

## Youth Theatre Ireland Child Safeguarding Statement

1. Name of service being provided: Youth Theatre Ireland
2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

Youth Theatre Ireland is the national development organisation for youth theatre. We support the sustained development of youth theatres across Ireland. Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to the personal, social and artistic development of young people using drama and theatre.

Youth Theatre Ireland works specifically with young people aged between 12 and 25. The largest cohort is currently within the 14-18 age range. Youth Theatre Ireland is committed to working with all young people regardless of their social, economic or geographical situation.

We undertake to provide a safe environment and positive experience, the welfare of the young person being of paramount importance. The Board of Youth Theatre Ireland recognises the duty of care it has; to staff, volunteers and all young people who access the organisation's services and that it is ultimately responsible for ensuring that Youth Theatre Ireland meets its legal and moral obligations to them.

Youth Theatre Ireland has adopted a whole organisation approach to welfare and child safeguarding. All those involved with the organisation including staff, volunteers and board members are made aware of the key role they play in safeguarding the welfare of young people.

We will ensure we are fully compliant with the Children First Act 2015. We will adhere to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) and to the policies and procedures we have developed to ensure this commitment is enshrined in all aspects of the organisation.

We engage and work directly with young people through the following activities:

- Drama workshops
- Rehearsals
- Theatre production and performances
- Auditions
- Residential Programmes
- Consultations including on-line and in-person focus groups, youth participation bodies etc.
- We communicate with young people from time-to time online and via email and have procedures in place to manage this.
- International exchanges and residentials

### 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 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/young person 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 Ireland personnel	Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training, induction and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm
2	Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by Youth Theatre Ireland 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 a young person being harmed by Youth Theatre Ireland personnel	Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers to work with children including procedure for Garda Vetting.  Policy for the Supervision/ training and support of staff/volunteers  Code of Behaviour for staff/volunteers
4	Risk of harm due to bullying of a young person	Anti- Bullying Policy  Group Contract is created with participants on all Youth Theatre Ireland programmes.
5	Risk of harm caused to a young person due to an insufficient number of trained staff present whilst participating on a Youth Theatre Ireland event and or in a residential setting	Policy on Adult/Young People Ratios  Code of Behaviour for staff/volunteers  Procedure for Residentials
6	Risk of continued harm arising from the mishandling of an allegation of misconduct or abuse by a young person against a member of Youth Theatre Ireland Personnel	Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a young person availing of our service

7	Risk of harm caused by youth theatre personnel communicating with young people in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, emailing digital device , Video app or other manner.	Policy on Communications with young people  Code of Behaviour for Staff/ Volunteers  Policy on Adult/ Young People Ratios
8	Risk of harm caused to a young person by Youth Theatre Ireland personnel through inappropriate use of video/ images taken by a staff member/ volunteer/ Youth Theatre Leader or participant whilst attending a Youth Theatre Ireland event	Policy on Use of Images/ video footage of young people  Code of Behaviour for staff/volunteers  Addressed when creating Group Contract with participants on all Youth Theatre Ireland programmes.  Policy on Interagency Cooperation  Guidelines for Youth Theatre Ireland Programmes involving youth theatre groups and groups from other youth work organisations.
9	Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of young people's personal data.	Confidentiality Policy  Data Protection Policy
10	Risk of harm to young people from third parties where sharing commercial hostel accommodation and other residential accommodation / facilities for Youth Theatre Ireland events	Youth Theatre Ireland takes account of safety of young people when booking accommodation – e.g. we ensure separate and contained sleeping facilities for National Festival of Youth Theatres and in our use of commercial hostels/ other accommodation facilities.
11	Risk of harm to young people from third parties when using third party venues for Youth Theatre Ireland events and programmes	Youth Theatre Ireland currently takes account of the safety of young people when booking third party venues e.g. we ensure facilities such as dressing rooms, toilets and showers in theatre production venues can be designated solely for the use of young people participating in our programme during the period of our usage.

#### 4. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015 and 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 while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure for reporting to Tusla by the provider or by a member of Staff in accordance with *Children First*
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person
- Complaints Policy/Procedures
- Disciplinary/Appeals Procedures
- Procedures for Giving Lifts to Young People
- Policy on including Members aged 18 and over
- Health and Safety Policies and Procedures
- Policy for Informing Parents for mandated and non mandated persons

All procedures listed are available upon request.

## 5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Youth Theatre Ireland 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 was reviewed in March 2023 and will be reviewed again in March 2025 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

## 6. List of Mandated persons

- Eoghan Doyle – Director
- Alan King – Deputy Director
- Barry Morgan – Special Projects Officer
- Rebecca Feely – National Programme Co-Ordinator
- Cathal Thornton – Child Protection and Wellbeing Officer

Signed: (Provider)



Sarah Bragg Bolger,  
Chairperson  
Youth Theatre Ireland

For queries, please contact Cathal Thornton, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

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