

# One in Four's Child Safeguarding Statement

## Introduction

One in Four provides professional psychotherapy and advocacy services to men and women over the age of 18 years who were sexually abused in childhood, and to their families. We also provide a Prevention programme for people who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviour against a child and for their families. More information about our services is available on our website at [www.oneinfour.ie](http://www.oneinfour.ie).

## Assessment of Risk

All our clients have been directly or indirectly affected by childhood sexual abuse. As all our clients are adults, most of these allegations concern retrospective accounts of child sexual abuse.

As adults, they themselves are no longer at risk. However, it may occur in the course of our work with a client that we become aware of, or receive information of, a current child who is at risk. Any information regarding a current child at risk we are obliged to notify to Tusla.

All disclosures from clients attending our Prevention Programme, are notified to Tusla and to the Garda Superintendent in the area in which that person lives.

## Protecting Children

Protecting children from sexual harm is at the core of all our activities at One in Four. We are committed to remaining fully compliant with the relevant legislation: The Children First Act (2015) and The Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information) Act 2012. We are a prescribed organisation under the terms of the 2012 Act. We also strive to remain compliant with the Children First National Guidance 2017.

Arranging and monitoring compliance with national policy and legislation is ultimately the responsibility of the Board of Directors of One in Four. This responsibility has been delegated to the CEO who also serves as One in Four's Designated Safeguarding Officer.

## Designated Safeguarding Officer Contact Details:

Deirdre Kenny  
CEO  
One in Four  
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01 6624070

All Psychotherapists and Advocacy Case Managers working at One in Four are mandated persons under the terms of the Children First Act 2015. Each psychotherapist and advocacy case manager is obliged to comply with the provisions of the Act.

## Garda Vetting

One in Four is compliant with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016. As per the Act, those staff who must be vetted are those whom "engage in relevant work

with a vulnerable adult or child.” It has been agreed with the National Vetting Bureau that the roles within One in Four that require vetting are for Psychotherapists and Advocacy Case Managers.

New staff receive an offer of a position “subject to Garda Vetting”. One in Four must receive a vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau before appointing an individual to one of these roles within the organisation. All external psychotherapy and advocacy consultants working directly with clients will also undergo mandatory vetting before working with One in Four clients.

In cases of people who have resided outside of the Republic of Ireland, they must undergo equivalent criminal background checks.

One in Four has appointed the Head of Business Services as the “Liaison Person” for the purposes of Garda Vetting with the National Vetting Bureau.

One in Four commits to re-vetting relevant staff every three years, in line with national best practice.

## **Training**

All staff members and trainees are required to complete the HSE ‘Children First’ eLearning Module before commencing work at One in Four, and to repeat the training every three years. In addition, all new staff and trainees will complete an internal training session on the One in Four Child Safeguarding Policy as part of their induction programme.

## **Breaches of the Child Safeguarding Statement**

All breaches of the Child Safeguarding Policy must be reported to the CEO. Employees and trainees who breach the Policy may be subject to the One in Four disciplinary procedures.

## **Reporting Policy**

We know that it is difficult for clients to take the first step to reach out for help, and people are very often concerned about confidentiality. At One in Four we understand the need to protect the privacy of our clients, but we also understand how important it is that children are protected from harm. We try at all times to ensure that our child protection policy does not deter clients from accessing services.

Determining whether or not a child is at risk of abuse is a specialised task and beyond the role of One in Four staff. In line with Children First National Guidance<sup>1</sup>, it is our policy to report any knowledge, belief, or reasonable suspicion that a child (as defined as an individual who, at the time that the mandated person receives, acquires or becomes aware of the information, is under the age of 18) has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed to Tusla child protection teams.

Client consent to make such a notification is not required in these circumstances. However, when possible we will seek this consent and keep our clients fully informed of the information we are obliged to share with Tusla.

In addition, when the information we receive or become aware relates to a child who is in immediate risk it is our policy to report such information to An Garda Síochána. If a client has already reported to Tusla or the Gardaí, this must be confirmed with the relevant agency.

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<sup>1</sup> Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017). Dealing with Adult Retrospective Disclosures of Childhood Abuse.

For clients attending the Prevention Programme, all disclosures are notified to Tusla and to the Garda Superintendent in the area in which that client lives. The Clinical Director is responsible for ensuring that notifications are made promptly in this regard.

### **GDPR and Mandatory Reporting**

Care must be taken to comply with our responsibilities under GDPR when processing sensitive information. When we are sharing this information with a third party, such as Tusla or other state body under our statutory obligation as Mandated Professionals, only the information which is necessary and proportionate to the requirements of the processing activities should be shared. All reasonable efforts should be made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided. Only the relevant personal information requested should be provided.

### **Liaison with External Agencies**

One in Four will fully cooperate with Tusla staff and the Gardaí in relation to child protection concerns, including participating in inter-agency meetings and mandated assistance under Section 16 of the Children First Act 2015, where necessary.

### **Review of Child Safeguarding Statement**

The Child Safeguarding Statement must be reviewed by the CEO and Policy and Operations Officer annually to ensure it remains compliant with on-going legislative and policy developments.

This Review must be notified to the Governance & Risk Committee of the Board annually in the meeting scheduled prior to the AGM.

Version Number:	2
Last reviewed by Board [Trustees] on:	8 May 2024
Person Responsible:	Deirdre Kenny, CEO and Designated Safeguarding Office