



Firkin Crane
THE HOME OF DANCE

FIRKIN CRANE CLG

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Update 09/04/15

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

We in Firkin Crane want to make sure that all children and young people who come to Firkin Crane are safe and are protected from harm. We call this our Child Protection Policy. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. It is central to the philosophy of the Firkin Crane that children and staff are unconditionally respected and kept safe from harm while using our services. It is important to ensure that normal practices and behaviour within our organization actively promote delivery of excellent services to children as individuals in a safe engaging environment where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

We will adhere to the recommendations of Children First: National Guidelines 2011 for the protection and Welfare of Children, published by the Department of Health and Children. We have implemented the following procedures detailing:

Code of behaviour for all staff:

- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse (see Appendix 1 for categories of abuse)
- Confidentiality
- Recruitment and selecting staff
- Managing and supervising staff
- Involvement of primary carers
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff
- Complaints and comments

- Incidents and accidents.

Review date April 2015

SIGNED Irene Ring (Operations Manager) DATE 09/04/2015

Firkin Crane's code of behaviour for staff is set out under the following headings:-

- Child Centred approach
- Good Practice
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Physical contact
- Health and safety

CHILD CENTRED APPROACH

- Treat all children and young people equally
- Listen to and respect children and young people
- Involve children and young people in decision-making, as appropriate
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability)
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal)
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere
- Offer constructive criticism when needed
- Treat all children and young people as individuals
- 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
- Agree group 'contract' before beginning session
- Encourage feedback from group
- 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 cognizant of a child's or young person's limitations, due to a medical condition for example
- Create an atmosphere of trust
Respect differences of, ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation

GOOD PRACTICE

- Register each child/young person (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact)
- Make primary carers, children/young people, visitors and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures
- Have emergency procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures
- Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs

- Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically
- Report any concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures.
- We have an anti-bullying policy. Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of anti-bullying policy. (For further information on anti-bullying policy see 'Our Duty to Care', Fact sheet 2, Department of Health and Children, 2002)
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour
- Evaluate work practices on a regular basis
- Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers
- Report and record any incidents and accidents
- Update and review policies and procedures regularly
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children
- Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved; observe appropriate gender balance for residential
- Ensure clear communication between artist and organizations; have guidelines and a prompt sheet for artists
- Have a written agreement with any external organization that an artist is working with; Do not 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 then make sure primary carers are informed
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think something you said may have caused 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 in inappropriate touching of any form
- Don't hit or physically chastise children/young people
- Don't socialize inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of the structured organizational activities

PHYSICAL CONTACT

- Seek consent of child/young person in relation to physical contact (except in an 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
- Manage any dangerous materials
- Provide a safe environment
- Be aware of accident procedures and follow accordingly

Firkin Crane's user groups are aware of the code of behaviour for children/young people.

REPORTING AND RECORDING PROCEDURES

Irene Ring 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 Irene Ring's responsibility to liaise with the Health Service Executive or Gardai where appropriate. Irene Ring can be contacted at (021) 4507487

Marie Lynch has been designated as deputy to Irene Ring and can be contacted at (021) 4507487.

RECORDING PROCEDURES

The Firkin crane will record the following information in relation to children and young people: The record book is located at reception office desk and the designated staff will record any concerns under the following headings:

- Suspicions
- Unfamiliar people entering the building
- Worrying observations
- Behavioural changes
- Actions and outcomes

DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

- Stay calm and listen to the child/young person, allow him or her enough time to say what s/he needs to say
- Don't use leading questions or 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 Firkin Crane has a very clear reporting procedure for matters relating to a child/young person's safety and welfare.

- The reporting procedure is known and accessible to all staff
- The person who expresses the concern will be involved and kept informed
- Actions and outcomes will be noted
- Record all details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure and the facts will be recorded in an incident book
- Any opinions should be supported by facts
- Inform the Designated Person or his or 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 further risk

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

The Firkin crane is committed to ensuring peoples, rights to confidentiality.

- However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that: 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
- Images of a child/young person will not be used for any reason without the permission of the parent/carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public performances)
- 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

The records are kept in a safe and confidential fireproof cabinet in reception area and the following people have access to records:

- Paul McCarthy
- Irene Ring
- Marie Lynch
- Ann Rea

RECRUITING AND SELECTING STAFF

The Firkin Crane 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 principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job (paid or voluntary)
- Posts will be advertised widely; We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel
- Candidates will be required to complete an application form;
- Candidates will be asked to sign a declaration form
- At least two written references that are recent, relevant, independent and verbal confirmed will be necessary
- Staff will be selected by a panel of at least two (or more) representatives through an interview process
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed
 - Some of the exclusions would include: -
 - Any child related convictions.
 - Refusal to sign application form and declaration form

- Insufficient documentary evidence of identification.
- Concealing information on one's suitability to working with children
- There will be a relevant probationary period of six weeks.
- All staff will be required to consent to Garda clearance, and where available this will be sought.

MANAGING AND SUPERVISING STAFF

To protect both staff (paid and voluntary) and children/young people, The Firkin Crane will undertake to provide induction, training and awareness of policies and procedures (as set out in our staff handbook) under the following headings:

New staff will:

- Take part in a mandatory induction training session
- Be made aware of the organization's code of conduct, child protection procedures and the identity and role of who has been designated to deal with issues of concern
- Undergo a probationary or trial period

All staff will:

- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices
- Be expected to have read and signed the child protection policy statement

INVOLVEMENT OF PRIMARY CARERS

The Firkin Crane is committed to being open with all primary carers. We undertake to:

- Advise primary carers of our child protection policy through weekly staff meetings
- Inform primary carers and schools of all activities and potential activities
- Issue contact/consent forms where relevant
- Comply with health and safety practices
- Operate child-centered 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

A copy of our Child Protection Policy will be given to User Groups of our organization. User Groups will brief parents of their own child protection policy.

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-centered organization, 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 organization to ensure the safety of their children
- Have a designated contact person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person's welfare

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Two separate procedures will be followed:

1. In respect of the child/young person Marie Lynch will deal with issues related to the child/young person.

2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made Irene Ring will deal with issues related to the staff member.

- The first priority is to ensure that no child or 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 will be followed. Both the primary carers and child/young person should be informed of actions planned and taken. The child/young person will be re-assured in a sympathetic manner by the designated person. Parents of child will be informed of all actions planned and taken
- The staff member will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation
- The staff member should be given the opportunity to respond
- The Chairperson/Head of the organization will be informed as soon as possible
- Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee should be taken in consultation with Health Service Executive and Gardai
- After consultation, the Chairperson/Head of organization should advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed by way of immediate suspension and investigation

COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS

Complaints or comments will be responded to within six weeks

- Irene Ring has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to:
- The Health Service Executive Social Worker
- The Community Garda (see reporting procedures section)
- Verbal complaints will be logged and responded to

INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS PROCEDURES

- The Firkin Crane maintains an up-to-date register of the contact details of all children/young people involved in the organization
- Children/young people's details should be cross-referenced between the incident book and file
- External organizations with whom your organization has dealings must provide proof that they have public liability insurance
- First-aid boxes are available and regularly re-stocked
- The location of the first-aid box is in the Reception; Ann Rea has completed First Aid Course

- Availability of first-aid are in accordance with the organization's Health and Safety guidelines
- The location of accident/incident books is located at Reception Office
- Children and young people must be advised of risks of dangerous material
- Record details of risky equipment used and take steps to minimize risk
- Take cognizance of responsibility for first-aid on off-site trips

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

The Firkin Crane holds a copy of *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*.