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**The Arts Council**

**Child Safeguarding Statement**



The Arts Council, Child Safeguarding Statement

# About us

The Arts Council is the national agency for funding, developing, and promoting the arts in Ireland.

We aim to build a central place for the arts in Irish life and we work in partnership with:

* artists
* arts organisations
* public policymakers
* others.

## Our work with children and young people

We support and promote children and young people’s engagement with the arts. Young People, Children and Education (YPCE) is the term we use to describe this area of our work. YPCE encompasses all art-forms, and centres on the child or young person’s experience of the arts as:

* a young artist
* learner
* participant
* audience member
* a combination of these.

Through our Creative Schools Programme, we support schools so they can put arts and creativity at the heart of young people’s lives.

The Arts Council Strategy, Making Great Art Work 2016–2025, details our commitment to working with partners to plan and provide for children and young people.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (those under 18) recognises the child’s right:

* to take part in the arts and cultural life
* an education that enables them to develop to their full potential
* take part in decision making on things that concern them

So they can enjoy these rights, we consider opportunities for children to learn and develop artistic skills, and to experience the arts, as essential.

Our work in the area of Young People, Children and Education includes early childhood and continues up to the age of 24. However, our child safeguarding and protection policies and procedures specifically relate to children under the age of 18.

## How we work with children and young people

### Funding

We manage funding for arts organisations and artists, including those who develop and share work with, by and for children and young people.

### Strategy and programmes

We consult with children and young people when we are developing and putting in place our strategy and programmes.

### Funding Decision Panel

Our funding decision panel process involves children and young people (those aged 16 or over). We consult these panels when we are making decisions that focus on children and young people in the arts.

### Networking and publicity

We run networking and publicity events that involve children and young people.

### Arts events and programmes

We attend and take part in arts programmes and events, including those developed with, by and for children and young people. We fund programmes whose policies and work impact on children and young people’s experience of the arts. We do this in partnership with:

* other government departments
* national agencies
* local authorities.

### Creative Schools Programme

We run the Creative Schools Programme, where we employ creative people to support schools across the country so they can develop the arts in schools.

### Culture Night and other events

We manage Culture Night and other arts events, where we put on some of our own events. We oversee a national programme of events delivered by a wide range of partners.

## The Arts Council’s principles to safeguard children from harm

We are committed to the protection and welfare of children. We recognise our obligation to create a culture of safety for the children and young people who use our services. We promote best practice in child safeguarding and are committed to upholding the rights of every child who avails of our services.

We believe:

* the safety and welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility
* the best interests of the child should be paramount
* children have a right to be protected from harm
* children should be treated with respect
* children have a right to be listened to and have their views taken seriously.

We also believe all children have an equal right to use a service that:

* respects them as individuals
* encourages them to reach their potential, regardless of their background.

Our guiding principles and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and legislation. We will review our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures every two years. Our guiding principles apply to everyone in our organisation. Employees and advisers, and temporary agency, project, and contract workersmust behave in a way that reflects the principles of our organisation.

## Risk assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm (as defined in the Children First Act, 2015)to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk and the procedures for managing these risks. If you require a particular procedure, we can email you a link. Please contact safeguarding@artscouncil.ie.

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| 1. Risk identified |
| Risk of harm to a child from Arts Council staff who work with and or have contact with children. |
| Procedure we have in place to manage this risk |
| * Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. * Reporting procedure. * Information sharing and record keeping procedure. * Code of behaviour between workers and children. * Safe recruitment and selection procedures. * Procedure for providing information and training. * Procedure for managing and supervising workers. * Procedures for responding to allegations of abuse against workers. * Procedure for managing services safely. * Garda vetting procedures. * Staff training. * Protocol for creative associates. * Procedure for arranging work-experience placements. * Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons.[[1]](#footnote-2) * Procedure for appointing a relevant person.[[2]](#footnote-3) |

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| 1. Risk identified |
| Risk of harm to a child from other children while they are involved in Arts Council activities including:   * panels * consultations * networking * events. |
| Procedure in place to manage risk identified |
| * Child safeguarding policy and procedures. * Reporting procedure. * Procedure for managing services safely. * Safe supervision procedure. * Communication procedure. * Anti-bullying policy and procedure. |

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| 1. Risk identified: |
| Risk of harm to a child from a visitor attending an Arts Council activity or event which is open to the public. |
| Procedure we have in place to manage this risk |
| * Child safeguarding policy and procedures. * Reporting procedure. * Procedure for managing services safely. * Safe supervision procedure. * Anti-bullying policy and procedure. |

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| 1. Risk identified |
| Risk of harm to a child from members of organisations, groups, or individual artists who are funded or grant-aided by the Arts Council, through non-compliance with Children First Act 2015 and national guidance. |
| Procedure we have in place to manage this risk |
| * Child safeguarding policies and procedures. * The Arts Council Child Protection and Welfare Quality Assurance Framework. * Child Protection and Welfare Self-Audits for funded or grant-aided organisations, groups, and individuals. |

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| 1. Risk identified |
| Risk of harm to a child through social media and internet-based technology, while they are taking part in activities organised by the Arts Council. |
| Procedure we have in place to manage this risk |
| * Child safeguarding policy and procedure. * Reporting procedure. * Procedure for providing information and training. * Procedure for managing services safely. * Safe supervision procedure. * Communication procedure. * Anti-bullying policy and procedure. * Data protection policy and procedure. * Guidelines for taking and using images of children and young people in the arts sector. * Social media and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) procedure. * Training in online safety when working with children. |

## Procedures

We developed our Child Safeguarding Statement in line with requirements under the:

* Children First Act 2015
* Children First: National Guidance 2017
* Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice 2019.

**List of our safeguarding policy and procedure to protect children**

1. Procedure for managing allegations[[3]](#footnote-4) of abuse or misconduct against workers or volunteers of a child using our service.
2. Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children.
3. Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
4. Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla – the Child and Family Agency.
5. Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons.
6. Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

We have a suite of safeguarding policies, procedures, guidance and protocols in place to protect children while they are using our service.

### Putting safeguarding policy in place

We recognise that putting our policy in place is an ongoing process. We are committed to putting in place this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures needed to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.

We will review this Child Safeguarding Statement in two years, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change[[4]](#footnote-5) in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: A close-up of a person's signature

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| If you have any questions about the Arts Council, Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact us. See contact details below |
| **Mags Walsh**  Programme Director Creative Schools and Senior Manager Safeguarding  (Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015)   * **Phone:** +353 (0)87 186 8101 * **Email:** [mags.walsh@artscouncil.ie](mailto:mags.walsh@artscouncil.ie)   **Reception**   * **Phone:** (01) 6180 200 or (01) 6180 243 * **Email:** [reception@artscouncil.ie](mailto:reception@artscouncil.ie) |

[](https://www.nala.ie/)

1. Mandated person – a person who must report concerns which reach a particular level to Tusla. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Relevant person – a person who is the first point of contact in respect of the child safeguarding statement. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Allegation – a statement, made without proof, that someone has done something wrong. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Material change – any change to legislation or policy that informs the content of this statement. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)