



**Early  
Childhood  
Ireland**

**Child Safeguarding  
Statement 2023**



## **Child Safeguarding Statement 2023**

**Name of the Service:** Early Childhood Ireland

**Location of the Service:** Early Childhood Ireland, Hainault House, Belgard Square, Tallaght, Dublin 24, RFVO 01

### **NATURE OF THE SERVICE BEING PROVIDED**

Early Childhood Ireland is a membership organisation with over 4,000 members, who support over 100,000 children and their families through pre-school, afterschool and full day care provision nationwide. Our work includes quality enhancement, communications and publications, advocacy, training, support and information for a sector that employs 25,000 people today. Early Childhood Ireland interacts with children in the following ways:

- Onsite visits to Early Years and School Age Care services for the purpose of observation, facilitating programmes/projects, support, research or consultation (supervised)
- Commissioning research involving children
- Hosting and participating in events for children
- Advice/Support to members where child safeguarding issues may arise (in person, phone and email)
- Processing of Garda Vetting Applications and dealing with disclosures
- Liaising with other child focused organisations
- Occasional visits by children at Early Childhood Ireland's work premises with parents/ caregiver

## COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM

- Child safeguarding is the responsibility of organisations to ensure they do no harm to children. This means doing all they can to prevent exploitation and abuse, and if abuse occurs, to respond appropriately. Early Childhood Ireland is committed to implementing safeguarding policies, procedures and practices across the organisation to ensure where Early Years and School Age Care services engage with a member of our team, we are always following best practice and legislative requirements
- Early Childhood Ireland has developed clear and comprehensive guiding principles and Child Safeguarding policies and procedures that places the child at the centre. We consider the welfare of the child as paramount, and are committed to child-centred practice in all of our work with children, educators and Early Years and School Age Care services
- We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person including the right to be safe and protected from harm, to be listened to and to be heard through our engagement with Early Years and School Age Care services, and all other stakeholders
- Our policy and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and legislation and are underpinned by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Tusla Children First - Child Safeguarding Guide 2017, and the Children First Act 2015
- Our policy declaration applies to all paid employees, volunteers, committee/board members and students on work placement within our organisation. All committee/board members, staff, volunteers and students must sign up to and abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our guiding principles and child safeguarding policies and procedures
- We will review our child safeguarding statement and accompanying child safeguarding guiding principles every two years, or sooner if necessary, in line with service issues or changes in legislation or national policy

## RISK ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Early Childhood Ireland has carried out a risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the service or participating in service activities.

RISK IDENTIFIED	POLICIES OR PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO MANAGE RISK
<p><b>Risk 1:</b> A child is harmed or subjected to risks to their rights, welfare and development by an Early Childhood Ireland staff member (for the purpose of the Safeguarding Statement 'staff' includes paid employees, volunteers, students and Board members) through coming into contact with the organisation during a programme, observation, support, research or consultation,' delivered by the organisation work.</p>	<p>Policies to manage these risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Childhood Ireland Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures</li> <li>Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>Safer Recruitment Policy and Checklist</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour</li> <li>Staff Induction Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training Policy</li> <li>Protected Disclosures Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Digital Safety Policy</li> <li>Garda Vetting Policy</li> <li>Digital Image and Photo Permission Policy</li> <li>Risk Assessment Procedures</li> </ul> <p>Induction &amp; core training includes completion of online Tusla safeguarding training and Early Childhood Ireland specific Child Safeguarding for all staff and additional role specific training if required</p>

<p><b>Risk 2:</b> A child is harmed or subjected to risks to their rights, welfare and development by third parties (adults or another child) while participating in an Early Childhood Ireland commissioned project or research (e.g. visits to settings for the purpose of observation, research or consultation)</p>	<p>Policies to manage these risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Childhood Ireland Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures</li> <li>Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>Safer Recruitment Policy and Checklist</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour</li> <li>Staff Induction Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training Policy</li> <li>Protected Disclosures Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Digital Safety Policy</li> <li>Garda Vetting Policy</li> <li>Digital Image and Photo Permission Policy</li> <li>Risk Assessment Procedures</li> <li>Working in Partnership Agreement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Risk 3:</b> A child is harmed or subjected to risks to their rights, welfare and development whilst attending an Early Childhood Ireland commissioned event/activity</p> <p>e.g. Pyjama Day Photocall</p>	<p>Policies to manage these risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Childhood Ireland Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures</li> <li>Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>Safer Recruitment Policy and Checklist</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour</li> <li>Staff Induction Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training Policy</li> <li>Protected Disclosures Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Digital Safety Policy</li> <li>Garda Vetting Policy</li> <li>Risk Assessment Procedures</li> <li>Digital Image and Photo Permission Policy</li> </ul>

<p><b>Risk 4:</b> A child is harmed or subjected to risks to their rights, welfare and development by the misuse of social media and the taking or misuse of digital images. (e.g., Poor management of images or recordings of children, including those shared publicly or on social media or in the digital environment)</p>	<p>Policies to manage these risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Childhood Ireland Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures</li> <li>Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>Safer Recruitment Policy and Checklist</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour</li> <li>Staff Induction Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training Policy</li> <li>Protected Disclosures Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Digital Safety Policy</li> <li>Garda Vetting Policy</li> <li>Risk Assessment Procedures</li> <li>Digital Image and Photo Permission Policy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Risk 5:</b> Early Childhood Ireland staff do not recognise a report of potential abuse, ill treatment or neglect of a child or a risk to their rights, welfare and development</p>	<p>Policies to manage these risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Childhood Ireland Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures</li> <li>Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>Safer Recruitment Policy and Checklist</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour</li> <li>Staff Induction Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training Policy</li> <li>Protected Disclosures Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Digital Safety Policy</li> <li>Garda Vetting Policy</li> <li>Risk Assessment Procedures</li> <li>Digital Image and Photo Permission Policy</li> </ul>

<p><b>Risk 6:</b> A child is harmed or subjected to risks to their rights, welfare and development by a failure of the staff member to follow the necessary policies and procedures in relation to allegations/ suspicions of abuse observed by or made to Early Childhood Ireland staff by telephone, email, and letter or in person or disclosed through Garda Vetting</p>	<p>Policies to manage these risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Childhood Ireland Guiding Principles and Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures</li> <li>Recruitment &amp; Selection Policy</li> <li>Complaints Policy</li> <li>Code of Conduct Policy</li> <li>Staff Induction Policy</li> <li>Staff Training Policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training</li> <li>Protected Disclosures Policy</li> <li>Staff Supervision Policy</li> <li>Digital Image and Photo Permission Policy</li> <li>Garda Vetting policy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Risk 7:</b> (In addition to risks above) Potential risks and harm to children in research include physical harm as a direct consequence of the research, physical retribution, punishment or harm from others (families or the wider community) for participating in or being excluded from research and any associated or perceived benefits); distress, re-traumatisation, anxiety or loss of self-esteem, disappointment; over-research / unfair burdening of disadvantage.</p>	<p>Policies and procedures to manage these risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Childhood Ireland Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures</li> <li>Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>Safer Recruitment Policy and Checklist</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour</li> <li>Staff support and supervision</li> <li>Risk Assessment Procedures</li> <li>Participation is always informed</li> <li>Methods for seeking children’s consent</li> <li>Ethics of Research Involving Children (eric) guidance (<a href="http://childethics.com">http://childethics.com</a>)</li> <li>*Draft Ethics Policy and Code</li> <li>*Pilot Framework for Ethical Decision Making</li> </ul>

<p><b>Risk 8:</b> Potential risks and harm to children, including risks to their rights, welfare and development from poor practice or operational activities due to poor design and/or delivery.</p>	<p>Policies and procedures to manage these risks include:</p> <p>Early Childhood Ireland Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures</p> <p>Safeguarding Statement</p> <p>Safer Recruitment Policy and Checklist</p> <p>Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour</p> <p>Qualified staff, and ongoing staff support and supervision</p> <p>Risk Assessment Procedures</p> <p>Robust project planning process</p>
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**EARLY CHILDHOOD IRELAND CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND 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 2017, and Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice 2nd Edition. The procedures listed in our Risk Assessment and the Specified Procedures below 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 that comes into contact with our organisation
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff to work with children
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding induction and 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 on request.



## IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our Organisation is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm whilst interacting with our organisation.

The Child Safeguarding Statement is displayed clearly at reception in our Head Office and on our website and will be reviewed in October 2025, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Provider of the Relevant Service under the Children First Act, 2015: Teresa Heeney, CEO, Hainault House, Belgard Square, Tallaght, Dublin 24, RFVO 01 4057100 [theeney@earlychildhoodireland.ie](mailto:theeney@earlychildhoodireland.ie)

Signed: 

The Relevant Person as required under the Children First Act, 2015 is Teresa Heeney CEO.

Contact details are: Early Childhood Ireland, Hainault House, Belgard Square, Tallaght, Dublin 24, RFVO 01 4057100

[theeney@earlychildhoodireland.ie](mailto:theeney@earlychildhoodireland.ie)

Signed: 



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