

East Wall Youth

Policy on the Protection of Children and Young People

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 East Wall Youth

East Wall Youth provides a wide range of services to children and young people each year through its various programmes. East Wall Youth is committed to promoting and facilitating the full participation of children and young people in our work. We aim to create a safe and healthy environment for the children and young people with whom we work and we are committed at all times to ensuring their safety, welfare and best interests.

1.2 Children First & Local Guidelines

In all of its service provision East Wall Youth aims to provide the best possible care and protection to children and young people availing of its services. For this reason East Wall Youth subscribes to Children First Act 2015: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children

These guidelines have been drawn up in response to the requirement in Children First (4.7.2) for voluntary organisations to draw up such local guidelines. These guidelines are supplementary to and based on “Children First Act 2015: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children” and “Our Duty to Care - The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People”. In any situation where there appears to be a contradiction between these guidelines and the National Guidelines the “Children First Act 2015: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children” should be followed.

The local guidelines are intended to assist staff and volunteers of East Wall Youth in dealing effectively and professionally with child protection issues. In addition, staff should be familiar with the full range of policies and procedures, many of which are relevant to the responsibility to establish and implement best practice in relation to child protection.

1.3 The Welfare of Children and Young People

Children First establishes a number of Principles for Best Practice in Child Protection and Welfare of which the most fundamental is that: “The welfare of children is of paramount importance”.

What this means is that the protection and welfare of children supersedes all other considerations or loyalties including those to clients, staff, colleagues, managers, employers or organisations. This does not mean that the rights and needs of others, especially the

families of children, can be disregarded but it does mean that where there is or appears to be a conflict of interest, the child's welfare must come first.

SECTION 2: CHILD PROTECTION

2.1 Policy

East Wall Youth's commitment to ensuring the general safety and welfare of young people using our service is expressed in a set of policies, procedures and practices by the Board of Management. Some of the key aspects of these are summarized below. The issue of child abuse is addressed in section three of these Guidelines.

2.2 Staffing

East Wall Youth seeks to ensure that all of its staff, and especially those working directly with children and young people, are suited to their role. In particular, the staff recruitment process incorporates a thorough vetting procedure, including the checking of references and Garda Clearance procedures for all staff.

New staff are offered an initial induction which includes guidance on all policies, procedures and practices relevant to child protection. Staff working directly with children and young people are also required to undertake child protection training (Children First Act 2015: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children) within their probationary period. Staff are encouraged to undertake further relevant training and to ensure that they remain up to date with policy and legislative change affecting child protection practice.

Throughout this document references to "staff" are intended to include full-time, part-time, relief staff, volunteers and students on placement.

2.3 Good Practice

East Wall Youth has a set of Staff Practice and Policy Guidelines outlining established practice, and these are issued to the relevant staff members. In addition the following more general guidelines apply to all staff:

- All staff must be aware of the good practice guidelines and familiar with the overall child protection policy.
- Staff are required to show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of children and young people.

- East Wall Youth respects and promotes the principles of equality and diversity and works with all children in a culturally sensitive way within the context of the Irish constitution and law and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- There are clear channels of communication and access to staff in East Wall Youth if a child or young person, or any adult with a genuine and legitimate interest in a child or young person wishes to express any concern about any aspect of the treatment of the child or young person.
- Children and young people involved with our work are informed of our guidelines and procedures.
- Parents/Guardians of children, and where relevant, other group leaders and other professionals, are also informed of our guidelines and procedures.
- East Wall Youth makes every effort to ensure that the physical environment of the Centre is clean, comfortable, fully accessible and appropriate for the activities being undertaken.
- There will be an appropriate ratio of suitably trained and qualified adults to children and young people for all programmes and activities (this may vary depending on the age and ability of the group involved and the nature of the activity).
- Systems are in place for recording any incidents or accidents while a child or young person is present in East Wall Youth.
- Inappropriate behaviour or language by children and young people in East Wall Youth will be challenged in a constructive and positive manner.
- All relevant information including contact details, allergies, medicines, dietary needs, etc., for the child or young person will be sought from Parents/Guardians and recorded.

Staff will exercise caution in relation to one-to-one work with young people and in particular will note the following:

- Staff will endeavour to avoid transporting one young person alone in a vehicle, especially for long journeys. Where this is unavoidable other staff should be informed of the purpose, destination and anticipated duration of the journey.
- Staff should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with an individual child or young person. Where a staff member needs to meet with a child or young person alone, the meeting should as far as is practically possible, take place in a location

which is visible and/or audible to other staff. Other staff should be informed of the purpose and expected duration of the meetings.

- There should be no unnecessary physical contact between a staff member and a child or young person. Any physical contact considered necessary and appropriate should only be in response to the needs of the child and should be appropriate to the age and the level of development of the child.
- The privacy of children and young people must be respected at all times and particularly in changing rooms, bathrooms, showers and toilets.
- Staff should endeavour to develop positive, professional relationships with all children and young people. They should however avoid showing favouritism towards any individual and should ensure that the relationship is constructive and aims to build the independence and autonomy of the participants.

2.4 Challenging Behaviour

Staff who work directly with children and young people will be given guidance and support in dealing with difficult behaviour in line with our policy on difficult behaviour. Serious instances of challenging behaviour will be recorded on an incident report form which will be copied to the parents/guardians and other responsible persons as appropriate.

2.5 Bullying

East Wall Youth aims to ensure that young people are treated with respect and that their rights are protected. Bullying is disrespectful, violates the rights of young people and will certainly affect the young person's enjoyment of their time in the youth club. In some cases bullying may pose a risk to a young person's health or even their life. Bullying is therefore not tolerated within East Wall Youth.

Bullying behaviour can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical which is conducted by an individual or group against others. Examples of bullying include:

- **Physical** – Hitting or kicking a person, taking or damaging their property
- **Verbal** – Threatening, name-calling, insulting, repeated teasing/slagging
- **Indirect** – Ignoring a person, excluding them from group activities

Staff has a responsibility to do everything possible to protect children and young people in the youth club and will therefore ensure that action is taken to stop any bullying which does occur. Any young person who feels that he/she is being bullied should be encouraged to report the problem to a member of staff, who must act on such a report.

Staff will try to assist the young person responsible for the bullying to change his/her behaviour but the protection of the victim of bullying is the priority. Any young person who persists in bullying behaviour will be removed from the youth club.

Serious incidents of bullying have to be recorded by staff in an Incident Report. Copies of Incident Reports are sent to Team Leader of East Wall Youth and to the parents/guardians of the young people involved and to other responsible persons as appropriate. In the case of physical or sexual assaults, reports will be made to the relevant authorities, including, when necessary, the Gardaí.

SECTION 3: CHILD ABUSE

3.1 Definitions of Child Abuse

It is a priority of East Wall Youth to protect children and young people availing of its services from harm arising from neglect or abuse. These terms are defined below in accordance with the definitions provided in Children First. The remainder of this section outlines the roles and responsibilities of staff in the youth club and the procedures to be followed in dealing with confirmed, alleged or suspected incidents of neglect or abuse.

Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission whereby a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development; this can be defined in terms of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation, supervision, safety, attachment to and affection from adults.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is whereby a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Emotional abuse is usually found in the relationship between a care giver and child.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury which results from deliberate failure to protect the child from harm, these include shaking, excessive force in handling, poisoning, suffocating, Munchausen's syndrome by proxy, allowing or creating substantial risk of significant harm.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her own gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

It should be noted that the legal definition of a child is of a person under the age of eighteen years. Some of the young people who avail of the services and programmes provided by East Wall Youth are over this age. In most situations the same guidelines for good practice apply to young people over eighteen as to children. In some situations, however, the responsibilities of staff are different.

Sexual activity among young people under the age of consent is commonplace. Staff should not, however, conclude from this that it is either acceptable or legal.

If any young person under the age of consent (17) engages in sexual activity an offence has been committed, regardless of whether the activity is consensual and regardless of the age

of the other person involved. Where the other person involved is an adult and/or there is a significant difference in age, maturity or authority, such activity is deemed to constitute sexual abuse.

Where both young people are under the age of consent or where one is only slightly older, consensual sexual activity may not be regarded as sexual abuse, but is still illegal and as such needs to be reported through the normal procedures. It is less likely that Tusla or An Garda Síochana will initiate any formal action in such cases other than where an older adult is involved, but any discretion in this lies with the statutory authorities rather than with individual staff members or East Wall Youth.

Staff should be aware of the possibility of sexual abuse being carried out on younger children by a young person. Such abuse should not be considered as normal experimentation, especially if there is a significant gap in age, maturity or authority, and all such incidents should be reported internally through the normal procedures. In cases of peer abuse both children should be treated in accordance with these guidelines and the National guidelines.

Young people over the age of consent are legally permitted to engage in consensual sexual activity and such activity does not constitute child abuse. There is no requirement to report such activity to Tusla or any statutory authority. It is however the policy of East Wall Youth that young people visiting or staying in East Wall Youth should not engage in sexual activity and it should therefore be reported to the relevant Team Leader and addressed by staff in the context of this policy. Such young people may also need sexual health issues to be addressed.

On occasion a person who is currently an adult (i.e. over the age of eighteen years) may disclose that they were previously abused as a child. Staff should follow the same internal reporting procedures as in the case of a young person under eighteen, as priority must be given to preventing the abuser from abusing other children. Such disclosures will be reported to Tusla in the usual way if any current or ongoing risk is considered to exist. It is therefore equally important to avoid giving undertakings of secrecy to adults as to children making disclosures.

In the case of any uncertainty or confusion arising in relation to questions as to whether or not any activity constitutes abuse, is illegal or is in conflict with East Wall Youth policy, staff should always consult with the relevant Team Leader, who may in turn seek advice from Tusla.

3.2 Basis for Reporting

In some cases neglect or abuse is easily recognized, most obviously when a child or young person complains of or discloses a specific instance or instances of mistreatment or when such an incident is witnessed by another person.

In other cases, however, staff may suspect that there is a child protection issue but may have little or no direct evidence of this. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 discusses the recognition of child abuse (pages 8-10) and also provides a list of indicators of child abuse (Appendix One). All East Wall Youth staff should familiarize themselves with these.

Many of these indicators, however, are not specific to child abuse and may be evident as a result of other factors. If staff have suspicions, but no evidence of neglect or abuse, these should be reported to the relevant Team Leader, who will advise on the course of action to be adopted. In many cases this will involve recording the concerns and closely monitoring the situation to identify any further grounds for concern. The Team Leader may seek advice from Tusla.

3.3 Dealing with Disclosure

In the event of a child or young person disclosing an incident of abuse it is essential that this is sensitively and professionally dealt with by staff. This is important not only in ensuring that the young person is supported and validated, but also in ensuring that nothing is done, at an early stage which might jeopardize future action by the statutory authorities.

Staff should note the following points:

- React calmly.
- Listen carefully and attentively; take the young person seriously.
- Reassure the young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you.
- Do not promise to keep anything secret.
- Ask questions for clarification only. Do not ask leading questions.
- Check back with the child/young person that what you have heard is correct and understood.
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser.
- Record the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible. Sign and date the record.
- Ensure that the child/young person understands the procedures which will follow.
- Treat the information confidentially.

3.4 Confidentiality

In matters of child abuse, an employee/volunteer should never promise to keep secret any information which is divulged. It should be explained to the young person that this information cannot be kept secret but that only those who need to know, will be told.

It is essential in reporting any case of alleged/suspected abuse that the principle of confidentiality applies. The information should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis and the number of people that need to be informed should be kept to a minimum. Giving information to others for the protection of the child is not a breach of confidentiality.

3.5 Role of Staff

The role of staff in East Wall Youth is to be pro-active in preventing child abuse and vigilant for any indicators that a child or young person is being or has been abused. All staff must be alert to the possibility that children and young people participating in programmes could be affected by abuse. Any concerns about this must be addressed within these guidelines and the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

Staff also have a role in recording any information which may be available about a situation where abuse has or may have occurred. The information required is outlined in the standard reporting form (Appendix 4 Children First). Staff should not carry out detailed interviews or investigations into what may have occurred. This will usually be carried out by Tusla staff or Gardaí as appropriate.

3.6 Role of East Wall Youth

There is a legal and moral obligation on East Wall Youth to provide children and young people with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and protect them from harm. The role of East Wall Youth in child protection is therefore to ensure the protection of children from abuse by ensuring that policies, procedures and practices are implemented to minimize the risk of abuse or other harm occurring. East Wall Youth will co-operate with all other agencies and specifically Tusla and An Garda Síochána to meet this objective.

East Wall Youth undertakes to assume the following responsibilities:

- To promote the welfare, health, development and safety of children and young people who are participating in programmes or are otherwise associated with East Wall Youth

- To adopt and consistently apply a safe and clearly defined method of recruitment of all categories of staff, volunteers, and students
- To raise awareness within the organization about the potential risks to children's safety and well-being and to encourage vigilance on the part of staff
- To operate effective procedures for responding to accidents or complaints
- To designate the Designated Liaison Person as having the responsibility for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse.

3.7 Role of Tusla

Tusla is the statutory agency with responsibility for the protection of children. Tusla is required to receive information about any child who is not or may not be receiving adequate care and protection; to assess the situation; and to take appropriate action to promote the welfare of the child.

3.8 Role of An Garda Síochana

Many instances of child abuse, particularly, physical or sexual abuse, involve the commission of a criminal act. An Garda Síochana therefore has a role in many child abuse investigations. In most cases however staff within East Wall Youth will report concerns in the first instance to Tusla. Tusla will in turn notify An Garda Síochana where it is considered that it has a role in the case.

An Garda Síochana does however have a role in the prevention of crime and the protection of individuals, so that concerns should be notified directly to the Gardaí where there is an immediate and serious risk to the safety and well-being of a child and it is not possible to contact an appropriate person within Tusla.

Where a child abuse case involves a prosecution, staff may be required to be interviewed by investigating Gardai and/or to give evidence.

3.9 Role of other Agencies

Young people involved with East Wall Youth programmes are sometimes also involved with one or more other agencies. Where appropriate young people who have been affected by abuse will be referred to appropriate support services including counselling services.

3.10 Joint Working with Other Agencies

East Wall Youth is committed to joint working to promote the best interests of children and young people across a wide range of issues including child protection. In the case of child protection issues, liaison and other joint work will be carried out by the Team Leader or Designated Liaison Person.

3.11 Internal Reporting Procedures

Any concerns that personnel may have regarding child protection must be immediately reported to the relevant Team Leader or the Designated Liaison Person. The Designated Liaison Person will assess the concerns expressed and when appropriate will report the information to Tusla.

The Designated Liaison Person may consult Tusla in order to establish whether or not there is a basis for making a formal report to Tusla. If, whether as a result of such consultation, or for some other reason, the Designated Liaison Person decides not to make a report to Tusla, the member of staff making the initial report should be informed in writing of this decision and the reasons for it. If the member of staff still feels that there is a valid basis for making a report to Tusla, s/he should report the concerns to the Designated Liaison Person of East Wall Youth. If s/he is still not satisfied the concerns should be reported to the Board of Management. If this does not produce a satisfactory outcome the staff member may make a report directly to Tusla and his/her right to do so will be supported by the management.

In most cases where there are justified concerns but insufficient evidence to form the basis for a report to Tusla, the Team Leader will direct that staff, individually or collectively, monitor the situation in order to identify any further indicators that abuse may have occurred or be currently occurring.

3.12 Reporting to Tusla

Reports of suspected child abuse will be made to Tusla by the relevant Designated Liaison Person. Where the child or young person has an allocated Social Worker the report should be made to that Social Worker if s/he is immediately available. Otherwise the report should be made immediately to the Duty Social Worker for the relevant Tusla region, i.e. the region in which the young person's home address is located.

The contact information for Duty Social Workers in East Wall Youth's priority target areas in Dublin are as follows:

Dublin North City (North Inner City)	
Phone	01 856 6856

Dublin North City (Finglas)	
Phone	01 856 7704

Dublin South Central (Lord Edward Street)	
Phone	01 648 6500

Dublin South Central (Ballyfermot)	
Phone	076 695 5587

Dublin North (Blanchardstown)	
Phone	01 646 4518

Dublin North (Coolock)	
Phone	01 816 0314

For other areas see <http://www.Tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/dublin-north-duty>

Although East Wall Youth places the responsibility for the initial reporting of cases of child abuse with the Designated Liaison Person, it is likely that the staff member making the initial report will be interviewed at some stage by Tusla and/or An Garda Síochana. This will almost certainly be the case where that staff member witnessed an incident or was the person to whom a disclosure was made.

3.13 Reporting to An Garda Síochana

Under no circumstances should a child or young person be left in dangerous situation due to a failure to establish contact with Tusla or pending Tusla intervention. In a situation, therefore, where a child or young person appears to be at immediate and serious risk and it is not possible to contact the Duty Social Worker, the Team Leader must consult with the Designated Liaison Person and the concerns reported to An Garda Síochana.

To report a concern to An Garda Síochana, phone one of the following Garda stations and ask to speak to the sergeant in charge of Child Protection:

Store Street	01-666 8000
The Bridewell	01-666 8200
Mountjoy	01-666 8600

3.14 Notification to Parents

East Wall Youth will inform parents/guardians prior to making a report relating to a child protection concern, unless this could put the child or young person at increased risk. Such notification will be undertaken by the Designated Liaison Person or a person specifically designated by the Designated Liaison Person to do so, once a decision to make a report has been made.

3.15 Protection for Person Reporting Child Abuse

Staff of East Wall Youth are protected from claims which might arise from making a report of child abuse which proves to be unfounded both by the procedures outlined in these guidelines and in law.

The protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to Tusla or An Garda Síochana. No action could therefore be taken unless it could be proved that the person making the report had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report.

The procedure outlined in these guidelines whereby staff are required to report concerns to the Team Leader and the Designated Liaison Person provides further protection in that staff will be supported in assessing their concerns and initial reports will generally be made by senior staff members.

3.16 Progress of Investigations

The steps taken when pursuing a report of child abuse are outlined in Chapter Three of Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011. East Wall Youth expects to be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation undertaken as a result of a report made by their staff and in turn, will, as far as possible, inform the staff member responsible for initially raising the issue of such progress and outcome.

3.17 Allegations against Employees

In cases whereby an allegation of abuse is directed against an employee (or volunteer) of East Wall Youth the following guidelines will be followed:

- The primary goal is to protect the child, and other children, whilst ensuring that the employee is treated fairly
- Allegations against employees will be reported to the Team Leader who will report to the Designated Liaison Person and to Tusla.
- Where an allegation is made against a Team Leader, reports should be made directly to the Designated Liaison Person who will report to Tusla.
- Where an allegation is made against the Designated Liaison Person reports should be made directly to the Management Board who will report to Tusla.
- When East Wall Youth becomes aware of allegations of abuse towards an employee, the employee's line manager should inform the employee that an allegation has been made against them and of the nature of the allegation, unless doing so might lead to further risk to children or jeopardise the outcome of any investigation. The employee will be afforded an opportunity to respond to the allegation.
- The possibility that staff may be subjected to malicious allegations must be considered and there should therefore be sensitivity and support offered to a staff member against whom an allegation is made including counselling if necessary.
- East Wall Youth will ensure that an employee is treated in accordance with the principles of natural justice, but notwithstanding this may take steps to ensure that children are protected by removing the employee from any duties which involve contact with children.
- The same person should not have responsibility for dealing with the reporting issues and the employment issues. The Board of Management will allocate responsibilities for dealing with these issues separately.

3.18 Complaints Procedure

East Wall Youth is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children and young people involved in its programmes. East Wall Youth has a Complaints Policy to cover any situations which may arise, when children or young people, their parents or guardians, or any person with a bona fide interest in their welfare, are unhappy with any aspect of their

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treatment by East Wall Youth and its staff. All interested parties will be informed of the existence of this policy and will be furnished with a copy on request. Staff will assist any person in making a complaint through this procedure.

3.19 Record-Keeping

The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for keeping the following records related to Child Protection in a locked filing cabinet:

- Copies of any complaints about the safety and welfare of children or young people involved in East Wall Youth programmes.
- Copies of any complaints of bullying of children or young people involved in East Wall Youth programmes.
- Any disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse.
- The follow up to any complaints, disclosure, concerns or allegations, including informal advice from Tusla, reports to Tusla and information provided to parents or guardians.
- Garda Vetting Forms for all staff

3.20 Training

Training ensures the promotion of effective interventions in the care and protection of children/young people. Effective child protection depends on the skills, knowledge and values of personnel working with children, young people and families.

East Wall Youth has a responsibility to ensure that such training is available on an ongoing basis.

East Wall Youth must ensure that:

- Personnel are equipped with appropriate skills, knowledge and values to deliver effective services to children and young people.
- Personnel are aware of relevant legislation, national guidelines and local child protection procedures and protocols.

- All employees working directly with children and families have consistent and regular support and supervision.
- Staff are aware that a lack of knowledge or experience does not constitute a basis for inaction in relation to child protection issues: all staff have a duty to seek clarification and advice in any situation where there is cause for concern.

Child Safeguarding Statement 11th March 2018

1. Name of Service

East Wall Youth is committed to the safeguarding of young people through our ethos and in line with current legislation.

2. Nature of Service

East Wall Youth provides a range of activities, supports and services to children and young people in the East Wall / North Port area of Dublin

3. Risk Assessment

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 risk identified

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1	Unsuitable adults having access to young people	Garda vetting for all staff/volunteers Reference check and recruitment procedures
2	Risk of inappropriate behaviour on overnight residential trips	Policy guidelines for trips. Staff planning. Risk assessment of accommodation as part of residential/ trips policy /guidelines.
3	Risk of inappropriate or abusive behaviour by staff, volunteers	Garda vetting for all staff/volunteers Induction for all staff. Child protection training for all staff. Clarity of roles (job descriptions) for staff /volunteers. Code of behaviour / conduct for staff and volunteers.
4	Risk of harm from accessing inappropriate materials online	Level of staff supervision. Online safety training for staff. Appropriate Internet filters.
5	Appropriate management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff, volunteers	Child protection training for managers and DLP's. Clearly defined CP and HR policies and procedures that include the role and responsibilities of Boards to manage.

4. Procedures

East Wall Youth's 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 (2017), 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:

- 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.

5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. East Wall Youth 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.

The Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on **11th March 2019**, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: _____

East Wall Youth

For queries, please contact **Eileen Vaughan**,

Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015

Declaration of Guiding Principles

East Wall Youth will provide a range of activities, supports and services in a safe environment for the young people of East Wall/North Port area of Dublin.

East Wall Youth believes that the best interests of children and young people visiting the youth club and availing of our services are **paramount**.

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,

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and current legislation such as

Children First Act 2015,

Child Care Act 1991

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse 1998

National Vetting Bureau Act 2012

Our guiding principles apply to all paid staff, CE staff, volunteers, board members and students on work placement within our organisation. All must sign up to these guiding principles and our child safeguarding procedures.

We will review our guiding principles and safeguarding procedures every two years or sooner if necessary due to issues or changes in legislation or national policy.

Our Designated Liaison Person is: Eileen Vaughan

Contact details: Telephone: 01 8860074 / 087 9173873

c/o St. Mary's Youth Club,

Strangford Road, Dublin 3.

Email: eileen@eastwallyouth.ie

Designated Liaison Person(s)

Roles and Responsibilities

- Be fully familiar with East Wall Youth's duties in relation to the Safeguarding of Children
- Have good knowledge of East Wall Youth's guiding principles and procedures
- Ensure that East Wall Youth's reporting procedure is followed, so that child protection and welfare concerns are referred promptly to Tusla
- Receive child protection and welfare concerns from workers and volunteers and consider if reasonable grounds for reporting to Tusla exist
- Consult informally with a Tusla Duty Social Worker if necessary
- Where appropriate, make a formal report of a child protection and welfare concern to Tusla on behalf of East Wall Youth, using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form
- Inform the child's parents/guardians that a report is to be submitted to Tusla or An Garda Síochána, unless;
 - Informing the parents/guardians is likely to endanger the child or young person;
 - Informing the parents/guardians may place you as the reporter at risk of harm from the family;
 - The family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment.
- Record all concerns or allegations of child abuse brought to your attention as well as any action/inaction taken in response to these concerns
- Provide feedback to the referrer, as appropriate
- Ensure that a secure system is in place to manage confidential records
- Act as a liaison with Tusla and An Garda Síochána, as appropriate
- Where requested, jointly report with a mandated person

Mandated Persons

Schedule 2 of Children First Act 2015 specifies the following classes of persons as mandated persons for the purpose of the Act;

- 15(k), person responsible for the care or management of a youth work service within the meaning of Section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001
- 16, Youth Worker who-
 - 16(a) Holds a professional qualification that, is recognised by National Qualifications Authority in youth work within the meaning of Section 3 of the Youth Work Act 2001 or a related discipline, and
 - 16(b) is employed in a youth work service within the meaning of Section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.

Under the Children First Act 2015, mandated persons have a **statutory obligation to report concerns** which meet or exceed a particular threshold and to cooperate with Tusla in the assessment of mandated reports, where requested to do so.

If reporting independent of East Wall Youth's DLP, the mandated persons should inform the DLP that a report under the Children First Act 2015 has been made.

It is important to note that the statutory obligation of mandated persons to report under the Children First Act 2015 **must be discharged by the mandated persons** and cannot be discharged by the DLP on their behalf.

Mandated persons can make a joint mandated report with their DLP or another person, mandated or otherwise. If, however, East Wall Youth, or your DLP, does not wish to report to Tusla, you, as a mandated person, should proceed with making a report. The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 will apply in this instance.

Where a mandated person has a concern that they believe does not reach the threshold for a mandated report, they should consider whether the concern meets reasonable grounds for concern. If the mandated person thinks the concern does meet reasonable grounds for concern, they should report the concern to the DLP. The mandated person retains their right to report independently, should the DLP choose not to report the concern. The provisions of the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 would apply in this circumstance.

Mandated Persons Register

All Mandated Persons to read and sign off on Safeguarding Statement, Responsibilities and Chapters 1 to 4 of Children First 2015. To be renewed annually (11th March) or if any person on the list is replaced.

Staff:	Signature:	Date:

All Trainees, Volunteers, Part Time Staff, Students on Placement to read and sign off on Safeguarding Statement, Responsibilities and Chapters 1 to 4 of Children First 2015. To be renewed annually (11th March).

Trainee:	Signature:	Date:
Volunteer:	Signature:	Date:
Part Time Staff:	Signature:	Date:
Student Placement:	Signature:	Date:

Children First Child Safeguarding Risk Register

Company Number: 320477

CHY Number: CHY21293

Date of adoption by Board: 11/03/18

Date of last review by Board: 11/03/18

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OVERVIEW

Introduction

A risk management system is defined according to the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, 2009 as:

“An effective risk management system identifies and assesses risk, decides on appropriate responses and then provides assurances that the chosen responses are effective”

As of the 11th of December 2017 the Children first Act 2015 was fully implemented by the Minister for Children and Youth affairs.

Under the Children First Act 2015, **East Wall Youth** is providing a relevant service and is obliged to undertake a risk assessment. This considers the potential harm to Children while they are in our care.

Section 11(1)(a) of the Children First Act 2015 defines risk as “any potential for harm to a child while availing of the service”. Section 2 of the Act defines harm as follows:

“harm means in relation to a child -

- (a) Assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a 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, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstances or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances or otherwise.”

The risk assessment process is intended to enable an organisation to:

- Identify potential risks/harm
- Develop policies and procedure’s to minimise risk by responding in a timely manner to potential risks
- Review whether adequate precautions have been taken to eliminate or reduce these risks

East Wall Youth recognises that an effective risk management framework is a key element of effective governance and internal control within organisations in the voluntary and community sector. Indeed, the need for formal risk management processes have been formalised through best practice codes such as the ‘Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland’ and the ‘Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies’.

This risk management framework provides management, volunteers, staff, funders, young people and parents and other stakeholders with assurances that the organisational risks are identified and appropriately managed on an ongoing basis.

Risk Identification

Risks are identified within the different areas of the organisations operations; risk identification is delegated to the appropriate persons within these areas.

Risk Assessment

Risk is measured in terms of:

- Likelihood or probability
- Consequences or impact

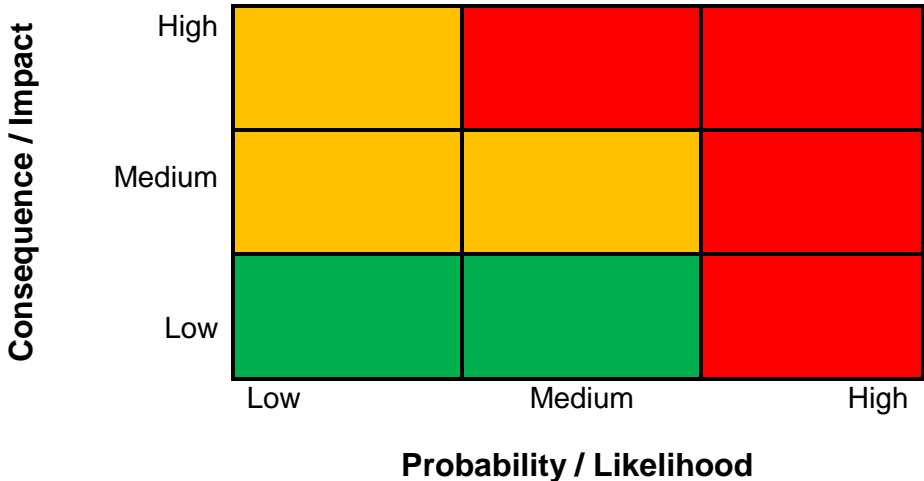
Probability / Likelihood of Occurrence

- What is the chance that this risk is going to happen
- Measured on a scale from low to high

Consequences / Impact of Occurrence

- If it does occur, what will be the likely impact on the organisation?
- Measured on a scale from low to high

Ranking of Risk - "Traffic Lights"



Consequence / Impact Scoring

Low
Medium
High

Likelihood / Probability Scoring

Low
Medium
High

Treatment of Risk

Risks are treated according to the three T's as follows:

Tolerate – accept the risk (*Risks that are low and require no further action*)

Treat – controls to address problems
(*Manage and contain the risk to an acceptable level*)

- Reduce – likelihood of occurrence
- Reduce – consequences of occurrence

Terminate – withdraw from activity (Where the only appropriate way of managing the risk is to terminate it)

Risk Register

Introduction

The Risk Register is the primary tool used to support the risk management process. It is used to record risks, to identify current controls, to allocate ownership of the risk and controls to the best placed individual and to identify future actions for the management of risks.

The Risk Register captures the following:

- Risk Number
- Risk Description
- Controls
- Likelihood Score
- Impact Score
- Risk Owner
- Immediate / Future Action

Review

The Risk Management Process and the Risk Register are subject to at least an annual review by the board and the senior management team.

RISK REGISTER

Risk No.	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood Score	Impact Score	Risk Owner	Immediate / Future Action
1	Unsuitable adults having access to young people	Garda vetting for all staff & volunteers. Reference check and recruitment procedures.	Low	High	Management All Staff	Review Garda vetting policy and procedures. Review recruitment and selection policy and procedures.
2	Non reporting of concerns due to risk of harm not being recognised by staff/volunteers	Induction for all staff. Child protection training for all staff. Circulation of safeguarding statement to all staff and on display to the public.	Low	High	Management All staff	Review safeguarding statement and risk register annually. Ongoing CP training for new and current staff and DLP(s).
3	Risk of inappropriate behaviour on overnight residential trips	Policy guidelines for trips. Staff planning. Risk assessment of accommodation as part of residential/ trips policy /guidelines. Adequate adult supervision for duration of trip.	Low	High	Management All staff	Put in place policy guidelines for residential/trips. Development of risk assessment for trips /residential. Update risk register

Risk No.	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood Score	Impact Score	Risk Owner	Immediate / Future Action
4	Risk of inappropriate or abusive behaviour by staff, volunteers	Garda vetting for all staff & volunteers. Induction for all staff. Child protection training for all staff. Clarity of roles (job descriptions) for staff /volunteers. Code of behaviour / conduct for staff and volunteers.	Low	High	Management All staff	Vetting Reference checks Induction Safeguarding training Work shadowing
5	Appropriate management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff, volunteers	Child protection training for managers and DLP's. Clearly defined CP and HR policies and procedures that include the role and responsibilities of Boards to manage.	Low	High	Management	Regular review of policy and procedures, Ongoing training in HR and CP
6	Risk of harm from accessing inappropriate materials online	IT policy for staff and young people. Level of staff supervision. Online safety training for staff. Appropriate Internet filters.	Low	High	Management All staff	On-going review of IT Policy. Updating of internet filters. Raising staff awareness in relation to online risks

Risk No.	Risk Description	Controls	Likelihood Score	Impact Score	Risk Owner	Future Action

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