

OurKidsCode Workshop Safeguarding Statement

OurKidsCode provides family friendly computing workshops for parents/guardians and their children. The OurKidsCode team is committed to safeguarding children who attend OurKidsCode workshops, both in person and online, under the guidance of our Safeguarding Policies. OurKidsCode project team members, workshop trainers and our volunteers are carefully recruited and are committed to creating a safe environment for families and their children.

The OurKidsCode Child Protection Policy includes a written Risk Assessment which indicates areas of potential risk of harm including the likelihood of the risk occurring and includes policies that are required to address these risks. The Risk Assessment covers: Workshop Supervision; Bullying; Online Bullying; Online Supervision; Garda Vetting; Incident Reporting; Mobile Device Use; Social Media and Research.

The OurKidsCode Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015 (the Children First: National Guidance and Tusla Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice). In addition to our Risk Assessment, there are further procedures that support our intention to safeguard children while they are attending OurKidsCode workshops. These include: dealing with and reporting allegations of abuse or misconduct by trainers or volunteers against a child availing of OurKidsCode workshop activities; safe recruitment of staff and volunteers to work with children in our activities; access to safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm and the appointment of a Designated Liaison Person as the first point of contact and Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

OurKidsCode Steering Committee have appointed the Designated Liaison Person as Nina Bresnihan (childprotection@ourkidscode.ie / +353 1 896 2704) and a Deputy Designated Liaison Person as Louise Caldwell (childprotection@ourkidscode.ie) for incident reporting.

This Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with requirements contained in the Children First Act 2015. The OurKidsCode project team are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and recognise that safeguarding is an ongoing process. This statement will be reviewed within 24 months of the date below.

Chairperson, Steering Committee : Signed.....Date:

Secretary, Steering Committee :Signed.....Date:

Academic Lead: Signed.....Date:

Name and address of organisation: OurKidsCode Steering Committee, Trinity College Dublin, 7-9 South Leinster Street, Dublin 2. Ireland.

OurKidsCode Child Protection Policy

Our Ethos

Families who attend OurKidsCode workshops will be encouraged to explore and learn computing in an environment in which they feel safe, valued and supported. The OurKidsCode ethos is child-centred, family friendly, collaborative and fun.

Our Policies and Procedures

This policy includes measures to reduce risk and deal with problems if they arise during the delivery of OurKidsCode workshops, both in person and online. This document sets out procedures to be followed in the event that child abuse (emotional, physical, sexual or neglect) occurs during OurKidsCode workshops involving families or among children themselves and is reported to an OurKidsCode trainer. This document contains a Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment designed to identify potential areas of risk to children who are participating in the project.

Policy and Procedure Enactment

OurKidsCode workshops will be held in community locations (including primary schools, community centres, education centres and libraries) where permission is granted from the relevant Management. We may also hold workshops online. OurKidsCode Child Safeguarding and reporting procedures are operational from the start of an OurKidsCode workshop until the end of an OurKidsCode workshop (approx 2.5 hours).

Our Roles and Responsibilities

The OurKidsCode Steering Committee is responsible for the oversight of this Safeguarding and Risk Assessment document and policies contained therein. The Principal Investigator, Nina Bresnihan (Trinity College Dublin), will ensure that project personnel are aware of this policy, and its procedures and have read and understood the OurKidsCode Safeguarding Statement.

OurKidsCode Risk Assessment

Introduction

In accordance with Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015, organisations providing a relevant service, must undertake a risk assessment to consider the potential for harm to come to children. This risk assessment considers the potential for harm while children are engaged with the OurKidsCode Project. It should be noted that risk in this context is the risk of abuse, not general health and safety. What follows is the OurKidsCode Risk Assessment.

A risk assessment is an exercise where the project examines all aspects of its service from a safeguarding perspective, to establish whether there are any practices or features of the service that have the potential to put children in a position of risk.

The risk assessment process is intended to enable the organisation to:

1. Identify potential risks
2. Develop policies and procedures to minimise risk by responding in a timely manner to potential risks
3. Review whether adequate precautions have been taken to eliminate or reduce these risks

After the risk assessment has been completed, organisations are then required to develop a Child Safeguarding Statement (see page 8) which outlines the policies and the procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified during the risk assessment.

Potential Risks

The following potential risks have been identified in providing OurKidsCode workshops.

Item	Description	Mitigation	Area
1	There is a risk of harm where an adult / or child accompanies a child on toilet breaks who is not a family member.	Families will be advised that they are responsible for supervising their children on toilet breaks. OurKidsCode trainers are not permitted to accompany children on toilet breaks.	Workshop Supervision
2	There is a risk of harm where unauthorised adults or unsupervised minors may try to attend OurKidsCode workshops to gain access to children.	Unsupervised children are not permitted to OurKidsCode workshops nor are unaccompanied adults.	Workshop Supervision
3	There is a risk that an OurKidsCode trainer observes bullying behaviour within a family group.	An Anti-Bullying Policy (see Appendix 1) is in place and will be reviewed in line with the time frame stated in the OurKidsCode Safeguarding Statement.	Bullying (including Online Bullying)
4	There is a risk that a child experience bullying from within their family group	Where a child reports an instance of bullying or an instance of bullying is observed, the OurKidsCode trainer will record in the incident and liaise with the family member(s), and mediate where appropriate	Bullying (including Online Bullying)

		Where the dispute is not mutually resolved, then the trainer reserves the right to ask family member(s) to leave the workshop.	
5	There is a risk that a child reports an experience of online bullying during an OurKidsCode workshop.	Where a child reports an instance of online bullying, the OurKidsCode trainer will record in the incident and liaise with the family member(s). OurKidsCode team will publish a list of age-appropriate links to anti-bullying materials (resources) on the OurKidsCode website.	Bullying (including Online Bullying)
5	There is a risk that families access inappropriate content when using internet enabled devices during an OurKidsCode workshop.	Families will be advised that they are responsible for supervising their children (online and offline) during workshops. An Online Usage Policy (see Appendix 2) is in place to safeguard children who use online resources during workshops.	Online Supervision
6	There is a risk that families have encountered an instance of online bullying / or have accessed inappropriate content and are unsure as to who to contact for help / and or assistance.	The OurKidsCode trainer will be on hand to help families discuss issues concerning their own or their child's online safety, with further information available via the OurKidsCode website.	Online Supervision
7	There is a risk that OurKidsCode project members, workshop trainers and volunteers are not Garda vetted.	The OurKidsCode Steering Committee will generate and maintain a Record of OurKidsCode approved trainers involved in delivering workshops. This register will record name, organisation, training status, garda vetting status (where applicable) and teaching council registration number. This record will also confirm who has read the OurKidsCode Safeguarding Statement (Appendix 8) OurKidsCode trainers are not Garda Vetted but have completed a minimum of Level 6 FETAC training, which includes safeguarding, and group work facilitation. This will be noted in the Record of OurKidsCode Trainers	Garda Vetting
8	There is a risk that OurKidsCode project members, volunteers and trainers are not aware of child safeguarding procedures and the risks associated with providing OurKidsCode workshops	OurKidsCode project team, trainers and volunteers have been recruited carefully, with references checked and all team members are expected to treat families and their children with respect	Garda Vetting
9	There is a risk that families are unaware as to how to report an online or an offline bullying or safety incident which occurs in an OurKidsCode workshop.	Families will be briefed on OurKidsCode Incident Reporting Procedure should they have concerns with OurKidsCode services.	Incident Reporting
10	There is a risk that unsolicited images and or voice recording are made of families without their consent.	Mobile phone users (Families and Children) are not permitted to record (audio or video) other families / children without parental/guardian consent.	Mobile Device Use

11	There is a risk that unsolicited images and or voice recording are made of families and are uploaded onto social media without their consent.	Families will be responsible for the content that they share on social media platforms. Mobile phone users (Families and Children) are not permitted to upload recorded (audio or video) content to social media depicting other families / children without parental/guardian consent.	Social Media Use
13	There is a risk that social media linked to the OurKidsCode project contains inappropriate content.	The OurKidsCode project team will moderate OurKidsCode social media platforms for inappropriate content.	Social Media Use
14	There is a risk that families are aware that there is a research component to the OurKidsCode workshops.	The OurKidsCode project team will adhere to their Audio-Visual Protocol which has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the School of Computer Science and Statistics, Trinity College Dublin.	Research
15.	There is a risk of harm where unauthorised adults or unsupervised minors may try to attend OurKidsCode online workshops to gain access to children.	Unsupervised children are not permitted to OurKidsCode online workshops nor are unaccompanied adults. All attendees of online workshops will receive private password protected access links and codes for video conferences. *(Addendum) In the case of a child being unaccompanied by a participating adult to an online workshop, the procedure is to let the child know that they cannot be in the session without an adult. If no adult is available, the child is removed immediately from the session and a notification is sent to contact@ourkidscode.ie or to email louise.caldwell@tcd.ie .	Video Conference
16.	Project team or trainer causes harm to families online. This could be deliberate or inadvertently.	No direct unsupervised contact takes place between project team and children. All contact is through the video conference where parents must attend. Attempts from trainers or children to share personal contact details will be removed by moderator. Answers or comments that could cause harm to families will be reviewed and removed if needed by moderator. Moderator will report any incident. In the case of a school students this would normally be to their parent. If the harm caused is thought to be deliberate the candidate will be removed	Video Conference

		from the meeting immediately and the incident investigated by the Designated Safeguarding Liaison Officer. If necessary, the relevant legal authorities will be contacted.	
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Incident Reporting Procedure

This information will also be published to the OurKidsCode website.

Item	Description
1	If you think that you observed a child protection issue during an OurKidsCode workshop, then contact our Designated Safeguarding Liaison Officer at childprotection@ourkidscode.ie
2	All safeguarding issues are dealt with in a confidential manner by the project team leader
3	We follow a documented and approved process when dealing with any reported cases regarding the wellbeing or safety of any child in our association. This process is available at http://www.ourkidscode.ie
4	Information on reporting procedures is contained on the OurKidsCode website http://www.ourkidscode.ie along with a copy of an Incident Report Form

Incident Response Procedure

OurKidsCode team will respond to procedures in accordance with the following timelines.

Item	Description
1	Incidents identified in an OurKidsCode workshop will be recorded at the time of the incident using the Incident Report Form
2	Where the online Incident Report form is used, an alert will be sent to childprotection@ourkidscode.ie to notify the Designated Safeguarding Liaison Officer.
3	Where a hard copy Incident Report Form is used, the OurKidsCode trainer will also email the childprotection@ourkidscode.ie to the Designated Safeguarding Liaison Officer to notify them of the reported incident and submit the hard copy form to the OurKidsCode Designated Safeguarding Liaison Officer.

4	On receipt of receiving the completed Incident Report form the OurKidsCode Designated Safeguarding Liaison Officer will advise the OurKidsCode facilitator of the appropriate action.
5	Where an Incident Report Form has been completed, the OurKidsCode Designated Safeguarding Liaison Officer will review and contact the necessary authorities within a time frame appropriate to the severity of the incident. In the case of suspected criminality this will be within 24 hours.

Incident Reporting Form

OurKidsCode Incident Reporting Form 2023

Workshop Date: _____ Workshop Location: _____

Time Incident Occurred: _____

Incident (Please Describe):

OurKidsCode Trainer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Risk Assessment Signature

In undertaking this risk assessment, the OurKidsCode Steering Committee has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to the delivery of OurKidsCode workshops and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified.

While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, the OurKidsCode Steering Committee has put in place procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent. This risk assessment has been completed by the OurKidsCode project team on **16th February 2021**.. It shall be reviewed as part of the OurKidsCode Steering Committee review of Child Safeguarding Statement.

Chairperson, Steering Committee : Signed.....Date:

Secretary, Steering Committee :Signed.....Date:

Academic Lead: Signed.....Date:

Name and Address of Organisation: OurKidsCode Steering Committee, Trinity College Dublin, 7-9 South Leinster Street, Dublin 2. Ireland.

OurKidsCode Safeguarding Statement

OurKidsCode is designed to provide family focused computing workshops and online support to parents/guardians and their children in a fun, safe and professional environment.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017, the OurKidsCode Steering Committee has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

The OurKidsCode Steering Committee has adopted and will implement fully and without modification child protection procedures outlined in this document.

The Designated Safeguarding Liaison Officer is ___Nina Bresnihan_____

The Deputy Designated Liaison person is ___Louise Caldwell_____

The OurKidsCode Steering Committee recognises that child protection and welfare is considered core to the ethos of OurKidsCode computing workshops. In its policies, practices and activities, the OurKidsCode team will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

- Recognise that the protection and welfare of all children is of paramount importance, regardless of other considerations;
- Fully comply with the statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- Fully cooperate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect OurKidsCode team members from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse;
- Develop a practice of openness with parents/guardians and encourage parental/guardian involvement in the education of their children; and
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

Service Provided

OurKidsCode provides family focused computing workshops and online support to parents/guardians and their children in a fun, safe and professional environment.

Service Commencement Date

1st of June 2018

Measures

The following procedures / measures are in place:

1. Where an OurKidsCode team members is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending an OurKidsCode

- computing workshops, this will be documented using Incident Reporting Form and the conduct of the investigation will adhere to the disciplinary procedure which is published on the OurKidsCode website
2. In relation to the selection or recruitment of OurKidsCode workshop trainers and their suitability to work with children, the OurKidsCode team adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 and 2016 as well as guidelines published on Garda.ie web site
 - a. The OurKidsCode Steering Committee will generate and maintain a record of OurKidsCode team members / volunteers and workshop trainers involved in delivering workshops. This register will record name, organisation, training status, garda vetting status (where applicable) and teaching council registration number. This record will confirm who has read the OurKidsCode Safeguarding Statement (Appendix 8)
 3. In relation to the provision of information and where necessary, instruction and training, to OurKidsCode team members in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) OurKidsCode team will ensure that:
 - a. Each existing as well as new members of OurKidsCode team involved in teaching will be issued with a copy of the OurKidsCode Safeguarding Statement
 - b. A copy of the OurKidsCode Safeguarding Statement will be published online on the OurKidsCode website, and a hard copy of the same statement will be printed and displayed in locations where OurKidsCode computing workshops are delivered
 - c. In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tulsa, OurKidsCode team members will use the Incident Reporting Form and follow procedures set out in the relevant Child Protection Procedures.
 - d. OurKidsCode Steering Committee have appointed the Designated Liaison Person Nina Bresnihan and a Deputy Designated Liaison Person Lorraine Fisher as points of contact for incident reporting.
 - e. In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the OurKidsCode Steering Committee has carried out an assessment of any potential harm to a child while attending OurKidsCode computing workshops and participating in OurKidsCode computing activities. A written assessment of the areas of risks identified and the OurKidsCode teams' procedures for managing those risks is included in the first section of this document.
 - f. The procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the OurKidsCode website.
 - g. If any OurKidsCode team member has a child protection concern, they are required to record that concern (using Incident Reporting Form) in a hard backed copy book kept by the OurKidsCode project manager.
 - i. Where forms are completed online, a copy of the form will be extracted, printed and kept in the hard backed copy book.
 1. All entries must be signed and dated, and hard backed copies will be kept in a locked filing cabinet/drawer kept by the OurKidsCode project manager.
 - h. Anyone attending an OurKidsCode computing workshop who has not completed an online registration prior to attending an OurKidsCode computing workshop, will be asked to do so prior to the start of an OurKidsCode computing workshop.
 - i. Unaccompanied adults are not permitted in OurKidsCode computing workshops and will be briefed as such.
 1. Unaccompanied children are not permitted in OurKidsCode computing workshops and will be briefed as such.
 - i. Volunteer OurKidsCode computing workshop mentors are required to have completed garda vetting.
 - j. Secondary students are permitted to attend OurKidsCode computing workshop but must be part of a family unit.
 - k. Bullying Behaviour will be addressed under the **Anti-Bullying Policy**. If the behaviour involved is of a sexual nature or regarded as being particularly abusive then a verbal warning will be issued, and the matter will be recorded in the **Incident Reporting Form** and further referred to the Designated Liaison Person.

- I. OurKidsCode will not monitor attendance but will require attendees to complete a pre workshop registration form to ensure that an adequate number of OurKidsCode team members are provided.

Statement Publication and Distribution Date

This statement has been published on the OurKidsCode website and has been provided to all OurKidsCode team members (including Steering committee). It is readily available and accessible to families, parents / guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and or any other relevant child protection organisations if requested.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as is practicable after there has been a material change in the document content or in legislation to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the OurKidsCode Steering Committee on:

Chairperson, Steering Committee : Signed.....Date:

Secretary, Steering Committee :Signed.....Date:

Academic Lead: Signed.....Date:

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Anti-Bullying Policy

Each OurKidsCode workshop seeks to provide a family friendly, nurturing and safe environment for parents/guardians and their children to explore computing.

During OurKidsCode workshops parents/guardians and their children will be encouraged to work together with parents/guardians and children given equal voice.

The OurKidsCode team aim to provide workshops which respect equal rights and diversity.

Appendix 2 - Online Usage Policy

OurKidsCode workshops provide an overview of online safety at the start of each workshop.

Parents/Guardians are reminded that where they may be using computers other than their own in workshops, parental/ guardian settings may be disabled this caution when internet searching is advised.

Additional materials / resources on setting parental/guardian controls are published in the OurKidsCode website along with links to websites advising safe online searching.

If Parents/Guardians inadvertently retrieve inappropriate content during an OurKidsCode workshops, Parents/Guardians are advised to report the incident to OurKidsCode team members who will take the

necessary steps to report the content.

Appendix 3 - OurKidsCode Disciplinary Procedure

If a complaint is made against an OurKidsCode trainer the following disciplinary procedure will be enacted. Complaints are categorised as instances where unprofessional behaviors are demonstrated*:

- (1) Verbal Warning - In the first instance a verbal warning will be issued, and the trainer will be advised of what the problem is and invited to respond and explain his/her actions. Notification of the warning will be kept on file for 3 months.
- (2) 1st Written Warning - Where further transgressions are reported, a written warning will issue, and the trainer will be further advised of what the problem is and invited to respond and explain his/her actions. The written warning will then be issued and last for another 3 months. This warning will set out the nature of the problem, suggest solutions such as retraining, and advise of the possible sanctions (including dismissal) if no improvement is observed within the 3 months.
- (3) 2nd Written Warning - If the required improvement is not forthcoming within the 3-month period after the 1st written warning then a 2nd written warning may be issued.
- (4) 3rd / Final Written Warning - If the required improvement is not happening then a final written warning would be issued with a 12-month monitoring period. This warning letter will be the final one prior to dismissal / removal from the project.
- (5) Dismissal or action short of dismissal - If there is no improvement after the final written warning then dismissal is the likely outcome. A meeting should be called and the trainer and representative invited. The project team will discuss issues with the trainer, and where a mutual agreement to revise behaviours has not been reached, the trainer will be asked to leave the project.

*Appendix - Unprofessional Behaviours are categorized as:

- Criminal acts
- Theft
- Intentional damage to property
- Assault
- Dereliction of duty
- Serious breach of health and safety procedure
- Fraudulent behaviour
- Falsification of records
- Abuse of company policies/procedures
- Abuse of trust
- Serious sexual harassment, harassment, bullying
- Serious breaches of internet/email policy
- Serious breaches of data protection policy
- Violent behaviour

Content for this policy adapted from: <https://employmentrightsireland.com/a-step-by-step-disciplinary-procedure-from-verbal-warning-to-dismissal/>

Appendix 4 - Legislation

Children First Act 2015

Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017

National Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 and 2016

National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017

Appendix 5 - Links

Garda.ie

Tulsa.ie

Appendix 6 - References

<https://www.scouts.ie/Scouter/Management-Resources/Policies-Procedures/All-Official-Policies/SID-40-05-Reporting-Procedures.pdf>

<http://www.tulsa.ie/children-first/organisations/what-is-a-risk-assessment>

<http://www.tulsa.ie/children-first/organisations/what-is-a-child-safeguarding-statement>

Appendix 7 - Removed from Risk Register

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During registration parents/guardians must notify OurKidsCode workshop facilitators if they are supervising children other than their own - this will be noted at point of registration 	Workshop Registration facilitated by NPC
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Appendix 8 - Record of OurKidsCode Trainers

Name	Organisation	Training / CPD	Garda Vetting	Teaching Council No.	Read Safeguarding	Date
<i>Lorraine Fisher</i>	<i>TCD</i>	<i>3rd Level</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>June 2018</i>
<i>Louise Caldwell</i>	<i>TCD</i>	<i>3rd Level</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>February 2021</i>
<i>Richard Millwood</i>	<i>TCD</i>	<i>3rd Level</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>February 2021</i>

<i>Mary O'Mahony</i>	<i>NPC</i>	<i>3rd Level</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>May 2021</i>
<i>Sarah Chapman</i>	<i>TCD</i>	<i>3rd Level</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>April 2023</i>