



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Child Protection Case File Booklet





The Child Protection Case File is a dedicated file (kept separate from other cases) with a unique reference number, containing all original, unaltered and unredacted hard copy documents, copies of redacted documents where applicable, and records relevant to a child protection case. A hard copy file containing original documents must be maintained by the DLP for all child protection concerns.

The DLP should refer to the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* when reporting and recording child protection concerns. Chapter 8 deals specifically with record keeping. Please note section 1.1.11 of these procedures regarding data protection and GDPR requirements.

The templates in this booklet are provided to support schools in keeping children safe by ensuring that required steps are taken and vital information is recorded. The templates will support schools in recording the necessary information and maintaining accurate records. Records in other forms or formats are also acceptable; however, the department recommends the use of the templates provided.

The templates are available to download from www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools. Please check this website regularly to ensure that you are using the most up to date versions available.

Support Templates:

- CPF 1 Child protection case file cover page
- CPF 2 Record of how the child protection concern came to the attention of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)
- CPF 3 Record of DLP's phone call seeking the advice of Tusla
- CPF 4 Statement from DLP to a member of school personnel as to the reasons why a report has not been made to Tusla
- CPF 5 Record of DLP informing or not informing the parent that a report has been submitted to Tusla
- CPF 6 Signed record indicating that all redacted documents presented to the board of management are accounted for following the Child Protection Oversight Report
- CPF 7 Advice on communicating with parents following the raising of a child protection concern, including sample letters
- CPF 8 Master list of child protection case files

Secure Storage of Child Protection Records

- > All child protection records shall be regarded as strictly confidential and placed in a secure location.
- > A secure location is a robust lockable location to which only the DLP and DDLP (and the chairperson when acting as DLP) have access.
- > A filing cabinet drawer dedicated to child protection files, within a filing cabinet to which personnel other than the DLP and DDLP have access, is not a secure location.
- > In circumstances where a school has very limited storage space and filing cabinets, a school could consider storing a secure lockbox containing child protection files within a drawer of a filing cabinet. This would ensure that only the DLP and DDLP (and the chairperson when acting as DLP), have access to the files.
- > Child protection records should not be stored digitally. Where records have been created digitally, they must be printed and included in the hard copy file. All digital versions and drafts must be securely and permanently deleted.

Checklist to support the DLP in creating a case file

When creating a case file, the DLP (and DDLP while supporting the DLP) may use the checklist below as a support in ensuring that all the necessary steps have been taken and information recorded. Full details of record keeping requirements are outlined in Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* and should be consulted if further information is required. Note that not all the records outlined below will be applicable to every case file.

- ☐ Has the case been assigned a case file number?
- ☐ Is there a record of how the child protection concern came to the attention of the DLP?
- ☐ Is there a record of any phone call by the DLP seeking the advice from Tusla, and does it include the date, the name and position of the Tusla official and the advice given?
- ☐ Is there a record retained informing the member of school personnel of the DLP seeking advice from Tusla and the nature of that advice (Record of Designated Liaison Person's (DLP) Phone Call Seeking the Advice of Tusla – CPF3)? Co-signing of the Tusla consultation record by the staff member will satisfy this requirement.
- ☐ Is there a copy of any report(s) made to Tusla?
- ☐ Is there a record of any statement from DLP to a member of school personnel as to the reasons why a report has not been made to Tusla?
- ☐ Is there a record of the DLP informing or not informing parent/carers that a report has been submitted to Tusla?
- ☐ Is there a record of any written notification issued to a parent/carers in any case where that parent/carers has raised a child protection concern in respect of their child or where they have made an allegation of abuse against a member of school personnel?
- ☐ Have records been made of any other communications (e.g. to the patron, chairperson, parent/carers, with Tusla, An Garda Síochána or any other relevant party)? Have they been included on the file?
- ☐ If the case file is being brought to the board of management for oversight, have all relevant parties been assigned a unique code or serial number?
- ☐ In cases brought to the board of management for oversight, has a copy of the redacted record been added to the file? Has a signed note accounting for the documents provided to the board as part of the Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR) been added to the file?
- ☐ Are there any other records that need to be added to the file?

CPF 1

Child Protection Case File Cover Page

HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL

Please refer to *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* – Chapter 8: Record Keeping for further guidance on record keeping.

Unique Case File Number:

Date File Opened:

File Index

(List of all codes used in the file – this is only applicable to files presented for oversight by the board of management, i.e. allegations against school personnel, other child protection concerns which were not reported by the DLP to Tusla, and child protection cases arising from alleged bullying behaviour between pupils.)

Code/Serial Number	Party to whom this code refers
Example - Child A	Ann Adams
Adult A	Mr Adam Adams

Name of DLP:

Name of DDLP:

Name of Chairperson of Board of Management:

CPF 2

Record of How the Child Protection Concern Came to the Attention of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Note to the DLP: in completing this template, please ensure that the full names of all parties are recorded, including the name of the person who raised the concern. If details of this concern are presented to the board for oversight, redacted copies of this document should be created for this purpose.

Date:

Name of Child:

Date of Birth:

Record of how the concern came to be known to the DLP and a complete record of the details of concern (for example, notified by member of school personnel, parent/carer, member of the public, child etc).

Where a member of school personnel has been informed that the DLP is seeking advice/not seeking advice from Tusla, the member of school personnel should sign below

Signed* Date:
DLP

Print Name:

Signed Date:
Member of School Personnel

Print Name:

Any additional records relevant to how the concern came to the DLP's attention (for example handwritten notes) should be included in the case file.

* Document to be printed and signed with original signatures

CPF 3

Record of Designated Liaison Person's (DLP) Phone Call Seeking the Advice of Tusla

Date: Time:

Full name of Social Worker, title and contact details:

Details of information provided to the Tusla Social Worker in respect of the concern
(including whether or not any identifying details were provided):

Advice provided by Tusla in relation to whether or not to report the concern or whether or
not to report the concern as a mandated report:

Any other information or advice provided by Tusla:

Where a member of school personnel, whether mandated or non-mandated, has been provided with the advice received from Tusla by the DLP, they should sign below.

Signed:* Date:
DLP

Print Name:

Signed:* Date:
Member of School Personnel

Print Name:

CPF 4

Record of Statement from Designated Liaison Person (DLP) to a Member of School Personnel About the Reasons Why a Report Has Not Been Made to Tusla

Dear:

Member of school personnel

In relation to the concern which you brought to my attention on (date), please be advised that I have decided not to report the matter to Tusla:

- ☐ I have sought advice from Tusla and have been advised by Tusla that the matter does not require reporting to Tusla

AND/OR

- ☐ Other reasons – listed here:

If you remain concerned about the situation, you may consult with Tusla and/or report to Tusla. If you decide to report the concern to Tusla you shall provide a copy of that report to me as DLP.

Signed:*

Date:

DLP

Print Name:

- ☐ I acknowledge receiving this statement from the DLP:

Signed:*

Date:

Member of School Personnel

Print Name:

* Document to be printed and signed with original signatures

CPF 5

Record of Designated Liaison Person Informing or Not Informing a Parent/Carer That a Report Concerning Their Child Is Being Made to Tusla

A. Record of Informing the Parent/Carer

Name of Child:

Name of Parent/Carer:

Date & Time Parent/Carer informed:

Method of Informing – Phone/Meeting etc:

On the date and by the means referred to above, I have informed the above-named parent/carers that a child protection report, concerning their child, is being made to Tusla and gave the following reasons for this decision to report. A printed copy of the report to Tusla is retained on the case file.

Signed:*

DLP

Print Name:

Date:

* Document to be printed and signed with original signatures

B. Record of Not Informing the Parent/CarerName of Child:

As DLP and in accordance with the *Children First National Guidance 2017*, I have decided not to inform the parent/carers that a child protection concern report concerning their child is being made to Tusla for the following reason(s):

- ☐ I consider that the child will be placed at further risk.
- ☐ I consider that the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment.
- ☐ I am of the reasonable opinion that by doing so it may place the reporter at risk or harm from the family.
- ☐ I have sought advice from Tusla as to whether the parent/carers should be informed and Tusla has advised me not to inform the parent/carers.

Signed:*

DLP

Print Name:

Date:

* Document to be printed and signed with original signatures

CPF 6

Signed Record Indicating That All Redacted Documents Presented to the Board of Management Are Accounted for Following Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR)

Please place this record in the relevant case file. The minutes of the relevant board of management meeting should also reflect the information below.

Where redacted and anonymised copies of records are provided to the board of management for oversight purposes, as set out in Chapter 12 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, all copies must be recovered following the meeting.

Section 8.8 of the procedures obliges the DLP to place a signed note on the case file indicating the number of copies distributed and recovered, keeping one redacted copy in the appropriate case file and shredding the extra copies (e.g. note that eight copies were distributed, eight returned and seven copies were shredded by the DLP). This ensures that all copies are accounted for.

Board of Management Meeting Date:

Unique Case file number:

Number of copies of files distributed:

Number of copies of files destroyed:

Number of copies of files retained on file:

Signed:*

Principal/Designated Liaison Person

Print Name:

* Document to be printed and signed with original signatures

CPF 7

Advice for Communicating with Parents

1. Where a child protection concern relates to their child

Section 5.3.6 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* outlines that a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) should inform parents/carers when a child protection concern arises in relation to their child as soon as practicable after they become aware of the concern.

This notification may be made by telephone, in person or in writing, and the DLP should keep a record of this fact.

Guidance is provided below to support DLPs in making this notification.

- > It is important to deal with any such communication in a sensitive and tactful manner.
- > The parent/carer should be informed that the concern will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures as set out in the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, which may include reporting the matter to Tusla.
- > The DLP should outline that school personnel do not have an investigative role in relation to child protection concerns.
- > Requirements of confidentiality as outlined in the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* do not prevent the DLP from communicating with parents in relation to child protection concerns involving their child.
- > The department has developed a leaflet for parents/carers to explain the contents of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*. The DLP may wish to provide the parent with a copy of the leaflet, or point them towards www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools where the leaflet can be found online. Tusla also provides a leaflet for parents on the role of mandated persons which is available on their website.
- > The DLP should be aware that due to the necessity to follow due process, the principles of confidentiality and, where relevant, disciplinary processes, it may not be possible to provide the parent/carer with all the details of the concern when informing them of the concern. This should be explained to the parent/carer.
- > However, where possible, the DLP can provide details such as the nature of the concern and when the concern happened, provided it does not impact on the necessity to follow due process.
- > Where a DLP wishes to communicate in writing, or provide a written record of a conversation, a sample letter has been provided below as an example of how a DLP might communicate with parents. It is not mandatory to use this letter.
- > In certain circumstances, Tusla may have advised the DLP not to inform the parent/carer, and in such cases that advice should be followed.
- > A parent/carer should not be informed of a child protection concern in relation to their child:
 - ~ if by doing so, the child will be placed at further risk; or
 - ~ in cases where the family's knowledge of a report to Tusla could impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment; or
 - ~ if the reporter is of the reasonable opinion that by doing so it may place the reporter at risk of harm from the family.

2. Where a parent raises an allegation of a child protection concern against a member of school personnel

Section 5.4.5 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* outlines that where an allegation of a child protection concern has been received from a parent/carer, the DLP should acknowledge the receipt of an allegation of a child protection concern from a parent/carer as soon as is practicable.

- > It is important to deal with any such allegation in a sensitive and tactful manner.
- > The parent/carer should be informed that the concern will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures as set out in the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, which may include reporting the matter to Tusla.
- > The DLP should outline that school personnel do not have an investigative role in relation to child protection concerns.
- > Requirements of confidentiality as outlined in the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* do not prevent the DLP from communicating with parents in relation to child protection concerns involving their child.
- > The department has developed a leaflet for parents/carers to explain the contents of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*. The DLP may wish to provide the parent with a copy of the leaflet, or point them towards www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools where the leaflet can be found online. Tusla also provides a leaflet for parents on the role of mandated persons which is available on their website.
- > Where a DLP wishes to acknowledge receipt of the child protection concern in writing, or provide a written record of a conversation, a sample letter has been provided below as an example of how a DLP might communicate with parents. It is not mandatory to use this letter.

In addition, as set out in the procedures, the DLP shall, as soon as feasible, and in any case within five school days of the parent/carer making the allegation issue a written notification to the parent outlining what action has been taken in relation to the report. The detail of this notification is set out in sections 5.4.5 and 7.5.1. A sample letter is provided below to support DLPs in writing this notification. While the DLP must provide a written notification to the parent/carer in these circumstances, it is not mandatory to use the sample letter.

Sample Letter 1:

Sample Written Notification from Designated Liaison Person (DLP) to a Parent/Carer About a Child Protection Concern Involving Their Child

[School Headed Paper]

Date:

Dear

Following our conversation on (date), I am writing to let you know that a child protection concern has been raised about your child on (date).

This concern will be handled according to the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, which may include reporting the issue to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. You can find more details about these procedures in the leaflet for parents attached to this letter, or online at www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools.

Please understand that, because we need to follow the proper process, maintain confidentiality, and, if needed, handle any disciplinary actions, I may not be able to share all the details with you right now.

Kind regards,

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Sample Letter 2:

Part A – Sample Written Acknowledgement from Designated Liaison Person (DLP) to a Parent/Carer Where an Allegation of a Child Protection Concern Was Raised by Them Involving a Member of School Personnel

[School Headed Paper]

Date:

Dear

Following our conversation on (date), I am writing to confirm that I have received your concern about a child protection issue involving a member of school personnel raised on (date).

This issue will be handled according to the procedures in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*. This may include reporting the matter to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. For more details about these procedures, please refer to the leaflet for parents, which is attached or available online at www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools

Please note that because we must follow the correct processes, maintain confidentiality, and, if necessary, follow disciplinary steps, I may not be able to share all details of the situation with you right now.

Within five days of receiving this concern, I will send you another letter to inform you whether the issue has been reported to Tusla and what the next steps will be.

Kind regards,

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Sample Letter 3:
Part B – Sample Written Notification from
DLP to a Parent/Carer where an Allegation of
a Child Protection Concern was Raised by
them Involving a Member of School Personnel

[School Headed Paper]

Date:

Dear

Following the child protection concern allegation which you have raised against a member of school personnel which was brought to my attention, I am writing to tell you that:

If you are unhappy with this decision, you can raise the matter directly with Tusla, and it remains open to you to report your concern directly to Tusla at any point.

Any allegation of abuse against a school employee reported to Tusla is dealt with under the procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*. For more details about these procedures, please refer to the leaflet for parents, which is attached or available online at www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools.

Yours sincerely,

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

CPF 8

Master List of Child Protection Files

HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL

Please refer to *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* Chapter 8: Record Keeping, for further guidance on record keeping

This master list contains details of each case file including the names of the child or member of school personnel in respect of whom the files were created.

Case File Number	Tusla Case Number (if applicable)	Category of concern, i.e. school personnel, other child protection concerns or alleged bullying behaviour among pupils	Were redacted case file documents presented to the board for oversight? Yes/Not applicable	Name of whom the file was created. Indicate whether Child or Member of School Personnel	Address
Example Case File 01/2025				Ann Adams (Child)	4 Main Street, Castletown



