

**CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT**

**FOR**

**MEATH ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT CLG – FLEXIBUS**

**(published February 2018)**

**1. NAME OF SERVICE AND SERVICE PROVIDED**

Meath Accessible Transport CLG – Flexibus was established in 2002 to provide safe, accessible and efficient rural transport services to adults and children in Louth, Meath and Fingal, in response to local demands. We are regulated by the National Transport Authority to provide rural services under the Locallink program.

**2. COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM**

This statement has been developed to reinforce our commitment to the safety and welfare of children utilising our services and to parents, carers and the community, of our commitment to the protection and safeguarding of children.

Our service believes that the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults utilising our service is paramount. We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and vulnerable adult who utilises our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to and heard.

- Our Child Protection policy and procedures (4.3.1) reflects national policy and legislation and are underpinned by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Tusla Children First - Child Safeguarding Guide 2017, and the Children First Act 2015.
- Our policies apply to all paid staff, volunteers, committee and board members, participants on training programmes and those contracted to work within our organisation (herein referred to as 'the Flexibus team'). All members of the Flexibus team must sign up to and abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by our Child Protection Policy (4.3.1), our Child Safeguarding Statement, all other relevant policies listed in point 4 and accompanying procedures.
- We will review our Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Child Safeguarding Statement as necessary, due to service issues or changes in legislation or national policy.
- We have appointed **Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP** to act as a resource person to any member of the Flexibus team, a liaison with outside agencies, and to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Child and Family Agency Duty Social Worker, or An Garda Síochána as per Tusla's "Child Safeguarding – A Guide for Policy Procedure and Practice." (Best Practice Theme 3 – Responding to and reporting child protection or welfare concerns)

**DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSONS**

<b>DLP: Deirdre Murtagh</b>	<b>Deputy DLP: Patricia Cassidy</b>
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### 3. RISK ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Meath Accessible Transport CLG – Flexibus, has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while utilising our service. Full details can be found in our Child Care Policy 4.3.1. A summary of the areas of risk identified, and Flexibus’s procedures for minimising those risks, is below:

Risk 1: A member of the Flexibus team might abuse a child or vulnerable adult utilising our service

- All potential members of the Flexibus team will be recruited in accordance with our Employment (4.1.1), Garda Vetting (4.1.3) and Whistle-blower (4.1.8) Policies and Procedures

Risk 2: Another person utilising our service might abuse a child or vulnerable adult also utilising our Service

- all members of the Flexibus team will undergo a comprehensive induction program (see Policies 4.2.1-4)
- all members of the Flexibus team will successfully complete Tusla’s E-Learning Programme – An Introduction to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, within 2 weeks of commencing at Flexibus
- a Designated Liaison Person and Deputy DLP will be available to members of the Flexibus team

Risk 3: Staff or volunteers may not recognise signs that a child is being abused or neglected or be aware of the process for reporting concerns

- all members of the Flexibus team will undergo a comprehensive induction program (see Policies 4.2.1-4)
- all members of the Flexibus team will successfully complete Tusla’s E-Learning Programme – An Introduction to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, within 2 weeks of commencing at Flexibus
- a Designated Liaison Person and Deputy DLP will be available to members of the Flexibus team

### 4. RELEVANT CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), and Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the procedures contained in our risk assessment, the following policies and procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Child Protection Policy and Procedures (4.3.1)
- Anti-Bullying Policy While Travelling on the Bus (4.3.2)
- Confidentiality Policy (4.5.8)
- Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Against Employees
- Procedure for Managing Child Protection Records
- Employment Policy (4.1.1)
- Garda Vetting Policy (4.1.3)
- Induction Policy (which includes procedures to inform new staff about the Child Safeguarding Statement and accompanying safeguarding policies and procedures) (4.2.1)
- Whistle-blower Policy (4.1.8)

- All staff will have completed the Tusla eLearning module – *Introduction to Children First* and relevant staff have attended Always Children First Child Protection Training.
- Staff have access to regular Supervision and Support in line with the service policy.
- Complaints Policy (4.5.16)
- Code of Conduct Policy (4.2.4)
- Policy for Managing Accidents and Incidents
- Social Media Policy (4.5.4)

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.
- This Statement will be reviewed as necessary and after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.
- This statement has been published on the service website and is displayed in the service. It has been provided to all staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla if requested.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 13/03/2018

Chairperson : John Burns.