



Offaly Arts Office - Child Safeguarding Statement

1. Name of service being provided

Arts Service

2. Nature of service:

The Offaly Arts Office strives to broaden and deepen access to the arts and to further develop strategies for sustainable engagement, creating an environment where the arts will continue to thrive. It is our aim to continue to build connections, programmes and policies to ensure that the arts in Offaly are a central element of civic life in the County.

The Arts Service is led and managed by the Arts Officer, with support provided by staff employed by the Council and a range of freelance contractors.

The Service works towards the continuing development of the arts in the County by providing:

- Advice and Information
- Arts Policy Development
- Grants and Schemes for the Arts
- A Developmental Arts Programme

This statement has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the **Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017**, the **Child Protection Procedures for Offaly County Council** and **TUSLA's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice**. The Arts Office Child Safeguarding Statement is applicable to those activities involving children and young people that are delivered by Offaly County Council Arts Office. Current provision includes:

Hullabaloo! Children's Arts Festival - The arts office delivers this programme annually held as a four-day event in conjunction with Birr Theatre and Arts Centre
Festivals and events Grants Scheme - The Arts Office fund festivals and events throughout the county where children may be present.

In addition Offaly Arts Office ensure our staff have received Child Safeguarding training and are aware of and comply with Child Safeguarding policies and procedures. We ensure that appropriate recruitment procedure and Garda Clearance are in place.

As a condition of funding Offaly Arts Office ask artists and organizations working with children to submit their own Child Safeguarding Statement and policies or agree to comply with the Arts Office Child Safeguarding Statement.

3. Principles to safeguard children from harm:

Offaly County Council is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children in the delivery of all our service and activities. The local authority has an overall corporate duty and responsibility to safeguard the children accessing the Local Authority Services and Activities.

Offaly County Council is committed to:

- Promoting general welfare, health development and safety of children;
- Ensuring safe management procedures are in place for all staff and volunteers including: robust recruitment, selection, supervision and support procedures;
- Developing guidance and procedures for staff and volunteers who may have reasonable grounds for concern about the possible abuse or neglect of a child involved in the services or activities of the Local Authority;
- Ensuring Designated Child Protection Liaison Officers are appointed and accessible;
- Ensuring that the Local Authority has procedures in place to deal with an allegation of abuse made against an employee/volunteer;
- Raising awareness in the organisation about potential risks to children's safety/welfare;
- Developing procedures for responding to accidents and complaints;
- Developing and maintaining clear record keeping procedures;
- Ensuring a Code of Behaviour is in place to provide employees and volunteers with clear guidance on how to treat children and young people in the organisation;
- Developing a policy of interagency cooperation with Tusla and other agencies involved in the protection of a child.

Local Authority's child-centred approach

Offaly County Council's Local Authority's child-centred approach means to:

- Treat all children equally
- Listen to and respect children
- Involve children as appropriate
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability)
- Use appropriate language (verbal and physical)
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere
- Offer constructive criticism when needed
- Treat all children as individuals
- Respect a child's personal space
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids
- Lead by example
- Be aware of child time limitations e.g. school/exams when scheduling activities
- Create an atmosphere of trust
- Be aware of the *Equal Status Act 2000-2010* which relates to discrimination based on nine grounds:
 - Gender
 - Civil Status
 - Family Status
 - Age
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Disability
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Membership of the Traveller community
- Use all information in respect of children only for the purpose for which it is given, subject to child protection concern(s).

4. Risk Assessment:

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our service. It is a mandatory requirement that an assessment of risk are carried out in accordance with Tusla's Children First National Guidance 2017 see

https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf

A list of areas of risk identified and procedures for managing these risks is have been identified as:

Risk identified	Procedures in place to manage identified risk
1. Risk of harm not being recognised by staff/contractors.	Mandatory reading and signing of the Service's Child Safeguarding Statement and policies. Provision of and access to Child Safeguarding information including Tusla's online Child Protection Training – Children First E-Learning module. Requirement of a Health & Safety Statement which includes policy and procedures to minimize any foreseeable risk
2. Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by staff/contractors.	All personnel are provided with procedures for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns in a timely manner to Designated Liaison Person/Tusla/Gardai through the Council's Child protection policy. Including information on the role and responsibilities of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
3. Risk of young person being harmed by staff, contractors	Provision for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and contractors including procedure for Garda Vetting. The likelihood of staff/contractors being on their own with a child is very low. Code of behaviour for staff/contractors is included in the Dignity at Work Policy.
4. Risk of harm due to bullying of a young person.	Code of behaviour for staff/contractors included in anti-bullying and harassment policy. The likelihood of staff/contractors being on their own with a child is very low.
5. Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of images of young people	Consent to use of images is requested from children and their parents/guardians. There is a social media policy in place.

	Use of photographs is limited to specific use and for specific purpose.
6. Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of young people's personal data	Use of personal data is limited and relates to specific projects and the General Data Protection Regulations policy applies. Communications and Confidentiality policy based on any interaction with public data applies.

5. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*, and *Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

Offaly County Council Policy and Procedure for the Protection and Safeguarding of Children:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children;
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- Procedure for maintaining a list of persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person

All procedures listed are available on request.

6. Reporting a Concern

Anyone can report a concern about a child. If you have any concerns about a child you should report it to Tulsa. A report can be made in person, by telephone or in writing.

Any member of the public who has a concern about a child can contact Tusla local social work duty service in the area where the child lives for advice about reporting your concern. In the event of any emergency where you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot get in contact with Tulsa, you should contact An Garda Síochána.

If you require any further information on the Local Authority's Policies and Procedures, please contact the Local Authority Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer or Deputy Child Protection Liaison Officer named below, who may be contacted on (057) 9346800

Ann Dillon – adillon@offalycoco.ie
Niamh Dowler – ndowler@offalycoco.ie
Fiona McCabe – fmccabe@offalycoco.ie

For information on Child Protection – www.tulsa.ie

7. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going 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 Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in July 2020 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.