

Child Protection Policy

As approved by
Academic Council on 18 June 2018
and by Governing Body on 18th June 2018

Document Location

Registrar's Office

Revision History

Date of this revision:	Date of next review:
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Version Number/Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked

Consultation History

Version Number/Revision Number	Consultation Date	Names of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes

Approval

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Title	Date
	AC	18/6/18
	GB	28/6/18

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1. Introduction

The safety and well-being of Children and Young People is of paramount importance to Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. This policy aims to reflect national legislation, guidelines and best practice for the protection and welfare of Children and Young People. The guiding principle of this policy is that the safety and well-being of the child or young person must take priority over any other consideration.

This policy is based on a revision of its' preceding 'Child Protection Reporting Policy', GMIT,2013, 'Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children', Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017, 'A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns' Tusla – Child and Family Agency, 2017, 'Best Practice Principles for Organisations in Developing Children First Training Programmes', Tusla – Child and Family Agency,2017", "Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement', Tusla – Child and Family Agency, 2017, 'Children First Act, 2015, "Our Duty to Care – The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People' Department of Health and Children2002and "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, Department of Education and Skills" (2010).

While the majority of persons studying, working and using the facilities of GMIT are adults there are a number of persons in GMIT, or associated with GMIT activities who are under 18 years of age. This policy aims to protect these children and young adults during their education and development through GMIT's facilities.

This policy is for the use of GMIT staff and its contractors. It is also available for students use if they wish to report any concerns in respect of the protection of a child or young person.

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis by the Registrar's Office with the support of the Designated Child Protection Person (DCPP) and other competent personnel as deemed appropriate, to ensure that it is line with national guidelines and legislation. The revised policy will be presented to Academic Council for approval and to the Governing Body for noting.

2. Purpose and Scope

- This document is intended to state the policies and procedures agreed by GMIT in respect of the protection of Children and Young People.
- It specifies the actions and behaviours required when dealing with Children/Young People and in the reporting of suspected child/young person abuse/neglect.
- It also provides a code of conduct applicable in respect of dealings with Children or Young People and sets out the reporting requirements in cases of suspected abuse of a Child or Young Person in GMIT.

The purpose of this Policy is to promote good practice by:

- Providing Children and Young People with the appropriate safety and protection while visiting or attending GMIT.
- Advising Staff of the child protection measures which are in place in GMIT to ensure that reasonable care is exercised in dealing with Children.
- Assisting Staff to make informed decisions and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- Giving direction and guidance to GMIT management and Staff in dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual and neglect), with protection and well-being of the child being the most important consideration.

3. Institute Responsibilities

In compliance with Section II of the Children First Act, 2015, GMIT will:

1. Carry out an assessment of any risk to a child/young person attending the Institute.
2. Prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) in accordance with subsection (3) of Section II of the Act
3. Appoint a relevant person for the purpose of this part of the Act.
4. Carry out a review of the Child Safeguarding Statement as soon as practicable, if there has been material changes and in any event no later than 24 months of the date of the first statement and within 24 months from each review thereafter.
5. Provide a copy of the CSS to all members of staff and on request to any parent/guardian of a child availing of services provided by the Institute, the child and Family Agency and members of the public.
6. Display the CSS or any subsequent review of same in a prominent place.

4. Definitions & Abbreviations

Children	Under The Child Care Act, 1991, Section 2, any person under 18 years of age is considered a child, excluding a person who is or has been married, and should be protected under Children First and the National Child Protection guidelines.
Young Person	For the purposes of this policy the term young person is used alongside the word child. Students of GMIT who are 17 years of age are more appropriately referred to as young people.
HSE	Health Service Executive ? unnecessary
GMIT	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Staff	Employees of GMIT either permanent or contractual
GCVU	Garda Central Vetting Unit
Designated Child	Person designated to deal directly, on behalf of GMIT, with concerns raised regarding abuse of Children/Young People.

Protection Person (DCPP)	
Neglect	Neglect can be defined in terms of an <i>omission</i> of care where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Features and examples are provided in Appendix A.
Emotional Abuse	Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a parent/carer and a child/young person rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's or young person's developmental need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Features and examples are provided in Appendix A.
Physical Abuse	Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child/young person physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. Features and examples are provided in Appendix A.
Sexual Abuse	Sexual abuse occurs when a child/young person is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child/young person being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child/young person to sexual activity directly or through pornography. Features and examples are provided in Appendix A.
Tusla	Child and Family Agency

5. Reporting Procedure

All staff, volunteers, persons seeking work experience and interns will be made aware of the procedures that are in place relative to reporting of child abuse concerns. Please see comment on same sentence at end section.

5.1 Reports to the Designed Child Protection Person

Reports of concerns of child/young person welfare shall be made to the Designated Child Protection Person (DCPP) within GMIT. The DCPP shall be notified of concerns on the form contained in Appendix B?. The DCPP shall brief the Registrar on a regular basis on the operation of this policy. The Registrar shall notify the President when an allegation is reported to the HSE or the Gardaí.

5.2 Out of Hours & Emergency Reports

In certain, limited circumstances, for example outside of normal working hours, an employee may become aware of an imminent risk to a child/ young person. In this case a report should be made directly to the Gardaíor Tusla – Child and Family Agency, if available,without delay. In such instances the DCPP shall be notified forthwith by the employee that a report has been made. The reporting form to be used in this instance is contained in Appendix C?.

5.3 Mandated Persons

“GMIT shall maintain a list of mandated persons within the organisation for the purpose of the Children First Act 2015. All mandated persons shall be notified of the status. All mandated persons will be made aware of their statutory reporting obligations and also made aware of the child safeguarding and reporting procedures of the Institute. All mandated persons shall comply with all training requirements that may be stipulated by the Institute from time to time and shall be kept up to date with developments in child protection law and requirements as per directives from the Department of Education and Skills.

5.4 Reporting Procedure for GMIT Counsellors and Medical Practitioners

Counsellors and Medical Practitioners who are retained by GMIT must comply with their own regulatory authorities and with Children First (2015) and Children First Guidance, 2017 in line with best practice. In the course of their work these professionals may decide, in certain limited circumstances, to inform Tusla – the Child and Family Agency or Gardaí directly. In such instances the DCPD shall be notified forthwith that a report has been made. The DCPD shall be notified in that instance on the form contained in Appendix C?.

6. Designated Child Protection Person

6.1 Duties of Designated Child Protection Person

GMIT will appoint one (or more) Designated Child Protection Persons to act as a liaison with outside agencies ? and to ensure all concerns of child/ young person protection and welfare are referred properly to the relevant authorities. The Institute may also appoint one or more Deputy Child Protection Person, as it sees fit. The DCPD will act as a resource to any member of GMIT staff who has child/young person protection queries or concerns. The DCPD is responsible for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure is followed, so that suspected cases of child/young person neglect or abuse are referred promptly to the relevant authorities.

6.2 Competencies of the Designated Child Protection Person

The DCPD shall have the requisite competencies to carry out the role. The particular types of qualities which will be required to fulfill this function include confidentiality, trusted judgment, empathy, accessibility and credibility.

6.3 Duty to be informed/educated in matters of Child Protection

Persons holding the position of DCPD shall receive focused training on the GMIT Child Protection policy prior to undertaking the role and shall ensure they fully understand the reporting obligations and policies required by law. The DCPD shall comply with all training requirements that may be stipulated by GMIT from time to time and shall ensure that they are up-to-date with recent developments in child protection law. Prior to taking up the position of DCPD interested personnel will be required to undergo Garda Vetting.

6.4 Duty of DCPD to inform Relevant Authorities

The DCPD is responsible for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure is followed and referred as appropriate to the designated person in Tusla – Child and Family Agency or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of Tusla, to An Garda Síochána.

6.5 Duty to keep relevant Records

The DCPD has a duty to maintain confidentiality. All information should be shared only on a 'need to know' basis in order to protect the interests of the child/young person. It is essential that all information exchanged between GMIT, Tusla – Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána is treated with the utmost confidentiality in order to safeguard the privacy of the children/young people and families concerned and to avoid prejudicing any subsequent legal proceedings which may follow.

The DCPD shall, without delay report to:

- (a) Tusla Child and Family Agency where the DCPD has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected. This report should be made to Tusla without delay. All reports made by the DCPD to Tusla should include as much as possible of the information sought in the standard reporting form as outlined in Appendix D.?
- (b) In case of an emergency, report concerns to An Garda Síochána, where it is believed that a child is in immediate danger and it is not possible to make contact with Tusla – the child and Family Agency. This may be done through any Garda Station.
- (c) The parent or guardian of a Child who is the subject matter of the report, if a report is likely to be submitted to Tusla, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child. If the DCPD decides not to inform a parent/guardian of the child this decision and the reasons for it should be recorded. If, for any reason it is not possible to inform the Child's parent/guardian, the DCPD should inform Tusla of the reason why. Tusla must be told if the Child's parents have not been informed so that it can take the necessary appropriate steps.
- (d) The Human Resources Manager where the allegation is made against GMIT Staff or a GMIT contractor.

The DCPD should ensure that any response made by a Staff member or contractor of GMIT against whom an allegation has been made shall be passed to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána when submitting the formal notification report. It is the role of the Human Resources Department to ensure that the Staff member or contractor is made aware of this.

Where a Staff member of GMIT or the DCPD reports suspicions of child abuse reasonably and in good faith to designated officers of Tusla or any members of An Garda Síochána, the Protection of Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 protects them from civil or criminal liability for doing so. The law does not require proof that the abuse in fact happened, only that there are reasonable grounds for concern that the abuse has occurred.

6.6 Procedure for cases that are not Referred

If the Designated Child Protection Person is of the opinion that it is not appropriate to report the case to Tusla or Gardaí the DCPD shall inform the person who initially made the report, in writing, of the reasons why it was decided not to refer.

If the DCPD is not sure whether or not to report the matter to Tusla , the DCPD should seek advice from Tusla without giving identifying details.

The DCPD should make it clear that he/she is not making a report but simply seeking advice.

If Tusla advises that a report should be made to Tusla , the DCPD should act on that advice.

If Tusla advises that no action is required:

- (i) the DCPD should keep a record in writing of that fact together with a record of any advice given by Tusla ;
- (ii) any actions taken as a result of the concern should be noted;
- (iii) the employee or volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla;
- (iv) the employee or volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla or and Garda Síochána;
- (v) and the DCPD remains concerned about a Child's Welfare, a report in writing may be made to Tusla .

6.7 Access to Governing Body & Policy Review

On an annual basis the Registrar shall make a report to Governing Body in respect of Child Protection within the Institute. The Registrar shall also ensure that this policy is reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

6.8 Promotion and Awareness of Child Protection

The DCPD shall advise on the promotion and awareness of Child Protection within the Institute. The extent and necessity of this particular role will be reviewed by GMIT on an annual basis.

7. Awareness of Children/Young People who may be at Risk

7.1 Recognition of Possible Child/Young Person Abuse

The ability to recognise child/young person abuse can depend as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on their knowledge and information. There are commonly three stages in the identification of child/young person neglect or abuse:

1. considering the possibility;
2. looking out for signs of neglect or abuse;
3. recording of information.

7.2 Stage 1: Considering the Possibility of Child Abuse

The possibility of child/young person abuse should be considered if a child/young person appears to have suffered a suspicious injury for which no reasonable explanation can be offered. It should also be considered if the child seems distressed without obvious reason or displays persistent or new behavioural problems. The possibility of child/young person abuse should also be considered if the child/young person displays unusual or fearful responses to parents/carers or older children/young people. A pattern of ongoing neglect should also be considered even when there are short periods of improvement (Children First 2011, p10).

7.3 Stage 2 : Looking out for signs of Neglect or Abuse

Signs of neglect or abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. They can exist in the relationships between children/young people and parents/carers or between children/young people and other family members/other persons. A cluster or pattern of signs is more likely to be indicative of neglect or abuse. Children/young people who are being abused may hint that they are being harmed and sometimes make direct disclosures. Disclosures should always be taken very seriously and should be acted upon, for example, by informing the DCP.

7.4 Stage 3 : Recording the Information

If neglect or abuse is suspected observations should be accurately recorded and should include dates, times, names, locations, context and any other information that may be relevant. Care should be taken as to how such information is stored and to whom it is made available.

7.5 Observation of a person whose behaviour causes concern for dependent Children/Young People

In the course of activities in GMIT a staff member/student/ volunteer/visitor may have concerns about the behavior of a person who is the parent or guardian of a child. If there is reason to believe that the behavior of this person may pose a potential risk to a child/young person, even though the child/young person is unidentifiable, this should also be communicated to the Designated Child Protection Person

7.6 Disclosure by an adult which may reveal a risk to Children/Young People

An adult may disclose to a staff member/student/ volunteer/visitor of GMIT that abuse took place during their childhoods. Such disclosures often come to light when adults attend counselling or during the course of their education.

It is essential to consider that there may be a high probability of current risk to any child/young person who may be in contact with the alleged abuser revealed in such disclosures. Therefore, in keeping with the associated procedure on reporting of retrospective abuse the GMIT member who received the disclosure should report the allegation to the Designated Child Protection Person without delay.

8. Duty to Report

Everyone must be alert to the possibility that children/young people with whom they are in contact may be suffering as a result of abuse or neglect. This responsibility is particularly relevant for all those who are classed as mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

The DCPD should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

The guiding principles in reporting child/young person abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

- (i) the safety and well-being of the child/young person must take priority;
- (ii) reports should be made without delay to the Designated Child Protection Person, and the DCPD should be informed of any reports which have been made to Tusla or the Gardaí in order to ensure appropriate records are maintained.

It is acknowledged that making a report to the DCPD may be a stressful event for staff. Support is available for employees going through this process through the Institute's Employee Assistance Programme.

9. Dealing with Disclosures of Child Abuse

In the event of a child disclosing an incident of abuse it is essential that this is dealt with sensitively and professionally. The following are guidelines to support staff in this regard:

- React calmly;
- Listen carefully and attentively & take the child/young person seriously;
- Reassure the child/young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you;
- Do not promise to keep anything secret;
- Advise that support will be offered but that the information must be passed on;
- Ask questions for clarification only. Do not ask leading questions (i.e. questions which prompt a "yes" or "no" answer);
- Do not proceed to interview the child/young person, simply report the relevant information;
- Confirm with the child/young person that what you have heard is correct and understood;
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser;
- Do not confront the alleged abuser;
- Record the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible.
- Sign and date the record;
- Ensure that the child/young person understands the procedures which will follow in accordance with this Policy;
- Ensure that the child/young person, if a registered student of GMIT, is aware that additional support is available to them through the Institute's Counsellors/ Doctors;
- Pass the information to the DCPD, do not attempt to deal with the problem alone;
- Treat the information confidentially (i.e. ensure that the information is only passed on to those who need to know it);
- The effective protection of a child/young people in GMIT will depend on the willingness of the staff and students involved with children to share and exchange relevant information. It is therefore critical that there is a clear understanding of professional and legal responsibilities with regard to confidentiality and the exchange of information.

All information regarding concern or assessment of child abuse or neglect will only be shared on 'a need to know' basis in the interests of the child with the relevant statutory authorities. No

undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. The provision of information to the DCPD and the statutory agencies for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.

10. Allegations in Respect of GMIT Employees

Where abuse or neglect by a member of staff is suspected, normal child/young person protection procedures should be instigated. Staff and management must cooperate fully with the investigation. The possibility of involvement and collusion of other members of staff must also be considered.

In respect of a staff member against whom an allegation is made, the Human Resources Manager of GMIT will deal with issues related to the staff member's contract of employment as per GMIT's disciplinary policy. A breach of this child protection policy is considered as a serious matter and will be dealt with accordingly.

11. Legal Protection for Those Reporting

Protection from Civil Liability

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 makes provision for the protection from civil liability of persons who have communicated child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of Tusla or to a member of An Garda Síochána. This protection applies to organisations as well as to individuals. This means that even if a communicated suspicion of child/young person abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the person who communicated the concern had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report.

Section 16(3) of the Children First Act 2015 makes provision for the protection from civil liability of persons who share information when assisting in the assessment of risk to a child.

"If a mandated person furnishes any information (including a report), document or thing to the Agency pursuant to a request made under subsection (1), the furnishing of that information, document or thing shall not give rise to any civil liability in contract, tort or otherwise and nor shall the information, document or thing be admissible as evidence against that person in any civil or criminal proceedings."

Anyone making a child protection report in good faith may have a defence to a claim of defamation where the report was made to a person who had a duty to receive (or interest in receiving) the information contained in the child protection report and the person making the report had a corresponding duty to communicate the information to such persons. This is called the defence of "qualified privilege" under the Defamation Act 2009.

12. Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 provides that every person has the following legal rights:

- **the right to access official records held by GMIT. The right of access to personal information relates only to the individual themselves. This right to access does not apply in a range of circumstances that may be relevant in a child welfare context.**

- the right to have personal information held on them corrected or updated where such information is incomplete, incorrect or misleading;
- the right to be given reasons for decisions taken by GMIT that affect them.

Requests are processed by the Freedom of Information Officer foi@gmit.ie

13. Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) provides individuals with a right of access to their personal information held by GMIT as follows:

1. Confirmation of whether or not their personal data is being processed;
2. Where their personal data is being processed, a copy of that personal information;
3. Where their personal data is being processed, other additional information as follows:
 - a) Purpose(s) of the processing;
 - b) Categories of personal data;
 - c) Any recipient(s) of the personal data to whom the personal data has or will be disclosed, in particular recipients in third countries or international organisations and information about appropriate safeguards;
4. The retention period.
5. The existence of a number of rights.

This right to access does not apply in a range of circumstances that may be relevant in a child welfare context.

This right of access to information must not adversely affect the rights and freedoms of others i.e. the right of access does not extend to any information that identifies a third party where that third party has an expectation of confidence. Accordingly, information that would identify a person making a child welfare report will not be provided in response to a subject access request.

Subject access requests are processed by the Data Protection Office dpo@gmit.ie

14. Duties of GMIT

14.1 GMIT has a duty to promote the general welfare, health, development and safety of Children/Young People.

14.2 GMIT has a duty to raise awareness within the organisation about potential risks to Children/Young People's safety and welfare.

14.3 GMIT must ensure allegations made or concerns reported in respect of children/young people are dealt with appropriately.

14.4 GMIT shall ensure that clear procedures in relation to record-keeping of child protection and welfare concerns are in place and are operating effectively, taking appropriate account of the need to ensure that such records are kept securely. All records relating to specific child protection issues (i.e. records that involve specific individuals as distinct from general information) must be kept securely. Hard copy physical documents must be securely stored in locked cabinets and soft copy/electronic records must

be kept on the GMIT system which is password protected. It is not recommended that these records be kept on individual laptops or mobile devices but, where they are, that they are encrypted. Access should be restricted to those who need to have access to these records owing to their child protection role.

14.5 GMIT shall identify and appoint a Designated Child Protection Person to act as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any person who has child protection concerns. The DCP is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to Tusla Child and Family Agency or to An Garda Síochána.

14.6 The person appointed to this role shall be competent and confident in the area of child protection and shall possess the necessary competencies to carry out the role.

14.7 GMIT shall provide or access training to ensure that relevant personnel have a good working knowledge of child protection issues and procedures.

14.8 GMIT shall have clear written procedures in place concerning action to be taken where allegations are received against GMIT employees/service providers.

14.9 GMIT has a duty to adopt and consistently apply a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting staff.

14.10 GMIT shall ensure that Garda Vetting procedures are in place, as is appropriate, for the relevant staff. GMIT shall ensure that it reviews its policy in respect of Garda vetting in line with any changes which may be implemented by national policy and legislation. The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012-2016 places statutory obligations on employers in relation to the Garda vetting requirements for persons working with children/vulnerable adults and GMIT undertakes that it will comply with any or all such requirements.

15. Best Practice for Activities with Children/Young People

GMIT staff who work with children and young people must familiarise themselves with this policy and sign “An acceptance of the GMIT Child Protection Policy and Guidelines form” (Appendix F). GMIT staff members should return the form to the HR Department.

Students who work/learn/volunteer with children and young persons must be made aware of this policy by the DCP or person nominated by him/her and the student must sign “An acceptance of the GMIT Child Protection Policy and Guidelines form” (Appendix XX). The students should return the completed form to the DCP or person nominated by him/her.

Staff members of GMIT must ensure that they work in an open environment (i.e. avoiding private or unobserved situations) where possible – there may be some instances where 1:1 work is required eg counselling / medical (? Position there) – consent from parent or guardian must be sought to offer intervention.

At all times members of the GMIT community must ensure that they:

- Always work in an open environment (i.e. avoiding private or unobserved situations);
- Avoid being alone with a child/young person; ? how it works for learning support/ chaplaincy and other SSs
- Treat all children/young person equally, and with respect and dignity;

- Demonstrate exemplary behaviour in the presence of children/young people;
- Provide a safe, appropriately monitored environment for any children/young people visiting any of our campuses;
- Adopt the safest possible practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children/young people;
- Keeping children/young people safe, involves assisting them to develop their own skills in keeping themselves safe. It also involves providing them with opportunities to develop free from unnecessarily restrictive environments;
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback;
- Never use physical punishment;
- Always refer reports of current/ retrospective child/young person abuse, welfare and safety issues to the DCPP. If a member of staff of GMIT is inhibited for any reason in reporting the incident internally to the DCPP or where they are dissatisfied with the response, they should contact Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

16. Students on Placement

16.1 A student on placement must be familiar with the policies and procedures in relation to child protection within the placement organisation.

16.2 A student on placement who is aware or made aware of suspected child abuse should without delay adhere to the following procedure.

16.2.1 The student should report the suspected abuse to the Designated Child Protection Person on that placement or somebody in authority.

16.2.2 The student must also report the suspected abuse to the Designated Child Protection Person within GMIT.

17. Best Practice for Research Involving Children/Young People

Research involving children/young people must be approved by the Institute’s Research Committee prior to the commencement of the work. In addition it must be ensured that:

- Informed consent is obtained from the parents/guardians of children/young people.
- Informed consent must also be obtained from the children/young people themselves.
- Children/young people need to be informed in appropriate language so that they understand the purpose of the research for which they have agreed to participate;
- The effect of the research on the child/young person must be monitored to ensure that they feel comfortable with continuing with the research.
- In addition to the child/young person one other person should be present during the research. There may be rare occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary and in such circumstances, the interview should be conducted in a room with an open door or visual access.

18. Client Responsibility for Child Welfare when Leasing GMIT Facilities

The client is solely responsible for any minors (younger than eighteen years of age) brought on to the site by the client. Any injury of whatever nature and howsoever incurred by those children is the full and sole responsibility of the client, except where it can be proven beyond all reasonable doubt that any injury is as a result of the negligence of GMIT. The client is responsible for ensuring that the health, safety and welfare of minors are protected on site through supervision at all times. In addition, the client undertakes that it is compliant with all current legislation, regulations and guidelines in the vetting of staff who work with minors, as well as ensuring that the supervisor to children ratios for different age groups, the monitoring and control of these are and will at all times be in line with applicable health, safety and welfare legislation, regulations and guidelines. Moreover, the client shall maintain accurate verifiable records of its compliance with the aforementioned requirements and make such records available as part of the application process for use of GMIT facilities.

19. Appendices

Appendix A: Features and examples of Abuse/Neglect

Appendix B: GMIT Standard Reporting Form

Appendix C: Notification to DCPD of a report that has already been made to the HSE / Gardai

Appendix D: Tusla Standard Reporting Form

Appendix E: Contact Numbers

Appendix F: Acceptance of GMIT Child Protection Policy and Guidelines

Appendix G: Authorised Persons of GMIT in respect of the protection of Children

Appendix H: Child Safeguarding Statement Sample Template

Appendix A: Features and Examples of Abuse/Neglect

Neglect: Examples & Signs

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety.

The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

The following are features of child neglect:

1. Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
2. Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
3. Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation.
4. Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation.
5. Inadequate living conditions-unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture.
6. Lack of adequate clothing.
7. Inattention to basic hygiene.
8. Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age.
9. Persistent failure to attend school.
10. Abandonment or desertion.

Emotional Abuse may be seen in the following ways:

1. Rejection.
2. Lack of comfort and love.
3. Lack of attachment.
4. Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play).
5. Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned).
6. Continuous lack of praise and encouragement.
7. Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child.
8. Bullying.
9. Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviours or actions.

10. Extreme over protectiveness.
11. Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom).
12. Ongoing family conflicts and family violence.
13. Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development.

(i) the imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;

(ii) conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;

(iii) emotional unavailability of the child's parent/carer;

(iv) unresponsiveness of the parent/carer and/or inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;

(v) premature imposition of responsibility on the child;

(vi) unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way;

(vii) under- or over-protection of the child;

(viii) failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the child's cognitive and emotional development;

(ix) use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;

(x) exposure to domestic violence;

(xi) exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology.

Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour. The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.

Physical Abuse: Examples & Signs

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Physical abuse can include the following:

(i) physical punishment;

(ii) beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;

(iii) pushing, shaking or throwing;

(iv) pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling;

(v) female genital mutilation

- (vi) use of excessive force in handling;
- (vii) deliberate poisoning;
- (viii) suffocation;
- (ix) fabricated/induced illness);
- (xi) allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child

Sexual Abuse: Examples & Signs

Examples of child sexual abuse include:

- (i) Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child;
- (i) an invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- (iii) masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- (iv) sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- (v) sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography (for example, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape, social media or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means);
- vi) Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act;
- vii) Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse;
- viii) Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology;
- ix) consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.

It should be noted that the definition of child sexual abuse presented in this section is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offence of sexual assault.

Appendix B: GMIT Standard Reporting Form

Note: There may be instances when the information requested on this form is not available to the reporter, in these instances the reporter is requested to provide the information they have to hand.

1. Name and contact details of the reporter:

2. Name of child/young person or adult student (If this information is available)

3. Age and Date of Birth of child/young person (If known): _____

4. Who does the child/young person live with (If known): _____

5. Address/place of residence of the Child/Young Person: _____

6. Child/Young person's contact details: _____

7. Brief description of what has prompted the concerns, citing the facts only (include dates and times of any specific incidents and names of persons involved/witnesses):

8. Observations made by you: Physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

9. Have you spoken to the child/young person? If so what was said?

10. Have you consulted an external agency or reported this to anyone else?

11. Does the child/young person require medical attention?

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix C: Notification to DCPD of a report that has already been made to the HSE/Gardai

1. Name and contact details of the reporter:

2. Name of child/young person (if appropriate):

3. Details of the Statutory Body to whom the report was made:

4. Case Number (if Appropriate):

5. Date on which the report was made to a Statutory Body:

Signature

Date

Appendix D: Standard Tusla Reporting Forms

Available with supporting documents at:

<https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/mandated-persons/making-a-mandated-report/>

APPENDIX E: Contact Numbers

Please see Tusla contact page – enquiries and reports should go to place where abuse or neglect of child/ young person is occurring or where the abuse or neglect occurred if retrospective report.

<https://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/>

? keep gardai numbers below or put in 999/112

	HSE		Gardaí	
Galway	Galway City, Social Work Department, Local Health Office, 25 Newcastle Road, Galway.	(091) 546366	Mill Street Garda Station, Mill St. Galway	(091) 538000
	Galway County, Tuam Social Work Department, Health Centre, Vicar Street, Tuam.	(093) 37200	Tuam Garda Station, Tuam, Galway.	(093) 70840
	Loughrea Social Work Department, Health Centre, Loughrea.	(091) 847820	Loughrea Garda Station, Loughrea, Galway	(091) 841 222
	Ballinasloe Social Work Department, Health Centre, Brackernagh, Ballinasloe	(090) 964 6200	Ballinasloe Garda Station, Ballinasloe, Co Galway	(090) 964 2123
	Oughterard Social Work Department, Health Centre, Oughterard	(091) 552200	Oughterard Garda Station, Oughterard, Co Galway.	(091) 552 202
Mayo	Ballina Social Work Team, Ballina Health Centre, Mercy Road, Ballina.	(096) 21511 (096) 248 41	Ballina Garda Station, Ballina, Co Mayo.	(096) 20560
	Castlebar Social Work Team, St. Mary's Headquarters, Castlebar.	(094) 902 2283	Castlebar Garda Station, Castlebar, Co Mayo.	(094) 902 2222

	Swinford Social Work Team, Swinford Health Centre, Aras Attracta, Swinford,	(094) 905 0133	Swinford Garda Station, Swinford, Co mayo.	(094) 925 1115
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Appendix F: Acceptance of the GMIT Child Protection Policy and Guidelines

I have read the GMIT Child Protection Policy and Guidelines and agree to abide by its contents. There is no reason why I would be considered unsuitable to work with children or young people.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Department: _____

This form must be retained by the HR Department.

Appendix G: Authorised persons of GMIT in respect of the protection of Children

Nominating signatory for Garda vetting

Appointee recommended by President of GMIT for Garda vetting of students (only)	Student Services Officer {Anita Mahony}
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Authorised signatory for Garda vetting

Appointee nominated by nominating signatory of students	Student Services Officer {Anita Mahony}
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Institute Child Protection committee

Michael Hannon	Vice-President for Academic Affairs & Registrar
Debbie Molly	Student Services Manager
Tony McDonogh	Human Resource Manager
Renagh Linnane	Student Counsellor
Aaron Burke	President, GMIT Students' Union

Designated Child Protection Person: TBC _____

Relevant Contact Person: Debbie Molloy

List of Mandated Persons:

As per current legislation..

APPENDIX H: CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT SAMPLE TEMPLATE

CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

1. Name of service being provided: _____

2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm
(brief outline of what our service is, what we do and our commitment to safeguard children).

3. Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

4. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First act 2015, the *Children First: National Guidance*, and Tulsa’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tulsa
- Procedures for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons
- Procedures for appointing a relevant person

All procedures listed are available upon request.

5. Implementation

We recognize that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on - _____, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: _____

(Provider)

[Provider's name and contact details] _____

For queries, please contact: _____

Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015