

(Organisation's Name / logo / contact details)

Information on our Child Protection Policy for Parents/Guardians

- Here at (**organisation name**) we are committed to providing a safe environment for children and young people. Children's welfare and safety is our top priority. We comply with Children First: National Guidelines for Child Protection and Welfare. To help us achieve this, we have a Child Protection Policy and Procedures which guide our work. Copies of our Child Protection Policy are available (on our website / from (**name**) our Designated Person for Child Protection).
- Parents/guardians are children's primary carers. We work in partnership with parents/guardians to ensure children's safety and enjoyment of the activities we offer. We ask you to take some time to read our guidelines and programme information. If you have any questions or concerns you can talk to (**name**), our Designated Person for Child Protection.
- Here are some questions you might want to ask:

What is a child protection policy?

A child protection policy is a statement of the organisation's commitment to keep children and young people safe and to report any concerns about their welfare. The policy will contain procedures for how this is done in the organisation.

These will usually include:

- ✓ A code of behaviour for staff.
- ✓ A safe recruitment policy.
- ✓ A Designated Person who deals with child protection issues.
- ✓ Procedures for reporting concerns to the HSE.
- ✓ Procedures for dealing with allegations against staff or volunteers.
- ✓ A confidentiality policy.
- ✓ A complaints policy.
- ✓ An accidents and incidents reporting policy.

What should I expect from an activity or group my child takes part in?

- You can expect your child's safety and welfare to be the top priority.
- You will be informed about and asked to give your consent for all activities your child is involved in.
- You will be asked for some personal information, such as contact details and any health information which is relevant for your child.
- You can expect that staff or volunteers are carefully selected and suitable to work with children and young people.

What does confidentiality mean?

- Confidentiality means that information in relation to you or your children will only be shared with people who 'need to know'.
- Personal information about your family will be treated with respect and records will be securely stored.

Who does the organisation report to, if they have a child protection concern about a child or young person?

- If we have a child protection concern about a child we are obliged to report it to a Duty Social Worker in the Health Service Executive (HSE), or in an emergency, to An Garda Síochána.
- Reckless endangerment of children is a criminal offence under Irish law which could result in criminal prosecution and imprisonment for failure to comply with the relevant provisions of the appropriate legislation.

What information will be passed on?

- We will pass on the child's name, address and age, your name and address and will say what the reason for concern is.
- We will also include the name of the person making the report.
- Anyone making a report of suspected child abuse, provided they act 'reasonably and in good faith' will have immunity from civil liability (Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998).

Do I have a right to see information about me or my child?

- Yes. You have a right to see any records that are kept about you or your children.

Is there a code of behaviour for staff, children and young people, volunteers, parents?

- Yes. A code of behaviour for staff, including volunteers, is part of our child protection policy.
- We have a code of behaviour for children and young people.
- We have an anti-bullying policy.
- We also ask parents/guardians to comply with certain measures to ensure their children's safety (see below).

Who can I talk to if I have a concern about a child?

- If you have a concern about a child or young person, you can talk to (name) our Designated Person. (S/he) will listen to your concern and explain our Child Protection Policy to you.
- Alternatively, you can contact a Duty Social worker in the HSE directly (contact details for local area Duty Social Worker).

Is there a complaints policy? Who can I talk to if I have a complaint?

- Yes, we have a complaints policy.
- If you have a complaint you can talk or write to (**name/contact details**). We will respond to your complaint within (time period).

Does the organisation have a health and safety policy?

- Yes. All organisations are required by law to have a safety statement and a health and safety policy.

Are staff vetted by the Gardaí and are references checked for all staff and volunteers?

- References are checked for all staff and volunteers.
- Where Garda Vetting is available it will be obtained.
- All staff and volunteers are asked to sign a declaration stating that they are suitable to work with children and young people and that they will abide by the organisation's child protection policy.

Does the organisation have a policy for dealing with allegations against staff or volunteers?

- Yes. Procedures for dealing with allegations against staff or volunteers are part of the child protection policy.

Can I come and visit or stay and watch the activities if I want to?

- Yes. You are always welcome to visit.

Parents Co-operation

In order to help ensure children and young people's safety and welfare we ask parents to:

- ✓ Bring and collect children on time for the activities. Staff at (**organisation name**) are not responsible for children outside of programme hours.
- ✓ Give us any relevant information (e.g. health, ability, emergency contact).
- ✓ Follow directions of staff (facilitators/leaders) when requested.
- ✓ Complete and sign registration and consent forms for programmes as requested.

Any other specific requirements relevant to your organisation's activities).