GUIDELINES
FOR THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE
OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
IN THE ARTS SECTOR
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Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People in the Arts Sector is the outcome of a two-year process. In 2004, seventy-six arts organisations took part in two-day training modules, organised by the Arts Council and facilitated by Health Service Executive personnel, informing the overall approach and design of Child Protection Guidelines for use within the arts sector. In 2005, a Working Party was established with representatives of arts organisations, the Council of National Cultural Institutions, the Health Service Executive and the Arts Council. Drawing on the outcomes of the 2004 sessions this group has worked meticulously to structure, pilot and present an accessible and relevant framework for use within the arts community, in line with Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

Partnership for the Arts says “our goals and actions can be achieved only if the Arts Council, the arts community and other interested agencies work together”. These guidelines represent such a commitment. They also will enable us to create better opportunities for children and young people to participate, create, and respond critically to the arts through recognising the importance of taking every reasonable step to ensure that the welfare and protection of young people is planned for and maintained. These guidelines will assist arts organisations in devising their own policies and procedures that meet national requirements and support all involved.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this publication, in particular, the members of the Working Party for giving of their time and expertise so generously. The guidelines will be made widely available. We will continue to work with the arts community, the Council for National Cultural Institutions and the Health Service Executive on implementation, and we will be reviewing and updating the guidelines as necessary.

Mary Cloake
Director
The Arts Council together with members of the arts community, the Council of National Cultural Institutions and facilitated by the Health Service Executive, has produced this document to assist arts organisations in the development of their own individual child protection and welfare policies and procedures.

The guidelines have been devised with the arts sector in mind and are a guide to good practice. They privilege a child-centred approach where the developmental needs of the child/young person are to the fore. They are not comprehensive but aim to provide a practical framework to be adapted by organisations to suit their own unique circumstances and practices. All arts organisations and individuals working with children and young people have a responsibility to protect children in accordance with government guidelines. A background to legislation and legal obligations relevant to child protection can be found in the government guidelines, *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (pp. 25-27).

Some arts organisations have already developed their policies or are currently working on them. Having clear policies and procedures in place to minimise the risk of abuse or harm to children and young people, and for dealing with complaints and allegations, should serve to support board members, all staff and volunteers and ease anxiety around the issues of child protection and safety. It is hoped that, over time, a network of peer support in the area of child welfare and protection within the arts sector will emerge, as individuals link up with each other and share experience and expertise.

Organisations should endeavour to raise awareness amongst board members, all staff and volunteers of the issues involved. There is an onus on everyone to report suspicions or concerns. It is important for individuals to be familiar with the definitions of abuse and to be equipped to recognise any signs or symptoms and know how to take a concern or an incident forward. Once protection and welfare policies and procedures are drawn up and agreed by the board they should be made available to all staff, volunteers, clients, parents and children/young people in a managed way. It is important that all those involved understand, accept and agree to abide by them.
The key elements of a Child Protection Policy

Every arts organisation working with children and young people should formulate a Child Protection Policy.

A Child Protection Policy comprises:

- a statement of policy, which expresses the organisation’s commitment to providing a safe environment for any children and young people with whom it interacts;
- an undertaking to apply that policy throughout the organisation;
- detailed procedures and steps to ensure that the Child Protection Policy is implemented across all areas of the organisation.

The Child Protection Policy Statement should be available to all staff\(^1\), boards of management, primary carers\(^2\), children and young people involved in the organisation. The policy should be reviewed annually, with the next review date being clearly indicated.

Supporting the Child Protection Policy Statement, the organisation should formulate detailed policies and procedures covering:

- Code of behaviour for all staff – whether permanent staff, volunteers, facilitators or interns;
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse;
- Confidentiality;
- Recruiting and selecting staff;
- Managing and supervising staff;
- Circulating information to staff, primary carers and participants;
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff;
- Complaints and comments;
- Incidents and accidents.

Each section of this booklet suggests policies and procedures for arts organisations to implement in each of these different areas.

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1‘Staff’ refers to staff, volunteers, facilitators, interns.
2‘Primary carer’ refers to parent(s), carer(s) or responsible adult(s) as appropriate.
A Child Protection Policy Statement is a statement of the organisation’s intention to provide a safe environment for any children and young people with whom it interacts. It also describes the policies and procedures that have been put in place by the organisation to ensure this safe environment.

The following is a template of what a Child Protection Policy Statement might look like. It should take account of the individual arts organisation’s activities, structure and environment.

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**Section 1 – Child Protection Policy Statement**

We [name of organisation] 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 *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, published by the Department of Health and Children. We have implemented procedures covering:

- Code of behaviour for all staff;
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse (see Appendix 1 for categories of 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 on [date].

[Signed by Designated Person] ________________________

Date: ___________________________

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3 The Child Care Act 1991 defines a child as a ‘person under the age of 18 years other than a person who is or has been married’ (S.2.1).
Section 2 - Code of behaviour for staff

A code of behaviour for staff is an essential element of any arts organisation's Child Protection Policy. This will help to create a supportive environment for staff to provide a child-centred approach for children and young people.

A separate code of behaviour for children and young people should be drawn up with each individual group with the involvement of the group members.

The following is an example of a code of behaviour for staff:

The code of behaviour can be categorised under the following headings:

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

Child-centred approach

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

- Register each child/young person (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact);
- Make primary carers, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures;
- Have emergency procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures;
- Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs;
- Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically;
- Report any concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures;
- 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. (For further information on anti-bullying policy see ‘Our Duty to Care’, Fact sheet 2, Department of Health and Children, 2002);
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour;
- Evaluate work practices on a regular basis;
- Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers;
- Report and record any incidents and accidents;
- Update and review policies and procedures regularly;
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children;
- Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved; observe appropriate gender balance for residential;
- Ensure clear communication between artist and organisations; have guidelines and a prompt sheet for artists;
- Have a written agreement with any external organisation that an artist is working with;
- Don’t be passive in relation to concerns, i.e., don’t ‘do nothing’;
- Don’t let a problem get out of control;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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

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

Physical contact

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

Health and safety

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

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⁴ However, work emanating from the artistic process and work of artistic content will not be censored in this way.
Section 3 – Reporting procedures

All arts organisations should appoint a Designated Person to deal with issues related to child protection and welfare within the organisation and to respond to any concerns that may be identified. A deputy should also be appointed to cover this role when the Designated Person is unavailable or if he or she is directly involved in an incident, suspicion or accusation.

The Designated Person and his or her deputy should be in senior positions within the organisation. Appropriate training should be provided for both.

- Think about which senior people in your arts organisation would be appropriate for the role of Designated Person and Deputy Designated Person;
- They should be comfortable dealing with the topic of child protection and welfare;
- Professional development and network support should be provided for the Designated Person and his or her deputy;
- It should be very clear to all staff, primary carers and children/young people who has been designated to deal with child protection issues and how to contact him or her.

The following is an example of a staff notice about a Designated Person:

Who to contact about issues related to child protection and welfare

[name] 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 Person to liaise with the Health Service Executive or Gardai where appropriate.

[name of Designated Person] can be contacted at [location and phone number].

[name] has been designated as deputy to [name of Deputy Designated Person] and can be contacted at [location and phone number].

The following excerpt from *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (4.3.2 - p.38) shows what would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

(i) specific indication from the child or young person that s/he has been abused;
(ii) an account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused;
(iii) evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way;
(iv) an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse [an example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour];
(v) consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
Recording procedures

Every arts organisation should have a system and mechanism for recording concerns about the protection of children and young people, e.g., an incident book. Policy should state very clearly where records are kept and who has access to them. They should be stored securely and confidentiality should be maintained (see Section 4: Confidentiality statement).

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 age-appropriate).

Reporting procedures

Organisations should develop very clear reporting procedures for matters relating to a child/young person’s safety and welfare.

- 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 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 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 Section 4: 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. (See Appendix 4 for sample form.) 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 Person or Deputy Designated 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.
Section 4 - Confidentiality statement

A confidentiality statement should give clear guidance about the issues of sharing information and maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality.

A confidentiality statement should include the following points:

Confidentiality statement

We in [name of organisation] 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.
Section 5 - Recruiting and selecting staff

All arts organisations should formulate recruitment and selection procedures that ensure – as far as possible – the safety and protection of children and young people. The organisation’s recruitment and selection policy should operate in tandem with its Human Resources policy.

All staff who will have or are likely to have contact with children and young people should undergo a recruitment process in line with these procedures and appropriate to their level of contact with children and young people.

In formulating policy the organisation should take cognisance of equal opportunities legislation. Ultimately, common sense and sound judgment should be applied in the process of selecting and recruiting staff.

The following is an example of a recruitment and selection policy statement:

**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:
  - any child-related convictions;
  - refusal to sign application form and declaration form;
  - insufficient documentary evidence of identification;
  - concealing information on one’s suitability to working with children;
- There will be a relevant probationary period;\(^5\)
- All staff will be required to consent to Garda clearance, and where available, this will be sought.

It is advisable that arts organisations seek legal advice when developing policy and procedures in relation to the safe recruitment and selection of staff.

\(^5\) Organisations need to specify what the probationary period will be.
The responsible management of staff involves having procedures in place to cover training, induction, supervision and the review of work practices.

New staff should receive induction training and should be made aware of policies and procedures, ideally this will be supported by a staff handbook.

Freelance staff should agree to abide by the organisation’s Child Protection Policy Statement. In the event that a freelancer has his or her own policy, the organisation must ensure that it is consistent with its own policy.

The following is an example of a staff management policy statement:

**Staff management policy statement**

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

**New staff will:**
- 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:**
- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices;
- Be expected to have read and signed the Child Protection Policy Statement;
- Be provided with child protection training.
Section 7 – Involvement of primary carers

Arts organisations should explicitly state in their guidelines how they intend to involve and share information with primary carers (parents, carers or responsible adults) in the case of any concern over a child or young person’s welfare.

The following is an example of a policy statement on the involvement of primary carers.

**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.
Section 8 - Dealing with allegations against staff

In the event of allegations being made against an employee (staff or voluntary), the protection of the child/young person is the first and paramount consideration.

The organisation has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and employee. The same person must not have responsibility for dealing with the child/young person welfare issues and the staff employment issues.

An allegation against an employee should be assessed promptly and carefully. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, a formal report to the Health Service Executive should be made. The reporting procedures outlined in Section 3 of these guidelines should be followed. The organisation should maintain a close liaison with the Health Service Executive and the Gardaí. Employers should ensure that their actions do not undermine or frustrate any assessment or investigation by Health Service Executive and the Gardaí.

Agreed procedures should be followed in the context of the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. The employer should take protective measures appropriate to the level of risk while not unreasonably penalising the worker – unless necessary to protect the child/young person. Protective measures might mean increased supervision, assignment to different duties, or suspension. Organisations may want to seek legal advice on procedures or protocol to deal with allegations against staff.

Dealing with an allegation against staff

Two separate procedures must be followed:

1. In respect of the child/young person [name of person] will deal with issues related to the child/young person.
2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made [name of person] 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 Person, then the Deputy Designated Person should be contacted;
- The reporting procedures outlined in Section 3 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.
Section 9 - Complaints and comments procedures

All organisations should have a complaints and comments procedure. Primary carers, children/young people and staff should all be made aware of these procedures. Consideration should be given to an appeals procedure.

A complaints and comments procedure could include the following:

In the event of complaints or comments:

- Complaints or comments will be responded to within [x] weeks;
- [Name of person] has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to the appropriate person;
- Verbal complaints will be logged and responded to.
Section 10 - Accidents procedure

Organisations should have a Health and Safety Statement that should include a risk assessment of each area of operation. Procedures to follow in the event of an accident should be formulated. This should include information along the following lines:

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;
- 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.
The Arts Council would like to thank each member of the Working Party for their contribution to formulating, piloting and designing the contents of these guidelines.

Marie Bourke   National Gallery of Ireland
Ben Cuddihy   Triskel Arts Centre
Paul Curran   The Poet’s House
Vincent Dempsey  Barnstorm Theatre Company
Dave Duff   Irish Museum of Modern Art
Miriam Dunne   Waterford Spraoi
Catherine Kelly   Westmeath County Council
Mike Kelly   Young Irish Film Makers
Jane O’Hanlon   Poetry Ireland
Belinda Moller   The Ark
Deborah Moon   Tallaght Community Arts Centre
Martin Murphy   TEAM Theatre Company
Jan Perrin   Health Service Executive, South Western Area
Anne Purcell   Health Service Executive, South Eastern Area
John Ruddy   Calipo Theatre Company
Maria Schwepppe   Dublin Youth Theatre

In addition, the following people provided input into the early draft of the guidelines at two-day ‘Keeping Safe’ training workshops in 2004:

Cork Group:

Peggy Amison   Sirius Arts Centre
Anna Barden   Munster Literature Centre
Anne Boddaert   Crawford Municipal Art Gallery
Oliver Breslin   Waterford Youth Drama
Ronnie Fitzgerald  South Tipperary Arts Centre
Jayne Foley   Fresh Film Festival
Oliver Hurley   Siamsa Tire
Rosina Joyce   Irish Association of Youth Orchras
Pippa Little   Limerick City Gallery
Peter McNamara   Belltable Arts Centre
Jim Myers   Galloglass Theatre Company
Victoria O’Brien   Daghda Dance Company
Kim O’Dee   Cill Rialaig Project
Karen O’Shea   Graffiti Theatre Company
Catherine Pearson O’Dwyer   Samhlaiocht Chiari
Jan O’Sullivan   Red Kettle Theatre Company
Una Quigley   Crawford Municipal Art Gallery
Frances Shanahan   Irish Chamber Orchestra
Antonia Splini   Garter Lane Arts Centre
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Jim Myers   Galloglass Theatre Company
Victoria O’Brien  Daghdha Dance Company
Kim O’Dee                   Cill Rialaig Project
Karen O’Shea   Graffiti Theatre Company
Catherine Pearson O’Dwyer Samhlaíocht Chiarri
Jan O’Sullivan   Red Kettle Theatre Company
Una Quigley   Crawford Municipal Art Gallery
Frances Shanahan  Irish Chamber Orchestra
Antonia Splini   Garter Lane Arts Centre

Dublin Group:

Mary Elizabeth Burke Kennedy   Storytellers Theatre Company
Anne Campbell-Crawford   Irish National Youth Ballet Company
Trish Lambe   Gallery of Photography
Norma Leen   St. Patrick’s Festival
Orlaith McBride   National Association for Youth Drama
Deirdre McCrea   Music Network
Emer McGowan Eida Mitroni
Bairbre Ni Chaoimh   Temple Bar Gallery and Studios
Polly O’Loughlin   Calypso Productions
Claire Ranson   Pavilion Theatre
Marian Ribon   Children’s Books Ireland
Ann Ryan   Dublin Youth Dance Company
Donal Shiels   Irish Film Institute
Jenny Traynor   Second Age Theatre Company
Loretta Yurick   CoisCéim Dance Theatre

Galway Group:

Marie-Louise Blaney   Model Arts and Niland Gallery
Mary Butler   Kilkenny County Council
Dave Donovan   Macnas
Marie Farrell   Linenhall Arts Centre
Margaret Flannery   Galway Arts Centre
Mary Hanley   Ramor Theatre
Orla Heverin          Galway Arts Centre
Anica Louw   Shawbrook /LD Dance Trust
Patricia McBride   An Grianán Theatre
Sadie Mackey   Junior Galway Film Fleadh
Lali Morris                Baboró
Siobhan Mulcahy   Clare County Council
Brendan Flynn   Clifden Community Arts Week
Darach Ó Tuairiscg   Fibin Puppet Theatre
Mharie Sutherland   Artlink

Kilkenny Group:

Denis Collins   Wexford Arts Centre
Barbara Connelly   KCAT Art and Study Centre
Mary Duffin   Riverbank Arts Centre
Lucy Dundon   Fluxusdance
Sinead Foley   Kilkenny Arts Festival
Maggie Gallagher   The Courthouse Arts Centre
Irma Grothius   Abbey Theatre
Bríd Murphy   St. Michael’s Theatre
Colette Stafford   Wexford County Council
Nathalie Weadick   Butler Gallery
The Arts Council acknowledges the enormous contribution of the Health Service Executive in drawing up these guidelines. We are particularly grateful to Jan Perrin - South Western Area, Anne Purcell - South Eastern Area and Charney Weitzman - Midland Area for their advice and assistance at all stages of the process.

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Sandra Claxton   Western Area
Brid Burke   Western Area
Sheelagh Broderick   Southern Area
Maureen Crowley   Southern Area
Margaret Fitzgerald   Southern Area

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Designed and produced: Origin Design
APPENDIX 1: Definitions of abuse

There are four main categories of abuse as outlined in *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*. The following is a synopsis of the information contained in that document. For the full definitions please refer to *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* 1993 (pp.32-34).

1. Neglect

“Neglect can be defined as being where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care….The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child’s needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.” (*Children First* p.31)

2. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse usually happens where there is a relationship between a carer and a child rather than as a specific incident or incidents.

“Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.” (*Children First* p.31)

Rather, it can manifest in the child’s behaviour or physical functioning. Examples of these include ‘anxious’ attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement and uncooperative or hostile behaviour.

“The threshold of significant harm is reached when interaction is predominantly abusive and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.” (*Children First* p.32)

Examples of emotional abuse in children include:

- Imposition of negative attributes on children, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- Emotional unavailability by the child’s parent/carer;
- Unresponsiveness, inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
- Premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
- Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child’s capacity to understand something or to behave and control him/herself in a certain way;
- Under or over-protection of the child;
- Use of unreasonably harsh discipline;
- Exposure to domestic violence.
3. Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child. Examples of physical injury include the following:

- Shaking;
- Use of excessive force in handling;
- Deliberate poisoning;
- Suffocation;
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant physical harm to a child.

4. Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves the use of a child for gratification or sexual arousal by a person for themselves or others.

Examples of sexual abuse include:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
- Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- Masturbation in the presence of the child or involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- Sexual intercourse with a child whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- Sexual exploitation of a child… may also include showing sexually explicit material to children which is often a feature of the ‘grooming’ process by perpetrators of abuse;
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an under-age person.
## APPENDIX 2: List of Health Service Executive Area Social Work Department Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Care Area</th>
<th>Area social work department</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone No.</th>
<th>Fax No.</th>
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<td>021 – 4927001 021 – 4927002</td>
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<td>066 – 7184887</td>
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### Duty Social Worker

- **South Lee**: 066 – 7184869/68
- **North Lee**: 090 – 6637528/29 090 – 6627043

## Western Area

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<td>091 – 546366 091 – 546325</td>
<td>091 – 527601 091 – 524231</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roscommon</td>
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<td>090 – 6626732</td>
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### Duty Social Worker

- **Galway**: 090 – 6637528/29
- **Roscommon**: 090 – 6627043
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<tr>
<td>Brid Burke</td>
<td>HSE, W.H.A. Galway</td>
<td>Community Services, The Annex, Western Area, Health Service Executive, Seamus Quirke Rd., Galway</td>
<td>T: 091 – 548440</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brid.burke@mailhse.ie">brid.burke@mailhse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Claxton</td>
<td>HSE, W.H.A. Roscommon, Mayo</td>
<td>Mayo Community Services, Mayo Headquarters, Old Westport Rd., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.</td>
<td>T: 094 – 9042579</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sandra.claxton@mailhse.ie">sandra.claxton@mailhse.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Charney Weitzman</td>
<td>HSE, Midland Area, Longford, Westmeath, Laois, Offaly</td>
<td>Child Care Unit, Unit 4, Central Business Park, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.</td>
<td>T: 0506 – 57842</td>
<td><a href="mailto:charney.weitzman@mailq.hse.ie">charney.weitzman@mailq.hse.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Noreen Herron</td>
<td>HSE, N.W.A Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal, Cavan.</td>
<td>Markievicz House, Barrack Street, Sligo.</td>
<td>T: 071 – 9155133</td>
<td><a href="mailto:noreen.herron@mailhse.ie">noreen.herron@mailhse.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sinead Twomey</td>
<td>HSE, Southern Area, North Lee, North Cork, Kerry.</td>
<td>Ellis House, Ballyvolane Commercial Park, Ballyvolane, Cork.</td>
<td>T: 021 – 4529010</td>
<td><a href="mailto:stwomeys4@shb.ie">stwomeys4@shb.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maureen Crowley</td>
<td>HSE, Southern Area, North Lee, South Lee, West Cork,</td>
<td>Ellis House, Ballyvolane Commercial Park, Ballyvolane, Cork.</td>
<td>T: 021 – 4529010</td>
<td><a href="mailto:maureen.crowley@mailp.hse.ie">maureen.crowley@mailp.hse.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Nee</td>
<td>HSE, M.W.A. Tipperary North</td>
<td>Child Care Manager’s Dept., Annbrook, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.</td>
<td>T: 067 – 38314</td>
<td><a href="mailto:laura.nee@mailhse.ie">laura.nee@mailhse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Godfrey</td>
<td>HSE, M.W.A. Clare</td>
<td>River House, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.</td>
<td>T: 065 – 6863919</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jan.godfrey@mailhse.ie">jan.godfrey@mailhse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Murray</td>
<td>HSE, M.W.A. Limerick.</td>
<td>87 O’Connell Street, Limerick.</td>
<td>T: 061 – 483520</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ann.murray@mailhse.ie">ann.murray@mailhse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Purcell</td>
<td>HSE, S.E.A. Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, South Tipperary.</td>
<td>Health Centre, HSE, S.E.A., Castlehill, Carlow.</td>
<td>T: 059 – 9133797/9136520</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ann.purcell@maila.hse.ie">ann.purcell@maila.hse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Contact Address</td>
<td>Contact No.</td>
<td>E-Mail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edwina Flavin</td>
<td>HSE, S.W.A. Dublin South</td>
<td>Children &amp; Families, Training &amp; Development Unit, Unit 4044</td>
<td>T: 01 – 4691720</td>
<td><a href="mailto:edwina.flavin@mailm.hse.ie">edwina.flavin@mailm.hse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City, Dublin South City</td>
<td>City West Business Campus, Saggart, Co. Dublin.</td>
<td>F: 01 – 469 1728</td>
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<td></td>
<td>South West, Dublin West,</td>
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<td>M: 086 – 380 3925</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kildare, West Wicklow.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Perrin</td>
<td>HSE, S.W.A. Dublin South</td>
<td>Children &amp; Families, Training &amp; Development Unit, Unit 4044</td>
<td>T: 01 – 4691720</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City, Dublin South City</td>
<td>City West Business Campus, Saggart, Co. Dublin.</td>
<td>F: 01 – 4691728</td>
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<td>Kildare, West Wicklow.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Tallon</td>
<td>HSE, S.W.A. Dublin South</td>
<td>Children &amp; Families, Training &amp; Development Unit, Unit 4044</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:mary.tallon@mailm.hse.ie">mary.tallon@mailm.hse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City, Dublin South City</td>
<td>City West Business Campus, Saggart, Co. Dublin.</td>
<td>F: 01 – 4691728</td>
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<tr>
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<td>South West, Dublin West,</td>
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<td>M: 087 – 7988863</td>
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<td>Kildare, West Wicklow.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lorraine Egan</td>
<td>HSE, E.C.A. Community Care</td>
<td>Child Youth &amp; Family Dept., HSE, E.C.A. HQ., Block B, Civic Centre</td>
<td>T: 01 – 2744273</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lorraine.egan@ecahb.ie">lorraine.egan@ecahb.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area 1, 2, 10 (Wicklow)</td>
<td>Main Street, Bray, Co. Wicklow.</td>
<td>F: 01 – 2744281</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>M: 086 – 3801603</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deirdre</td>
<td>HSE, N.E.A. Cavan/</td>
<td>Old Rooskey Offices, HSE, Rooskey, Monaghan.</td>
<td>T: 047 – 30470</td>
<td><a href="mailto:deirdrem.horanmartin@maila.hse.ie">deirdrem.horanmartin@maila.hse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horan-Martin</td>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td></td>
<td>M: 087 – 9672724</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheelagh</td>
<td>HSE, Southern Area</td>
<td>Ellis House, Ballyvolane Commercial Park, Ballyvolane, Cork.</td>
<td>T: 021 – 4529010</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sheelagh.broderick@mailp.hse.ie">sheelagh.broderick@mailp.hse.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broderick</td>
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<td>F: 021 – 4529028</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>M: 087 – 2224829</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>HSE, Southern Area</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:margaret.fitzgerald@mailp.hse.ie">margaret.fitzgerald@mailp.hse.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fitzgerald</td>
<td></td>
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<td>F: 021 – 4529028</td>
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</table>
### PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

**STANDARD FORM FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND/OR WELFARE CONCERNS**

In case of Emergency or outside Health Service Executive office hours, contact should be made with An Garda Síochána

A. To Principal Social Worker
   or Duty Social Worker: ____________________________

1. Details of Child:
   Name: ____________________________ Male: ______ Female: ______
   Address: ____________________________ Age/D.O.B.: ____________________________
   School: ____________________________

1a. Name of Mother: ____________________________ Name of Father: ____________________________
    Address of Mother if different to Child: ____________________________
    Address of Father if different to Child: ____________________________
    Telephone Number: ____________________________ Telephone Number: ____________________________

1b. Care and Custody arrangements regarding child, if known: ____________________________

1c. Household Composition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship to Child</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
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</table>

Note: A separate report form must be completed in respect of each child being reported.

2. Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) (if known).

3. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child:
   Name: ____________________________ Age: ______ Male: ______ Female: ______
   Address: ____________________________
4. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child:

Social Workers: ___________________________ School: ___________________________

Public Health Nurse: ______________________ G.P.: ___________________________

G.P.: ___________________________ Pre-School/Creche/Youth Club: ______________________

Hospital: ___________________________ Other, specify e.g. Youth Groups, After School Clubs: ______________________

5a. Are Parents/Legal Guardians aware of this referral to the Social Work Department? Yes No

5b. Are the Parents/Legal Guardians supportive? Yes No

6. Details of Person reporting concerns: (Please see Guidance Notes re Limitations of Confidentiality)

Name: ___________________________ Occupation: ___________________________

Address: ___________________________

Telephone Number: ___________________________

Nature and extent of contact with Child/Family: ___________________________

7. Details of Person completing form:

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Occupation: ___________________________ Signed: ___________________________

GUIDANCE NOTES:
The Health Service Executive has a statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act, 1991, to promote the welfare and protection of children in their area. The Health Service Executive therefore has an obligation to receive information about any child who is not receiving adequate care and/or protection.

This reporting form is for use by:
• Health Service Executive Personnel.
• Professionals and individuals in the provision of child care services in the community who have service contracts with the Health Service Executive.
• Designated person in a voluntary or community agency.
• Any professional, individual or group involved in services to children who becomes aware of a child protection or welfare concern, or to whom a child protection or child welfare concern is reported.

Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. (Health Service Executive personnel should do this in consultation with their line manager). This will assist the Social Work Department in assessing the level of risk to the child, or support services required. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate by putting a line through the question. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report.

The Health Service Executive aims to work in partnership with parents. If you are making this report in confidence you should note that the Health Service Executive cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality as:
• A Court could order that information be disclosed.
• Under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997, the Freedom of Information Commissioner may order that information be disclosed.

You should also note that in making a ‘bona fide report’ you are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998. If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone the duty social worker and discuss your concerns with him/her.

(Local arrangements to be inserted.)
Sample Volunteer Reference Form
Confidential

______________________________ has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer with this club/organisation and has given your name as a referee.

This post involves substantial access to children and as an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.

If you are happy to complete this reference, all information contained on the form will remain confidential and will only be shared with the applicant’s immediate supervisor, should they be offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate you being extremely candid in your evaluation of this person.

How long have you known this person? ________________________________

In what capacity? ____________________________________________________

What attributes does this person have which you would consider makes them a suitable volunteer?

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

How would you describe their personality? ________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

Please rate this person on the following (please tick):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>V/Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-motivation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivation of others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Signed: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Occupation: ______________________________
Sample Volunteer Reference Form
Confidential

______________________________ has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer with this club/organisation and has given your name as a referee.

This post involves substantial access to children and as an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people?

Yes               No

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.

If you are happy to complete this reference, all information contained on the form will remain confidential and will only be shared with the applicant’s immediate supervisor, should they be offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate you being extremely candid in your evaluation of this person.

How long have you known this person?  ____________________________________________

In what capacity? ________________________________________________________________

What attributes does this person have which you would consider makes them a suitable volunteer?
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

How would you describe their personality?  __________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

Please rate this person on the following (please tick):

Poor      Average      Good      V/Good      Excellent

Responsibility

Maturity

Self-motivation

Motivation of others

Energy

Trustworthiness

Reliability

Signed:  ________________________________________      Date:  ______________________

Occupation: ______________________________________

Appendix:

Declaration Form
Confidential

Declaration form for all those working with children and young people.

Surname: _______________________________   First Name: ___________________________

Date of Birth: ___________________   Place of birth: ______________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________________________

Tel. No: _______________________________   Mobile No: ______________________________

Any other name(s) previously known as: _____________________________________________

Is there any reason that you would be considered unsuitable to work with children and young people?  Yes               No

If yes, please outline the reason below.

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence?            Yes                No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence (s):

Signed:  _________________________________      Date:  ___________________________

Appendix:
### Key Actions Checklist

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key things to do</th>
<th>Who is responsible</th>
<th>By when</th>
<th>Done</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involves C.E.O. (if not already)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appoint Designated Person (D.P.) and Deputy Designated Person (D.D.P.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish what support is available for the D.P. and D.D.P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draw up code of behaviour for staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devise Child Protection Policy Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devise policy for recruitment, training, support and supervision (including a Volunteer Reference Form and a Sample Declaration Form)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish procedures around recording information (on incidents and suspicions) and around reporting incidents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draw up a confidentiality statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devise procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation against staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seek feedback on your new guidelines from legal advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inform the Board of new Child Protection policies and procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan induction for staff/new staff/volunteers/interns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Let parents and children and young people know about your new policies and procedures around Child Protection (for example with a fact sheet)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review the policy annually</td>
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</table>

*Please note: this is not a definitive list*
Further reading/reference

- Our Duty to Care - *The principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people* Department of Health and Children 2002
- *Child Protection Guidelines* National Youth Federation 2004

Legislation relating to child protection and welfare:

- Child Care Act 1991
- Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992