**Mayo County Council**

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**Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo**

**CHILD SAFEGUARDING SAFETY STATEMENT**

**Mayo County Council Arts Service is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children, young people and vulnerable persons with whom we interact and to the development and implementation of policies and practices that protect children, young people and vulnerable persons from harm.**

1. **Name of service being provided:**  Mayo County Council Arts Service
2. **Nature of service**

Mayo Arts Service initiates and implements programme and services which develop and support the arts in Mayo. This includes the following core areas of activity: information, promotion, advice, programming, funding and policy development. The service works across all artforms. The service also provides support, including funding, to organisations, groups and artists.

Mayo County Council Arts Service is committed to promoting opportunities for children and young people to participate in the arts and recognises the importance of its role in creating a culture of safety that promotes the welfare of those availing of its services.

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.

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 Mayo County Counci**l and **TUSLA’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.** The Arts Service Child Safeguarding Statement is applicable to those activities involving children and young people that are delivered by Mayo County Council Arts Office. Current provision includes:

* Excel Youth Arts Programme
* Once-off projects with youth groups
* Public Performances or events organised by the Arts Service
* Youth Advisory Groups
* Schools Exhibition Programme
* Public Art Projects
* Intergenerational arts projects
* Mayo Youth Theatre (separate safeguarding statement)
* Communication via internet/ social media platforms
* Documenting events: photography, audio and video documentation of projects

**Mayo County Council Arts Service is a partner/member in the following:**

* Music Generation Mayo – partner, lead partner is Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim ETB and their Child Protection Policy applies.
* Mayo Arts Service gives partnership funding to six independent art venues across county Mayo, all have independent Child Protection Policies.
* Mayo Arts Service is a member of the Creative Ireland Culture Team in Mayo County Council, which includes developing engagement opportunities for young people

In addition, Mayo County Council Arts Service ensures service staff have received Child Safeguarding training and are aware of and comply with Child Safeguarding policies and procedures, and that appropriate recruitment and Garda Vetting procedures are in place.

As a condition of funding Mayo Arts Office ask artists and organisations working with children to confirm that they have their own Child Safeguarding Statement and policies or to agree to comply with the Arts Office Child Safeguarding Statement.

1. **Principles to safeguard children from harm:**

Mayo County Council has developed a Policy for the Protection and Safeguarding on Children. This safeguarding statement is developed in line with this policy.

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

Mayo 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.

Mayo County Council’s policy is under-pinned by a child-centred approach, including a commitment to:

* Treat all children equally
* Listen to and respect children
* Involve children as appropriate
* Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability)
* Use appropriate communication (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**

Mayo County Council Arts Service has 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 in place to manage risk identified.

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| Risk identified | | Procedures in place to manage risk identified |
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| 1. | Staff/contractors being on their own with a child. | * The likelihood of staff/contractors being on their own with a child is very low. * Groups/organisations availing of our services must provide appropriate supervision. * Recruitment procedures, including an application form, interview, reference check and, as appropriate, Garda vetting procedure in place. * 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. |
| 2. | Inability of staff members or freelance contractors to properly recognise ‘harm’. | * Staff and freelance contractors will be provided with Mayo County Council’s Policy and Procedures for the Protection and Safeguarding of Children.   • Staff will be provided with Child Protection Training to ensure they are  equipped to comply with the policy. |
| 3. | Lack of awareness of child  protection duty and noncompliance  with Child  Protection Policy | • Staff and freelance contractors will be provided with Mayo County Council’s Policy and Procedures for the Protection and Safeguarding of Children.  • Staff will be provided with Child Protection Training to ensure they are  equipped to comply with the policy.  • Staff will be required to complete the TUSLA e-learning  programme. |
| 4. | Non-compliance of Child Protection Policy by freelance individuals and Arts Service staff. | * Staff will participate in Child Protection Training and be familiar with the Mayo County Council Child Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement. * Freelance contractors will be provided with MCC Child Protection Policy. |
| 5. | A suspicion of child abuse is determined by a member of staff. | * Staff will participate in Child Protection Training and be familiar with the Mayo County Council Child Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement. * 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. |
| 6. | Child makes a disclosure to a member of staff | * Staff will participate in Child Protection Training and be familiar with the Mayo County Council Child Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement. * 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. |
| 7. | Receipt of complaints of alleged child abuse where a member of Mayo County Council staff or freelance contractor is the alleged perpetrator. | * Provision for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and contractors including procedure for Garda Vetting, where required. * The likelihood of staff/contractors being on their own with a child is very low.   • 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.  • Internal disciplinary processes are in place where the issue  concerns an employee. |
| 8. | Incident of inappropriate behaviour by a grant beneficiary | * Organisations, groups and artists supported by Mayo County Council Arts Service, or funded through schemes and initiatives managed on behalf of third parties, who work with children will be required to confirm compliance with the Children First Act 2015 and Children First National Guidance 2017. |
| 9. | Unsanctioned circulation of photographs featuring children | * Mayo County Council’s Child Protection Policy includes clear procedures for taking and circulating photographs of children and relevant consents required. * Use of photographs is limited to specific use and for specific purpose. |
| 10. | Receipt of complaint of alleged child abuse where a parent, guardian, support worker or teacher is the alleged perpetrator. | * 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. |
| 11. | A suspicion of child abuse  is determined by a  member of staff. | * 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. |

1. **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, Procedures and Practice.*

In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while availing of our service:

* 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 the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
* Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

1. **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:

Ms. Olivia Gallagher, Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer

094 90 64731

Ms. Carol Gilmartin, Deputy Child Protection Liaison Officer

094 90 64508

1. **Implementation**

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Mayo County Council Arts Service is committed to the implementation of the 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 29/05/23 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:

Arts Officer

Mayo County Council Arts Service