuals are also Relevant Persons under the Child First At 2015 and can be contacted at:

Bus Éireann, Room 18, Constitution Hill, Broadstone, Dublin 7, D07 X2AE.

This statement is designed to demonstrate our commitment to the safety and welfare of children on our services/premises/in our care and is intended to reassure parents/guardians/carers of our ongoing dedication to the protection and safeguarding of children.

This Statement will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers and/or changes in legislation or national policy.



Stephen Kent,

Bus Éireann Chief Executive Officer.

Updated April 2023.