



IRISH SHOWS ASSOCIATION CLG

POLICY STATEMENT

DATE: 22nd July 2024

REVIEW DATE: 21st July 2025

Child Safeguarding

Our country shows are an important showcase for our agrifood and bloodstock industries and a great shop window for many of the wonderful artisan food producers this country has to offer. Aside from shows contribution to the rural economy, agricultural shows provide a great community event, with local clubs and schools getting involved. Agricultural shows provide entertainment for all the family. Most of our member agricultural shows are run on an entirely voluntary basis,

The Irish Shows Association is committed to ensuring that any person under 18 years of age who attends an Agricultural Show are protected and kept safe.

This Child Safeguarding Policy is prepared in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First: National Guidance together with the other legal provisions set out below. It sets out the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as possible, that a child attending our Show is safe from harm.

Legal Context

This Child Safeguarding Policy has been developed having regard to and in line with the following legislation and guidance documents which seek to protect and safeguard children: -

- Child Care Act 1991

- Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- * Criminal Justice Act 2006
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons Act), 2012 – 2016
- Children First Act 2015
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)
- Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook 2011 (Health Service Executive)
- Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice 2018 (Tusla)

Aims

Some of the aims of this Child Safeguarding Policy include (but are not limited to) the following: -

- To create a safe environment for children in their interactions with the agricultural Shows and minimise the possibility of harm, either deliberate or accidental
- To encourage safe practices for those dealing with children
- To set out appropriate responses and procedures to adverse events or disclosures

Inappropriate Behaviour

Volunteers interacting with children should comply with the following guidelines, which are not exhaustive but instead designed to provide general principles: -

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children
- Do not use or allow language that is offensive, abusive or sexually suggestive - physical and/or verbal
- Do not single out a particular child for favouritism, criticism, unwelcome focus or attention
- Do not hit or physically chastise children

- Do not socialise inappropriately with children, for example, socialising outside of structured organisational activities

Physical Contact

- Always seek the consent of a child to any physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation)
- Avoid horseplay or inappropriate physical contact
- Check with children about their comfort when doing activities that might involve physical contact
- Staff who have to administer first-aid should ensure wherever possible that other children or another adult are present

Relevant Services Provided

Any work or activity which involves providing: » Educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children.

Schedule 1, Section 2, paragraph 6 of the Children First Act 2015 provides a list of 'work or activities' that constitute a 'relevant service'. In relation to Shows, they may be providing recreational activities, i.e. children's games.

The ISA Child Safeguarding Principles

The following principles and obligations apply under ISA Child Safeguarding Policy.

- To keep the child safe from harm while involved in children's activities provided by Shows
- To assess the risks
- To address those risks, as required by the Act.

Relevant Persons 'Mandated Persons'

The ISA has relevant persons 'Mandated Persons' as defined in Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015. These persons are Mary O'Keeffe, National Safeguarding Officer.
okeeffe.mary1@gmail.com

Each Show must have a Child Safeguarding Officer on duty on the day of its Show.

Reporting Procedures

Any volunteer who has child protection concerns should report those immediately to the relevant on-site Child Protection Officer in his/her Show. The Child Protection Officer and, in doing so, should try to provide the following information, if possible, to the National Safeguarding Officer: -

- the name, address and age of any child in respect of whom such concerns arise
- the nature of any injury
- any need for medical attention
- the reason for suspicions or concerns
- any practical information, such as the name of the child's GP, school, etc.

It is the role of the National Safeguarding Officer to receive child protection and welfare concerns from the Child Protection Officers or volunteers and to report concerns which meet the threshold of 'reasonable grounds for concern' to Tusla and to provide support to staff who report concerns about a child. On receipt of a concern, the National Safeguarding Officer will decide if the threshold of reasonable grounds for concern is met. A written record should be kept of this decision-making process.

Confidentiality and Sharing Information

All information about a child and family should be handled in a confidential and sensitive manner.

CARRYING OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT

Shows should carry out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of their services.

As part of the risk assessment process, your organisation should reflect on what specific risks arise as a result of the service you provide and how these risks can be managed. The following steps are a guide to help your organisation consider where the potential for risk lies and how these risks can be managed.

Step 1: Think about who or what might cause harm to children or young people using your service. Different people will have different perceptions of what is a risk.

Step 2: Rank each risk in terms of low, medium and high risks. To help rank each risk, consider the likelihood of the risk occurring and how serious the consequences could be.

Step 3: Who owns the risk? Assign risk owners.
What current controls are in place to reduce the risk?
What future actions must be done to reduce the risk?
What else do you need to do about the risk?

Step 4: Are the controls effective?
Are the actions effective?

It is not possible to eliminate risk completely, but risks can be significantly reduced if they are properly managed.

Specify the procedures that are in place to manage any risk identified.

See Appendix 1 Risk Assessment Template

Reporting Procedure

All volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people and to report any concerns that they may have for the protection or welfare of a young person. Regardless of how a concern comes to a member's attention it must be reported to the Child Protection Officer.

Action must be taken where there is thought to be an immediate risk to the child.

Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Policy Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This Child Safeguarding Policy Statement will be reviewed at least on annually.

Margaret Healy
Chairperson

Date: 22-7-24

Joe Hayden
Safeguarding Officer

Date: 22-07-24