

## Backwater Artists Group Child Safeguarding Statement

Backwater Artists Group believes in the importance of widening the range of people that become involved in the arts. Through an ongoing public programme of exhibition tours, studio tours, talks and workshops we aim to engage with people of all ages including children and young people to create opportunities in which they can participate and develop an enthusiasm for the arts. Our services take place on site at our studio complex in Wandersford Quay.

At Backwater Artists Group we want to make sure that all children and young people who participate in our programme are safe and protected from harm. To ensure this we have policies and procedures in place to provide a safe working environment. Here at Backwater Artists Group, we believe that the rights of children and young people are paramount. We believe that Children and young people have a right to: **Be safe. Be listened to. Be treated with fairness and respect. Be free from bullying. Get help and support if they have been hurt, neglected or badly treated.**

Our guiding principles apply to all paid staff, volunteers, committee/board members and students on work placement within our organisation. All committee/board members, staff, volunteers and students must sign up to and abide by these guiding principles and our child safeguarding procedures.

We consider any person under the age of 18 years as a child.

We adhere to the recommendations of Children First: National Guidelines for Protection & Welfare of Children, published by The Department of Health & Children.

### **Policies & Procedures**

Our Child Protection Statement and Policy has been developed in line with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First National Guidance for the Protection & Welfare of Children (2017) and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. We have implemented procedures covering.

- A code of behaviour for all staff, our members and volunteers facilitating workshops for children.
- A safe recruitment policy.
- Induction Policy for all staff, members and volunteers working with children.
- A Designated Liaison Person who looks after child protection concerns.
- Managing and supervision of staff and members.
- Involvement of primary carers.
- Reporting of suspected abuse.
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by all staff/members/volunteers.
- A confidentiality policy.
- A complaints policy.
- An accidents and incidents reporting policy.
- Garda Vetting.

### **Risk Assessment**

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Backwater Artists Group has completed a risk assessment of how children could be potentially harmed while availing of our services and have put procedures in place to manage those risks. See below.

<b>Risk Identified</b>	<b>Procedures in place to manage risk</b>	<b>Level of Risk</b>	<b>Person overseeing Risk management</b>
Staff, Members, Volunteers not adequately informed of the procedures in place to safeguard children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that everyone working with children receives an adequate induction on the organisations Child Protection Statement &amp; Policy and procedures in place to safeguard children.</li> <li>• Ensure that they have access to training opportunities.</li> <li>• Ensure that they are</li> </ul>	L	DLP

	<p>aware of the procedures in place regarding reporting abuse.</p>		
<p>Staff, Members, Volunteers unsuitable for working with children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that there is a safe recruitment policy in place and that all staff, members and volunteers are Garda Vetted.</li> </ul>	L	DLP
<p>Hazards due to cluttered workspaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that workspaces are kept clean and free from hazards.</li> <li>• Ensure that there is an adequate number of staff and volunteers on hand to ensure a hazard free experience for all (1 adult:6 children ratio).</li> <li>• Ensure staff, members and volunteers are trained in Health &amp; Safety.</li> </ul>	L	DLP/Staff/Members/Volunteers
<p>Inappropriate artistic content for children to view in exhibitions and artist's studios.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All people working with children to have a clear idea of content available for viewing and ensure it is age appropriate for participating children.</li> </ul>	L	DLP/Staff/Members/Volunteers
<p>Inappropriate use of images of children's such as sharing them online without</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consent asked from all parents/guardians to take, use and store images of children. No images to be used on</li> </ul>	L	DLP/Staff/Members/Volunteers

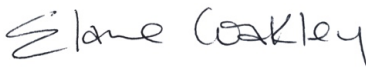
permission.	social media or online.		
-------------	-------------------------	--	--

**Implementation & Review**

Backwater Artists Group is committed to the implementation and review of our Child Protection Statement & Policy to ensure that children are keep safe from harm while availing of our services. We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. This statement and policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis or sooner if necessary due to service issues or changes in legislation or national policy . This statement has been published on our website and will be made available to parents and guardians on request. It will be made available to Tusla if requested. It has also been given to all staff, board members, members and volunteers at Backwater Artists Group who help us to deliver our services to children.

Relevant Person: Elaine Coakley

Designated Liaison Person: Elaine Coakley

Signed by Designated Liaison Person:  Date: 15 February 2023