

Child Safeguarding Statement

Signatories	Mary Conlon (Director, Mandated Person) Joanne Laws (Chair)
Last amended	October 2024
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Policy links	The Dock Child Protection Policy The Dock Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy The Dock Programme Policy

Introduction

The Dock is committed to a child-centred approach in our work with children and young people. At The Dock, we adhere to the Government of Ireland's "Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children" – which sets out the statutory responsibilities for mandated persons and organisations under the Children First Act 2015 – by adopting and implementing child protection policies and procedures.

Principles

The Dock's principles and procedures, outlined below, should always be observed to ensure, as far as possible, that a child is safe from harm while availing of our services both within our building and off-site.

- The relevant Dock staff and regular artists and facilitators will be Garda vetted.
- The Dock staff and representatives will be made familiar with The Dock's code of behaviour, protection policy and procedures, and health and safety guidelines in relation to participation in children and young people's activities.
- All child protection or welfare concerns will be reported to Tusla and/or the Gardaí in a timely manner.
- Children will always be accompanied by a parent or guardian, teacher or member of staff while in the venue.
- A child in need of personal support because of illness, physical needs or any form of distress, shall be referred in the first place to their parent, guardian or teacher. In the absence of a guardian, the staff member who is supervising that activity will provide such support. A parent, guardian or teacher should inform a member of staff if there are specific needs required during a child's participation at the Dock.

Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and list of procedures for managing risks.

Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
Non-compliance with The Dock's Child Protection Policy.	All staff and volunteers are provided with the Child Protection Policy. Any breach of the Child Protection Policy will be reported to the relevant line manager. The Child Protection Policy is reviewed every 2 years.
Delay in making referrals to The Dock.	All staff and regular volunteers are trained and supported to ensure they can act promptly and not delay in contacting the Mandated Person or Tusla when they deem a referral may be warranted.
Receipt of complaints of alleged child abuse where a member of The Dock is the alleged perpetrator.	All staff are aware of the procedures to make a referral to the Mandated Person or directly to Tusla. Internal disciplinary processes are in place where the issue concerns an employee.
Receipt of complaint of alleged child abuse where a parent, guardian or teacher is the alleged perpetrator.	All staff are aware of the procedures to make a referral to the Mandated Person or directly to Tusla. The school will be notified.
Child makes a disclosure to a member of staff.	All staff are aware of the procedures to make a referral to the Mandated Person or directly to Tusla.

Procedures

The Dock's Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with obligations under the "Children First Act 2015", and the "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 of a child availing of our services.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers 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 or the Gardaí as appropriate.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are Mandated Persons as defined under the “Children First Act 2015”.
- Procedure for appointing a Mandated Person.

Listed procedures are available upon request.

Implementation

The Dock recognises 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 services. This statement will be reviewed every two years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Mandated Person

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