

**Áras Éanna**

**Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults  
Protection Policy and Procedure**

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## **1. Statement:**

Aras Eanna has a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults with which the organisation comes into contact. These guidelines and procedures are to facilitate understanding and clarity. Aras Eanna Staff and Volunteers have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

## **2. Responsibilities of Aras Eanna, including all staff or volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, are:**

- To ensure volunteers are aware of vulnerable adult's need for protection.
- To notify the appropriate agencies if abuse is identified or suspected.
- To support and where possible secure the safety of individuals and ensure that all referrals to services have full information in relation to identified risk and vulnerability.
- To comply with Garda Vetting procedures, ensuring that volunteers who have access to, or work with Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults are Garda Vetted and have undergone child protection training.
- To be familiar with the children, young people and vulnerable adult protection policy.
- To take appropriate action in line with the both the Aras Eanna Health and Safety Handbook and the Aras Eanna Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults policy.
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers have been Garda Vetted and declared any existing convictions, both verbally and in writing. All staff or volunteers must be notified that they must declare any subsequent convictions immediately upon conviction via written statement.

## **3. Aims**

Aras Eanna will aim to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- Ensuring that staff and Board members, freelance and volunteers are carefully selected and trained and that both requesting declaration of convictions and following up on references is an integral part of the recruitment process for all staff.
- Ensuring that the Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy and Procedure remains consistent with good practice by regularly reviewing and updating policy and procedures in line with national and local developments.

- Ensuring that Aras Eanna staff and volunteers are familiar with the Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy by supplying information in the format of their choice (**e.g. Braille, Large print, BSL**) to Staff, Board members, freelancers and volunteers and asking them to sign to confirm they have read and understood the policy and will act in accordance with it.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers attend appropriate local Safeguarding training as it becomes available (in practice this may mean cascading from the CEO or a designated officer).
- Ensuring that Aras Eanna has a designated person for Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection and that all staff and board members, freelancers and volunteers are aware of the named person and the process of reporting concerns to them. The designated officer is .....
- Assessing the risk that children and vulnerable adults may encounter and taking steps to minimise and manage this when planning activities, booking and planning use of premises, taking on staff and volunteers, and working in partnership with other organisations.
- Ensuring that the Aras Eanna policy and procedures for protection of children and vulnerable adults are shared as applicable with children and vulnerable adults themselves, and with their parents and carers. This will be done by making our revised policy and procedures available through our website and on request in the Aras Eanna Arts Centre
- Giving children, young people, parents and carers information about what the Aras Eanna does and what people can expect when they are involved in a project with us.
- Letting parents, carers, children, young people and vulnerable adults know how to report concerns and / or complain about anything else that they believe evidences risk or compromises protection. This will be done by making our policy and procedures available through our website and in the Aras Eanna Arts Centre and by ensuring that people working with the organisation have a lead contact with which they can raise concerns.

#### **4. Designated Persons**

The designated person is Dara McGee, Bainisteoir Aras Eanna.

Email: [daramcgee@gmail.com](mailto:daramcgee@gmail.com)

Mobile Number: ...087-2483577

The designated deputy is Cormac Coyne

Email: [Cormac.coyne@gmail.com](mailto:Cormac.coyne@gmail.com)

Mobile Number: 087-6740116

## **5. Code of Behaviour for Working with Children and Young People**

- All staff and volunteers should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in activities that require physical contact with children.
- Aras Eanna recognises that physical contact with children is sometimes necessary as part of the teaching and learning of certain activities, such as theatre or artistic instruction for example, all staff and volunteers should ensure that such contact is no more than is absolutely necessary in the circumstances.
- While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring and showing concern for children, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all persons concerned.
- Staff or volunteers should never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a child, nor should they even tell jokes of an inappropriate or sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Staff and volunteers should be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism, and should be proactive about confronting this.
- While it may be necessary for staff at Aras Eanna to work on a one to one basis with children, young people or vulnerable adults, staff should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with an individual child. Volunteers should not spend unsupervised time with children, young people or vulnerable adults, without a staff member present.
- All staff and volunteers (even those not working directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults) of Aras Eanna should respect the personal space, safety and privacy of all individuals.
- It is not recommended that staff give lifts in their cars to individual children, especially for long journeys. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full written consent of the parents/guardians and a senior member of staff at Aras Eanna.

## **6. Details of Staff, Volunteer, and Artist Safe Recruitment Procedures and Vetting Practices**

As we are a small arts organisation we adhere to and abide by The Wheels conditions for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. They run our children, young people and vulnerable adults training and also facilitate our Garda Vetting.

We are also a member of Create, and have incorporated their guidelines into our children, young people and vulnerable adults protection policy.

Galway County Council support Aras Eanna financially with child and vulnerable adults protection staff training. All CE scheme participants, regardless of role

within the organisation are sent for Child Protection Training and are Garda Vetting as protocol.

## **7. Vulnerable Adults**

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are getting or may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

## **8. Child neglect or abuse**

Child neglect or abuse can often be difficult to identify and may present in many forms. No one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse. It may indicate conditions other than child abuse. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the context of the child's situation and family circumstances.

### **Abuse can include:**

- Physical,
- Financial,
- Material,
- Sexual,
- Psychological,
- Discriminatory,
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect.

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone.

## **9. Guidelines for reporting neglect or abuse**

Signs of neglect or abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. They can exist in the relationships between children and parents/carers or between children and other family members/other persons. A cluster or pattern of signs is more likely to be indicative of neglect or abuse. Children who are being abused may hint that they are being harmed and sometimes make direct disclosures. Disclosures should always be taken very seriously and should be acted upon, for example, by informing the HSE Children and Family Services. The child should not be interviewed in detail about the alleged abuse without first consulting with the HSE Children and Family Services. This may be more appropriately carried out by a social worker or An Garda Síochána. Less obvious signs could be gently explored with the child, without direct questioning.

## **10. Recording of information**

If neglect or abuse is suspected and acted upon, for example, by informing the HSE Children and Family Services, it is important to establish the grounds for concern by obtaining as much information as possible.

Observations should be accurately recorded and should include dates, times, names, locations, context and any other information that may be relevant. Care should be taken as to how such information is stored and to whom it is made available.

### **11. Reporting Information**

The guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

- The safety and well being of the child must take priority.
- Reports should be made without delay to the HSE Children and Family Services.
- A report can be made in person, by telephone or in writing to the HSE Children and Family Services.

### **12. Allegations against staff members / volunteers**

If any member of staff or a volunteer has concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another individual working within the group or organisation, this should be reported to the designated officer. Concerns about behaviour or conduct may include the following:

- Behaving in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or vulnerable adult;
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adult;

### **13. Support for those who report abuse**

All those making a complaint or allegation or expressing concern, whether they are staff &/or volunteers &/or service users &/or carers &/or members of the general public should be reassured that:

- They will be taken seriously
- Their comments will be treated confidentially, but their concerns may be shared with the appropriate authorities if they or others are at significant risk.

### **14. The Vulnerable Adult has the right:**

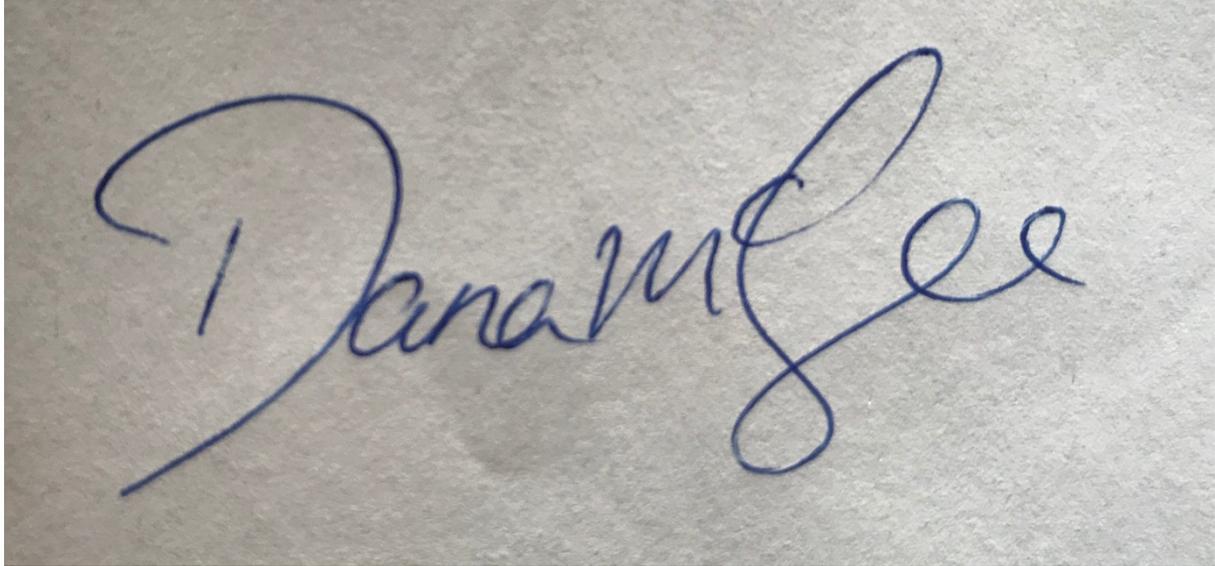
- To be made aware of this policy
- To have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously
- To receive fair and respectful treatment throughout
- To be involved in any process as appropriate
- To receive information about the outcome

## 15. Standard Tusla Reporting Forms

		An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency		FORM NUMBER: CC01:01:01	
<h3>STANDARD REPORT FORM</h3> <p><i>(For reporting CP&amp;W Concerns)</i></p>					
<b>A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate:</b> _____					
<b>1. Date of Report</b> <input type="text"/>					
<b>2. Details of Child</b>					
Name:	<input type="text"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>	DOB	<input type="text"/>	Age	<input type="text"/>
		School	<input type="text"/>		
Alias	<input type="text"/>	Correspondence address (if different)	<input type="text"/>		
Telephone	<input type="text"/>	Telephone	<input type="text"/>		
<b>3. Details of Persons Reporting Concern(s)</b>					
Name:	<input type="text"/>	Telephone No.	<input type="text"/>		
Address:	<input type="text"/>	Occupation	<input type="text"/>		
		Relationship to client	<input type="text"/>		
Reporter wishes to remain anonymous		<input type="checkbox"/>	Reporter discussed with parents/guardians		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4. Parents Aware of Report</b>					
Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported		- Mother	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		- Father	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Comment	<input type="text"/>				
<b>5. Details of Report</b> <i>(Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.)</i>					
<input type="text"/>					



Designated Person's Signature:

A photograph of a handwritten signature in blue ink on a light-colored, textured surface. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read "Dana M. Lee".

Adopted on: 23 February 2019

Reviewed on: 23 February 2019