



CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Child Safeguarding Statement

1. The Social Action Group Rathmore

The Social Action Group was founded in 1975 to give young people an opportunity to make a difference in their community and beyond. Young people have made a significant contribution to community life ever since.

The Social Action Group has evolved over the years. It is now a company limited by guarantee (CLG) with charitable status (CHY 9004). It has developed a very progressive care programme for older people which includes a Day Care Centre, Social Housing, a Meals on Wheels and Laundry service.

Teach Íosagáin (the headquarters of the Social Action Group) was a purpose built Youth Creativity Centre built in 1983. The Social Action Group is committed to providing activities and facilities in Teach Íosagáin for young people as well as all ages and abilities and providing such activities in a safe environment.

The activities specifically for children and young people consist of: Children's birthday parties, kid's camps, Social Clubs/ Discos (for local teenagers), a canteen service for the children attending the nearby secondary school and use of Teach Íosagáin gym for teenagers 16 years or older.

The Social Action Group has youth members (13-18 years) who actively participate in the development of the various programmes in which we engage. Youth members meet regularly in Teach Íosagáin where they are encouraged to participate and give their views on how to improve their community and the wider world. They take part in many activities including team building activities, outdoor activities such as walking and mountain climbing, fundraising for our care programme for older people and the developing world, providing social programmes for the clients of the day care centre and the Gaisce President's Award Challenge.

Who to contact in the Social Action Group about issues related to child protection and welfare.

JULETT CULLOTY (Manager Teach Íosagáin) has been designated as the person to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child or young person's safety or welfare.

It is the responsibility of this person to support and advise staff about the 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 Tusla or the Gardaí where appropriate.

JULETT CULLOTY can be contacted at Teach Íosagáin, Church Place, Rathmore, Co. Kerry. Phone- 064-7761000

Áine O' DONOGHUE (Social Action Group Director and Youth Leader) has been designated as deputy to JULETT CULLOTY and can be contacted at Teach Íosagáin, Church Place, Rathmore, Co. Kerry. Phone- 064 7761000

2. COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM

- Our service is committed to safeguarding the children in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can play, learn and develop.
- Our service believes that the welfare of the children attending our service is paramount. We are committed to child-centred practice in all our work with children.
- 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.
- Our policy and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and legislation and are underpinned by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Tusla Children First - Child Safeguarding Guide 2017, and the Children First Act 2015.
- Our policy declaration applies 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 the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our child safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures.
- We will review our child safeguarding statement and accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures every 2 years or sooner if necessary, due to service issues or changes in legislation or national policy.
- **Designated Liaison Person** for Child Protection

DLP: *Julett Culloty*

064 77 61000

Deputy: *Áine O' Donoghue*

064 77 61000

3. RISK ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Board of Management/Service Provider has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the service or participating in service activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the service procedures for managing those risks is summarised below:

Risk Identified	Policies and/or Procedures in place to manage Risk
-Children arriving early for Social Action Group (SAG) events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Parents/Guardians are notified of start time of meetings -The building or event area is not opened until at least two adult employees/voluntary leaders are present -If building is already open, child remains in entrance hall area under CCTV footage until other children arrive -See Child Protection Procedures
-Children collected late from SAG events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Parents/Guardians are notified of end time of meetings • Parents/Guardians are notified of end time of event • Two adult leaders remain in the building until the child or young person is collected • Child remains in entrance hall area under CCTV footage until they are collected • Parents should have contact details of a designated adult person whom they can contact if they are running late
The use of phones by children attending SAG events	<p>Children are not permitted to use phones during parties or camps.</p> <p>Usage of phones by children at all other Social Action Group events is monitored by staff and volunteers for inappropriate use and controlled thereafter (particularly in changing and sleeping areas).</p> <p>-See procedure for mobile phone and camera usage</p>
Risk of people coming into the building while events are taking place	<p>Areas within the building are designated for events and young people within these areas are monitored by staff and volunteers at all times</p>
Children going to the bathroom during parties or camps.	<p>Each child has a 'buddy' (team up with another child) and it is explained by a staff member that their buddy has to accompany them if they have to go to the bathroom. They also have to inform a member of staff.</p>

<p>-Overnight trips-Boys and girls on trip together</p>	<p>Boys and girls will be placed in separate rooms/sleeping areas- See procedure for overnight trips</p>
<p>-Overnight trips-Supervision</p>	<p>Two supervisors will be awake at all times during the night and will ensure procedures are followed- See procedure for overnight trips</p>
<p>Children attending social events organised for older people.</p>	<p>All events organised for older people will be attended by adult youth leaders and staff of St. Joseph's Day Care Centre. Children will interact with older people in public settings under the supervision of youth leaders and staff of St. Joseph's Day Care Centre.</p>
<p>Children exhibiting challenging behaviour</p>	<p>The child will be calmly asked to refrain from the behaviour and two adults will remain with the child to de-escalate the situation. Parents may need to be contacted if behaviour escalates- See procedure for dealing with challenging behaviour</p>
<p>New staff or volunteers joining organisation</p>	<p>Only people who have been garda vetted will be taken on as employees of the Social Action Group Any person interested in volunteering with the organisation will immediately be given garda vetting forms to complete Any person who has not been garda vetted will not be able to work with youth members or children- See Recruitment and garda vetting procedure All staff or volunteers who join the organisation will be brought through the child safeguarding statement and child protection procedures before commencing employment/ volunteering. They will also be brought through any other relevant policies and procedures. They will also be required to complete the Tusla E-learning module 'Introduction to Children First' before commencing employment or volunteering.</p>

4. CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As required by the Children First Act, 2015, Children First National Guidance for Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and the Guidance for Developing a Child Safeguarding statement, The Social Action Group Rathmore has the following in place.

- A Relevant Person has been appointed
- A Designated Liaison Person and Deputy have been appointed
- Child Protection and Welfare Reporting Procedures
- Confidentiality Procedure
- Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Against Employees
- Procedure for Managing Child Protection Records
- Recruitment Procedure
- Garda Vetting Procedure
- Code of Behaviour for Working with Children
- Induction Policy (which includes procedures to inform new staff about the Child Safeguarding Statement and accompanying safeguarding policies and procedures)
- All staff and volunteers have completed the Tusla eLearning module – *Introduction to Children First* and relevant staff have attended *Always Children First* Child Protection Training.
- Staff and volunteers have access to regular support in line with the service policy.
- Complaints Procedure for Child Protection
- Procedure for Managing Outings
- Procedure for managing overnight trips
- Procedure for Managing Accidents and Incidents
- Camera and phone usage management procedure

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.
- This statement will be reviewed every 2 years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.
- This statement has been published on the service website and is displayed in the service. It has been provided to all staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla if requested.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Service Provider's name and contact details:

For further information on this Statement, contact Relevant Person:

Julett Culloty, Teach Íosagáin Manager, Teach Íosagáin, Rathmore, Co. Kerry. (064) 7761000