



KLP

## Child Protection & Welfare Service Policy Statement

Approved KLP Board 22nd April 2020

# 1. Child Protection and Welfare Policy Statement

KLP is committed to safeguarding the children in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can play, learn and develop.

This document covers, not just the childcare facilities that KLP operates, but those children, that we come in contact with via, programmes for young people under 18, self-referrals and guidance sought by young people under 18, or those children who attend at our offices along with their parents for an appointment.

As a company which works to address social exclusion, KLP from time to time encounters children attending with their parent or guardian, for the adult's appointment, under such programmes as SICAP, TUS, RSS, etc. KLP is conscious that these children are while on KLP's premises, the company is also responsible for their safety.

Not all KLP's activities, result in the company working hands on and caring for young people, but many of the different programmes can result in staff coming in contact with young people on a daily basis e.g.

- a. A child accompanying an adult to the adult's appointment.
- b. A young person under 18, availing of KLP's services, such as CV preparation, support to 3<sup>rd</sup> Level or further education, interview skills, other training programmes.

KLP has encompassed and borne in mind the above when writing this policy and would ask the reader to do so also.

We are committed to child centred practice in all our work with children and full compliance with *Children First* and *Our Duty to Care*.

We recognise the right of children to be protected from harm, treated with respect, listened to and have their views taken into consideration in matters that affect them.

Management, staff, volunteers and students in this service recognise that the welfare of children is paramount, and our service will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Having procedures to recognise, respond to and report concerns about children's protection and welfare
- Having a confidentiality policy
- Having a code of behaviour for management, employees, students and volunteers
- Having a safe recruitment procedure
- Having procedures for managing/supervising employees, students and volunteers
- Having a procedure to respond to accidents and incidents
- Having a procedure to respond to complaints
- Having procedures to respond to allegations of abuse and neglect against staff members.

This document should be read, in conjunction with:

- KLP Staff Handbook which contains such sections as KLP's Bullying and Harassment Policy, KLP Complaints Policy and Procedure,
- KLP Data Protection Policy which includes data retention,
- KLP Equality and Diversity Policy
- KLP Safeguarding Policy

### ***1.1 As part of the policy this service will: -***

- Appoint both a Designated Liaison Person for dealing with child protection concerns and a Deputy
- Provide induction training on the Child Protection and Welfare Policy to all staff, volunteers, students and members of the board of management
- Ensure that staff attend child protection training as appropriate
- Provide supervision and support for staff and volunteers in contact with children
- Share information about the Child Protection and Welfare Policy with families and children
- This policy will be shared with parents on enrolment with our service
- This policy will be reviewed each time an incident is reported or every 2 years if that is sooner. This review will be carried out by the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy.
- Work and cooperate with the relevant statutory agencies as required.

### ***1.2 Overall Responsibility of all Employees, Board Members, Volunteers and Students***

Although the Designated Liaison Person (see section 2) has a lead on issues relating to the protection and welfare of children, it is the responsibility of all service personnel to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children in the care of the service. All staff, management, board members, relief staff and volunteers are required to read, understand and sign off on the Child Protection and Welfare Policy. It is expected that if staff, board members or volunteers have any questions about the policy or its implementation they speak with the Designated Liaison Person.

We will ensure that all personnel:

- Are aware of their responsibilities and their obligations under *Children First*
- Are aware of their responsibilities for reporting concerns and/or incidents regarding the safety or well-being of children to the Designated Liaison Person
- Maintain records to ensure relevant people attend child protection training as appropriate every three years

This policy is always applicable when children are in the care of the service, including on day trips and outings.

This policy must be observed by:

- Staff
- Special Needs Assistants<sup>1</sup>
- Board of Management
- Volunteers
- Students on placement
- Visitors to the service
- Children (depending on the age)

### ***1.3 Definition of a Child***

For the purpose of this policy, a 'child' means anyone who is under 18 years of age.

## **2. Role of the Designated Liaison Person**

2.1 *Children First* requires that every organisation providing services to children appoint a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for reporting neglect or abuse. The DLP is responsible for dealing with child protection and welfare concerns in accordance with *Children First* and *Our Duty to Care*.

The Deputy DLP will be appointed by the board of management/Coordinator to undertake the below duties when the DLP is on leave or is unavailable for a long period of time.

Designated Liaison Person	Deputy Designated Liaison Person	
Martin Rafter 087 6820748	Catherine Lennon 087 1252510	

The Role of the DLP is to:

- Provide information and advice on child protection and welfare concerns and issues to the staff of the service
- Be accessible to all staff
- Ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and welfare and that they undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments
- Ensure that the Child Protection and Welfare Policy and procedures of the service are followed

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<sup>1</sup> Where a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) attends a service with a child they are subject to the Child Protection & Welfare Policy of the service. They may also be subject to their employer's Child Protection & Welfare Policy. It is recommended that the SNA is provided with the same induction in relation to child protection and other staff members and volunteers.

- Be responsible for reporting concerns about the protection and welfare of children to TUSLA – Child & Family Agency or to An Garda Síochána
- Ensure that appropriate information is included in the report to the Child & Family Agency and that the report is submitted in writing (under confidential cover) using the Standard Report form (see Appendix (i))
- Liaise with the Child & Family Agency, An Garda Síochána and other agencies as appropriate
- Keep relevant people within the organisation informed of relevant issues, whilst maintaining confidentiality
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken by the service, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome
- Advise the organisation of child protection training needs
- Maintain a central log or record of all child protection and welfare concerns in the service

## ***2.1 Mandated Persons***

The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on certain people, to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla - Child and Family Agency. These Mandated Persons must also assist Tusla, on request, in its assessment of child protection concerns about children who have been the subject of a mandated report.

Mandated Persons are people who have contact with children and/or families and who, because of their qualifications, training and/or employment role, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Mandated Persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015.

These are:

1. To report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla;
2. To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

Mandated Persons Responsibilities:

Section 14(1) of the Children First Act 2015 states:

‘...where a Mandated Person knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information that he or she has received, acquired or becomes aware of in the course of his or her employment or profession as such a Mandated Person, that a child–

(a) has been harmed,

(b) is being harmed, or

(c) is at risk of being harmed,

he or she shall, as soon as practicable, report that knowledge, belief or suspicion, as the case may be, to the Agency.'

Section 14(2) of the Children First Act 2015 also places obligations on Mandated Persons to report any disclosures made by a child:

'Where a child believes that he or she—

(a) has been harmed,

(b) is being harmed, or

(c) is at risk of being harmed,

and discloses this belief to a Mandated Person in the course of a Mandated Person's employment or profession as such a person, the Mandated Person shall, ... as soon as practicable, report that disclosure to the Agency.'

### **3. Recognizing, Responding and Reporting Concerns about a Child's Welfare or Possible Abuse**

#### ***3.1 Recognising Concerns***

- Staff and/or volunteers may at times be concerned about the general welfare and development of children they work with and they can discuss any concerns with their Coordinator and/or Designated Liaison Person at any time.
- All staff and volunteers should be familiar with the definitions of abuse as outlined in *Children First* (see Appendix (ii)) and the signs and symptoms of abuse (see Appendix (iii)).

In accordance with *Children First*:

- Everyone must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be suffering from abuse or neglect.
- The Children and Family Agency should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected. Child protection concerns should be supported by evidence that indicates the possibility of abuse or neglect.

- A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable, should also be communicated to the Child and Family Agency.
- The guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:
  - (i) *the safety and well-being of the child must take priority*
  - (ii) *reports should be made without delay to the Child and Family Agency.*
- Any reasonable concern or suspicion of abuse or neglect must elicit a response. Ignoring the signals or failing to intervene may result in ongoing or further harm to the child.
- Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 introduced the criminal charge of reckless endangerment of children. It states:

‘A person, having authority or control over a child or abuser, who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by – (a) causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse, or (b) failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation, is guilty of an offence.’

The penalty for a person found guilty of this offence is a fine (no upper limit) and/or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years.

### ***3.2 A concern could come to your attention in several ways:***

- A child tells you or indicates that she/he is being abused. This is called a disclosure (see Appendix (iv)) for guidance on responding to a disclosure from a child)
- An admission or indication from the alleged abuser
- A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable
- Information from someone who saw the child being abused
- Evidence of an injury or behaviour that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- An injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse, but an innocent explanation is given
- Concern about the behaviour or practice of a colleague.

All Personnel are expected to consult *Children First* and the *Child Protection & Welfare Practice Handbook* for detailed information on the signs and symptoms of abuse.

### **3.3 Procedures for Responding to a Child Protection or Welfare Concern**

- Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk pending Child & Family Agency intervention. In the event of an emergency and unavailability of a Duty Social Worker, the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána
- If the child has made a disclosure, a written record will be made. If there are other grounds for concern that the child has been abused or neglected, a written record will be made
- If there are reasonable grounds for concern (see Appendix (V)) the DLP will complete the Standard Report Form without delay and send it to the Duty Social Work Team in the Child and Family Agency (See below for contact details).

Duty Social Work Team, Tusla – Child & Family Agency	An Garda Síochána	
Child and Family Agency, Social Work Office, Childcare Department, Carlow/Kilkenny, St.Canices Hospital, Dublin Rd, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny. 059 9136570	Kilkenny City Garda Station Dominic Street, Kilkenny 056 777 5000	

- If the concern is urgent and the child is in immediate danger, the report to the Child & Family Agency will be made by telephone and followed up with the completed Standard Report Form.
- In the event of an emergency and the unavailability of a Duty Social Worker the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána
- The DLP may use the process of informal consultation with the Duty Social worker to discuss the response to a child protection & welfare concern and whether or not it warrants reasonable grounds for concern. Informal consultation is carried out without providing the name of the family or the child. If advised to do so, a formal report will be made.
- The DLP will record information about the concern, informal consultation (if carried out) and details regarding if and when the parents were informed.

### **3.4 Community Services/Services with a Voluntary Management Committee:**

Where there is a voluntary management committee in place, the chairperson/delegated board member; Martin Rafter is informed each time a referral or report is made under the

Child Protection and Welfare Policy. In accordance with the confidentiality policy no identifying information is included when informing the chairperson.

**Other Services:** If the owner is not the DLP they are informed when a referral or a report is made under the Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

#### ***Duty Social Work***

*A list of all the duty social work teams can be accessed here:*

<http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker>

### ***3.5 Procedure when a referral is not made to the Child & Family Agency***

- Not all concerns will meet the reasonable grounds for concern. In this case, the concern and any informal consultation will be documented and kept confidentially and securely.
- The DLP will inform the member of staff, volunteer or student who raised the concern that it is not being referred in writing, indicating the reasons. The DLP will advise the individual that they may make a report themselves or contact the Duty Social Work Team and that the provision of the *Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998* will apply<sup>2</sup>.

### ***3.6 Informing Parents about Child Protection and Welfare Concerns***

- Good communication with parents is very important in ensuring best outcomes for children and any concerns about the health and well-being of a child will always be discussed with parents from the outset.
- **When a child protection concern is being reported to the Child & Family Agency, good practice indicates that parents should be informed about the report unless doing so may put the child at further risk.** The DLP may seek advice from the Child and Family Agency Social Work Department in relation to this.

### ***3.7 Responding to a Retrospective Disclosure by an Adult of abuse as a child***

- In relation to retrospective disclosures, it is imperative that all child protection concerns are examined and addressed.
- An increasing number of adults are disclosing abuse that took place during their childhood. If a staff member becomes aware of a retrospective concern they should follow the reporting procedure and speak with the DLP. If any risk is deemed to exist to a

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<sup>2</sup> The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides protection from civil liability and penalisation by an employer where reports are made to designated officers in the HSE or to An Garda Síochána reasonably and in good faith.

child who may be in contact with an alleged abuser, the service should report the concern to the Children and Family agency without delay.

- Information about relevant support services may be provided to the adult if appropriate

## **4. Confidentiality Statement**

KLP has an extensive Data Protection Policy as part of its GDPR requirements, which must be adhered to by all staff at all times, it includes, document storage and retention also.

- The effective protection of a child often depends on the willingness of the staff in statutory and voluntary organisations involved with children to share and exchange relevant information. It is therefore critical that there is a clear understanding of professional and legal responsibilities with regard to confidentiality and the exchange of information.
- All information regarding concern or assessment of child abuse or neglect should be shared on 'a need to know' basis in the interests of the child with the relevant statutory authorities.
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with a child and family should make this clear to all parties involved, although they can be assured that all information will be handled taking full account of legal requirements.
- Ethical and statutory codes concerned with confidentiality and data protection provide general guidance. They are not intended to limit or prevent the exchange of information between different professional staff with a responsibility for ensuring the protection and welfare of children. The provision of information to the statutory agencies for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.
- It must be clearly understood that information gathered for one purpose must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided that information.

### ***4.1 Allegations of Abuse or Neglect against Employees, Students or Volunteers***

In dealing with an allegation of abuse or neglect against employees KLP may seek legal advice and/or Human Resource Management advice.

The protection and welfare of the children in the service are paramount and their safety and well-being is the priority. However, KLP also has a duty and responsibility, as an employer, in respect of its employees. There are two procedures to be followed when an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against an employee:

1. Reporting procedure in respect of any child protection and welfare concern
2. The procedure in respect to the allegation against the employee

Two different people will be nominated to manage each procedure. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to call on external people who are independent to the parties.

- The Designated Liaison Person will be responsible for reporting the matter to the Child & Family Agency (as per the reporting procedure) while the employer Kilkenny Leader Partnership is responsible for addressing the employment issues, as per the KLP grievance and staff hand book.
- If the concern meets the reasonable grounds for reporting, then it will be referred without delay to the Child & Family Agency.
- To be reported to the Child and Family Agency the allegation must meet the reasonable grounds for reporting of a concern, informal consultation with the Child & Family Agency may be used to determine if reasonable grounds are present.
- All staff and volunteers in the service are made aware of who to contact should they become aware of an allegation of abuse or neglect against any employee in the service.
- Written records are very important: If a disclosure is made by a child, a written record of the disclosure should be made as soon as possible by the person receiving it. Where an allegation of abuse or neglect is made by an adult, a written record of the allegation should be made and a written statement should be sought from this person.
- Where an employer becomes aware of an allegation of abuse by an employee while executing their duties, an employer should privately inform the employee of the following:

- (i) The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her
- (ii) The nature of the allegation.

The employee should be afforded the opportunity to respond; the response should be noted and passed onto the Child & Family Agency with the formal report.

- All stages of the process should be recorded.
- An investigation may be required. This will be carried out by Kilkenny Leader Partnership as per its complaints procedure.
- Whether or not the matter is being reported to the Child & Family Agency, the employer is always informed of an allegation of abuse or neglect against an employee.
- Confidentiality: It is always essential that the matter is treated in the strictest confidence and that the identity of the employee is not disclosed, other than as required under the procedures within this policy.
- Protective measures may be required while the allegation is being investigated. The principles of natural justice, the presumption of innocence and fair procedures should be adhered to. Protective measures are intended to be precautionary and not disciplinary.
- The employer will maintain regular and close liaison with the Child & Family Agency and or An Garda Síochána and ensure that no action by the service frustrates or undermines any investigation.
- Further action will be guided by employment legislation, the contract of employment, the other policies and procedures of the service, staff handbook (including the disciplinary policy) and the advice of the investigating agencies.
- *KLP may seek legal advice when dealing with allegations of abuse or neglect against an employee.*

#### ***4.2 Parents and allegation of abuse or neglect against employees***

- Parents have the right to contact the Child & Family Agency to report an allegation of abuse or neglect about the employee or service.
- Parents of children who are named in an allegation of abuse or neglect will be kept informed of actions planned and taken, having regard to the rights of others concerned.
- If there is any concern that a child may have been harmed their parents will be informed immediately.

### **5. Record Keeping**

Under the Child Care (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, accurate and up to date records in relation to children, staff and service provision must be kept. The Early Years (Preschool) Inspectorate will have access to files for inspection purposes.

Parents may have access to the files and records of their own children on request but may not have access to information about any other child.

Only employees involved with a particular child should have access to confidential files in line with KLP Data Protection Policies

Records are stored in compliance with 2016 Child Care Regulations.

Where there are child protection or welfare concerns, observations/records will be kept on an ongoing basis and information shared with the Child and Family Agency as appropriate. These will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a separate file to the child's individual file.

Procedures are in place for archiving records, as per the document storage and retention Policy contained in KLP Data Protection Policy.

All records will be managed in line with the service Data Protection Policy and the data Protection Acts of 1988 and 2003, and the 2016 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### **6. Code of Behaviour**

We at KLP recognise the importance of a Code of Behaviour between staff and children as recommended in *Our Duty to Care*. Our Code of Behaviour is kept under regular review. The Code of Behaviour supports all staff and volunteers to have a clear understanding of what is acceptable with respect to their behaviour with children.

- We recognise that children have an equal right to our service provision in line with the *Equal Status Acts* and the *National Disability Strategy*.
- We are committed to -
  - Valuing and respecting all children as individuals
  - Listening to children
  - Involving children in decision making as appropriate
  - Encouraging children to express themselves
  - Working in partnership with parents
  - Promoting positive behaviour
  - Valuing difference
  - Implementing and adhering to all relevant policies to keep children safe
- KLP adheres to current adult child ratios as laid out in the Child Care Act 1991(Early years Services) regulations 2016, in all childcare facilities, and events or activities involving children.
- The Code of Behaviour will be given to all staff and volunteers at induction and it is expected that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the code and that they will raise any questions arising with their Coordinator.
- All employees have a duty to adhere to the Code of the Behaviour and to bring breaches of the code to the attention of their line Coordinator. Breaches of the Code of Behaviour are dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.
- KLP disciplinary procedures can be found in the KLP Staff Handbook.

## **7. Safe Recruitment**

We will ensure that all staff and volunteers are carefully selected in line with the Service Recruitment Policy and the Child Care (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 where applicable. The following will be undertaken:

- Development of job description which outlines the qualifications, skills and experience needed for each post
- Advertising vacancies externally and as widely as practicable
- Requesting candidates to supply personal information on an application form
- Interviews will be conducted by more than one person. It is the responsibility of the interview panel and not one individual to appoint staff/volunteers
- All processes should be consistent and transparent. (i.e. interview questions agreed in advance, scoring sheets and feedback to candidates)
- Prior to an offer of employment being made, two references from previous employers (including the most recent) should be supplied, verified and kept on file.

- Prior to commencement of position, proof of identity including address (passport, driving licence or ID card) will be requested and kept on file.
  - Prior to commencement of position satisfactory Garda Vetting will be in place for all staff or volunteers working with Children.
  - The development of criteria on decision making regarding suitability in the event of a vetting disclosure (Garda Vetting Policy)
- Any child protection and welfare concerns that arise through the recruitment process should be dealt with through the reporting procedures as outlined in Section 3
  - All new appointments will be subject to a probationary period of three months and a review meeting will be held before the post is confirmed.
  - All employees will be provided with an employment contract and Staff Handbook.

### ***7.1 Personnel File***

An up-to-date and accurate personnel file is kept for each member of staff that includes the following records:

- proof of identity and that the person is over 18 years of age
- proof of satisfactory Garda Vetting if applicable.
- two validated references, including a reference from the most recent place of employment
- verification of qualifications
- Investigation of any gaps in employment
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## **8. Induction, Training and Supervision/Support**

### ***8.1 Induction for new employees, students and volunteers:***

As part of the induction process, all new management, staff, volunteers and students will be briefed on all the elements of the Child Protection and Welfare Policy including the ethos of the service, child centred practice and the Code of Behaviour, within the first week of employment.

All management, staff, volunteers and students will be required to commit to and abide by the Child Protection and Welfare Policy. They are required to confirm that they have read and understand the Child Protection and Welfare Policy with their signature.

### ***8.2 Training on Child Protection:***

The DLP and deputy DLP will be released to attend *Always Children First* Training and/or other relevant training as identified and we will ensure that the DLP and Deputy DLP attend child protection training every 3 years.

All management, staff and volunteers will be encouraged to attend child protection and other relevant training as identified.

Staff will be provided with information in relation to particular skills training to encourage professional development and best practice.

### ***8.3 Staff Supervision and Support***

Regular supervision and support is available to staff and volunteers, through one to one meetings or group meetings.

Staff will be supported while dealing with a child protection concern and outside support will be sought where necessary, the costs of this will be borne by the company.

## **9. Responding to Complaints**

### ***9.1 Policy Statement:***

We work in partnership with parents by seeking their views and encouraging parents to participate in any decision making in relation to the service. We welcome comments/suggestions on the delivery of the service. KLP have a robust Complaints Procedure and Policy, which will be utilised in cases where there is a complaint being made against the company or staff members.

### ***9.2 Procedures for Responding to a Complaint***

- We undertake to ensure all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly, impartially and confidentially, in line with KLP's Complaints Procedure and Policy.
- We will endeavour to quickly and informally resolve complaints through discussion with parents and members of staff as appropriate.
- Parents will be made aware that there is a complaints procedure in operation as part of enrolment/intake.
- If we find that we have made a mistake or that something could have been done better, we will change the way we do things to avoid making the same mistake in future.
- Complaints can be made by parents, guardians and other advocates on behalf of children.
- If a parent is not satisfied with any aspect of the service, they are requested to resolve the issue informally through discussion with the room leader.
- If the problem persists, re-occurs or the parent is not satisfied with the response, the complaint should be put in writing to the Assistant CEO & Social Inclusion Programmes Manager – Martin Rafter. If the issue is not resolved at this stage.

- The Board of Management may then nominate a committee member to meet with the parents and the room leader/Coordinator to try and resolve the issue.
- Most complaints are resolved by this stage. However, if there are other or more serious issues arising from the complaint or it cannot be resolved then both sides may agree the need for a third party to mediate in relation to the complaint.
- Written records of discussion and agreements made will be kept of this meeting and copies made available to parents, room leader, or another involved staff (as appropriate).
- All complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner.

## **10 Managing/Day Trips Outing from the Service**

### ***10.1 Policy Statement***

KLP aims to provide children with a varied and wide experience and from time to time the service may organize day trips and outings. It is our policy to ensure the safety and well-being of children during these activities through planning, risk assessment, management and supervision of the activity.

### ***10.2 Managing Routine Outings***

KLP goes on outings when weather permits. In managing and planning these activities we will:

- Inform parents at enrolment of the proposed activity, method of travel and supervision in place
- Seek written consent from the parents; children will not be able to participate in this activity unless this has been obtained
- Ensure an adequate number of personnel are present and that the children are supervised at all times
- Ensure that the person in charge will have access to the service mobile phone in case of emergency
- A risk assessment of the venue/facility will be carried out and reviewed annually
- Ensure that adequate insurance is in place for the outing
- Ensure staff are familiar with emergency procedures

### ***10.3 Managing and Planning Day Trips/Outings***

At KLP we recognise the importance of trips and outings and encourage children to participate in planned or spontaneous trips and outings in order to enhance the opportunities provided

Aims:

- Ensure Children regularly partake in walks and outings.
- Ensure outings are planned appropriately and conducted in a safe supervised manner.

All policies and procedures that are implemented throughout KLP must continue to be implemented while on the trip/outing in addition to the procedures set out below.

For local outings (where staff and children walk) parents will give permission on the annual registration form. There are four local walks that the children partake in.

Any outings outside of these, written consent will be sought. Parents will be encouraged to attend the outings but they will only be in charge of their child and will never be left unsupervised with any children.

The procedures below are specific to Childcare facilities managed by KLP. But it can arise from time to time that trips may be arranged involving teenagers, or youths under the age of 18 who are still considered children. In such cases the same procedures will be applied, using the appropriate staffing ration.

**10.3.1** A risk assessment will be carried out before each outing and staff will follow the following procedures:

1. Advise parents on appropriate clothing and equipment for the outing e.g. wellies, raincoats, packed lunches etc.
2. Operate a maximum adult ratio of 1adult: 3 children unless the risk assessment deems the need for the ratio to be less.
3. Each adult will be deemed responsible for the same children for the entire trip.
4. Designate one staff member as outings leader. This will be a senior member of staff.
5. A first aid qualified staff member must always accompany the outing.

**10.3.2** The Outings Leader will:

1. Carry out a risk assessment ahead of the outings. Should this be a regular outing a risk assessment will be carried out every 6 months and staff will be mindful of potential risks on each visit. A walks and outings form will be filled out before each journey.
2. Ensure that the children know who their main carer on the outing is and ensure that they stay together as one group.
3. Plan a safe route and ensure pedestrian crossings are used.
4. Take a list of the children; parents contact details, fully charged mobile phone, first aid box.
5. Ensure each staff member remains vigilant at all times.
6. Inform parents of destination, methods of travel, times of departure and expected times of arrival.
7. Take a group photograph before leaving.

**10.3.3** Staff Members will:

1. Ensure that the staff to adult ratio is 1:3 (or less dependant on the outing) is maintained at all times. Ratio of 1:4 for after school age.
2. Fill out a walks and outings form in the office before leaving on the walk, this form contains information on where the outing will be, what children and

staff are present, how long the walk will last, the staff member's contact number and must be signed by the Afterschool's Coordinator.

3. Take a first aid kit for the group.
4. Take the crèche mobile phone and contact numbers for staff and children.
5. Take anything else that is deemed necessary for the comfort of the walk or outing.
6. Contact the crèche at least once whilst out.
7. Take the register of the children attending the trip before setting off, on arrival, once during the outing, before departure and again on arrival back at the nursery.
8. Take as many head counts as deemed necessary throughout the walk or outing.
9. Ensure any incident that occurs on the outing is recorded in writing on return.

### ***11.4 Use of bus hire for outings***

When planning an outing using bus hire, KLP will ensure that all vehicles are properly licensed and insured.

The Service Coordinator will ensure the following procedures are followed:

1. Ensure that written consent has been obtained from all parents
2. Ensure the bus is fitted with sufficient safety restraints for all the children
3. Ensure the maximum seating is not exceeded
4. Ensure all children will be accompanied by staff members
5. No child will be left on the bus unattended
6. A staff member will be at the back and front of the bus at all times.
7. Care will be taken when getting in or out of a bus. Where possible the bus will park away from busy roads and children will enter and exit on the pavement side.
8. Afterschool's outings are organized in line with the crèche insurance policy.
9. Ensure that for the children remaining in the crèche adult: child ratios and all other requirements are met.

### ***11.5 Missing Child Policy and procedure***

**Policy** At KLP we work closely with the children, parents and the community to ensure that all the children are kept safe.

#### **11.5.1**

Procedure for a missing child

If a child goes missing on school premises, whilst in our care or on a trip of any kind, the person in charge will take the following action:

- Gather all the children safely together and take the register/head count to ensure no other child is missing.
- Conduct an initial sweep of the immediate area without causing undue panic amongst the other children, and/or leaving the children alone at any time.

- When it is confirmed that a child is missing, the person in charge at that time should contact the Coordinator
- Maintain staff ratios.
- Instigate a more thorough search of the premises and immediate surrounding area.
- Advise the Coordinator of a missing child so that all staff in the crèche can be asked to check their immediate area
- Contact should be maintained at all times with management.
- If after 15 minutes the child is still not found, telephone contact will be made with the child's parents/guardians and the Guards. Then a full search can be carried out.

### **11.5.2**

#### **Outings**

When children are being taken away from the school on outings, staff will ensure that the following procedure is followed:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff will bring the children in their care together and conduct a head count to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- Conduct an initial sweep of the immediate area including any pre-arranged meeting points, without causing undue panic amongst the other children, and/or leaving the children alone at any time.
- Summon assistance (i.e. Site security) to carry out a wider search of the area.
- If after 15 minutes the child has not been found, contact the Coordinator to report a missing child.
- Coordinator will contact the missing child's parents to inform them of the situation.
- The Guards should be contacted to report a missing child.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting

### **11.5.3**

#### **Procedure once a child has been located;**

When a missing child has been located, all those previously notified (parents, police), must be notified immediately. Once the child has been found, a full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file by the member of staff who was responsible for the child at the time that they disappeared and an investigation into the incident will be carried out by the Coordinator.

The incident report will detail:

1. The date and time of the incident
2. Which staff/children were in the group to which the missing child belonged
3. When the missing child was last seen
4. The estimated time that the child went missing.
5. Circumstances surrounding the child's disappearance –
  - What was the child doing/saying prior to going missing?

If the incident warrants a Garda investigation, all staff are required to co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Tusla may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address. The Afterschool's Insurance Company should be informed. Following the event, a review will be made of security procedures and all relevant parties will be informed of the findings, implications and outcomes of the review.

## **12. Dealing with Accidents or Incidents**

It is our policy to promote the health, well-being and safety of all the children in our service through the implementation of robust policies and procedures and by developing and regularly reviewing accident prevention procedures and fire safety. Although we adhere to all safety precautions and guidelines, accidents may occur.

### ***12.1 Responding to an Accident or Incident***

- We will ensure that all personnel are aware of emergency numbers and that they are prominently displayed.
- We will ensure that all relevant personnel have up to date First Aid Training and that a complete First Aid Box is accessible.
- The safety and welfare of the child is always the first consideration if a child is injured or an accident occurs.
- After an accident, as soon as practicable, the accident Report Form is completed and recorded in the accident book/log.
- The Coordinator is informed of serious accidents or incidents.
- Parents are always informed of incidents or accidents involving their child and requested to sign the relevant form.
- The Coordinator will review the accident and incident reports annually

## **13. Social Media Policy**

### ***13.1 Camera and photograph usage***

KLP uses photographs to display evidence of the activities children take part in during the day. They are also used as evidence for observations, curriculum planning etc.

- Recorded images are only made, kept and used where there is a valid reason associated with an activity.

- Only the two crèche cameras are to be used to take photographs of the children. These never leave the premises and are stored in a locked cabinet at night.
- Staff or students are not permitted to use their own personal cameras or mobile phone cameras at any time.
- Permission will be sought for the children's Learning Journals in Pre School. This allows group photographs to be taken and put into each Child's book.
- Parents may use camera or video recording at scheduled open days at the service, e.g. (Drama shows / graduation days). This is on the condition that it is not shared on social media.
- Images taken will always be of a positive nature and never used to hurt or humiliate a child in any way.
- Parent's wishes that their child not be photographed will be respected.

CCTV images and recordings of children in the service are only accessible to the following: -

- CCTV not installed as of yet

### ***13.2 Social Media***

Social media is used for the purpose of promoting the Service.

Social Media Administrator; Sharon Stone.

The role of the social media administrator is to verify all social media posts (including those by parents) before they are published online. Children in the service will not be engaged with on social media. In relation to Facebook, children in the service will not be "friended".

## Appendix 1 Risk Assessment

### Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

RISK IDENTIFIED	PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO MANAGE RISK
Child abused within setting	Vetting in place to include Garda vetting, police checks, validated references. No unsupervised access by unauthorised personnel. Staff aware of mandated requirement to report abuse. Staff trained in child protection DLPs appointed Mandated persons named and listed Visitors or persons unknown to staff will not have unsupervised access and visiting times will, if possible, be arranged when children are not present as they are unvetted.
Inappropriate curriculum and activities	Curriculum Policy developed to be age and stage appropriate and is monitored by the Manager on on-going basis
Infection/illness	Infection Control Policy in place and followed, Illness Exclusion Policy in place and followed, Hand washing signs installed
Lost child	Missing Child Policy in place and followed, Outing Policy in place and followed. Risk Assessments carried out, Critical Incident Plan in place. Access to the building is gained by using the keypad.
Accidents and incidents	Safety Statement in place, Risk Assessments carried out following an accident and corrective action taken, Accident and Incident Policy in place and followed
Medication errors/ Child not treated for a condition	Medicines Policy in place and followed Parental Consent Forms signed, Individual Child Care/Emergency Plans in place

Child not collected/ Unauthorised collection and Access Rights	Collections Policy in place and followed, Emergency Collectors available, Parental Agreements & Permissions in place, Child Registration Form completed with emergency contacts and authorisations. Children are not released to unauthorised persons. Where there is a dispute between parents we will seek legal clarification regarding access and may require copies of a court order  If we have never met a parent and a parent is not listed on the registration form we may seek clarification of identity before engaging with the parent
Dignity of the child violated. Sexual abuse	Toileting Policy in place and followed, Nappy Changing policy if applicable in place Sanitary Area suitable where children's privacy is maintained. Child and Adult Protection Policy.
Illness or infection due to poor nutrition	Healthy Eating Policy in place and followed, Food Hygiene Policy is in place and followed.
Unsuitable staff	Recruitment and Selection Policy, Garda Vetting Policy, Relevant validated References, Child and Adult Protection Policy, Risk Assessment of Disclosures on Garda Vetting forms completed if required
Poor behaviour strategies where the dignity of the child is undermined	Managing Behaviour Policy in place and followed Positive strategies only used No Corporal punishment No isolation Professional assistance sought for very challenging behaviour
Un-vetted students/volunteers	Garda Vetting Policy, Students and Volunteers Policy
Access to inappropriate online resources. Unauthorised sharing of images and information about a child	Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices Policy, Parental Consent Forms completed. No images of children published externally or on social media, No mobile phones allowed in classrooms
Injury during sleep	Safe Sleep Policy in operation
Fire	Fire Safety policy in place Monthly fire drills Staff trained in fire prevention and response Fire Equipment maintained

**Responsibility**

The DLP is responsible for ensuring the above risks are managed

## **Appendix 2**

### **KLP list of all mandated persons.**

#### **Community Care Health project:**

Eileen Delaney  
Margaret Mary O'Reilly  
Josie Cash  
Bridget Cash  
Hannah Carthy  
Hannah Carthy Jnr (CE employee)  
Catherine Lennon

#### **KLP Staff who may have access to children or young adults under 18 from time to time.**

Yuvraj Basanth  
Therese Curran  
Amanda DeBurca  
Ljiljana Dolenc  
Fergus Horgan  
Moirra Hutchison  
Alison Iremonger  
Miriam Kelly  
Tom McDonald  
Margaret Morrissey  
Hannah O'Gorman  
Martin Rafter  
SARAH RAFTER  
Mike Redmond  
Brian Spratt

**Programme KLP is responsible for assisting, but separate company**

**KTCM:**

Kitty Murphy  
Kathleen Cash

**KTCM Afterschool service :**

John Carty  
Martina McInerney  
Brigid O'Reilly  
Angela Flynn  
Tara Roche  
Shona Lynch  
Mickey Flynn