



DUBLIN YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Introduction

The Dublin Youth Orchestra will endeavour to raise awareness amongst staff and volunteers of the issues involved. There is an onus on everyone to report suspicions or concerns. It is important for individuals to be familiar with the definitions of abuse and to be equipped to recognise any signs or symptoms and to know how to take a concern or an incident forward.

1. It is important that all those involved either on staff or on a voluntary basis understand, accept and abide by this child/young person protection policy.

Key Elements of DYO Child Protection Policy

The Dublin Youth Orchestra works with children/young people in what we hope is a safe and friendly environment. Today it is important for the sake of the children/young people to have a child protection policy in place.

Our Child Protection Policy comprises of:

1. A statement of policy, which expresses the commitment to providing a safe environment for any child and young person with whom it interacts;
2. An undertaking to apply this policy throughout the organisation;
3. Detailed procedures and steps to ensure that the Child Protection Policy is implemented across all areas of the Dublin Youth Orchestra.
4. The policy be reviewed every two years

Supporting the Child Protection Policy Statement, the DYO has formulated detailed policies and procedures covering:

- Code of Behaviour for all staff whether permanent or voluntary,
- Facilitators or interns;
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse;
- Confidentiality;
- Recruiting or selecting staff;
- Managing and supervising staff;
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff;
- Complaints and comments;
- Incidents and Accidents.

Section 1: Child Protection Policy Statement

We the Dublin Youth Orchestra are committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. We will adhere to the recommendations of Children First; National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, published by the Department of Health and Children. We have implemented procedures covering:

- Code of behaviour for all staff;
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse;
- Confidentiality;
- Recruiting and selecting staff ;
- Managing and supervising staff;
- Involvement of primary carers;
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff;
- Complaints and comments;
- Incidents and accidents.

This Policy will be reviewed on October 2014

Signed -----
Designated Person

Signed -----
Deputy Designated Person

SECTION 2 - Code of behaviour for Staff

A code of behaviour for staff is an essential element of this organisation's Child Protection Policy. This policy will help to create a supportive environment for staff to provide a child - centred approach for children and young people.

A separate code of behaviour for children and young people is to be drawn up with each individual group with the involvement of the group members.

- Child centred approach
- Good practise
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Physical contact
- Health and safety

Child Centred Approach

- Treat all children equally;
- Listen to and respect children and young people;
- Provide encouragement, support and praise;
- Use appropriate language (physical or verbal);
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere;
- Offer positive constructive criticism when needed;
- Respect a child's or young person's personal space
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers;
- Use age appropriate teaching aids and materials;
- Lead by example;
- Be aware of a child's or young person's other commitments when scheduling rehearsals or activities, e.g., school or exams;
- Be cognisant of a child's or young person's limitations, due to a medical condition;
- Create an atmosphere of trust;
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation.

Good Practise

- Register each child/young person (name, address, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact);
- Make primary carers, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures and keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children;
- Have emergency procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures;
- Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs;
- Report any concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures;
- Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and be aware of anti-bullying policy;
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour;
- Evaluate work practises on a regular basis;
- Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers
- Report and record any incidents and accidents;
- Update and review existing policies and procedures regularly;
- Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved; observe appropriate gender balance for residential;
- Ensure clear communication between artists and the DYO organisation; have guidelines on a sheet for artists;
- Don't be passive in relation to concerns, i e., don't 'do nothing';
- Don't let a problem get out of control;
- Avoid taking a session on your own. If this is not possible then it should be in an open environment with the full knowledge and consent of primary carers;
- Avoid if at all possible giving a lift to a child/young person and if you do make sure that primary carers are informed
- Maintain awareness around language used and comments made. If you think that something you have said may cause offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.

Inappropriate behaviour

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/ young people;
- Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language;
- Don't single out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention;
- Don't allow/engage inappropriate touching of any form;
- Don't hit or physically chastise children/young people;
- Don't socialise inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities.

Physical contact

- Seek consent of child/young person in relation to physical contact (except in emergency or a dangerous situation)
- Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch;
- Check with children/young people about their level of comfort when doing touch exercises.

Health and safety

- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised under the age of 17?
- Manage any dangerous materials;
- Provide a safe environment;
- Be aware of accident procedures and follow accordingly;

SECTION 3 - Reporting procedures

- DYO will appoint a Designated Person and a Deputy Designated Person to deal with issues related to child protection and welfare within the organisation. They will respond to any concerns that may be identified. A deputy needs to be appointed to cover this role when the Designated Person is unavailable or if he or she is directly involved in an incident, suspicion or accusation.
- Appropriate training should be provided for both.
- Designated Persons should be comfortable dealing with the topic of child protection and welfare;
- Professional development and network support should be provided for the Designated Person and his/her deputy;
- It should be very clear to all staff, primary carers and children/young people who has been designated to deal with child protection issues and how to contact him/her.

Recording Procedures

The Dublin Youth Orchestra has a system and mechanism in place for recording concerns about the protection of children and young people. It involves using an incident book where records are kept. These records are stored securely and confidentiality is maintained.

Staff should record the following information in relation to children and young people:

- Suspicions
- Concerns
- Worrying observations
- Behavioural changes
- Actions and outcomes

Dealing with a Disclosure

- Stay calm and listen to the child/young person, allow him/her enough time to say what he/she needs to say;
- Don't use leading questions to prompt details;
- Reassure the child/young person but do not promise to keep anything secret;
- Don't make the child /young person repeat the details unnecessarily;
- Explain to the child/young person what will happen next (Explanation should be age appropriate).

Reporting procedures

- The Dublin Youth Orchestra has developed very clear reporting procedures for matters relating to a child/young person's safety and welfare.
- The reporting procedures should be known and accessible to all staff;
- The person whom expresses the concern should be involved and kept informed;
- Actions and outcomes should be noted;
- Record all details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure and the facts in the incident notebook. Information should be factual only. Any opinions should be supported by facts;
- Inform the Designated Person, or his/her deputy if unavailable;
- The most appropriate person should discuss the concern or consult with primary carers. Parents, carers or responsible adults should be made aware of a report to the Health Service Executive unless it is likely to put the child/young person at risk;
- The Designated Person may contact the Health Service Executive Duty Social Work Department for an informal consultation prior to making a report;
- Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis (see Section 4: Confidentiality statement);
- If there are reasonable grounds for concern as outlined above, Designated Person will contact the Duty Social Worker in the Health Executive area using the standard reporting form available from the Health Service Executive. Reports to the Duty Social Worker can be made verbally initially and then followed by the standard reporting form. Reports should be made to the Health Service Executive without delay;
- If the Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person is not available, contact the local Duty Social Worker of the Health Service Executive directly;

In case of emergencies outside of the Health Service Executive Social Work Department hours, contact the Gardai. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/young person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardai.

SECTION 4 - Confidentiality statement

- Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child/young person;
- Giving such information to others for the protection of a child or young person is not a breach of confidentiality;
- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child or young person are at risk;
- Primary carers, children and young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the Health Service Executive, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk;
- Procedures will be put in place in relation to the use of images of children/young people;
- Procedures will also be put in place for the recording and storing of information in line with our confidentiality policy.

SECTION 5 - Recruiting and selecting Staff

Recruitment and selection policy statement

We will ensure that staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principals:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job (paid or voluntary);
- We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel;
- Staff will be selected by a panel of at least two representatives through an interview process;
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed;
- Some of the exclusions would include:
 - a) any child-related conviction;
 - b) insufficient documentary evidence of identification;
 - c) concealing information on one's suitability to working with children;
- There will a relevant probationary period;
- Garda Vetting is a requirement of all adult/staff volunteers involved with DYO

SECTION 6 - Managing and supervising staff

New staff should receive induction and Child Protection training and should be made aware of policies and procedures.

Freelance staff should agree to abide by the organisations Child Protection Policy Statement. They should be provided with the Code of Conduct.

Staff management policy statement

To protect both staff (paid and voluntary) children and young people, we undertake that:

New staff will:

- Be made aware of the organisation's code of conduct, child protection procedures and role of who has been designated to deal with issues of concern;
- Undergo a probationary or trial period.

All staff will:

- Be expected to have read and signed the Child Protection Policy Statement;
- Be provided with child protection training.

SECTION 7 - Involvement of primary carers

Policy statement on the involvement of primary carers

We are committed to being open with all primary carers.

We undertake to:

- Advise primary carers of our child protection policy;
- Issue contact /consent forms where relevant;
- Comply with health and safety practices;
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice;
- Adhere to our recruitment guidelines;
- Ensure as far as possible that the activities are age-appropriate;
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parent(s), carer(s) or responsible adult(s) where appropriate.

If we have concerns about the welfare of the child/young person, we will:

- Respond to the needs of the child or young person;
- Inform the primary carers on an on-going basis unless this action puts the child or young person at further risk;
- Where there are child protection and welfare concerns we are obliged to pass these on to the Duty Social Worker and, in an emergency, the Gardai;
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff, we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform primary carers as appropriate.

As a child-centred organisation, we are committed to putting the interest of the child/young person first. To that end we will:

- Contact local Health Service Executive and Gardai where there is a child protection welfare concern;
- Encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by our organisation to ensure the safety of their children;
- Have a designated person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person's welfare.

SECTION 8 Dealing with allegations against staff

In the event of allegations being made against an employee (staff or voluntary), the protection of the child/young person is the first and paramount consideration.

The DYO has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and employee. The same person must not have responsibility for dealing with the child/young person welfare issues and the staff employment issues.

An allegation against an employee should be assessed promptly and carefully. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, a formal report to the Health Service Executive should be made. The reporting procedures outlined in Section 3 of these guidelines should be followed. The DYO will maintain a close liaison with the Health Service Executive and the Gardai. Employers should ensure that their actions do not undermine or frustrate any assessment or investigation by the Health Service Executive and the Gardai.

Agreed procedures should be followed in the context of the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. The employer should take protective measures appropriate to the level of risk while not unreasonably penalising the worker - unless necessary to protect the child/young person. Protective might mean increased supervision, assignment to different duties, or suspension. We may want to seek advice on procedures or protocol to deal with allegations against staff.

Procedures

Two separate procedures must be followed:

1. In respect of the child/young person [name of person] will deal with issues related to the child/young person.
 2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made [name of person] will deal with issues related to the staff member.
- *The first priority is to ensure that no child/young person is exposed to unnecessary risk;*
 - *If allegations are made against the Designated Person, then the Deputy Designated Person should be contacted;*
 - *The reporting procedures outlined in Section 3 of these guidelines should be followed. Both the primary carers and the child/young person should be informed of actions planned and taken. The child/young person should be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner;*
 - *The staff member will be informed as soon as possible:*
 - a) *of the nature of the allegation;*
 - b) *the staff member should be given an opportunity to respond;*
 - *The chairperson of the organisation should be informed as soon as possible;*
 - *Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee should be taken in consultation with the Health Service and the Gardai;*
 - *After consultation, the chairperson of DYO should advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.*

SECTION 9 Complaints and comment procedures

In the event of complaints and comments:

- Complaints and comments will be responded to as soon as possible.
- The chairman has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to the appropriate person.
- Verbal complaints will be logged and responded to.

SECTION 10 Accident procedures

- The DYO must contain an up-the-date register of the contact details of all children/young people involved within the organisation;
- Children/young people's details should be cross-referenced between the incident book and file;
- External organisations with whom the DYO has dealings with must provide proof that they have public liability insurance;
- First-aid boxes should be available and regularly re-stocked;
- The location of the first-aid boxes must be made known to staff;
- Availability of first-aid should be in accordance with the Health and Safety guidelines. The location of accident/incident book must be made known to staff;
- Children and young people must be advised of risks of dangerous material;
- Take cognisance of responsibility for first-aid on off- site trips.

APPENDIX 1 Definitions of abuse

There are four main categories of abuse as outline by *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*. The following is a synopsis of the information contained in that document.

1 Neglect

“Neglect can be defined as being where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care---The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child’s needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.” (*Children First* p.31).

2 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse usually happens where there is a relationship between carer and a child rather than a specific incident or incidents.

“Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.”
(*Children First* p.31)

Rather, it can manifest in the child’s behaviour or physical functioning. Examples of these include ‘anxious’ attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement and uncooperative or hostile behaviour.

“The threshold of significant harm is reached when interaction is predominantly abusive and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.”
(*Children First* p.32)

Examples of emotional abuse in children include:

- Imposition of negative attributes on children, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- Emotional unavailability by the child’s parent/carer;
- Unresponsiveness, inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
- Premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
- Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child’s capacity to understand something or to behave and control harm/herself in a certain way;
- Under or over-protection of the child/young person;
- Use of unreasonably harsh discipline;
- Exposure to domestic violence.

3 Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child. Examples of physical injury include the following:

- Shaking;
- Use of excessive force in handling;
- Deliberate poisoning;
- Suffocation;
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant physical harm to a child/young person;

4 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is involves the use of a child for gratification or sexual arousal by a person for themselves or others.

Examples of sexual abuse include:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
- Intentional touching or molesting of a child whether by a person or an object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- Masturbation in the presence of the child/young person or involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- Sexual intercourse with a child/young person whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- Sexual exploitation of a child...may also include showing sexual explicit material to children/young people which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse;
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an under-age person.

APPENDIX 2 :

List of Health Service Executive Area Social Work Department Contact Details in the Dublin Region

East Coast Area

Area 1 Principal social worker 01-2365130
Duty social worker 01-2808403
Our Lady's Clinic
Patrick Street
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin

Area 2 Principal 01-2680320
Duty Social Worker 01-2680333
Vergemount Hall
Clonskeagh
Dublin 6

Area 10 Principal Social Worker
Duty Social Worker
Bray Health Centre, Block B
Civic Offices
Main Street
Bray
Phone 01-2871482
 01-2744100

Area 10 Principal Social Worker
Duty Social Worker
Glenside Road Health Centre
Wicklow Town
Co. Wicklow
Phone 0404-68400
 0404-60800

South Dublin Principal Social Worker

City District Duty Social Worker
Carnegie Centre
21-25 Lord Edward St.,
Dublin 2
Phone 01-6486650
 01-6486555

Dublin South West Principal Social Worker
Duty Social Worker
Health Centre
Millbrook Lawns
Tallaght
Dublin 24
Phone 01-4154700/739
 01-4520666

Dublin West District Principal Social Worker
Duty Social Worker
Bridge House
Cherry Orchard Hospital
Ballyfermot
Dublin 10
Phone 01-6206387

Appendix 4: Forms

Volunteer Reference Form

_____ has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer with this DYO and has given your name as a referee.

This post involves substantial access to children and as an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people?

Yes No

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.

If you are happy to complete this reference, all information contained on the form will remain confidential and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor, should they be offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate you being extremely candid in your evaluation of this person.

How long have you known this person?

In what capacity?

What attributes does this person have which you would consider makes them a suitable volunteer?

How would you describe their personality?

Please rate this person on the following (please tick):

	Poor	Average	Good	V/Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self-motivation					
Motivation of others					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Occupation: _____

Declaration Form

Confidential Declaration form for all those working with children and young people.

Surname: _____

First Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of birth: _____

Address:

Tel. No: _____ Mobile No:

Any other name(s) previously known as:

Is there any reason that you would be considered unsuitable to work with children and young people? Yes No

If yes, please outline the reason below.

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence? Yes No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence (s):

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Staff notice about Designated Persons:

Valerie O'Brien has been designated as the person to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's or young person's safety and welfare; It is the responsibility of this person to support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child protection and to ensure that procedures are followed. It is also the responsibility of the Designated Person to liaise with the Health Service Executive of Gardai where appropriate.

Designated person: Valerie O'Brien
133 Hollybank Road
Drumcondra
Dublin 9

Mobile 087 2055523

The following excerpt from 'Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children(4.3.2 -pg 38) shows what would constitute reasonable grounds for concern.

1. Specific indication from the child or young person that he/she has been abused;
2. An account by a person who saw the child/ young person being abused;
3. Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way.
4. An injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that may be a case of abuse (an example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour).
5. Consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

**FORM FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND/OR WELFARE CONCERNS
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

In case of Emergency or outside Health Service Executive office hours, contact should be made with An Garda Síochána

A. To Principal Social Worker

or Duty Social Worker : _____

1. Details of Child:

Name: _____ Male: Female:

Address: _____

Age/D.O.B.: _____

School: _____

Name of Mother:	Name of Father:
Address of Mother if different to Child:	Address of Father if different to Child:
Telephone Number:	Telephone Number:

Care and Custody arrangements regarding child, if known:

Household Composition:

Name:	Relationship to Child:	Date of Birth:	Additional Information e.g. School/Occupation:

Note: A separate report form must be completed in respect of each child being reported.

2. 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).

3. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child:

Name: _____ Age: _____ Male: _____ Female: _____

Address: _____

Relationship to Child: _____ Occupation: _____

4 Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child:

Social Workers: _____

School: _____

Public Health Nurse: _____

Gardaí: _____

G.P.: _____ Hospital: _____

Pre-School/Crèche/Youth Club: _____

Other, specify e.g. Youth Groups, After School Clubs: _____

Are Parents/Legal Guardians aware of this referral to the Social Work Department? Y N

Are the Parents/Legal Guardians supportive? Yes No .

5 Details of Person reporting concerns: (Please see Guidance Notes re Limitations of Confidentiality)

Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Nature and extent of contact with Child/Family: _____

6 Details of Person completing form: Name: _____

Date: _____ Occupation: _____

Signed: _____

Guidance notes: The Health Service Executive has a statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act, 1991, to promote the welfare and protection of children in their area. The Health Service Executive therefore has an obligation to receive information about any child who is not receiving adequate care and/or protection. This reporting form is for use by: • Health Service Executive Personnel. • Professionals and individuals in the provision of child care services in the community who have service contracts with the Health Service Executive. • Designated person in a voluntary or community agency. • Any professional, individual or group involved in services to children who becomes aware of a child protection or welfare concern, or to whom a child protection or child welfare concern is reported. Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. (Health Service Executive personnel should do this in consultation with their line manager). This will assist the Social Work Department in assessing the level of risk to the child, or support services required. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate by putting a line through the question. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report. The Health Service Executive aims to work in partnership with parents. If you are making this report in confidence you should note that the Health Service Executive cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality as: • A Court could order that information be disclosed. • Under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997, the Freedom of Information Commissioner may order that information be disclosed. You should also note that in making a 'bona fide report' you are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998. If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone the duty social worker and discuss your concerns with him/her. (Local arrangements to be inserted.)