



Declaration of Guiding Principles

Here at Laois Youth Dance Ensemble we provide the following services to children/young people: Dance training and opportunities to perform nationally and internationally.

We believe that:

1. Our priority to ensure the welfare and safety of every child and young person who attends our service is paramount.
2. Our guiding principles and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and legislation and we will review our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures every two years.
3. All children and young people have an equal right to attend a service that respects them as individuals and encourages them to reach their potential, regardless of their background.
4. We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to and heard.
5. Our guiding principles apply to everyone in our organisation.
6. Workers/volunteers must conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our organisation.

Laois Youth Dance Ensemble Child Safeguarding Statement

Published by: Laois Youth Dance Ensemble, January 2019

1. Name of service being provided:

Laois Youth Dance Ensemble – Youth Dance Company

2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm:

Laois Youth Dance Ensemble is a youth dance company divided into two groups: Juniors (9 – 13 years old) and Seniors (14 – 24 years old).

The company meets at least 3 hours per week for dance training and rehearsals, performing at various locations throughout the year nationally and internationally

We are aware and understand our responsibilities about Child safeguarding and recognise that our duty is to protect the child from harm, promoting their welfare, creating an environment which enables children and young people to grow and achieve their full potential.

We will carry out a risk assessment to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed while taking part of any of our activities (workshops, events) and develop a Child Safeguarding Statement that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified, appointing a relevant person to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement.

We employ qualified staffs and work under an agreement/ contract with parents/guardians explaining the full implications of attending our dance activities (e.g. the use of physical contact). A written permission for the use of images and videos also takes place and the size of the company is limited to 15 dancers per group.

Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1	Harassment and bullying that may occur with the age gap in each group	Make sure staffs are garda vetted and children are supervised at all times while on the premises and our care. All issues must be reported and dealt accordingly.
2	Incidents or accidents may occur while dancing.	Report and record any incidents or accidents. First aid kits available to all staff.
3	Photography and video	Parents must sign a consent form permitting the use of videos and pictures in association with Laois Youth Dance Ensemble and its activities (performances, workshops, films, artistic collaborations). Anything outside these formats must have another permission signed by the parents to become eligible.
4	National and international performances	The following consideration will take place while the company travels to outside activities: Safe methods of transport; Adequate insurance to cover all aspects of the trip; Written parental consent (for each individual trip); Any information about the children/young people which may be relevant to staying away overnight, e.g. allergies, medical problems, special needs, etc.; Number of workers/volunteers required to adequately supervise children/young people at all times; Appropriate and well supervised sleeping arrangements; Respect for the privacy of children and young people in dormitories, changing rooms, showers and toilets
5	Dancers over 18, guest artists X under 18 dancers	The group leader (artistic director) shall be present at all times during activities and all participants and artists must be aware of the company's code of behaviour. Any issues will be reported to a member of staff in writing and dealt accordingly.

3. 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 support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct 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;
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

4. 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 December 2021, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.



Signed:
Erica Pessanha Borges
Laois Youth Dance Ensemble Artistic Director

For queries, please contact Erica Borges, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

'Our commitment to safeguard children is to keep children safe from harm while participating in any activity related to Laois Youth Dance Ensemble.'

- Child Safeguarding *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*
- *Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement* (www.tusla.ie)
- *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice* (www.tusla.ie)