



Child Safeguarding Statement of **WATERFORD YOUTH ARTS CLG**

1. **Name of service being provided: WATERFORD YOUTH ARTS**
2. **Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm**

Waterford Youth Arts is a youth and community arts resource that enables participation in creative activity in a safe, professional and fun environment. This enables capacity building and progression.

Waterford Youth Arts believes that the safety and best interests of children and young people attending our services are paramount. We believe that all children attending our service have the right to be protected, treated with respect, listened to and to have their views taken into consideration in all decisions affecting them.

Our guiding principles are underpinned by *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, *Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*, the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and current legislation such as the *Children First Act 2015*, *Child Care Act 1991*, *Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998* and the *National Vetting Bureau Act 2012*.

Our guiding principles apply to all paid staff, volunteers, committee/board members and students on work placement within our organisation.

Waterford Youth Arts believes the following:

1. Our priority to ensure the welfare and safety of every child and young person who attends our service is paramount.
2. 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.
3. All children and young people have an equal right to attend a service that respects them as individuals and encourages them to reach their potential, regardless of their background.
4. We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to and heard.
5. Our guiding principles apply to every one in our organisation.

Waterford Youth Arts is a youth and community arts resource that enables participation in creative activity in a safe, professional and fun environment. This enables capacity building and progression.

Waterford Youth Arts is committed to a young-person centred approach in our work. We undertake to provide a safe environment and a positive experience for youth people, where the welfare and safety of the young person is paramount. We will adhere to *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*.

We have developed policies and procedures to ensure this commitment is embedded in our practice and all projects at Waterford Youth Arts. Our Child Protection Policy incorporates all policies and procedures that relate to working with young people. The Board of Waterford Youth Arts CLG recognises it holds ultimate responsibility for the wellbeing of members and staff, artists, practitioners and volunteers. Our policy is targeted at all adults involved in the organisation, be they staff, volunteers, placement students, artists or practitioners. Parents /guardians will be informed of relevant policies and procedures. Youth members will be informed of procedures and policies as they relate to their participation.

We work with children aged 5 to 9 years and young people aged 10 to 25 years of age.

We carry out a range of youth arts activities including:

- **Drama workshops**
- **Theatre Productions**
- **Rehearsals**
- **Open Mic Nights / Teenage Kicks Rock music nights**
- **Trips away/ International Exchanges**
- **Short film projects**
- **Youth Dance programme**
- **Youth Film workshops**
- **Creative writing**
- **Visual art – Saturday Art Club and urban art**

3. Risk Assessment

Section 2 of the Children First Act 2015 defines harm as follows: ‘harm means in relation to a child – (a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects, or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or, (b) sexual abuse of the child.’

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 areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1	Risk of harm not being recognised by youth theatre personnel (committee members, leaders, staff or volunteers)	Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm. e.g. Tusla e-learning module (compulsory)
2	Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by youth theatre personnel	All personnel are provided with procedures for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla, including information on the

		Role and responsibilities of the Designated Liaison Person and Mandated Persons
3	Risk of young person being harmed by youth project personnel or contracted artist or practitioner	<p>Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children including procedure for Garda Vetting.</p> <p>Policy for the supervision / training and support of staff</p> <p>Code of Behaviour for staff / volunteers</p>
4	Risk of harm due to bullying of a young person	<p>Anti-bullying policy</p> <p>Charter of Members Rights</p>
5	Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of young people	<p>Policy on Adult /Young People Ratios</p> <p>Code of Behaviour for staff / volunteers</p> <p>Protocols and procedure for residentials, travel and trips</p>
6	Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/ communications between youth theatre personnel and a young person	<p>Policy on Communications with young people</p> <p>Code of Behaviour for Leaders–Conduct, Ethics and Performance</p> <p>Policy on Adult / Leader / Young people ratios</p>
7	Risk of harm caused by youth theatre personnel communicating with young people in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or Other manner.	<p>Policy on Communications with young people</p> <p>Code of Conduct, Ethics and Performance for staff/volunteers</p>
8	Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of images of young people	<p>Policy on Use of Image collection and sharing</p> <p>Code of Conduct, Ethics and Performance for staff/volunteers</p>
9	Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of young people’s personal data.	<p>Confidentiality Policy</p> <p>Data Protection Policy</p>

10	Risk of harm to young people from third party spaces/venues where accessing hired space or public building	Ensure facilities such as dressing rooms, bathrooms, toilets are designated solely for the use of young people participating
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4. Procedures

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

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child/ young person availing of our service
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person. **The Relevant person of Waterford Youth Arts is Ollie Breslin**
- Complaints Policy/Procedures
- Disciplinary/Appeals Procedures
- Procedures for Trips Away / Residentials / Exchanges and Transnational meetings
- Policy on including Members aged 18 or over
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Policy on Informing Parents
- Guidelines on Dealing with Disruptive Behaviour

All procedures listed are available upon request.

5. 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 on 6th October 2025 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

For queries, please contact

Ollie Breslin

T.35351879 377

E.ollie@waterfordyoutharts.com

Designated Liaison Person under the Children First Act 2015.