



Dublin Fire Brigade Child Safeguarding Statement 2022/2024



Version Control				
Version	Date	Nature of change	Author	Approved by
1.1	03/10/2019	Annual Review 2019	Brendan McNicholas	Dennis Keeley
1.2	02/03/2020	Review 2020	Michelle O'Toole	Brendan McNicholas
1.3	10/04/2020	Viewing by Law Dept.	Michelle O'Toole	Dennis Keeley
1.4	01/07/2022	Review 2022	Rachael Lee	Brendan McNicholas
1.5	02/08/2022	DCC CSC comments	Brendan McNicholas	Dennis Keeley
2.1	01/09/2022	Túsla RF/CSSCU/005	Brendan McNicholas	Dennis Keeley
2.2	01/11/2022	Túsla RF/CSSCU/005	Brendan McNicholas	Dennis Keeley

Dublin Fire Brigade operates a Fire, Rescue and Ambulance Service that responds to approximately 130,000 incidents annually within the greater Dublin area serving a transient population of approximately 2 million people. Dublin Fire Brigade also manages the East Region Communications Centre, which processes in excess of 200,000 999/112 calls for fire services in seventeen counties, and calls for emergency medical services in the Dublin area. Dublin Fire Brigade has its Headquarters at 165-169 Townsend Street, Dublin 2 (Eircode D02 RY99).

Due to the nature of emergencies, including *inter alia* fires, rescues, medical incidents and telephone calls, Dublin Fire Brigade staff may provide services directly to children, sometimes without the presence of an adult known to the child. Dublin Fire Brigade facilitates visits to fire stations, has run a Transition Year programme and has a programme of visits to schools and community events. We recognise the attraction of fire appliances and ambulances while visible in the community.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, and Túsla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, Dublin Fire Brigade has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

- 1 Dublin Fire Brigade has adopted and will implement fully and without modification, Dublin City Council's Policy and Procedures for the Protection and Safeguarding of Children 2019 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement. **Mary Quinn (01 2226173 or mary.quinn@dublincity.ie)** is the Safeguarding Officer for Children and Adults at Risk at Dublin City Council
- 2 **Rachael Lee is the Child Safeguarding Coordinator** for Dublin Fire Brigade. dfbchildsafeguarding@dublincity.ie. A number of Dublin Fire Brigade personnel are trained to Designated Liaison Person standard. Contact details for these personnel are available on request.
- 3 Dublin Fire Brigade recognises that child safeguarding and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of emergency response life and therefore, must be reflected in all Dublin Fire Brigade policies, procedures, practices and activities. Dublin Fire Brigade will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

Dublin Fire Brigade will:

- 3.1 Recognise that the safeguarding and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations.
- 3.2 Fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the safeguarding and welfare of children, including Mandated Reporting.
- 3.3 Commit to full co-operation with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child safeguarding and welfare matters, regardless of any legal obligations.
- 3.4 Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect.
- 3.5 Develop a practice of openness and respect with parents, where possible, recognising that the safety of both the child and the staff members must be considered.
- 3.6 Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child safeguarding matters, by informing relevant personnel on a need to know basis only e.g. An Garda Síochána, Túsla, Emergency Department staff and Designated Liaison Persons within DFB/DCC.
- 3.7 Take all disclosures of abuse seriously (including retrospective disclosures), reporting concerns above the threshold of harm to Túsla, using the appropriate form.

4 The following procedures/measures are in place:

- 4.1 In relation to 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 under our care, Dublin Fire Brigade adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Children First guidelines and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for Dublin Fire Brigade and Dublin City Council Staff as set out in Dublin City Council's Policy and Procedures for the Protection and Safeguarding of Children 2019.
- 4.2 In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, Dublin Fire Brigade adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by Dublin City Council.
- 4.3 In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act), Dublin Fire Brigade
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the Dublin Fire Brigade's Child Safeguarding Statement.
 - Ensures frontline staff receive relevant training in relation to child welfare.
 - Encourages all members to avail of relevant upskilling and refresher training every two years.
 - Maintains records, at the Dublin Fire Brigade Training Centre, of all staff training.
 - Has distributed an information pack to all DFB workplaces containing relevant legislation and guidance documentation in relation to child safeguarding.

4.4 In Dublin Fire Brigade, the 'relevant person' (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) is **Mary Quinn (01 2226173 or mary.quinn@dublincity.ie)** who is the Safeguarding Officer for Children and Adults at Risk at Dublin City Council. She is the first point of contact in respect of this child safeguarding statement.

4.5 All Emergency Medical Technicians, Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics, registered with the Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council and employed at Dublin Fire Brigade, are 'Mandated Persons' under the Children First Act 2015. Dublin Fire Brigade is committed to fully supporting our Mandated Persons in reporting their concerns regarding child welfare to Túsła regardless of any legal obligation.

4.6 A list of Mandated persons is reviewed every year.

4.7 Dual reporting to both Túsła and An Garda Síochána is required in certain circumstances. These specific offences are outlined in Schedule 1, Section 2 of the Criminal Justice Act (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) 2012.

4.7 In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Dublin Fire Brigade has carried out a risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child encountered in the course of our duties. A list of the main risks identified with Dublin Fire Brigade procedures for managing those risks is appended to this statement. A more detailed secondary risk assessment is available on request.

4.8 The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the DubNet (Dublin Fire Brigade Private Area) or can be made available on request by Dublin Fire Brigade.

Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list.

- 5 This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Dublin City Council and Dublin Fire Brigade on 09/01/2023. This statement has been published on the Dublin City Council and Dublin Fire Brigade private websites and a copy has been provided to all members of Dublin Fire Brigade personnel. It is readily accessible at all DFB work stations. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Túsła and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs if requested.
- 6 This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every two years or as soon as practicable following material changes in any matter to which this statement refers. The next review is due by 09/01/2025.

Signed:



Chief Executive
Dublin City Council

Date: 09/01/2023

Signed:



Chief Fire Officer
Dublin Fire Brigade

Date: 09/01/2023

A list of the main risks identified and Dublin Fire Brigade procedures for managing those risks.

	Risk Identified	DFB procedures for managing those risks
1	Risk of harm/abuse towards children from DFB members	Garda Vetting. DFB/ DCC Code of Conduct. Child Safeguarding Training. Request additional personnel e.g. Fire crew/ Gardaí unless it is an emergency. Cameras in Ambulances (DFB Recording policy). Ensuring another adult/staff member is present where possible. No unauthorised adults to be present. Ensure appropriate supervision. Procedures to deal with an allegation of abuse made against an employee. DFB Child Safeguarding Policy.
2	Risk of harm/abuse towards children non DFB contractors, visitors and ran callers to station	No unauthorised adults to be present. All visitors registered in Visitors Book. Visitors and Contractors apprised of DFB Child Safeguarding Policy.
3	Risk of harm/abuse towards children from other children	Child Safeguarding Training Ensure appropriate ratio of Adults to Children
4	Inability to recognise the signs of children experiencing harm/abuse	Child Safeguarding Training Educational Material available in work locations DLP available for support and advice
5	Failure to report a child protection concern promptly and properly	Child Safeguarding Training Support to make a joint report with DLP Awareness that non-compliance can lead to disciplinary procedures and fitness to practice enquiries
6	Lack of Awareness of Mandated Person's role and responsibilities	Child Safeguarding Training Paramedic Training and upskilling Organisational Memos Educational Material available in work locations
7	Violence/Aggression following a mandated reporting case	Garda Vetting Child Safeguarding Training Paramedic Training and upskilling
8	Noticing indicators of abuse where potential abusers are present	Child Safeguarding Training every 2 years Educational Material available in work locations DLP available for support and advice
9	Over-zealous reactions to indications or disclosures of harm/abuse	Child Safeguarding Training Paramedic Training and upskilling, including Interpersonal skills training DLP available for support and advice
10	Contact with children on social media including taking images of children	Child Safeguarding Training. Paramedic Training and upskilling. Adhere to DCC Social Media Policy.

NB: A more detailed secondary risk assessment is available on request.