



SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE GROUPS

POLICY & PROCEDURES

Policy approved at DM on:	2 nd December 2013
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SECTION 1 - Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Waterways Ireland is committed to safeguarding the well being of children and vulnerable adults with whom we come in contact, through our business operations. We want children and vulnerable adults to avail of and enjoy the facilities and services offered by the organisation, safely and free from the threat of harm.

Waterways Ireland is not directly responsible for the care or education of children or vulnerable adults in the course of our routine business, however, the nature of our work makes it inevitable that our staff will come in contact with these groups from time to time.

It is essential that all staff have an understanding of the issues relating to the safeguarding of vulnerable groups and an awareness of the legislative framework which addresses these. This policy is designed to support this and to provide guidance on best practice in dealing with these groups through our procedures.

The organisation's policy and associated procedures reflect our involvement with children and vulnerable adults in a high level, caretaker or 'guardian' role. Such groups using our facilities for school outings, sponsored walks, nature trails etc. will generally, be under the care of a dedicated 'responsible person', such as a teacher or youth worker. This 'responsible person' will have primary responsibility for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults in their care.

Waterways Ireland expects that all contact between our staff and children and vulnerable adults will be guided by the principles of best practice provided in the Waterways Ireland Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Policy and Procedures.

Adherence to the policy and procedures will also serve to protect staff from potentially compromising situations.

2.0 Legislation

This policy, and associated procedures, has been prepared in the context of a variety of legislative instruments and best practice documents from both jurisdictions, North and South. The Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults is subject to specific legislation in Northern Ireland and there is a requirement for public bodies to have relevant policies and procedures in place. In Ireland, provisions exist across a number of separate pieces of legislation for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, and a number of best practice guides have been produced by statutory bodies.

Relevant legislation and best practice reference guides are listed at Appendix 3.

3.0 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

3.1 Child

The term “**child**” or **children**” refers to any child or young person under the age of 18.

3.2 Vulnerable Adult

A **vulnerable adult** is any person aged 18 years or over who is, or maybe, unable to take care of him or herself or who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may be because he or she has a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, is old and frail, or has some form of illness. Because of his or her vulnerability, the individual may be in receipt of a care service in his or her own home, in the community or be resident in a residential care home, nursing home or other institutional setting.

The above definition of a vulnerable adult is used for the purposes of this policy and is a working definition which reflects current legislation and is consistent with the definition published by the Northern Ireland Office and Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

A “vulnerable adult” is defined under legislation in Northern Ireland but there is currently no definition provided by legislation in Ireland.

SECTION 2 – Policy

4.0 Policy Statement

Waterways Ireland is fully committed to safeguarding the well being and safety of children and vulnerable adults with whom we come in contact with through our work.

Waterways Ireland will not tolerate any form of abuse or harm wherever it occurs or whoever is responsible. The organisation is committed to promoting an atmosphere of inclusion, transparency and openness and welcomes feedback from the people who use our services, facilities and our staff with a view to how we may continuously improve our services and activities.

Through this policy Waterways Ireland aims to uphold these commitments by:

- Adhering to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Policy and ensuring that it is supported by robust procedures;
- Creating and maintaining an environment which aims to ensure, as far as possible, that children and vulnerable adults who take part in our activities or avail of our services are kept safe from abuse and exploitation;
- Adopting best practice standards for dealing with children and vulnerable adults in the work environment;
- Implementing clear procedures to deal with concerns and complaints;
- Providing clear guidance for staff in the application of these practices and procedures.

Waterways Ireland will review this policy, procedures and practice at regular intervals, at least once every 3 years, and will update the policy as and when required in line with current legislation.

5.0 Waterways Ireland's work with Children and Vulnerable Adults

Waterways Ireland staff may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults in a variety of situations. In addition to organised visits to the waterways, contact may include;

- children and vulnerable adults using services and facilities on our waterways;
- children and vulnerable adults attending shows, boat rallies or events;
- children and vulnerable adults using our Visitor's Centre;
- young people and vulnerable adults gaining work experience.

It is important that this policy is seen to apply and that the guidelines are followed in all situations in which staff have contact with children or vulnerable adults.

6.0 To whom does this policy apply?

The policy applies to:

- all staff (including permanent, fixed term and short term temporary appointments, people on work experience and work placements) and all others whose work with Waterways Ireland brings them into contact with children or vulnerable adults, e.g. contractors and volunteer workers.

Everyone has a duty to do everything reasonable in their power to ensure the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults while they are in contact with Waterways Ireland, and to act in accordance with the Procedures in this document.

7.0 Implementing the policy

7.1 Role of the Designated Officer and Assistant Officers

Waterways Ireland has appointed a Designated Officer and an Assistant Designated Officer, responsible for the promotion and implementation of this policy.

These designated staff will:

- be accredited appropriately for the role, according to the jurisdiction in which they are based;
- undertake relevant training to ensure that their knowledge and Waterways Ireland's policy, procedures and training events, in relation to children and vulnerable adults are kept up to date in line with changes in legislation and best practice;
- receive reports of complaints and allegations and act on these in line with the approved procedures;
- build relationships with external agencies such as Social Services, the Health Service Executive (HSE), Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and An Garda Síochána, as appropriate;

- co-ordinate actions within the organisation and liaise with the appropriate authorities such as the police and social services about suspected or actual cases of abuse;
- liaise with Human Resources to coordinate an ongoing training programme for all staff;
- ensure that systems are in place for recording and retaining all relevant documentation in relation to issues associated with the protection of children and vulnerable adults;
- keep senior management informed of any action taken.

An important aspect of the Designated Officers role will be to provide support, advice and guidance to staff dealing with incidents relating to children and vulnerable adults within the work environment.

The Designated Officer and Assistant Designated Officer are not responsible for investigating or validating safeguarding concerns and have no counselling role.

Contact details for Designated Officers are at Appendix 2.

7.2 Training and Awareness

Waterways Ireland will provide appropriate instruction and training for all staff in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Refresher training will be provided at regular intervals.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Policy and Procedures will be introduced to all new staff during the induction process and a copy of the policy and procedures will be included in all Employee Handbooks.

7.3 Recruitment and Selection

Where the organisation needs to fill a post which will involve regular, substantial or unaccompanied contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, this post will be designated a 'Regulated Post' as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2009. Waterways Ireland are legally obliged to carry out a disclosure check on those individuals recruited to a 'Regulated Post' prior to appointment. This check will determine if the individual is named on either of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Barred Lists.

Decisions on the designation of posts, as 'Regulated Posts', will be made by the Head of HR, in consultation with the Head of the relevant business unit.

Recruitment and Selection procedures will apply as defined by the Waterways Ireland's Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures, Regulated Posts.

7.4 Waterways Ireland Sponsorship Programme

Where Waterways Ireland is providing sponsorship, through funding or services, to events involving children or vulnerable adults, the organisation will seek to ensure that commitment to the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults is provided by the event organisers.

Applicants seeking sponsorship will be required to sign a declaration stating that they will comply with Waterways Ireland's Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Policy and Procedures.

Prior to the final approval being given for sponsorship money to be offered, Marketing and Communications staff will meet with the organisation to highlight the main issues within this policy, to ensure the organisation has the ability and commitment to meet the standards required to put this policy into practice.

8.0 Policy on Complaints

8.1 Liaising with Statutory Agencies

Complaints of alleged abuse may require collaboration with external agencies such as; Social Services, HSE, PSNI, An Garda Síochána, and will be addressed in accordance with the complaints procedures at Section 3.

8.2 Disciplinary Action

Any allegations of abuse or misconduct will be investigated and may lead to disciplinary action under the Waterways Ireland Disciplinary Procedures. Behaviour which is found to be in breach of this policy or abuse of a child or vulnerable adult by an employee will be treated as gross misconduct and may result in dismissal. Waterways Ireland will not hesitate to inform relevant statutory bodies in cases where staff are suspected of abuse or misconduct to children or vulnerable adults.

8.3 Malicious Complaints

On occasion, allegations of abuse made by children or vulnerable adults are found to be mistaken or malicious. This policy, and the associated procedures, is designed to help staff avoid situations in which their well intentioned actions could be misinterpreted.

Complaints of alleged abuse made by staff, which are found to be malicious, will be dealt with under the Waterways Ireland Disciplinary Procedures.

8.4 Confidentiality

All complaints will be dealt in a confidential manner. All information in relation to complaints will be gathered, stored, used and shared in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act in both jurisdictions following the principles of good information handling.

Any disclosure or sharing of confidential information to external statutory agencies will be made through concerns or risk to an individual's safety and welfare, the safety of others or where a crime has been committed.

SECTION 3 – Procedures

9.0 Reporting Concerns or Disclosures

A concern relates to the possibility of a child or vulnerable adult suffering harm.

A disclosure is when a child or vulnerable adult tells a staff member that they have been or are being harmed or abused.

All concerns or disclosures of abuse or harm made by children or vulnerable adults to members of staff must be recorded and reported to the Designated or Assistant Designated Officer immediately and recorded on an Incident Report Form (Appendix1).

Any concern, disclosure or allegation made about the behaviour of a member of staff must be referred to the Designated or Assistant Designated Officer immediately and recorded on an Incident Report Form (Appendix 1). The checklist for recording concerns should be reviewed prior to completing the incident form (Annex C).

Where a member of staff has suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult is, or has been, the victim of abuse, the matter must be addressed quickly, sensitively and professionally. The Incident Report Form (Appendix 1) should be used to report the suspicion to the Designated Officer where the suspected abuse relates, in any way, to the work environment.

Where a member of staff is witness to, or suspects, abuse of a child or vulnerable adult in the work environment, it is required that the incident be reported to the Designated Officer immediately. It may be appropriate, where a child or vulnerable adult appear to be in danger, to contact the local PSNI or An Garda Síochána, and the Designated Officer will advise accordingly.

A written report detailing the alleged abuse/suspicion should be made as soon as possible following the incident, on the Incident Report Form (Appendix 1), providing as much detail and information about the child, vulnerable adult and alleged abuser as possible. Details of the time, date, location and nature of alleged abuse should be included in the report.

Information recorded about any concern, disclosure or allegation is confidential and the rights of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator should be protected. However, this should not over-ride the legal principle that the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount as is their right to be protected from harm. Information of a confidential nature should only be communicated on a need to know basis.

Further advice, information and guidance may be sought from the Designated Officer.

10.0 Determination of complaint

The Designated Officer will liaise, as necessary, with Social Services, the HSE the PSNI and An Garda Síochána.

In the event that the allegations should be further investigated, the incident will be formally reported to Social Services or the HSE, without delay. In an emergency, the Designated Officer will report the incident directly to the PSNI and An Garda Síochána.

Investigations into allegations of abuse will be carried out by the statutory agencies – Health Authorities and the PSNI and An Garda Síochána. Waterways Ireland will cooperate fully with these investigations and the Designated Officer will be the central contact point for these bodies.

Where the allegation, subject to a formal referral to the statutory agency, is against a member of staff, the Designated Officer will notify the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Personnel. A Risk Assessment will be carried out to determine whether the staff member should be relocated within the organisation pending the outcome of the investigation.

Waterways Ireland will be informed of the outcome of the investigation by the statutory agency.

Where allegations are found to be upheld against a member of staff, Waterways Ireland will initiate formal disciplinary proceedings as per the Waterways Ireland Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

Where allegations are found not to be upheld the investigators will independently advise all parties to the investigation. The Designated Officer will ensure that this is communicated to the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Personnel and that records are noted accordingly. A report will also be forwarded to the Safeguarding Officer within both Sponsoring Departments.

11.0 Code of Behaviour

Waterways Ireland aims to provide a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults by creating a culture of awareness and understanding of the risk to both these groups through a Code of Behaviour.

This code outlines the behaviour expected of all involved with the organisation, including visitors and contractors, when dealing with children and vulnerable adults in a work environment. Through this code of behaviour Waterways Ireland aims to minimise the risk of harm or abuse that children and vulnerable adults could be subjected to. It will also help protect those involved with children and vulnerable adults by providing a clear set of behaviours that is expected of them and the boundaries within which they should operate.

In particular when working with children or vulnerable adults, staff should:

- Take all reasonable steps to protect individuals from harm or abuse.
- Take appropriate action should an incident occur.
- Take appropriate action if you become aware of anyone physically, emotionally or sexually abusing a child or vulnerable adult.
- Report an incident or suspicion of abuse to the Designated or Assistant Designated Officer.
- Be accessible for the child or vulnerable adult to talk to.
- Be friendly and approachable.

In receiving a disclosure or allegation staff should:

- Take all disclosures of alleged abuse seriously.
- Listen carefully and sensitively, stay calm and ensure a clear understanding of the allegation.
- Reassure the child or vulnerable adult that they are right to talk to them.
- Ask questions for clarification only.
- Record factually what has been disclosed.
- Explain what will happen next.
- Advise that you must pass the information to the appropriate authorities.
- Report incident to the Designated or Assistant Designated Officer at the earliest opportunity. A telephone call in the first instance should be followed up with the written report of the allegation on or attached to the Incident Report Form (Appendix 1).
- Treat all information gathered in these circumstances with the utmost confidentiality.

Staff should not:

- Give a commitment to the child or vulnerable adult that the disclosure will be kept secret.
- Express any personal opinion about the alleged abuser or the alleged incident.
- In cases where physical abuse is suspected, remove any clothing from the child or vulnerable adult.
- Ask any leading questions.

Behaviours which should be avoided:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with a child or vulnerable adult away from others.
- Taking a child or vulnerable adult to his/her own home.
- Taking a child or vulnerable adult alone on a car journey. If the journey is unavoidable or necessary, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents (or guardians) and the consent of the relevant

manager. An appropriate record of the journey should also be maintained.

- Holding meetings with individual children or vulnerable adults should be avoided or only take place within sight of others. If privacy is required the door to the room should remain open and other staff should be aware of the meeting.
- Making unnecessary physical contact which could be misinterpreted.
- Being overly familiar.

Some of the above situations may be unavoidable but should only take place with the full knowledge and consent of the relevant manager and the child or vulnerable adult's parent or guardian.

Staff must never:

- abuse, neglect or harm or place at risk of harm a child or vulnerable adult whether by omission or commission;
- engage in rough physical games, including horseplay, other than structured sports activities;
- engage in any inappropriate touching of any form;
- engage in sexually provocative behaviour or games;
- make sexually suggestive comments to or about a vulnerable adult or child;
- show a child or vulnerable adult anything that might be construed as abusive images;
- trivialise or exaggerate abuse issues;
- do things of a personal or intimate nature for a child or vulnerable adult that they can do themselves;
- carry out any physical punishment, slap or hit a child or vulnerable adult;
- cause distress by shouting at a child or vulnerable adult or by calling him/her derogatory names;
- hold a child or vulnerable adult in a way that causes pain or shaking them;
- drink or purchase alcohol or take drugs while children or vulnerable adults are in your professional care;
- accept /make loans or gifts of money to/from a child or vulnerable adult;
- photograph /video children or vulnerable adults, even by mobile phone, without appropriate consent;
- take any photographs/videos that are inappropriate.

Staff must report any inappropriate use of images of children or vulnerable adults in the work environment.

Staff must also report any inappropriate or dangerous behaviour on the internet that involves children or vulnerable adults in the work environment.

11.1 Health & Safety – Risk Assessments

Waterways Ireland embraces health, safety and welfare at work as a core value and is committed to the provision of a safe workplace and safer operating practices for all employees, waterway users and the general public.

The organisation operates an effective procedure for assessing and managing risks with regard to safeguarding vulnerable groups with whom we have contact during the course of our activities and work. Risk assessments must be carried out and risks identified and evaluated prior to any work related activity which involves a child or vulnerable adult. Guidance on carrying out appropriate risk assessments is attached at Appendix 4.

All staff must ensure that emergency procedures and appropriate safety equipment are in place prior to a work activity which involves a child or vulnerable adult.

11.2 Appropriate use of technology

Under the Waterways Ireland ICT Policy staff cannot take or use photographic images of children or vulnerable adults without the appropriate consent.

11.3 Communicating with children and vulnerable adults

All staff are expected to show respect and courtesy to children and vulnerable adults with whom they come in contact, during the course of their work with Waterways Ireland. Staff must ensure that their use of language and their behaviour is appropriate at all times.

Inappropriate use of language or inappropriate behaviour in dealings with children and vulnerable adults will be dealt with under the Waterways Ireland Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

11.4 Dealing with disruptive or challenging behaviour

On occasion, staff may encounter incidents of disruptive or challenging behaviour involving children and/or vulnerable adults in the course of their work. All incidents must be dealt with sensitively and professionally with due regard for the safety and welfare of all parties concerned.

In addressing these incidents, it is recommended that at least two staff members are present. A full record should be made of the incident on the Incident Report Form (Appendix 1) detailing;

- how the behaviour was identified;
- what the behaviour was;
- date, time and location of the incident;
- who was involved;

- what staff were present;
- any significant comments made by any party;
- any identified injury to person or property;
- action taken by Waterways Ireland staff;
- outcome of the intervention by staff.

All staff members who witness the incident should also make a report. All reports should be forwarded, via line management to the Designated Officer.

Where there is only one member of staff available to deal with an incident of disruptive or challenging behaviour, it is recommended that a full record of the incident is made as above, and that the member of staff should report the matter to line management as soon as possible.

Adherence to this procedure will provide some protection for staff in their dealings with children and vulnerable adults.

11.5 Lost or Injured Children and Vulnerable Adults

From time to time, a member of staff may encounter lost or injured children or vulnerable adults in the course of their work. Where this happens the staff member should, where possible, enlist the support of a colleague to deal with the situation and avoid a one to one situation with the child or vulnerable adult.

Where the child or vulnerable adult is lost or injured, it is likely that they will be upset and confused. Staff should address them professionally and calmly and gather details of;

- their name and age;
- their parent/carers name and last known location;
- a contact telephone number for the parent/carer;
- how the child or vulnerable adult came to be in the situation.

Both staff members should accompany the child or vulnerable adult on a quick search of the immediate area to locate the parent/carer.

Parents/carers should be asked to provide identification before the child or vulnerable adult is given back to their care.

Where no parent or carer can be readily found, staff should contact the Designated Officer for further advice, or alternatively, in circumstances where this is not practical, staff should contact the local PSNI or An Garda Síochána.

The staff members should make a written report of the incident and their action on the Incident Report Form (Appendix1) which should be passed, via line management to the Designated Officer.

Adherence to this procedure will provide some protection for staff in their dealings with children and vulnerable adults.

11.6 First Aid

First Aid should only be administered by a qualified First Aid Officer. In administering First Aid the Officer should be accompanied by another member of staff.

Where the injury is serious and/or where there is no First Aid Officer available, the staff member should call the emergency services.

All action taken in relation to dealing with an injured child or vulnerable adult should be reported, via line management, on the Incident Report Form (Appendix 1) to the Designated Officer.

12.0 Record Keeping

Data Protection Consent forms

12.1 Incident Report Form (Appendix 1)

In order to standardise information gathered in relation to the safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults, all reports to the Designated Officer should be made on or accompanied by a completed Incident Report Form (Appendix 1).

This form should be completed in full, providing detail as requested.

12.2 Storing Records

Records relating to allegations raised in response to this policy will be held only by the Designated Officer/s.

Records will be held confidentially and securely.

In the first instance access to the records will be restricted to Designated Officer/Assistant Designated Officer and where appropriate statutory agencies.

Where Disciplinary Procedures are initiated following a complaint being upheld, relevant records may be made available to the Disciplinary Panel.

Records held by the Designated Officer will include;

- allegations of abuse;
- incident report forms;
- referrals to statutory agencies;
- outcomes and reports from statutory agencies;
- reports of incidents of disruptive or challenging behaviour;
- reports arising from incidents concerning lost or injured children or vulnerable adults.

Annex A Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Officer

The Designated Child Protection Officer is responsible for acting as a source of advice on safeguarding matters, for coordinating action within the organisation and liaising with the relevant health and social services authorities in each jurisdiction and other Agencies, such as the police, about suspected or actual cases of abuse.

The role of the Designated Child Protection Officer is to:

- Promote awareness of among staff of the Waterways Ireland Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups policy;
- Advise staff in their business area on best practice in regard to safeguarding issues;
- Advise on and co-ordinate training on safeguarding matters;
- Act as the point of contact with the relevant statutory authorities;
- Agree incident reporting procedures;
- Keep records of incidents and reports, together with other relevant information;
- Report incidents to the statutory authorities and ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral;
- Ensure that individual case records are maintained of any action taken;
- Keep Waterways Ireland Senior Management and the Sponsoring Departments Safeguarding Officers informed of any action taken.

The Designated Officer is not responsible for investigating or validating safeguarding concerns and has no counselling role.

Annex B Awareness of Abuse

There are different types of abuse that a child or vulnerable adult may suffer.

Physical abuse: Physical abuse is deliberate physical injury or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child or vulnerable adult that he or she is worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may involve causing the child or vulnerable adult to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children and vulnerable adults.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve any physical contact or non-contact activities such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children or vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care.

There are various ways in which you may become aware of the actual or likely occurrence of harm or abuse:

- A child or vulnerable adult may tell you.
- Someone else may tell you.
- A child or vulnerable adult may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation.
- A child or vulnerable adult's behaviour may indicate to you that he or she is being harmed or abused.
- Something in the way that another person relates to a child or vulnerable adult alerts you.
- A child or vulnerable adult showing distrust of others.
- Increasingly unkempt appearance or loss of weight for no apparent reason.
- Withdrawal from a social group or inability to make friends.

There are various types of inappropriate behaviour that may alert you to the possibility of abuse.

- Inappropriate petting or fondling.
- Inappropriate physical contact.
- Sexually explicit behaviour.
- Suspicious behaviour in changing areas, cubicles or toilet areas.
- Use of inappropriate language in the presence of children or vulnerable adults.

Annex C Checklist for Recording Concerns

The following is a checklist of details to record where allegations have been made or there is a suspicion of abuse.

- Name of the child/vulnerable adult
- Age
- Any special factors
- Name of parents/guardians where appropriate
- Home address
- Home telephone number
- Nature of allegation or suspicion
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or passing on those of another person?
- What has prompted the concerns? Include dates and times of any specific incidents.
- Record any physical signs, behavioural signs or indirect signs.
- Has the child/vulnerable adult been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- In the case of children have the parents been contacted? If so, what was said?
- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record the details.
- Has anybody else been consulted? If so, record the details.

Appendix 1 Incident Report Form

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Section A – To be completed by staff to report all incidents, and/or reports of alleged or suspected abuse, involving children and/or vulnerable adults.

1. Details of Child /Vulnerable Adult

Name:	Adult: Y/N	Child Age:
Parent's/Guardian's names:		
Home address (and phone number if available):		
Tel No:	Name of school (where appropriate):	
Mobile No:		

2. Details of Incident

Please describe the sequence of events including: time and location of incident, description of any injuries observed and any treatment given and details of contact made with parents or guardians. Where appropriate give details of alleged abuse and details of allegations or suspicions of abuse,

A narrative report or additional pages may be attached for completeness.

3. Details of Informant

Name:	Contact Tel No:
Contact Address:	Work Location :
Is additional report attached? YES / NO	Has Designated Officer been informed? YES/NO

Signature of Informant

Date

Section B -To be completed by the Designated Officer

4. Receipt of Incident Report Form

Date Incident Report Form received:	Additional information/report attached? YES /NO
Previous notification of incident received from	on (date)
Acknowledgment sent to person making report on (date)	

5. Details of Designated Officer

Name:	Contact Tel No:
Contact Address:	

6. Determination

Refer to Statutory Agency?	YES - <i>complete point 8</i> NO - <i>complete point 9</i>
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7. Determination to Refer: Use notes box below or attach narrative report to detail reasons for referral including any contact made to date with Statutory agencies

Referred to (Name);	Statutory Agency:
Contact Address:	
Contact Tel No:	e mail :
Date referred:	CEO& Director F&P advised : YES /NO

9. Determination NOT to Refer: Use notes box below or attach narrative report to detail reasons for **not** referring the incident including any contact made to date with Statutory agencies

Determination advised to person making report (date):

10. NOTES

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Signed - Designated Officer:

Date:

Appendix 2 Useful Contacts

Designated Officer

Name: Francie Gallagher
Contact Address: Waterways Ireland
2 Sligo Road
Enniskillen
Co Fermanagh
BT74 7JY

Contact Tel No: 028 66 346222 (NI) or 048 66 346222 (Ireland)
E Mail: francie.gallagher@waterwaysireland.org

Assistant Designated Officer

Name: **Currently under Review**

Contact Address:

Contact Tel No:

E Mail:

Statutory Agencies

Incidents of suspected abuse of children or vulnerable adults may be referred to;

Area Child Care Managers / Senior Social workers in the local Regional Health Authority / Social Services.

OR

An Garda Síochána or PSNI at the local station.

Appendix 3 Legislation and Guidelines

- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the UN in 2006**

The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by disabled people. The Convention covers a number of key areas. These include health, education, employment, access to justice, personal security independent living and access to information. It was adopted by the United Nations in 2006 and was ratified by United Kingdom in 2009. Ireland has signed the convention and ratification is in progress.

- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the UN in 1989.**

This convention identifies and sets out to protect fundamental rights of children. It was adopted by the United Nations in 1989 and was ratified by both Ireland in 1991 and the United Kingdom in 1992.

- ***Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007***

This Order updates, and highlights, the responsibilities of employers and service providers in respect of ensuring the safety and protection of Vulnerable Groups.

- ***The Child Care Act, 1991***

Defines a 'child' and makes certain provisions for the care, protection and welfare of children.

- ***The Children (NI) Order 1995***

This legislation sets out the responsibilities of authorities to provide services to children in need and their families, to provide for and support looked after children, to investigate children at risk and take appropriate action.

- ***Sexual Offences Act 2003***

This legislation makes new provisions regarding sexual offences. It is specifically designed to protect children from sexual harm.

- ***Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008***

This brings sexual offences legislation in Northern Ireland in line with the law in England and Wales.

- ***Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2009, Department of Health and Children (2011).***

Updated and revised in 2011. These guidelines state that organisations dealing with children and young people should put in place a child protection policy, to protect children in line with "Children First" and to provide protection for staff.

- ***Our Duty to Care, Department of Health and Children (2002)***

This document outlines a number of fundamental principles of good practice in relation to the care and protection of children.

- **Getting it Right – Standards of Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People**

Getting it Right was developed by Volunteer Now to support organisations in developing and implementing best practice in relation to safeguarding children policy and procedures. It has been endorsed and supported by the Department of Health, Social Service and Public Safety as the minimum standards for policy development for voluntary and community sector organisations in Northern Ireland.

- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – A Shared Responsibility (2011)**

Volunteer Now was commissioned by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in 2009 to develop the minimum standards of practice and supporting good practice guidance for safeguarding vulnerable adults within the voluntary, community and independent sectors.

- **Human Rights Act 1998**

The rights of vulnerable adults to live a life free from neglect, exploitation and abuse are protected under this legislation.

Appendix 4 Guidance on Carrying Out Appropriate Risk Assessments

Waterways Ireland operates an effective procedure for assessing and managing risks with regard to children and vulnerable adults.

Criteria:

- A risk assessment is carried out to identify and evaluate risks to children and vulnerable adults.
- The identified risks are managed by putting in place risk-reducing measures.
- All identified risks and risk-reducing measures are recorded and reviewed on a case by case basis dependent on the duration of the time when the child or vulnerable adult will be in position within Waterways Ireland.
- Waterways Ireland recognises that vulnerable adults in particular have the right to take risks and should provide help and support to enable them to identify and manage potential and actual risks to themselves and others.
- Waterways Ireland has a Health and Safety procedure in place for reporting, recording and reviewing accidents, incidents and near misses, which should in turn inform practice and the risk assessment and Standard Operating Procedures. The Health and Safety procedures and Standard Operating Procedures in place should assist and inform the risk assessment and overall management procedure for children and vulnerable adults in the workplace.

Principles of working with risk:

- The assessment and management of risk should promote the independence, real choices and social inclusion of children and vulnerable adults.
- Risks change as circumstances change.
- Risks can be minimised but not eliminated.
- Information relating to children and vulnerable adults activities and circumstances will sometimes be incomplete and possibly inaccurate.
- Identification of risk carries a duty to do something about it, i.e. risk management.
- Involvement of vulnerable adults and practitioners from a range of services and organisations helps to improve the quality of risk assessments and decision-making.
- 'Defensible' decisions are those based on clear reasoning.
- Risk-taking can involve everybody working together to achieve positive outcomes.
- Confidentiality is a right, but not an absolute right and may be breached in exceptional circumstances when people are deemed to be at serious risk of harm or it is in the public interest.
- Sensitivity should be shown to the experience of people affected by any risks that have been taken and where and event has occurred.

The Risk Assessment Process:

The risk assessment process involves:

- The identification of risks; and
- Determining the level of risk by evaluating its potential impact and the likelihood of it happening.

Risk Management Options:

For activity/service provision, an identified risk can be managed in a number of ways. It can be avoided, controlled, financed, transferred or accepted.

- **Avoid the risk**
If the level of risk cannot be satisfactorily reduced through other means, you may decide not to engage in a particular activity or provide a particular service.
- **Control the risk**
Controlling risk involves implementing measures to both reduce the likelihood of a harmful event occurring and to minimise the impact of such an occurrence. This is about identifying the good practice policies that need to be adhered to and the training required to reduce risk and harm.
- **Finance the risk**
It is important to provide the resources to meet the liabilities caused by the risks when they are identified.
- **Transfer the risk**
This typically happens when it is deemed more appropriate for the particular activity is carried out by a third party so that the risk is transferred to them.
- **Accept the risk**
Tolerate the risk; perhaps because no reasonable action can be taken to mitigate it or the likelihood of the risk occurring and its impact are at an acceptable low level. All the while having regard to the positive outcomes for the vulnerable adult that may accrue from positive risk taking.

Risk Assessment Template:

Identify MAIN RISKS to people, property and/or Waterways Ireland's work and reputation	Evaluate the seriousness of these risks		Assessed Level of Risk	Risk Owner	How can you manage these risks?				Action Completed (date)	By Whom	Review
	Likelihood of it happening	Impact of it happening	Combination of likelihood and impact		Stop the Activity	Reduce the Risk	Finance the Risk	Transfer the Liability			How and when will you review the risks in this area?
	Unlikely Possible Likely	Minor Moderate Major	Low Medium High		Action needed	Action needed	Action needed	Action needed			
a)											
b)											
c)											
d)											

Appendix 5 Reporting Procedures

