

Child Protection Policy Safeguarding Statement

The Irish Heart Foundation's Child Safeguarding Policy is presented in addition to our Child Safeguarding Statement and contains the necessary policies, references and information to complete the requirements of the Child Safeguarding Statement and to ensure best practice in relation to our work with children and young people.

The Irish Heart Foundation is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all the children and young people with whom we work by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm and neglect. It is a priority of the organisation to protect and promote the welfare of children. Our policy on child protection is in accordance with "Children First Act 2015", and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children. Irish Heart Foundation is committed to promoting the rights of the child including the participation of children and young people in matters that affect them. We are committed to child centred practice in all our work with children and full compliance with Children First and our duty to care.

Child protection is everyone's responsibility, and it is the policy of the Irish Heart Foundation to promote and protect the welfare of children. We recognise the right of children to be protected from harm, treated with respect, listened to and have their views taken into consideration in matters that affect them. Management, staff, volunteers and placement students in this organisation recognise that the welfare of children is paramount, and our programmes will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Having procedures to recognise, respond to and report concerns about children's protection and welfare
- Having a confidentiality policy
- Having a code of behaviour for management, employees and volunteers
- Having safe recruitment procedures
- Having procedures for managing/supervising employees and volunteers
- Having a procedure to respond to accidents and incidents
- Having a procedure to respond to complaints
- Having procedures to respond to allegations of abuse and neglect against staff members

This policy has been created in accordance with the *Children First Act (2015)* and the *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*.

This document forms part of a suite of documents that are used to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people we work with. Other relevant documents can be accessed by request. The documents are outlined on the following page.

Children and Young Person Safeguarding Statement

The Irish Heart Foundation is located at 17-19 Rathmines Road Lower, Dublin 6.

The Irish Heart Foundation operate a hybrid system with staff working from home for a number of days during the week. Some staff may work in schools and communities from time to time.

Services Provided:

The Irish Heart Foundation works with children and young people from across Ireland. The Foundation's strategic priority is tackling health inequalities and as such can work with vulnerable children and young people. A dedicated team works closely with children and young people in a school setting and as such follows the Irish Heart Foundation's guidelines when working in school's policy and also the individual schools' policies. Staff working in this area are experienced children and young people health promotion practitioners and work in teams rather than individually. The Irish Heart Foundation works directly with children and young people up to the age of 18 years.

Our Work in the Area of Children and Young People

The Irish Heart Foundation works directly with children and their families in the following way:

- Through our school programmes in a school setting, the dedicated Children and Young People Team (CYP) work directly with children and young people in schools. Our programmes focus on the area of health and wellbeing including but not limited to consultations, co-design workshops, interview panels, meetings, CPR programmes, health promotion programmes.
- Online meetings and focus groups.
- Youth Advisory Panel, the CYP team work directly with young people in a group setting where young people advise the Foundation on matters relating to health and wellbeing that affect children.
- Our Family Weekends at family camp.
- Work experience programme at Transition Year (4th year).
- Fundraising events with their schools for flag ship days.

Principles of Promoting the Welfare of Young People and Safeguarding them from Harm

The Irish Heart Foundation is committed to promoting best practice within our organisation and to the protection of the young people with whom we work.

The Irish Heart Foundation is committed to promoting the rights of the young people including the participation of young people in making decisions on matters that affect them.

The Irish Heart Foundation is committed to adherence to *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017) and the Children First Act 2015.

Risk assessment

The Irish Heart Foundation has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services including the area of online safety when accessing the internet. 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
Risk of harm not being recognised and / or not being dealt with appropriately by staff, contractors, or volunteers with the Irish Heart Foundation (IHF).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child welfare policies and procedures implemented and up to date.• Online training in Child Welfare for all staff and volunteers.• Code of conduct for staff and volunteers.• Clearly documented reporting mechanism.• Appointment, training and clear identification of Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
Risk of harm due to insufficient supervision and ability to act in case of emergency due to insufficient number of adult staff and volunteers present at events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2:1 adult to child ratio at all times. That is an adult should never be left alone with a child, there should always be two adults.• A residential staff ratio for the first five people of 2 adults. For each extra ten people (or part thereof), one extra adult.
Risk of harm from staff and/or volunteers towards young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Procedure for recruitment, Garda vetting and referencing of staff and volunteers.• Supervision, training and support of staff and volunteers.• Internet, photography and social media child protection and safeguarding guidelines.
Risk of harm from third parties in accommodation and other facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff should make themselves aware of potential risks, monitor those risks and act accordingly.• Third party policy.• Event risk assessment
Failure to engage appropriately trained staff and / or volunteers due to fear of child protection legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be clear about the level of responsibility required of staff and volunteers and support them and facilitate their training.• All staff must liaise with the Children and Young People Manager before engaging in activity involving children and young people and complete a risk assessment.
Risk of bullying between young people and staff's lack of knowledge on how to manage bullying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anti-bullying policy.

Lack of knowledge of staff in how to respond to a critical incident: Assault (fight), sexual assault, serious accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteers are trained appropriately in child welfare.
Lack of knowledge of staff in how to respond to underage sex.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to guidelines on underage sex provided by Tusla.
Risk of staff drinking while acting in a supervisory capacity. Risk of young people accessing alcohol while participating in services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteers on duty never drink. • Clear boundaries for young people. • Code of conduct, sanctions and rules for participants.
Risk of staff taking drugs during their role in the Irish Heart Foundation. Risk of young people accessing drugs while participating in services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No drugs other than prescription drugs or over the counter remedies are to be taken or be in the possession of young people/staff or volunteers.
Inappropriate use of social media and mobile phones by young people while participating in services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt policies on communications and use of social media.
Inappropriate communication with or communications by inappropriate channels between staff, volunteers and young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt policies on communications and use of social media and internet for CYP.
Risk of staff using data / personal information of young people inappropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt policies on communications and use of personal information.

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, 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 service:

- The appointment of responsible persons;
- Maintaining a list of mandated persons;
- Recruiting, managing and training staff and volunteers;
- Codes of behaviour for staff, volunteers and young people;
- Dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers;
- Reporting procedures for child protection concerns;
- Anti-bullying;

- Confidentiality;
- Involvement of primary carers;
- Accidents
- Complaints and comments
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla.

All procedures listed are available upon request by emailing info@irishheart.ie with reference 'child protection'.

Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing 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 the 10th of August 2023 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.



20.5.21

Signed

Date

Tim Collins (CEO) on behalf of the Irish Heart Foundation
Relevant Person under the Children First Act (2015)

Laura Hickey, Children and Young People Programme Manager.
Designated Liaison Person (Child Protection Officer)

Katherine Scott, Schools Engagement Officer.
Deputy Designated Liaison Person

Caitriona Pollard, Health Check Manager.
Deputy Designated Liaison Person
