

# **Child Protection Policy**

Nenagh Arts Centre September 2023

# Contents

Child Protection Policy Statement	3
Code of behaviour for employees and volunteers	4
Child-centred approach	4
Good practice	5
Inappropriate behaviour	6
Physical contact	6
Health and safety	6
Types Of Child Abuse And How They May Be Recognised	6
Neglect	7
Emotional abuse	8
Physical abuse	9
Sexual abuse	10
Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm	11
BULLYING	13
Disclosures of abuse from a child	13
What are the legal obligations of a Mandated Person	14
Reporting Procedures	14
Recording Procedures	15
Dealing with a disclosure	15
Reporting Procedures	15
Confidentiality Statement	16
Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement	17
Staff Management Policy Statement	18
Policy Statement on the Involvement of Primary Carers	18
Dealing with an allegation against staff	19
Accidents procedure	20
Appendix	22
Appendix - Contacts	22
Appendix - Sample Report Forms	22
Appendix - Child Safeguarding: Relevant Legislation	22

# **Child Protection Policy Statement**

We, Nenagh Arts Centre, are committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. We will adhere to the recommendations of Child First Act (2015) and the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, published by the Department of Health and Children. We have implemented procedures covering:

- Code of behaviour for all employees and volunteers
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse
- Confidentiality
- Recruitment and selecting staff
- Managing and supervising staff
- Involvement of primary carers
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff
- Complaints and comments
- Incidents and accidents

This policy will be reviewed in September 2024

[Signed by Designated Liaison Person]

Date: 07/09/2023

# Code of behaviour for employees and volunteers

- Child-centred approach
- Good practice
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Physical contact
- Health and safety

# Child-centred approach

- a. Treat all children and young people equally
- b. Listen to and respect children and young people
- c. Involve children and young people in decision-making, as appropriate
- d. Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability)
- e. Use appropriate language (physical and verbal)
- f. Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere
- g. Offer constructive criticism when needed
- h. Treat all children and young people as individuals
- i. Respect a child's or young person's personal space
- j. Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers
- k. Agree group 'contract' before beginning session
- I. Encourage feedback from group
- m. Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials
- n. Lead by example
- o. Be aware of a child's or young person's other commitments when scheduling rehearsals or activities, e.g., school or exams
- p. Be cognisant of a child's or young person's limitations, due to a medical condition for example
- q. Create an atmosphere of trust
- r. Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation.

### Good practice

- a. Register each child/young person (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact)
- b. Make primary carers, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures;
- c. Have emergency procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures;
- d. Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs;
- e. Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically;
- f. Report any concerns to the Designated Liaison Person and follow reporting procedures;
- g. Organisations should have an anti-bullying policy. Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of anti-bullying policy.
- h. Observe appropriate dress and behaviour;
- i. Evaluate work practices on a regular basis;
- j. Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers;
- k. Report and record any incidents and accidents;
- I. Update and review policies and procedures regularly;
- m. Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children;
- n. Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved; observe appropriate gender balance for residentials;
- o. Ensure clear communication between artist and organisations;
- p. Have a written agreement with any external organisation that an artist is working with
- q. Don't be passive in relation to concerns, i.e., don't 'do nothing'
- r. Don't let a problem get out of control
- s. Avoid taking a session on your own. If this is not possible then it should be in an open environment with the full knowledge and consent of primary carers
- t. Avoid if at all possible giving a lift to a child/young person and if you do then make sure that primary carers are informed
- u. Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.

# Inappropriate behaviour

- a. Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people
- b. Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language4.
- c. Don't single out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention.
- d. Don't allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- e. Don't hit or physically chastise children/young people
- f. Don't socialise inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities.

# Physical contact

- a. Seek consent of child/young person in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation)
- b. Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch
- c. Check with children/young people about their level of comfort when doing touch exercises.

### Health and safety

- a. Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised
- b. Manage any dangerous materials
- c. Provide a safe environment
- d. Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly.

# Types Of Child Abuse And How They May Be Recognised

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger, and can be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children and you should follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer.

The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this section are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

### Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission 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. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

If you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí without delay.

In this Guidance, 'a child' means a person under the age of 18 years, who is not or has not been married.

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation
- Inadequate living conditions unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture

- Lack of adequate clothing
- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Abandonment or desertion

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child.

Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection
- Lack of comfort and love
- Lack of attachment
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child
- Bullying
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviours or actions
- Extreme overprotectiveness
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom)
- Ongoing family conflicts and family violence

 Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.

It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment
- · Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking
- Pushing, shaking or throwing
- Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation
- Fabricated/induced illness
- Female genital mutilation

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

#### Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and in some instances occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
- 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, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
  - Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act
  - Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse
- Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse. Details on exemptions for mandated reporting of certain cases of underage consensual sexual activity can be found in Chapter 3 of this Guidance.

# Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm

If you are dealing with children, you need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children you come in contact with. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

The following list is intended to help you identify the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important for you to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

### Parent or carer factors:

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- · Addiction, including gambling
- Mental health issues
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability
- Conflictual relationships
- Domestic violence
- Adolescent parents

### Child factors:

- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability

- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide
- Communication difficulties
- Trafficked/Exploited
- Previous abuse
- Young carer

### Community factors:

- Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction
- Culture-specific practices, including:
  - Female genital mutilation
  - Forced marriage
  - Honour-based violence
  - Radicalisation

#### **Environmental factors:**

- Housing issues
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently
- Poverty/Begging
- Bullying
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage:

- Non-attendance at appointments
- · Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans

You should consider these factors as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla.

### **BULLYING**

It is recognised that bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it is verbal, psychological or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating, and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyberbullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices.

While bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable. These include: children with disabilities or special educational needs; those from ethnic minority and migrant groups; from the Traveller community; lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children and those perceived to be LGBT; and children of minority religious faiths.

There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying among children with special educational needs. This is particularly so among those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating. Some children with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly. Such children may be more vulnerable because they do not have the same social skills or capacity as others to recognise and defend themselves against bullying behaviour.

Bullying in schools is a particular problem due to the fact that children spend a significant portion of their time there and are in large social groups. In the first instance, the school authorities are responsible for dealing with such bullying. School management boards must have a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy in place. If you are a staff member of a school, you should also be aware of your school's anti-bullying policy and of the relevant guidelines on how it is handled.

In cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, you may need to make a referral to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána

# Disclosures of abuse from a child

If you receive a disclosure of harm from a child, you may feel reluctant to report this for a number of reasons. For example, the child may say that they do not want the disclosure to be reported, or you may take the view that the child is now safe and that the involvement of Tusla may not be desired by either the child or their family. However, you need to inform Tusla of all risks to children above the threshold, as the removal of a risk to one child does not necessarily mean that there are no other children at risk. The information contained in a disclosure may be critical to Tusla's assessment of risk to another child either now or in the future.

You should deal with disclosures of abuse sensitively and professionally. The following approach is suggested as best practice for dealing with these disclosures.

- React calmly
- Listen carefully and attentively
- Take the child seriously
- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you
- Do not promise to keep anything secret
- Ask questions for clarification only. Do not ask leading questions
- Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser
- Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible
- Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of this Guidance and legislation

# What are the legal obligations of a Mandated Person

Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015

- To report harm of children, above a defined threshold, to Tusla
- To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report

As a mandated person, under the legislation they are required to report any knowledge, belief or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect or sexual abuse, and covers single and multiple instances.

The reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015 apply only to information that you as a mandated person, received or became aware of since the Act came into force. However, if you have reasonable concern about past abuse, where the information came to your attention before the Act and there is possible continuing risk to children, you should report it to Tusla under the Children First Guidance 2017.

# **Reporting Procedures**

Eva Birdthistle has been designated as the person to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's or young person's safety and welfare. It is the responsibility of this person to support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child protection and to ensure

that procedures are followed. It is also the responsibility of the Designated Liaison Person to liaise with the Health Service Executive or Gardaí where appropriate.

Eva Birdthistle can be contacted at Nenagh Arts Centre 06734400

Michelle Donnellan has been designated as deputy to Eva Birdthistle and can be contacted at Nenagh Arts Centre 06734400

### **Recording Procedures**

Staff should record the following information in relation to children and young people:

- Suspicions
- Concerns
- Worrying observations
- Behavioural changes
- Actions and outcomes

### Dealing with a disclosure

- Stay calm and listen to the child/young person, allow him or her enough time to say what s/he needs to say.
- Don't use leading questions or prompt details
- Reassure the child/young person but do not promise to keep anything secret
- Don't make the child/young person repeat the details unnecessarily
- Explain to the child/young person what will happen next (explanation should be ageappropriate).

### **Reporting Procedures**

### See the NENAGH ARTS CENTRE: CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT REPORT FORM - 2022

- The reporting procedure should be known and accessible to all staff
- The person who expresses the concern should be involved and kept informed
- Actions and outcomes should be noted:
  - Record all details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure and the facts (for example in an incident book). Information recorded should be factual. Any opinions should be supported by facts
- Inform the Designated Liaison Person or his or her deputy, if unavailable

 The most appropriate person should discuss the concern or consult with primary carers. Parents, carers or responsible adults should be made aware of a report to the Health Service

Executive unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk.

The Designated Liaison Person may contact the Health Service Executive Duty Social Work

Department for an informal consultation prior to making a report

• Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis (see Confidentiality statement)

If there are reasonable grounds for concern as outlined above, the designated person will

contact the Duty Social Worker in the Health Service Executive area using the standard reporting form available from the Health Service Executive. Reports to the Duty Social

Worker can be made verbally initially and then followed by the standard reporting form. Reports should be made to the Health Service Executive without delay.

• If the Designated Liaison Person or Deputy Designated Liaison Person is not available,

contact the local Duty Social Worker of the Health Service Executive directly

• In case of emergencies outside of Health Service Executive Social Work Department

hours, contact the Gardaí. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/

young person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí.

**Duty Social Worker Department: 067 46660** 

Garda Station: 067 50450

**Confidentiality Statement** 

We in Nenagh Arts Centre are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. However, in

relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the

child/young person

Giving such information to others for the protection of a child or young person is not a

breach of confidentiality

We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child or young

person are at risk

• Primary carers, children and young people have a right to know if personal information is

being shared and/or a report is being made to the Health Service Executive, unless doing so

could put the child/young person at further risk.

- Images of a child/young person will not be used for any reason without the consent of the parent/carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public performances).
- Procedures will be put in place in relation to the use of images of children/young people.
- Procedures will also be put in place for the recording and storing of information in line with our confidentiality policy.

# Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement

We will ensure that staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job (paid or voluntary)
- Posts will be advertised widely
- We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel
- Candidates will be required to complete an application form
- Candidates will be asked to sign a declaration form
- At least two written references that are recent, relevant, independent and verbally confirmed will be necessary
- Staff will be selected by a panel of at least two (or more) representatives through an interview process
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed
- Some of the exclusions would include:
  - o any child-related convictions
  - o refusal to sign application form and declaration form
  - o insufficient documentary evidence of identification
  - o concealing information on one's suitability to working with children
  - o There will be a relevant probationary period
  - All staff will be required to consent to Garda clearance, and where available, this will be sought.

# Staff Management Policy Statement

To protect both staff (paid and voluntary) and children/young people, we undertake that:

### New staff will:

- o Take part in a mandatory induction training session
- Be made aware of the organisation's code of conduct, child protection procedures, and the identity and role of who has been designated to deal with issues of concern
- Undergo a probationary or trial period.

#### All staff will:

- o Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices
- o Be expected to have read and signed the Child Protection Policy Statement
- o Be provided with child protection training.

# Policy Statement on the Involvement of Primary Carers

We are committed to being open with all primary carers.

#### We undertake to:

- Advise primary carers of our child protection policy
- Inform primary carers and schools of all activities and potential activities
- Issue contact/consent forms where relevant
- Comply with health and safety practices
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice
- Adhere to our recruitment guidelines
- Ensure as far as possible that the activities are age-appropriate
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parent(s), carer(s) or responsible adult(s), where appropriate.

If we have concerns about the welfare of the child/young person, we will:

- Respond to the needs of the child or young person
- Inform the primary carers on an on-going basis unless this action puts the child or young person at further risk
- Where there are child protection and welfare concerns we are obliged to pass these on to the Duty Social Worker and, in an emergency, the Gardaí

• In the event of a complaint against a member of staff, we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform primary carers as appropriate.

As a child-centred organisation, we are committed to putting the interest of the child/young person first. To that end we will:

- Contact local Health Service Executive and Gardaí where there is a child protection welfare concern
- Encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by our organisation to ensure the safety of their children
- Have a designated contact person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person's welfare.

# Dealing with an allegation against staff

Two separate procedures must be followed:

- 1. In respect of the child/young person Michelle Donnellan will deal with issues related to the child/young person.
- 2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made Eva Birdthistle will deal with issues related to the staff member.
- The first priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk
- If allegations are made against the Designated Liaison Person, then the Deputy Designated Liaison Person should be contacted
- The reporting procedures outlined in 'Reporting Procedures' of these guidelines should be followed. Both the primary carers and child/young person should be informed of actions planned and taken. The child/young person should be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner

The staff member will be informed as soon as possible:

- of the nature of the allegation
- the staff member should be given the opportunity to respond
- The chairperson/head of the organisation should be informed as soon as possible
- Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee should be taken in consultation with Health Service Executive and Gardaí
- After consultation, the chairperson/head of organisation should advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.

In the event of complaints or comments:

- Complaints or comments will be responded to within 2 weeks
- Eva Birdthistle has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to the appropriate person
- Verbal complaints will be logged and responded to.

# Accidents procedure

- The organisation must maintain an up-to-date register of the contact details of all children/young people involved in the organisation
- Children/young people's details should be cross-referenced between the incident book and file
- External organisations with whom your organisation has dealings must provide proof that they have public liability insurance
- First-aid boxes should be available and regularly re-stocked
- The location of the first-aid box(es) must be made known to staff:
  - o Reception Large wall mounted
  - o Technicians Room Large wall mounted
  - Dance Studio Green Case
  - o Kitchen Green Case
  - Marketing Office Green Case
  - Administration Office- Green Case
- Availability of first-aid should be in accordance with the organisation's Health and Safety guidelines. The location of accident/incident books must be made known to staff
- Children and young people must be advised of risks of dangerous material
- Record details of risky equipment used and take steps to minimise risk
- Take cognisance of responsibility for first-aid on off-site trips.

Designated Liaison Person: Eva Birdthistle Nenagh Arts Centre 06734400

Michelle Donnellan has been designated as deputy to Eva Birdthistle and can be contacted at Nenagh Arts Centre 067 34400

I acknowledge I have read and understand the procedures if an incident occurs with a child while at Nenagh Arts Centre:

Type Name	Signature	Date

# **Appendix**

# Appendix - Contacts

Tusla Mid-West
Child and Family Agency,
Mid West,
HSE Building, Ballycummin Avenue
Raheen Business Park,
Raheen,
Limerick.
Tel 061-482792 | areamanagermw@tusla.ie

Nenagh Guarda Station Kickham Street Nenagh Co. Tipperary E45 NX49 Tel 067 50450

# Appendix - Sample Report Forms

https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Retrospective\_Abuse\_Report\_Form\_FINAL.pdf
https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/

# Appendix - Child Safeguarding: Relevant Legislation

Child and Family Agency Act 2013

http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2013/a4013.pdf

Child Care Act 1991

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1991/act/17/enacted/en/print.html

Children Act 2001

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2001/act/24/enacted/en/pdf

Children First Act 2015

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf

Criminal justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable

Persons) Act 2012 http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/24/enacted/en/pdf

Criminal Justice Act 2006, Section 176: Reckless Endangerment of Children

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2006/act/26/enacted/en/pdf

Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1988/act/25/enacted/en/html

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2003/act/6/enacted/en/pdf

Domestic Violence Act 1996

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1996/act/1/enacted/en/pdf

Education (Welfare) Act 2000

https://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2000/a2200.pdf

**Education Act 1998** 

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/enacted/en/pdf

Freedom of Information Act 2014

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/30/enacted/en/pdf

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2106

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/47/enacted/en/pdf

Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1997/act/26/enacted/en/pdf

Protected Disclosures Act 2014

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/14/enacted/en/pdf

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/49/enacted/en/pdf