

Child Safeguarding Statement

1. Name of Service : Youth Work Ireland Laois

2. The services we provide are:

Youth Work Ireland Laois is a community based youth work organisation.

- a. **Youth Club Development:** 6 volunteer led youth clubs work with children and young people across the County
- b. **Community Youth Project:** 1 youth project in Portlaoise which engages with the local community to identify and respond to the needs of young people in their area.
- c. **One To One Support:** For young people with additional needs, the organisation delivers tailored support on an individual basis where appropriate
- d. **Comhairle Na nÓg:** Youth Work Ireland Laois facilitates Laois Comhairle Na nOg (Child & Youth Council)

3. Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm:

Youth Work Ireland Laois is committed to the principles laid out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. These are:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm.
- Interventions by the State should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family.
- Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where it is necessary for the State to intervene to keep children safe, the minimum intervention necessary should be used.
- Children should only be separated from parents/carers when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted.
- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect, and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/carers and families.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.

4. Risk assessment of potential harm to children whilst availing of our services:

Youth Work Ireland Laois has included the risk of harm to a child as a new category in the organisations Risk Management Policy & Procedures. A comprehensive risk assessment has been conducted to identify potential areas of harm and to implement measures to reduce the risk as per the Risk Management Process.

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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 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 services.

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers by a child while 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 mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available on request.

6. Implementation:

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 services. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed by 20th September 2022 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:  R.D.
Youth Work Ireland Laois

For further details contact:

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