

# The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

## Child Safeguarding Statement

### **The Arts Council delivers the following services:**

The Arts Council is the Irish government agency for developing the arts. We work in partnership with artists, arts organisations, public policymakers, and others to build a central place for the arts in Irish life.

The Council recognises that the arts have a central and distinctive contribution to make to our evolving society. Established in 1951, to stimulate public interest in and promote the knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts, the Council is an autonomous body, which is under the aegis of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. The Arts Council is a voluntary body of 12 members and a chair, appointed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. The Arts Council has currently 90 employees, 18 Arts Advisers, as well as temporary agency, project and contract workers from time to time.

The Arts Council supports and promotes 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 whether as a young artist, learner, participant, audience member or a combination of these.

The Arts Council Strategy Making Great Art Work 2016–2025 articulates our commitment to working with relevant partners to plan and provide for children and young people. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Ireland in 1992, recognises children's right to participate in the arts and cultural life, and to express themselves freely in the medium of their choice, including in the form of art. The Convention also recognises children's right to an education that enables them to develop to their full potential. The Arts Council considers opportunities for children to learn and develop artistic skills, and to experience the arts, as essential to realising these rights. The UN Convention relates to children under the age of

eighteen. This is also true for national legislation in the area of child safeguarding, and the Arts Council's child protection policies and procedures therefore specifically relate to children under the age of eighteen. However, the Arts Council's work in the area of Young People, Children and Education encompasses children and young people's engagement with the arts from early childhood up to the age of twenty-four. This is in line with national government policy and reflects different key developmental periods in children and young people's lives.

The services we deliver include:

- We manage funding for arts organisations and artists, including those who develop and share work with, by and for children and young people.
- We consult with children and young people in the development and implementation of our strategy and programmes.
- We run a peer panel system that involves children and young people (aged 16+) in decisions that have a particular focus on children and young people's arts.
- We run networking and publicity events that involve children and young people.
- We attend and participate in arts programmes and events, including those developed with, by and for children and young people.
- We fund programmes in partnership with other government departments, national agencies, and local authorities whose policies and provision impact on children and young people's experience of the arts
- We run the Creative Schools programme, through which we contract creative practitioners who support schools across the country in developing the arts in their schools.
- We manage Culture Night, and on occasion manage other arts events directly, where we programme some of our own events, and we oversee a national programme of events delivered by a wide range of partners.

### **The Arts Council's Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm**

The Arts Council is committed to the protection and welfare of children and recognises its obligation to create a culture of safety that promotes the welfare of children and young people who avail of their services. The Arts Council promotes the key principles that inform

best practice in child protection and welfare and is committed to upholding the rights of every child who avails of our service. The Arts Council believes that:

- 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.
- All children have an equal right to avail of a service that respects them as individuals and 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 and we will review our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures every two years. Our guiding principles apply to everyone in our organisation and employees, advisers, temporary agency, project and contract workers must conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our organisation.

### **Risk Assessment**

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the amalgamated areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1.	<p>Risk of harm to a child from Arts Council members, employees, advisers, temporary agency, project or contract workers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection and Welfare Policy and Procedures</li> <li>• Reporting procedures</li> <li>• Information sharing and record keeping procedure</li> <li>• Code of behaviour between workers and children</li> <li>• Safe recruitment and selection procedures</li> <li>• Procedure for the provision of information and training</li> <li>• Procedure for management and supervision of workers</li> <li>• Procedures for responding to allegations of abuse against workers</li> <li>• Procedure for safe management of services</li> <li>• Human Resource Policy and Procedures for the safe recruitment of workers</li> <li>• Human Resource Policy and Procedures for garda vetting of workers</li> <li>• Protocol for Creative Associates. Procedure for reporting child protection and welfare concerns</li> <li>• Procedure for arranging work experience placements for transition year students</li> </ul>
2.	<p>Risk of harm to a child involved in The Arts Council panels, consultations, networking, and publicity events.</p> <p>Including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Risk from workers.</li> <li>b) Risk from other panel members, attendees or peers.</li> <li>c) Risk from unauthorised use of digital photography, digital media or other recording devices.</li> </ol>	<p>Procedures as set out in section 1 and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Supervision Procedure</li> <li>• Communication procedure</li> <li>• Anti-bullying policy and procedure</li> <li>• Data protection policy and procedure</li> <li>• Guidelines for taking and using images of children and young people in the arts sector</li> <li>• Information sharing and record keeping procedure</li> <li>• Confidentiality policy and procedure</li> <li>• Social Media and ICT procedure</li> <li>• Training in online safety when working with children</li> </ul>

3.	<p>Risk of Harm to a child participating in The Art’s Council’s activities or events, which are open to the public, for example, Culture Night.</p> <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Risk from Arts Council staff (from all departments) who supervise the event on a volunteer basis.</li> <li>b) Risk from strangers/members of the public attending the event.</li> <li>c) Risk from peers attending event.</li> </ul>	<p>Procedures as set out in section 1 and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedure for safe management of services</li> <li>• Safe Supervision Procedure</li> <li>• Anti-bullying policy and procedure</li> </ul>
4.	<p>Risk of harm to a child from non-compliance by organisations, groups and individual artist who are funded by the Arts Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Arts Council Child Protection and Welfare Quality Assurance Framework</li> <li>• Child Protection and Welfare Self-Audits for funded organisations, groups and individuals</li> <li>• Contract and conditions of funding</li> </ul>
5.	<p>Risk of harm to a child from participating in activities organised by the Arts Council including the provision of services via online platforms.</p> <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Risk from Arts Council workers providing or supervising the activity.</li> <li>b) Risk from peers attending the activity – bullying.</li> <li>c) Risk from inappropriate use of social media and internet-based technology.</li> </ul>	<p>Procedures as set out in section 1 and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Supervision Procedure</li> <li>• Communication procedure</li> <li>• Anti-bullying policy and procedure</li> <li>• Data protection policy and procedure</li> <li>• Guidelines for taking and using images of children and young people in the arts sector</li> <li>• Information sharing and record keeping procedure</li> <li>• Confidentiality policy and procedure</li> <li>• Social Media and ICT procedure</li> <li>• Training in online safety when working with children</li> </ul>

## Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance, and Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the procedures listed above, the

Arts Council has a suite of safeguarding policies, procedure, guidance and protocols which support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

1. Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of 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
5. Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons
6. Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

A copy of the Arts Council Policy and Procedures is available on the website ([www.artscouncil.ie](http://www.artscouncil.ie))

### **Implementation**

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This Child Safety Statement will be reviewed in 24 months, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:



Kevin Rafter

Chairperson

The Arts Council

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For queries, in relation to the Arts Council, Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact:

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(Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015).