

Galway Community Circus Child Safeguarding Statement

- 1. Name of service being provided: Galway Community Circus**
- 2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm**

Galway Community Circus is Ireland's flagship organisation for youth and social circus, located in the heart of Galway City with a local, national and international remit. Our aim is to advance the artistic, personal and social development of young people through circus arts. We are committed to creating an innovative and imaginative learning experience where all young people can realise their full potential.

We work with young people aged 0-25 years. We are committed to working with all young people regardless of their social, economic or geographical situation. We carry out a range of activities including: weekly classes, workshops, performances, rehearsals, trips away and international exchanges.

Child Protection Statement

The Board of Directors, the Executive Creative Director and all staff and volunteers of the Galway Community Circus believes that the protection and welfare of children and young people are of paramount importance in our work as a youth arts organisation. Galway Community Circuses guiding principles aim to reassure workers, volunteers, families, children, young people and the wider community that Galway Community Circus is dedicated to safeguarding children and young people and that the welfare and protection of children and young people in our care is always the priority.

Galway Community Circus is committed to a young-person centred approach in our work. It is the policy of the organisation that all staff and volunteer leaders take all reasonable care to ensure that all children and young people involved in its services are protected from abuse of any kind. We undertake to provide a safe environment and positive experience, where the welfare of the young person is paramount. Such a policy is an invaluable tool in helping our staff involved in working with young people, to safeguard both the young person and themselves.

Galway Community Circus has completed the Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland in 2017 and this child protection policy and its guidelines is to be taken considering all other policies within the organisation relating to HR, Health and Safety, Welfare and Data Protection. In particular, in relation to children and young people, the Code of Good Practice for staff and volunteers, Guidelines for Overnight and Day trips away go hand in hand with this Child Protection Policy as does the Arts Council Guidelines for taking & using images of young people.

GCC's policy is derived from and consistent with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children; Children First Act 2015; A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns.

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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 seriously 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 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 Circus personnel (committee members, leaders, staff or volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm
2	Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by youth Circus personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 young person being harmed by youth Circus personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children including procedure for Garda Vetting. • Policy for the Supervision/ training and support of staff • Code of Behaviour for staff/volunteers
4	Risk of harm due to bullying of a young person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-bullying policy • Group Contract for Members
5	Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Adult/Young People Ratios • Code of Behaviour for staff/volunteers
6	Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/ communications between youth Circus personell and a young person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Communications with young people • Code of Behaviour for Leaders • Procedures for Giving Lifts to Young People
7	Risk of harm caused by youth Circus personnel communicating with young people in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, texting, digital device or other manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Communications with young people
8	Risk of harm due to innapropriate use of images of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Use of Images
9	Risk of harm due to innapropriate use of young people’s personal data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality Policy • Data Protection Policy

4. Procedures

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

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child/ young person availing of our service
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person. The Relevant person of Galway Community Circus is Ulla Hokkanen and Deputy Tracey Lohan.
- Complaints Policy/Procedures
- Disciplinary/Appeals Procedures
- Procedures for Trips Away/ Residentials
- Policy on including Members aged 18 or over
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Policy on Informing Parents
- Guidelines on Dealing with Disruptive Behaviour

All procedures listed are available upon request

5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going 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 1st April 2020, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:

Reg Gordon, Chairperson

For queries, please contact the DLP Ulla Hokkanen on ulla@galwaycircus.com or 085 1117224, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.