



**An Roinn Leanaí  
agus Gnóthaí Óige**  
Department of Children  
and Youth Affairs

# **CHILDREN FIRST SECTORAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**[PUBLISHED BY THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
AFFAIRS UNDER SECTION 27 OF THE CHILDREN FIRST ACT  
2015]**

**MARCH 2018**

**(FOR REVIEW MARCH 2021)**

## **Foreword by Minister for Children and Youth Affairs**

“I am delighted to publish the Children First Sectoral Implementation Plan for my Department, as required by the Children First Act 2015.

The Plan describes, for the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the range of services for children provided directly or funded by my Department, and sets out the programme of measures in place to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance in respect of those services.

My commitment to child safeguarding is well known. The process of commencing all provisions of the Children First Act 2015 concluded on 11 December 2017. In addition to the provisions relating to Departmental Sectoral Implementation Plans, that date also marked the very significant introduction of the provisions in relation to mandated reporting of child abuse, and requirements in relation to Child Safeguarding Statements. The Sectoral Implementation Plans are the vehicle for ensuring that public funding is linked to full compliance with those statutory requirements.

In respect of my own Department, as would be expected, and as should be the case, the vast majority of our budget ultimately ends up in a service to a child or young person. From Early Years to Youth Affairs, and from Adoption to Youth Justice, the core of my Department’s remit is services to improve the lives of children and young people. Accordingly, my Department’s responsibilities in relation to ensuring that this funding is firmly linked to the highest standards of child safeguarding are significant.

Even before the commencement of the Children First Act, and the requirement for a Sectoral Implementation Plan, child safeguarding was high on the agenda of my Department. In anticipation of statutory obligations, best practice standards were applied, and in my engagement with the range of sectors under my remit, I was always impressed by their commitment to child safeguarding, and their efforts to continually drive improvement.

The Children First Act now imposes a statutory framework on us all. I am committed, as is my Department, to fully meeting all our obligations under the Act, and to ensuring that those who receive funding from my Department do the same.

Our children and young people deserve no less.”

**Dr. Katherine Zappone T.D.**  
**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs**  
**March 2018**

## **Background**

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs focuses on harmonising policy issues that affect children in areas such as early childhood care and education, youth justice, child welfare and protection, children and young people's participation, research on children and young people, youth work and cross-cutting initiatives for children. The Department has a budget of €1.356bn in 2018, and a staffing complement of 246, and funds a range of services for children and young people, directly and through NGOs and funded agencies, including Tusla. Most of the Department's funded services fall within the definition of relevant services to Children under the Children First Act 2015.

Given the remit of the Department, the safeguarding of children is central to the ethos of the Department. The Department is fully committed to meeting all its statutory obligations in relation to child protection, and is further committed to striving to continuously developing best practice standards in all its activities. However, the Department also recognises the central importance of helping children and young people to meet their full potential, and is committed to balancing proportionate risk to continuing to engage with children.

## **Requirements of the Children First Act 2015**

This Children First Sectoral Implementation Plan has been prepared and published in accordance with the Children First Act 2015. Section 27 of the Children First Act 2015 requires each Minister to prepare and publish a Sectoral Implementation Plan in relation to services to children delivered or funded by the Department. Relevant services in this context are defined in Schedule 1 of the Act. The Sectoral Implementation Plan must contain the following:

- A description of the relevant services provided by or on behalf of the Department;
- An outline of the programme of measures taken, or to be taken, to ensure that the Department and any body funded by the Department, is in compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance [namely, the Children First Act 2015 and *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children [2017]*];
- An outline of the measures taken or proposed to be taken to promote, review and report on compliance under the legislation and guidance;
- Monitoring and review procedures in relation to the Sectoral Implementation Plan.

The Sectoral Implementation Plan, in accordance with Section 27(4) of the Act, must be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas. It will also be available on the Department's website.

## **Relevant services provided by or on behalf of the Department**

The development of the Department's Sectoral Implementation Plan was preceded by an audit of every Unit of the Department. Each unit was tasked with identifying any relevant services for children provided by, or funded by, the Unit. They were also required to set out the measures in place, or proposed to be taken, to ensure that the Department itself, or the funded service or body, were in compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance.

The full set of responses at Unit level is attached at *Appendix 1*.

In addition, there may on occasion be activities carried out by this Department which are not classed as relevant services under Schedule 1 of the Act, but which involve interactions with children. It is also the case that various units of the Department may, in the course of their work, receive correspondence or other communications giving rise to child protection concerns. In line with best practice, this Department has in place policies, procedures and training to support staff and to ensure that Children First principles are understood and followed.

### **Overview of compliance arrangements**

The range of services provided or funded by the Department stretches from once off funding of small projects, to significant funding of sectors, including Early Years and Youth Affairs, and of Agencies, including Tusla, which has a budget in excess of €750m. Child protection was already a significant feature of engagement in relation to DCYA funding, with in many cases, child protection structures and supports in place, including provision of training.

Full commencement of the Children First Act 2015 is now complete, with the provisions relating to mandated reporting and Child Safeguarding Statements commencing on 11 December 2017. Funded agencies and services are now required, in the context of the normal governance processes, to assure the Department that they have identified and are compliant with, all their legal requirements under the Children First Act.

All Units in the Department will now integrate the additional obligations of the Children First legislation into their usual governance and compliance engagement with agencies and services receiving funding from the Department. Child safeguarding in general, and compliance with Children First guidance and legislation in particular, will be integrated into compliance processes with all funded agencies and services. This in turn will be reflected in the normal business planning and risk management processes within the Department.

### **Department of Children and Youth Affairs Children First Oversight Group**

A Children First Oversight Group has been in place in the Department for over five years. The Group consists of representatives from units of the Department with direct contact with children, or significant funding of children's services, and from the Agencies funded by the Department, namely, Tusla, the Adoption Authority of Ireland, and the Office of the Ombudsman for Children. The focus of the Group was child safeguarding generally, and in particular, supporting the Department and its agencies to prepare for the full commencement of the Children First Act 2015.

The focus of the Group following the full commencement of the Act is to support the Department in promoting, reviewing and reporting on compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance, as required by the Act. The Group will also have a role in relation to promoting consistency across the Department in relation to governance and compliance in respect of Children First, and related child protection legislation.

The Oversight Group provides updates on each of its meetings to the Management Board of the Department.

## **Department of Children and Youth Affairs Child Safeguarding Statement**

This Sectoral Implementation Plan has been prepared in conjunction with the Department's Child Safeguarding Statement. Both have been prepared on the basis of a detailed audit at unit level of the relevant services for children provided directly by the Department, and relevant services funded by the Department.

As the Department directly provides services to children in respect of some of its functions, it is required to prepare and publish a Child Safeguarding Statement [CSS] under section 14 of the Children First Act 2015. The CSS includes a risk assessment in respect of certain services provided directly to children and young people by the Department, and sets out the mitigating measures in place to address those risks.

The Department's CSS is available on the Department's website and is on view in the Department's headquarters, as required by the Act.

### **Monitoring and review of the Sectoral Implementation Plan**

This is the first iteration of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs' Sectoral Implementation Plan, and follows an audit by all units of the Department who have undergone an exercise of explicitly identifying the funding of children's services [as defined in the Children First Act] and setting out the programme of measures to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance.

Following publication of the plan, the focus of the Department will move towards governance assurance of public monies in relation to the statutory obligations under the Act. This process will take place at all levels of the Department, from the individual units to the Oversight Group and to the Management Board as required.

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs is required, under section 27(5) of the Children First Act 2015, to review and revise a sectoral implementation plan not later than 3 years from the date of publication. This plan will be reviewed no later than March 2021, unless the Minister determines another period, as provided for in the Act.

# APPENDIX 1

## SECTORAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: DCYA UNIT RETURNS

CHILD WELFARE AND PROTECTION POLICY UNIT		
QUESTION	RESPONSE	REF. TO CF ACT 2015
1.1. Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2. Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Funding of ISPCC Missing Children Hotline	Reference: Paragraph 6 of Schedule 1
1.3. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil: See answer to 1.1 above	
1.4. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	The Unit will communicate with the ISPCC in relation to their potential obligations under the Children First Act, and will integrate monitoring of same into the governance processes and structures.	
1.5. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil: See answer to 1.1. above	
1.6. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	See answer to 1.4 above: the engagement with the ISPCC will take place in the context of the normal governance engagement around the DCYA funding of the service in question.	

**CHILD CARE LEGISLATION & CHILDREN'S RIGHTS POLICY UNIT**

<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Nil	
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	

<b>ALTERNATIVE CARE UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Nil	
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	



**TUSLA DEVELOPMENT AND CROSS GOVERNMENT FRAMEWORK UNIT**

<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
<p>1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations with Structured Dialogue (Young Voices) Children and Young People</li> <li>• Children and Young People’s Services Committees (CYPSC)</li> <li>• Area Based Childhood Programme (ABC)</li> <li>• St. Ultan’s Cherry Orchard</li> </ul>	
<p>1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit</p>	<p><b>Consultations with Structured Dialogue (Young Voices) Children and Young People</b></p> <p>The EU Structured Dialogue Working Group (Young Voices) provides a national participation and consultation process whereby young people aged 15-25 can feed into European youth policy. Membership consists of young people and youth organisations, experts on youth issues and public decision-makers. The youth representatives have a formal link with DCYA and the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium, which ensures that the views of young people inform the implementation of <i>Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures</i>.</p> <p><b>Children and Young People’s Services Committees (CYPSC)</b></p> <p>Children and Young People’s Services Committee (CYPSC) are a key structure identified by Government to plan and co – ordinate services for children and young people in every county in Ireland. CYPSC are county-level committees that bring together the main statutory, community and voluntary providers of services to children and young people. They provide a forum for joint planning and co-ordination of activity and for oversight of local policy and provision, to ensure that children, young people and their families receive optimum services. CYPSC are co funded by DCYA and Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. There are 27 CYPSC nationwide with the national co ordinator and local co</p>	

	<p>ordinators employed by Tusla.</p> <p><b>Area Based Childhood Programme (ABC)</b></p> <p>The Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme is a prevention and early intervention initiative, targeting investment in effective services to improve the outcomes for children and families living in areas of disadvantage. From 2013 to 2017 it was co-funded between the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA), and The Atlantic Philanthropies (Atlantic) and the programme has been extended until the end of 2018 entirely funded by DCYA. The Programme is being delivered in 13 areas of disadvantage, each led by local consortia who co-ordinate the planning and delivery of services in their area. The aim of the ABC Programme is to test and evaluate innovative prevention and early intervention approaches in areas of disadvantage, to improve outcomes for children and families. The focus of the work under the ABC Programme covers, in the main, Child Health and Development, Children’s Learning, Parenting, and Integrated Service Delivery.</p> <p><b>St. Ultan’s Cherry Orchard</b></p> <p>St. Ultan’s is a registered charity that works with children and young people in the Cherry Orchard Area of Ballyfermot in West Dublin. St. Ultan’s facility contains a Nursery, Early Years, Primary School, Autism Unit, kitchen sports hall/dining area, parent room and an After school facility linked with the school completion programme. The St. Ultan’s facility is a wrap around model because of the range of services in operation. St. Ultan’s is funded through by DCYA and also receives funding by the Department of Education and Skills.</p>	
<p>1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services <b>provided</b> by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance</p>	<p>Nil – no services provided directly</p>	
<p>1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your</p>	<p>Adherence and cognisance of Children First guidelines including ongoing monitoring and review of controls in place. Also the unit will promote access</p>	

<p>unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance</p>	<p>to Tusla online training in relation to Children First and will disseminate information on Children First to the organisations concerned.</p>	
<p>1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines</p>	<p>Nil – no services provided directly</p>	
<p>1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines</p>	<p>See. 1.4 above. In addition, confirmation of compliance with Children First Act and guidelines will be included as a requirement in all funding applications, where applicable.</p>	

**CHILD CARE PERFORMANCE & SOCIAL WORK UNIT**

<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Nil	
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	All organisations funded by this Unit will be asked to submit written confirmation of their compliance with Children First legislation and guidance as it relates to the purpose for which funding is provided.	
1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Confirmation of compliance with Children First Act and guidelines will be included as a requirement in all funding applications, where applicable.	

<b>TUSLA GOVERNANCE &amp; PERFORMANCE OVERSIGHT UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Unit is responsible for governance oversight of Tusla	
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	The unit will, as part of the formal biannual PO led engagement with its agencies, require an assurance from Tusla that it is compliant with all legislation, including Children First, and if it is not, how it proposes to address any gap	
1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	

<b>COMMUNICATIONS &amp; CORPORATE GOVERNANCE UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1. Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2. Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	<p>The Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) is an independent statutory body, which was established under the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002. The OCO has two core statutory functions: to promote the rights and welfare of children up to the age of 18 years living in Ireland, and to examine and investigate complaints made by or for children about the administrative actions of reviewable agencies that have or may have adversely affected a child.</p> <p>The OCO's contact with children and young people primarily occurs in the context of the three following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the OCO's work raise awareness of children's rights among children and young people, in accordance with section (7)(1)(d) of the 2002 Act (as amended);</li> <li>- the OCO's initiatives to consult with or to commission/undertake research involving children and young people under Sections (7)(2) and (7)(3) of the 2002 Act (as amended);</li> <li>- the OCO's implementation of its statutory function to examine and investigate complaints made by or on behalf of children.</li> </ul>	
1.3. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	The Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) has been kept informed of all developments through the DCYA Children First Oversight Group. A letter issued in December 2017 to OCO in the template required by the Secretary General for issue to all bodies under the aegis of DCYA.	

<p>1.5. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines</p>	<p>Nil</p>	
<p>1.6. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines</p>	<p>In the Oversight Agreement between DCYA and OCO, under the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies, In the section dealing with "Arrangements for Oversight, Monitoring and Reporting" a paragraph is included regarding Children First obligations. DCYA and OCO meet twice annually on governance issues associated with this oversight agreement where any issue arising on Children First will be discussed.</p>	

<b>HR UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1. Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2. Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Nil	
1.3. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Induction process includes information in relation to Child Safeguarding Statements in the Department	
1.4. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.5. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	



<b>EXTERNAL HR UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Nil	
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	

<b>RESEARCH, EVALUATION &amp; INFORMATION UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1. Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	<p>Nil</p> <p>Note: Currently the unit itself does not engage directly with children in relation to research, data or evaluation services. However, the REU will notify HR should any material change arise in the future</p>	
1.2. Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	<p>The REU funds Growing Up in Ireland: the national longitudinal study of children in Ireland. The study is carried out by a team of researchers at the ESRI and Trinity College under a contract for services. The contract is held by the ESRI.</p> <p>The study involves regular data collection from just under 20,000 children and young people and their families - in their homes. It also involves focus groups / consultations with children and young people in advance of each wave of data collection as part of the questionnaire development process.</p>	Relevant services funded by the REU as defined in Children's First Act Schedule 1 paragraph 5A
1.3. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	<p>A letter issued to the contractor, the Economic and Social Research Institute, as required by the DCYA Secretary General in related communication and associated resource material was provided.</p> <p>Compliance with CF guidance and relevant legislation is required under the GUI contract agreement.</p>	
1.5. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	

<p>1.6. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines</p>	<p>See answer to 1.4. Compliance with CF guidance and relevant legislation is required of the contractor under the GUI contract.</p> <p>A GUI governance structure is in place and meets at least quarterly relating to the funding of service in question. Discussion with the ESRI on any issue arising, as well as the implementation of DCYA requirements on assurances from funded services emerging from the deliberations of the DCYA oversight group, will take place in this context.</p>	
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<b>SUPPORT SERVICES &amp; FINANCE UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1. Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	The Finance Unit and the Support Services Unit of DCYA do not work directly with children and as such do not provide any of the services as defined in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act.	
1.2. Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Nil	
1.3. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.5. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	

<b>LEGISLATION UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1. Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2. Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Nil	
1.3. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.5. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	

<b>ADOPTION UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1. Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2. Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	DCYA funds the AAI which has obligations under Children First	
1.3. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil: See answer to 1.1 above	
1.4. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	The Unit has and will communicate with the AAI regarding their potential obligations under the Children First Act, and will integrate monitoring of same into the governance processes and structures.	
1.5. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil: See answer to 1.1. above	
1.6. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	See answer to 1.4 above: the conversation with the AAI will take place in the context of the normal governance engagement	

<b>IRISH YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Role of the <b>PO/Child Welfare, Policy &amp; Practice</b> . To provide specialist advice to the DCYA/IYJS in the area of youth justice (Oberstown). This includes the safe and secure custody of young people detained by the courts. To meet as needed with young people and monitor care provision. Ensure appropriate safeguarding policies are in place in line with legislation and guidance. Have oversight in ensuring that children's rights are maintained in compliance with both national and international standards.	REF: Children First Act 2015: Schedule1, Section 2, 6.
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Oberstown Children Detention Campus</b> – provision on behalf of the DCYA/IYJS of safe and secure custody of young people sent to detention by the courts.</li> <li>2. Funding to <b>Extern</b> to provide the Bail Supervision Scheme on behalf of the DCYA/IYJS (on a pilot basis) to the Children Court.</li> <li>3. Funding, on a contract basis of the <b>Participation Hub</b> to conduct consultations with young people in detention and who have been involved with the Children Court in relation to: i) the revision of the Standards for the Oberstown Children Detention Campus, and ii) to input into the design of the proposed new Children Court complex.</li> </ol>	<p>REF: Children First Act 2015: Schedule 1, Section 2, 1(f)</p> <p>REF: Children First Act 2015; Schedule 1, Section 2, 4</p> <p>REF: Children First Act 2015; Schedule 1, 5(c)</p>
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	<b>PO/Child Welfare, Policy &amp; Practice</b> is aware of responsibilities of the Children First Act 2015 through participation in the Children First Oversight Group within the DCYA.	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Board of Management and the Director of <b>Oberstown</b> have been kept informed through the DCYA Children First Oversight Group. A letter issued in December 2017 to both the Chair of the BOM and the Director. This outlined the responsibilities in relation to the Children First Act 205 and highlighted</li> </ol>	

	<p>in particular: Mandated Reporting; Child Safeguarding Statement and Training.</p> <p>2. <b>Extern</b> organisation has been informed of its responsibilities (in writing) that fall to them under the Children First Act 2015 in relation to Mandated Reporting &amp; Child Safeguarding Statement.</p> <p>3. <b>Participation Hub</b> will be made aware of its obligations under the Act in relation to Mandated Reporting &amp; Child Safeguarding Statement.</p>	
<p>1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines</p>	<p><b>PO/Child Welfare, Policy &amp; Practice</b> will promote through formal consultation with Director of Oberstown; review through evaluation of reports received and report on compliance on a regular basis through the Children First Oversight Group.</p>	
<p>1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines</p>	<p>1. Board of Management and Director of <b>Oberstown</b> to provide CSS to DCYA by March 11<sup>th</sup> 2018. On-going review of compliance with the Safeguarding Policy for the Campus to be conducted by the Child Welfare, Policy &amp; Practice PO.</p> <p>2. The Bail Supervision Scheme Oversight Group will monitor <b>Extern's</b> compliance in line with the conditions of the funding arrangement.</p> <p>3. Normal governance arrangements around DCYA funding will form part of the contract agreements with the <b>Participation Hub</b>.</p>	



<b>MOTHER AND BABY HOMES UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Nil	
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	
1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Nil	

<b>YOUTH AFFAIRS UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Quality Standards Team (QST) DCYA currently has three collocated colleagues from CDETB who provide the NQSF service to 30 National Youth Organisations on behalf of the YAU. Part of this role requires the staff to meet with young people in youth service settings to discuss their experience of the services offered, the quality of their engagement and things they would like to have improved. This is one aspect of a broader report into DCYA.	<b>Schedule 1: 5 a and c – NQSF Focus Groups</b>
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	Funding of Education Training Boards, Gaisce and Pobal who operate as intermediary and oversight bodies with youth projects/services and National Youth Organisations respectively. Additionally ETBs can carry out actions to implement DCYA Policy directly with young people on behalf of YAU	<b>Schedule 1: 5 a,b &amp;c</b>
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Quality Standards Team operates to the DCYA Child Protection Policy and will use the DCYA Reporting Procedures if a disclosure or concern arises in the course of their duties.	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	The Youth Affairs Unit communicated with the 16 Education and Training Boards, Gaisce and Pobal in relation to their potential obligations under the Children First Act, and will integrate the appropriate monitoring of same into the governance processes and structures. This will form part of the SLA with each ETB, Gaisce and Pobal in 2018	
1.5 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Item is part of relevant Unit Meeting Agendas. All Unit Staff will be briefed on the legislation and their obligations. Specific time allocated to bring staff through the dealing with communication or correspondence relating to Child Protection Concerns/Reports from the public as issued by the CWPP Unit.	

1.6 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	See response to 1.4	
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<b>PARTICIPATION UNIT</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1 Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	<p>Services provided as specified in Schedule 1, paragraph 5 (c)</p> <p>Any work or activity which consists of the provision of</p> <p>...formal consultation with, or formal participation by, a child in respect of matters that affect his or her life.</p>	
1.2 Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	<p>Grant aid for Comhairle na nOg and Dail na nOg, etc. to provide an opportunity for consultation and participation initiatives with children and young people to give them a voice in decision that affect their lives.</p>	
1.3 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	<p>The relevant services are provided in one of the following three ways:</p> <p>(a) direct provision by DCYA</p> <p>(b) provision by the contracted provider on behalf of DCYA of the Children and Young People's Participation Support Services (Foroige with Youth Work Ireland as a sub-contracted provider) or</p> <p>(c) A and B above working together to provide the relevant service.</p> <p>The following are the measures taken with respect to each component:</p> <p>(a) DCYA staff – all staff Garda vetted and plans to ensure e-learning module is taken by all team members.</p> <p>(b) contracted provision – assurances built into the contract from outset in relation to potential obligations under the Children First Act, and will integrate monitoring of same into the governance processes and structures.</p> <p>(c) A and B above</p>	
1.4 Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	<p>This Unit communicated with all Local Authorities in relation to their potential obligations under the Children First Act.</p> <p>Annually, each LA must sign assurance of compliance with CF as part of the application process for funding. Monitoring of same will continue in 2018 as part of the governance processes and structures. IN acknowledgement of the recent legislation enactment, the letters of grant offer for 2018 to issue from Pobal in February 2018 will</p>	

		make specific reference to the 2015 Act.	
1.5	Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	<p>For DCYA providing services alone:</p> <p>(a) when DCYA staff working alone with children and young people, de-briefing at the end of each work piece will allow for review of the work with reference to compliance with CF and agreement of reporting pathway where relevant.</p> <p>(b) review will be integrated into the monitoring of Children and Young People’s Participation contract and into the appropriate the governance processes and structures.</p> <p>(c) Operating procedures for how compliance will practically work when both A and B working together will be worked out at a specific session re: same to be planned for March 2018. A session in mid-2017 has mapped out the work flow and potential areas for further consideration.</p>	
1.6	Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines	Annually, each Local Authority must sign assurance of compliance with CF as part of the application process for funding. Monitoring of same will continue in 2018 as part of the governance processes and structures.	

<b>EARLY YEARS UNITS</b>		
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>REF. TO CF ACT 2015</b>
1.1. Please give details of all relevant services provided by your unit	Nil	
1.2. Please give a short overview of the relevant services funded by your unit	<p>The 'relevant services' funded by the Early Years Unit include all Early Years services in contract with the DCYA under the various schemes including ECCE, CCS, CCSP, TEC, AIM etc.</p> <p>Other 'relevant services' are bodies funded by the DCYA Early Years Unit who give guidance and support, including Pobal incorporating Better Start, Early Childhood Ireland, the 30 Childcare Committees, the National Childhood Network, Childminding Ireland, Barnardos, The St. Nicholas' Montessori Society of Ireland, Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association, and the National Parents Council.</p> <p>More specifically and having reviewed the definition of relevant services Schedule 1 of the Children First Act (2015), Early Years Division fund the services described in this Schedule at 1a, 1b, 2, 5a, 5b, 6 and 8) (see Appendix A)</p>	
1.3. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your Unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	Nil	
1.4. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken, or proposed to be taken, by your unit to ensure compliance with the Children First legislation and guidance	<p>The measures being taken at present or proposed to be taken to promote, review and report on compliance include a national Early Years Children First plan. A National Early Years Children First Committee was established over 4 years ago to develop a training and implementation plan for the EY sector. The plan, developed with Tusla and other relevant partners in the sector, includes a training of trainers, a training manual and training roll out plan, a communication plan and a quality assurance plan. This was recently evaluated. 60 Children First trainers are in place and are working to a national structure. They are monitored on</p>	

	<p>an annual basis.</p> <p>In response to the legislation there is a widespread information plan underway. All relevant services funded by DCYA as listed at 1.2 above received correspondence from DCYA advising them that they should ensure that they meet any obligations they may have under the Children First Act.</p> <p>Regional information sessions are being delivered across the country on developing a Child Safeguarding Statement. A template has been developed and has been emailed to every registered childcare service in the country. Local workshops are underway at present to support EY providers to fill in the template and to understand their responsibilities under the Act. Workshops for support services have been delivered.</p> <p>A guide to developing a CSS has been developed and is sector-specific. Included in this document is information on undertaking risk assessments together with a risk assessment template. There is also reporting sample, reporting procedures and guides to meet the requirements in relation to recruitment, information provision and allegations against staff. This has been emailed to every service. The Children First EY training is being reviewed and revised to incorporate the new legislation. Trainers will be updated and the revised training will go live after Easter 2018. The eLearning module from Tusla will form part of this training. The Early Years Unit staff will be encouraged to do the eLearning module.</p> <p>It is expected the EY sector will meet the statutory deadline for publication of CSSs</p> <p>It is hoped that the Tusla EY inspectorate will ask to view the CSS when inspecting EY services. This is under discussion.</p> <p>Consideration is being given to including compliance with the Children First as a contractual obligation to funded services.</p>	
<p>1.5. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services provided by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the</p>	<p>Nil</p>	

Children First Act and guidelines		
<p>1.6. Please outline, in respect of any relevant services funded by your unit, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by your unit to promote, review and report on compliance under the Children First Act and guidelines</p>	<p>Consideration is being given to including a requirement for a CSS in the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. Tusla is the statutory regulator of EY services and has responsibility for ensuring that relevant services are compliant with these Regulations.</p> <p>Consideration is also being given to including compliance with Children First as a contractual obligation to funded services.</p> <p>The National Early Years Children First Committee, as outlined above, is implementing a Child Protection Plan which includes information sessions, training, and a communication campaign.</p> <p>All relevant services funded by DCYA as listed in 1.2 above received correspondence from DCYA advising them that they should ensure that they meet any obligations they may have under the Children First Act.</p>	