



AAEX (Art as Exchange)

Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Statement

AAEX (Art as Exchange) - Who we are and what we do

AAEX (Art as Exchange) is an open, all-inclusive group of visual artists coming together in Dundalk for the sake of making public art that is accessible, experiential, participative and/or free. In return, participating artists and their practice will grow and develop through a mutually respectful and fair exchange of information, ideas, and knowledge. As many of the artists are based in rural areas, bi-monthly meetups provide a social outlet, knowledge of our work and greater sense of belonging to a larger community of artists. Active engagement in the development of art initiatives and events in the region, including art exhibitions, performances and occasional participatory arts workshops for children, teenagers or vulnerable adults are further aspects of what we do within our local community. Children's needs and their safe care are the priority of all AAEX artists at work within the community, during AAEX led art activities, workshops, projects, and events.

We believe in the wonder and importance of creativity in childhood, knowing that this flourishes when children are feeling secure and safe. We are therefore committed to protecting children and ensuring their safe and happy engagement with us in AAEX during arts events and workshops hosted by AAEX artists. This document highlights our suite of procedures and policies which help us to maintain a high standard of child safeguarding within our group.

Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential of harm to a child while availing of our services including the area of online safety or cyber bullying. Below is a list of the areas of risks identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1	Risk of physical injury due to inaccurate demonstration of art tools or media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members and volunteers are appropriately qualified, vetted, motivated, and supervised to ensure safe care and work practices are provided to all child participants.• Make sure that instructions are always clear, concise and understood by children through the use of age appropriate language and demonstrations• AAEX maintain up to date Accident and Incident Forms
2	Risk of harm to children from members who have a history of unacceptable or abusive practices in previous positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members are vetted and supported in compliance with all statutory requirements.• AAEX may seek advice from Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, to support any at risk children identified in its care. This liaison will

		be carried out by the AAEX Safeguarding Officer/Designated Person
3	Risk of physical injury due to unsafe physical environment of workshop venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every AAEX Arts event is subject to a health and safety assessment at commencement and action is taken to mitigate and manage those risks. • AAEX has a Health and Safety Policy
4	Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members are provided with a copy of the AAEX Child Safeguarding Statement, the AAEX Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and accept the AAEX Code of Behaviour for members • Photography, video-recording and social media policies are shared with all members and parents/guardians complete consent forms
5	Risk of Bullying by member or another child participant at AAEX arts event/workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAEX has a Code of Behaviour for all members outlining good safe practice with children and vulnerable adults • All members dealing with children or vulnerable adults are Garda Vetted in compliance with all statutory requirements. • AAEX has an Anti-Bullying policy which all members are aware of

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*.

In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures, defined in the AAEX Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Policy and procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct including against allegations 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
- Communication Procedures and Policy, including obtaining consent for activity participation, photography, recording and social media consent
- Complaints procedures

All policies and procedures listed are available upon request.

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 12/08/2022, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Slater". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jennifer Slater, AAEX Safeguarding Officer

For queries, please contact Jennifer Slater, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

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