

Sarah Cremin  
Committee Secretariat  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2  
D02 XR20

5 July 2024

**Re: S1783 PAC33**

Dear Ms Cremin,

I refer to your correspondence of 21 June 2024, seeking clarifying information in respect of unaccompanied and separated children and young people seeking international protection who were in the care of or accommodated by Tusla, Child and Family Agency, namely:

In relation to the table, *'Separated Children seeking international protection'*, the Committee would like to seek further details on the 32 children that Tusla are aware of who were reported missing during the period 2022 - 2024 respectively, who have not been accounted for.

- 1. Details on the type of accommodation were these children/young people staying when they went missing?*
- 2. How many of these children were accommodated in unsupervised accommodation such as B&Bs?*

In Table 1 below, I have outlined the placement type of the 32 children who went missing during the period 2022 – 2024.

**Table 1 - Placement type of Child/Young Person when reported missing**

Placement type of Child/Young Person when reported missing	# of Children/Young People	Percentage
Registered Children's Residential Centre	1	3%
Special Emergency Arrangement (SEA) <sup>1</sup>	21	66%
At Tusla's office while awaiting assessment/ care placement	10	31%

I would like to clarify that no child or young person is placed in unsupervised accommodation by the Separated Children Seeking International Protection (SCSIP) service.

In emergency circumstances, if a child cannot be placed in a regulated setting or in an established SEA in a privately rented house, a B&B or hotel may need to be used.

Of the 21 Children/Young People reported missing who were placed in SEAs, 2 were placed in B&Bs with staff, with the remaining placed in privately rented accommodation with other young people and staff.

Staff are always put in place to supervise the child in SEAs. However, due to the age of the young people, many are free to come and go from their placement and may not be always accompanied, as is age appropriate and in line with their absence management plans.

<sup>1</sup> A Special Emergency Arrangement (SEA) refers to emergency settings where a child/young person is accommodated in a non-statutory, non-regulated or non-procured placement. This can include hotel, B&B or privately rented accommodation. Staff are on site at all times.



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It may be helpful to highlight that the point of intake/referral is the highest risk time for going missing, evidenced by almost all children and young people going missing from Tusla offices while awaiting placement and from the SEAs, which is generally the first placement provided to a child or young person while an intake assessment of their needs is being undertaken.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information or clarification in respect of same.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kate Duggan'.

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**Kate Duggan**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Tusla Child and Family Agency**