



Child Protection Policy

Nenagh Arts Centre

NENAGH ARTS CENTRE

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY, CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Version: 2026

Review Date: 18/06/2026

Approved By: Fiana Ní Chonail

Date Approved: 18/06/2026

1. CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Nenagh Arts Centre is committed to safeguarding children and young people and to providing a safe, supportive and creative environment in which they can participate in arts, educational and recreational activities.

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Nenagh Arts Centre recognises its duty of care to protect all children and young people from harm and to promote their welfare at all times.

The welfare of children participating in activities organised by Nenagh Arts Centre is paramount. All staff, volunteers, artists, tutors, contractors and board members are expected to adhere to this policy and to act in the best interests of children at all times.

Nenagh Arts Centre has carried out an assessment of potential risks to children involved in its services and has developed procedures to manage and minimise these risks.

The following procedures are in place to support child safeguarding:

- Procedures for reporting child protection and welfare concerns to Tusla.
- Procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers.
- Safe recruitment and selection procedures.
- Garda Vetting procedures where required by law.
- Staff induction, training and supervision procedures.
- Codes of behaviour for staff, volunteers and participants.
- Online safety and digital communication procedures.
- Photography and recording procedures.
- Anti-bullying procedures.
- Health and safety procedures.
- Complaints procedures.
- Record keeping and confidentiality procedures.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP):

Fiana Ní Chonaill

Telephone: 067 34400

Deputy Designated Liaison Person:

Michelle Donnellan

Telephone: 067 34400

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable following any material change affecting child safeguarding within the organisation.

Signed: Fiana Ní Chonaill

Position: Artistic Director

Date: 18/06/2026

2. CHILD SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT

Potential risks identified include:

- One-to-one tuition, mentoring or rehearsal sessions.
- Inappropriate physical contact during arts instruction.
- Inadequate supervision of children.
- Unauthorised photography or recording of children.
- Inappropriate use of social media or digital communications.
- Children arriving early or remaining after activities.
- Off-site performances, events or trips.
- Contact with external facilitators, artists or contractors.
- Bullying or cyberbullying.
- Recruitment of unsuitable staff or volunteers.
- Failure to identify or report child welfare concerns.
- Online workshops and virtual activities.

Control Measures:

- Child safeguarding training for staff and volunteers.
- Garda Vetting where required.
- Appropriate supervision ratios.
- Open-door or two-adult approach wherever practicable.
- Clear reporting procedures.
- Photography consent procedures.
- Online safety procedures.
- Safe recruitment procedures.
- Annual review of safeguarding practices.

- Incident recording procedures.
- Health and safety controls.

3. DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON (DLP)

The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for:

- Receiving child protection and welfare concerns.
- Consulting with Tusla where appropriate.
- Making reports to Tusla where necessary.
- Maintaining safeguarding records.
- Supporting staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring implementation of this policy.
- Coordinating policy reviews.

The Deputy DLP will assume these responsibilities when the DLP is unavailable.

4. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND FACILITATORS

Child-Centred Approach

All staff and volunteers will:

- Treat all children and young people equally.
- Listen to and respect children and young people.
- Encourage participation in decision-making where appropriate.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise.
- Use appropriate language and behaviour.
- Promote a positive environment.
- Respect personal boundaries and privacy.
- Respect diversity and inclusion.
- Lead by example.
- Be aware of children's developmental, educational and medical needs.
- Create an atmosphere of trust and respect.

Good Practice

Staff and volunteers will:

- Maintain attendance records and emergency contacts.
- Make children, parents and guardians aware of safeguarding procedures.
- Follow emergency procedures.
- Report concerns immediately.

- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Dress appropriately.
- Attend safeguarding training.
- Record incidents and accidents.
- Keep parents informed where appropriate.
- Ensure adequate supervision at all times.
- Use approved organisational communication methods.
- Work openly and transparently.

Inappropriate Behaviour

Staff and volunteers must not:

- Spend excessive time alone with a child.
- Use offensive, abusive or sexually suggestive language.
- Engage in bullying or intimidation.
- Favour or target particular children unfairly.
- Engage in inappropriate physical contact.
- Physically punish children.
- Form inappropriate relationships with children.
- Communicate with children through personal social media accounts.
- Share inappropriate content online.
- Exchange personal gifts with children without organisational approval.

Physical Contact

- Physical contact must always be appropriate and necessary.
- Consent should be sought where appropriate.
- Contact should be explained and understood by the child.
- Physical contact should never be secretive or coercive.
- Horseplay and rough physical games are prohibited.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Nenagh Arts Centre will:

- Provide a safe environment.
- Conduct risk assessments.
- Ensure first aid equipment is available.
- Maintain emergency procedures.
- Ensure staff understand emergency procedures.
- Supervise children appropriately.
- Minimise hazards associated with equipment and materials.

Children must never be left unattended where supervision is required.

6. ONLINE SAFETY AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Staff, volunteers and facilitators:

- Must not use personal social media accounts to communicate with children.
- Must not engage in private online communications with children.
- Must use approved organisational systems where communication is necessary.
- Must maintain professional boundaries online.
- Must report any online safeguarding concerns immediately.

Where online activities are delivered:

- Parents and guardians will be informed.
- Appropriate platforms will be used.
- Sessions will be appropriately supervised.
- Recordings will only be made where authorised and necessary.
- Data protection requirements will be observed.

7. PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING POLICY

- Written parental or guardian consent will be obtained before using photographs or recordings of children for promotional purposes.
- Images will be stored securely.
- Full names of children will not be published alongside images without explicit consent.
- Parents may withdraw consent at any time.
- Staff may not use personal devices to photograph or record children unless specifically authorised.

8. REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION OR WELFARE CONCERNS

All staff; volunteers, tutors, facilitators, contractors and board members have a responsibility to report concerns regarding the welfare or protection of children.

Concerns may arise from:

- A direct disclosure by a child.
- Information received from another person.
- Observation of concerning behaviour.

- Signs of neglect, abuse or exploitation.
- Concerns arising from online or digital activities.

Any concern should be reported immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or Deputy DLP.

Reasonable grounds for concern include:

- Specific information from a child.
- Witnessing abuse.
- Consistent signs or indicators of abuse.
- Information from a credible source.

The DLP shall:

- Consider the information received.
- Record all relevant details.
- Consult with Tusla where appropriate.
- Make a report to Tusla where there are reasonable grounds for concern.
- Maintain confidential safeguarding records.

9. EXTERNAL REPORTING CONTACTS

Tusla – Child and Family Agency

North Tipperary Dedicated Contact Point

Civic Offices
Limerick Road
Nenagh
Co. Tipperary
E45 A099

Telephone: 067 46660

Website: www.tusla.ie

Where a child is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, An Garda Síochána should be contacted immediately.

Emergency Services: 999 or 112

Nenagh Garda Station:

Telephone: 067 50450

Tusla does not operate a dedicated out-of-hours emergency social work service. Where a child is at immediate risk outside office hours, An Garda Síochána should be contacted immediately and Tusla informed as soon as possible thereafter.

10. DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

When a child discloses information:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Allow the child to speak freely.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Do not promise secrecy.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing.
- Explain what will happen next.
- Record the information accurately.
- Report the matter to the DLP immediately.

11. RECORDING PROCEDURES

All concerns must be recorded accurately and promptly.

Records should include:

- Date and time.
- Names of those involved.
- Details of concerns or disclosures.
- Observations.
- Actions taken.
- Outcomes.

Records must be factual and objective.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely, and access will be restricted to authorised personnel.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Nenagh Arts Centre respects confidentiality while recognising that the protection of children is paramount.

Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis for safeguarding purposes.

Information may be shared with Tusla, An Garda Síochána or other relevant authorities where necessary to protect a child.

Safeguarding records will be processed in accordance with:

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- Children First legislation and guidance.

Data will be retained only as long as necessary and stored securely.

13. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Nenagh Arts Centre is committed to safe recruitment.

The organisation will:

- Clearly define all roles.
- Obtain completed application forms.
- Conduct interviews.
- Verify identity.
- Obtain at least two references.
- Verify qualifications where relevant.
- Carry out Garda Vetting where required by law.
- Provide induction and probation periods.

Individuals deemed unsuitable to work with children will not be appointed.

14. GARDA VETTING

All employees, volunteers, facilitators, tutors and contractors engaged in relevant work or activities with children shall be subject to Garda Vetting in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016 where legally required.

No person may commence relevant work with children until required vetting procedures have been completed and reviewed.

15. STAFF TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

All staff and volunteers will:

- Receive safeguarding induction training.
- Receive regular refresher training.
- Be informed of safeguarding procedures.
- Be supervised appropriately.
- Sign to confirm they have read and understood this policy.

The DLP and Deputy DLP will undertake additional safeguarding training appropriate to their roles.

16. INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Nenagh Arts Centre will:

- Inform parents and guardians about safeguarding procedures.
- Obtain necessary consent forms.
- Encourage communication and involvement.
- Keep parents informed where appropriate.
- Work collaboratively in the best interests of children.

Where concerns arise, parents will normally be informed unless doing so may place the child at additional risk.

17. DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

The welfare of the child is the first priority.

Where an allegation is made:

- The child's safety will be prioritised.
- Reporting procedures will be followed.
- The DLP will manage safeguarding aspects.
- The staff member concerned will be informed as appropriate.
- Advice will be sought from Tusla and, where necessary, An Garda Síochána.
- Natural justice and fair procedures will be observed.
- Appropriate employment procedures will be followed.

Any protective measures implemented will be proportionate to the circumstances.

18. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints or comments relating to safeguarding matters should be directed to the DLP.

Nenagh Arts Centre will:

- Record complaints.
- Investigate appropriately.
- Respond as promptly as possible.
- Maintain records of outcomes.

19. ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

Nenagh Arts Centre will:

- Maintain emergency contact details.
- Maintain accident and incident records.
- Ensure first aid facilities are available.
- Ensure staff know the location of first aid equipment.
- Record accidents promptly.
- Review incidents to identify learning and improvements.
- Ensure external providers maintain appropriate insurance.

First Aid Locations:

- Reception – Large Wall-Mounted First Aid Box
- Technicians Room – Large Wall-Mounted First Aid Box
- Dance Studio – Green First Aid Case
- Kitchen – Green First Aid Case
- Marketing Office – Green First Aid Case
- Administration Office – Green First Aid Case

20. POLICY REVIEW

This Child Safeguarding Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment will be reviewed:

- Annually.
- Following any significant safeguarding incident.
- Following significant legislative or organisational changes.
- Whenever safeguarding practice indicates a review is required.

21. STAFF DECLARATION

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the Nenagh Arts Centre Child Safeguarding Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement and associated procedures.

Name: FIANNA NI CHONAILL

Signature: Fiana Ni Chonail

Role: Artistic Director

Date: 18/06/2026