

**Galway Regional Youth Federation CLG
t/a Youth Work Ireland Galway**

Child Safeguarding Statement

1. **Name of Service: Youth Work Ireland Galway**
2. **The services we provide are:**

Youth Work Ireland Galway is a community-based youth work organisation operating an Integrated Youth Service Model providing services to young people and families from 5 Youth Work Ireland Galway youth centres in Galway City and County and other community partner held spaces such as Health Centres, Family Resource Centres, education centres, halls and public spaces. We acknowledge our responsibilities as a 'Relevant Provider' under *Children First Act, 2015*.

- a. **Youth Club Development:** support to 10 volunteer led youth clubs working with children and young people across the County.
- b. **Community Youth Projects:** 5 youth projects engage with the local community to identify and respond to the needs of young people in Ballinasloe, Tuam, Loughrea in Galway County, Westside, and CAPE in Galway City.
- c. **Youth Justice Work:** 2 projects supporting young people to divert from crime and anti-social behaviour in Treo Nua and The Junction Youth Diversion Projects.
- d. **Adolescent Support Work:** Youth Workers provide support to individual young people in conjunction with Tusla in Tuam and Loughrea.
- e. **Youth Information Service:** services are provided at Ballinasloe Information Centre, in schools and through outreach work.
- f. **Youth Counselling:** for young people by contracted adolescent psychotherapists in Galway City and County and online.
- g. **Adolescent Addiction Counselling:** a service for U18s delivered by employed therapists integrated into the HSE Community Drugs Service in Galway City, Galway County and Roscommon.
- h. **Comhairle Na nÓg:** coordinating Galway City and County Galway Comhairlí na nÓg with the support of the local authorities.
- i. **LGBT+ Youth Work:** shOUT! Youth Project supports young people through 1 to 1 work, drop-in sessions, group work and awareness workshops in schools and community settings.

- j. **Climate Justice Work:** Sauti Youth Project is a youth led initiative which aims to monitor local government commitments to climate action in Galway City and County and support Global Youth Work.
- k. **Family Support:** The Preparing for Life Project works with pregnant mothers, mothers and their child from pre-birth and up to starting primary school. This universal service covers Ballinasloe town and is a partnership with Tusla Family Support Services.
- l. **International Programmes:** supporting young people to engage in development opportunities under the Erasmus+ programme such as youth exchanges, training, and volunteering.

Other Services: In addition to the services delivered directly to young people listed above, Youth Work Ireland Galway delivers the following services:

Community Employment Programme: supporting adults to progress to education, training or employment through work experience, training, and mentoring.

3. Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm:

Youth Work Ireland Galway is committed to the principles laid out in *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*. These are:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm.
- Interventions by the State should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family.
- Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where it is necessary for the State to intervene to keep children safe, the minimum intervention necessary should be used.
- Children should only be separated from parents/carers when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted.
- Children have a right to be heard, listened to, and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/carers and families.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.

4. Risk assessment of potential harm to children while availing of our services:

Youth Work Ireland Galway has included the risk of harm to a child as a new category in the organisations Risk Management Policy & Procedures. A comprehensive risk assessment has been conducted to identify potential areas of harm and to implement measures to reduce the risk as per the Risk Management Process.

RISK IDENTIFIED	Procedures in Place to Manage Identified Risk
<p>Risk of harm to a child should a member of the organisation fail to report an issue or cause for concern or a disclosure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Statement and policies are circulated to all staff and volunteers • Mandated reporters are notified of their roles and responsibilities in relation to reporting and mandated assisting • Safeguarding is on the agenda of staff meetings, staff induction, and supervision • Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) are clearly identified in the organisation and are in senior roles • Safeguarding is a standing item on the Management Reports and Board Agenda • Safeguarding is a consideration in all service planning to identify any risk of harm to children and young people • All staff and volunteers attend safeguarding briefings and training as required • Failure to report concern or harm in a timely manner will be addressed by management
<p>An allegation, complaint or report of abuse is made against a volunteer, staff member or other third party engaged by the organisation:</p> <p>Risk of harm (as defined in Children First Act) to a child by a member of the organisation</p> <p>Risk of harm of a child by a visitor to the youth service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear procedures are in place and communicated for reporting all issues of harm or concern relating to staff, volunteers or other parties engaged in the organisation • Clear procedures are in place for reporting and management of allegations against staff and volunteers • Codes of conduct are in place for staff and volunteers and this forms part of the induction process • Staff and volunteers attend all mandatory briefings and trainings • Staff and volunteers are subject to recruitment and selection processes • Staff and volunteers subject to initial and repeat Garda Vetting through the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Siochana • A complaints procedure is in place including dealing with third parties engaged by the organisation • Service Level Agreements or Memorandum of Understandings are in place with partner organisations • Youth Work Ireland Galway commits to assisting investigations by Tusla and An Garda Siochana

<p>Risk of harm through bullying of a child by another minor</p> <p>Risk of harm of a child through use of unauthorised photos or videos</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear procedures are in place and communicated for reporting all issues of harm or concern by staff and volunteers • Complaints policy and procedure is in place • Anti-Bullying policy and procedure is in place • Volunteers and staff are trained in accordance with Children First National Guidance • All events and activities are planned, staffed, and supervised • All activities, one-to-one and group work, and events have agreed rules and codes of conduct that are discussed and agreed with children and young people • Consent by parents/guardians is sought for recording of activities by photography or video. Children and young people can choose to opt out even if parental/guardian consent is given • Staff and volunteer training covers bullying and discrimination • Registration and specific activity forms include questions on consent for photography and video as a separate item to consent to engage in the activity or youth group or club
<p>Risk of harm due to the nature of events or activities</p> <p>Risk of harm of a child on trips from another minor, staff, volunteer, or member of the public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All activities, events and programmes are planned and risk-assessed and age and developmentally appropriate • Venues are checked and risk assessed including Health and Safety, transport and offsite venues are pre-checked • Informed consent is sought for all activities • Staff are briefed and have attended induction and relevant training • Staff and volunteers consider the risk of a young person going missing from an activity, event or trip and have a protocol in place • Staff and volunteers operate within the Code of Conduct and within their duty in <i>loco parentis</i>
<p>Risk of harm of online abuse through social media or access to online content</p>	<p>In addition to all the above being applied to online activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where online activities are in place ground rules are agreed and communicated including how to raise a complaint about another youth member, volunteer, staff member or third party • Training is available to young people, volunteers, and staff in relation to online safety • Complaints or concerns about online activity including cyberbullying, sexting, inappropriate or unwarranted communications, etc will be dealt with in an appropriate manner • Youth Work Ireland Galway staff and volunteers will assist with any statutory investigations as necessary

5. 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* 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/volunteers by a child or young person while availing of our service.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children and young people.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla.
- Register of those who have completed the Tusla e-learning module.
- Maintaining a list of mandated persons.
- Appointment of a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available on request.

6. Implementation:

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 Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed again by 22nd October 2027 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:  Date: 23/10/2025
Relevant Person

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