

How to recognise and report child protection / welfare concerns in line with SDCC's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Staff Manual

Definition of 'child' means a person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or has been married.

All South Dublin County Council staff and those contractors and volunteers who come in contact with children in the course of carrying out work on behalf of the Council must adhere to the reporting procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Staff Manual. Below is a brief outline of this procedure.

What to do if you become aware of something of concern:

- In a situation where a child is in **immediate risk** - contact the Gardaí without delay by dialling 999 / 112. Then contact the duty worker in the housing welfare section to ensure that a report in relation to the situation is submitted to Tusla- Child and Family Agency.
- In other instances where there is a concern about a child, discuss your concerns with your line-manager (if possible)-and email the duty social worker, Housing - Duty Social Worker (dutysocialworker@sdublincoco.ie) with an outline of your concerns, as a matter of urgency. Follow this up with an immediate phone call to the duty social worker (to ensure that the email has been seen). If you are not able to send an email, ring the duty social worker immediately on 01 414 9025 and give a verbal account of your concerns. A report outlining your concerns will then be submitted to Tusla, if necessary.
- If an adult discloses to you that they experienced abuse as a child this is a **retrospective disclosure** which must be reported to Tusla so that an assessment can be made as to whether the alleged perpetrator poses a current risk to children. Please report any concerns in relation to retrospective disclosures to the either the housing welfare Deputy Designated Officer / the duty social worker or the HR Deputy Designated Officer (if the matter relates to a member of staff).

***Please note: Contact any housing welfare social worker if you are unable to get hold of the duty social worker, or if you do not know which social worker is on duty.**

Allegations of abuse of a child / young person, against an employee or volunteer, must be made to the HR Deputy Designated Officer.

A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time:

Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an **omission**, where the child / young person suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and / or medical care.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the **relationship** between a parent / carer and a child / young person rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's / young person's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child / young person is used by another person for their gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse of a child / young person is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust.

Do not keep your concerns to yourself – talk to a member of staff responsible for child safeguarding.

Staff Responsible for Child Safeguarding

Designated Officer

Director of Corporate Performance and Change Management – Lorna Maxwell
lmawell@sdblincoco.ie

Deputy Designated Officer

Senior Social Worker – Niamh Milliken nmilliken@sdblincoco.ie

Administrative Officer, Human Resources – Caroline O'Reilly
coreilly@sdblincoco.ie

Support Contact Person in HR

Administrative Officer, Human Resources – Deirdre Wall dwall@sdblincoco.ie

Housing Welfare Duty Social Work

dutysocialworker@sdblincoco.ie