

National Library of Ireland

Child Safeguarding Statement - Updated March 2021

Child Protection and Welfare Statement

The **National Library of Ireland** offers services to and for children and is committed to a child-centred approach in our work with children and young people. In the NLI Strategy 2016 -2021 the provision of ‘equal and safe access for everyone’ is one element of the library’s core functions. It is central to the Learning and Outreach programme of the National Library of Ireland that children (and staff) are unconditionally respected and kept safe from harm while using our services.

We recognise the importance of ensuring that the practice and behaviour within our organisation promotes the delivery of excellent and enjoyable services to children in a safe environment where the welfare of the child /young person is paramount.

We will adhere to the [Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017](#) by implementing child protection policies and procedures. In order to ensure mutual protection, staff/authors/artists/facilitators and other organisations working in the National Library of Ireland will be made familiar with the National Library’s Child Protection and Welfare Policy and Procedures, Code of Behaviour and Health and Safety guidelines in relation to participation in children and young people’s activities.

- 1. Nature of services being provided:** Under the Child First Act (2015) the NLI is a relevant service as it undertakes: *‘Any work or activity which consists of (a) educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children’*. Annual summer programme in July each year which consists of weekly workshops and may include a trail through a designated part of the library. Hands on History: a two day workshop for post-primary students of History; guided tours of the library’s exhibitions with a member of the Learning team for primary and post-primary school groups; Introduction to the Library session for TY students and LC history students; Author visits as part of collaborative programmes (City Wide read, Dublin Book festival); Drop-in Thursdays – family activity hour on Thursday in July and at mid-term breaks through the year.
- 2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm** (brief outline of what our service is, what we do and our commitment to safeguard children):

Public workshops: These are generally open to ages 5 -12. Events include workshops - *Catchy captions (newspaper workshop), The Bigger Picture: Old Maps in the National Library, Miss Battersby’s Birds - Flapping good fun! , Children’s coat of arms* and a *Design a Book Cover– Bilingual* workshop. Where relevant, workshops are age specific. On other occasions the group is divided by age with staff allocated to each group. Two members of NLI staff (with a third available if required) are present for all these workshops and the accompanying adult (parent, grandparent, minder) is required to remain in the space where the workshop is taking place.

Hands on History: As pre-booking is required for this workshop, parent/guardian contact details are provided in advance and are available to staff. Where an external partner/facilitator is delivering a workshop or part of a workshop, a member of the NLI Learning and Outreach team is in the space for the duration, with another staff member available if required.

Poetry Aloud: This island of Ireland poetry speaking competition is run by the NLI in partnership with Poetry Ireland from September to December each year. Regional heats take place in schools and in

the NLI. Students are accompanied by teachers to the regional heats, semi-final and to the final. A parent or other family member accompanies the participant if the teacher is unavailable. Contact details are provided as part of the application procedure and parental consent forms are required for the final to allow photography/filming to take place.

School visits: Teachers and assistants must accompany school groups and remain in attendance at all times while in the National Library. A child in need of personal support because of illness, physical needs or any form of distress shall be taken care of by his/her teacher/accompanying parent/ SNA. Teachers should inform NLI staff if there are any specific requirements to facilitate participation in an NLI event.

3. Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) 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 risk identified
1. Bathroom visits: risk of harm by a member of the public if a child is left alone to go to the bathroom	Staff ensure that child is accompanied by parent/teacher/guardian in all areas of the NLI. (Child Protection policy)
2. Risk of abuse or harm if child is left alone with a member of staff	Children must be accompanied by parent/teacher/guardian while in the library. Staff instructed accordingly in line with Child Protection Policy. Child Protection training provided. CCTV in place in key areas of the NLI.
3. Member of the public harming a child while in the library	Unaccompanied adults not permitted to enter the workshop space (admittance/booking procedure in place)
4. Risk of bullying by member of staff	Bullying procedure in place.
5. Promotion of events for children	Promotion material clearly states this event is for children/families
6. Online Engagement	Online activities are risk-assessed to ensure adherence to the Child Protection policy. Staff should adhere to the same code of behaviour as outlined in the Child Protection Policy and in this statement whether the engagement is in the physical space or digitally/online. All data relating to children is protected in line with the Child Protection Policy and Data Protection Policy. Permission is always sought prior to taking photographs of children while in the NLI and photographs will not be used for NLI promotion unless permission has been granted. No public internet access is available for children NLI follows ICT Usage policy

4. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance, 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 service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers 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
- 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 upon request.

5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is a continuous process. The NLI 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 every two years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers. The review update is scheduled for March 2023.

This Statement has been provided to all NLI staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service. It is readily accessible to parents/ guardians and members of the public on request and will be displayed where relevant services are provided.

Signed: _____ (Provider)

Providers' name and contact details: Sandra Collins, Director, National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

For queries please contact _____ Brid O'Sullivan _____ (Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015)

The legislation and guidelines detailed below have been used to inform the NLI Child Safeguarding Statement:

The Child Care Act 1991; Children First Bill 2014, Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011); Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017

Addendum to *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Online safety)* 2019

Child: a 'child' means anyone who is aged 17 years and under. In Ireland, the Child Care Act, 1991 defines a child as any person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or who has been

married. This definition encompasses the word 'student' aged 17 years and under, where it is used in this statement.

Young People: The Children Act 2001 does not distinguish between a child and a young person. Any provisions in earlier Acts distinguishing different classes of children (for example, young persons, minors, and child) no longer exist. However for the sake of clarity, this 'Child Safeguarding Statement' describes children who are aged 16 or 17 years of age as 'Young People'.