



Marsh's Library Child Protection Policy

Guiding Principles for the Protection and Welfare of Children

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1. Declaration of Guiding Principles

We are committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. We endeavour to provide learning experiences in a positive environment, where the welfare and safety of the child/young person is paramount. We listen to, respect and value children and young people and will ensure that no child is treated differently because of their gender identity, social or ethnic background, family status, sexual orientation, religion or disability.

Services/activities we provide to children and young people:

- Children visit the library in a tourist capacity under the supervision of their parents, carers or guardians. NB Children aged 16 and under cannot visit the library unaccompanied. There are a variety of activities which the children can take part in, such as: writing with quills and ink, taking photographs in our selfie corner, hunting for our historical minifigures hidden in the library, drawing in our creative area in the Old Reading Room. Many visit for cultural festivals such as St. Patrick's Festival and Bram Stoker Festival when we provide guided tours and special events aimed at a young audience.
- Children aged 17-18 can visit the library unattended for a daily guided/self-guided tour.
- School/Out-of-School groups/clubs visit the library to:
 - take part in organised educational activities, i.e. Engineers Week, Science Week, and Maths Week. Here we provide hour long sessions to match themes set out by the event organisers.

- learn about their local history and they can do this in a variety of ways, i.e. guided tours with short workshops afterwards or historical minifigure hunt.
- fulfill a literary objective e.g. *Fighting Words* has organised creative writing sessions, We have visiting authors & illustrators who provide workshops for groups of children for World Book Day.
- take part in competitions for various festivals or special days i.e. World Book Day.
- Take part in practical creative workshops .
- Creative workshops provided for children during school holidays where parental consent is required.
- The Education & Outreach Officer may visit and collaborate with other institutions and schools to provide outreach activities.

As a result of this we are categorised as a Relevant Service (see NB below) under the Children First Act 2015 and must then ensure that we have a legal responsibility to safeguard children from any harm. (*Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies the relevant services for the purposes of the Act. Marsh's Library is therefore categorised as: 5. Any work or activity which consists of the provision of - (a) educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children.*)

This document complies with the Children First Act 2015 and follows the recommendations of *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*.

These guiding principles apply to our Guardians & Governors, all staff, interns and volunteers. It sets out our procedures for ensuring that children in our care are safe, and the ways in which we will handle any incidents which occur on the premises of the Library.

Every member of staff in Marsh's Library is morally, ethically and legally obliged to do everything in their power to ensure the welfare and safety of the children/young persons in our care. We must ensure that nothing adverse happens to a child or young person in our care as a result of anything that we do **or fail to do**.

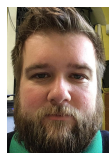
Our guiding principles were last reviewed in **March 2021**. They will be reviewed and updated, if necessary, every two years (unless new guidelines require immediate implementation). This policy will, therefore, next be reviewed in March 2023.

2. Key roles in safeguarding

Our Named, Designated Liaison & Mandated Persons



Julie Burke, Education & Outreach Officer, is the person responsible for leading the development of guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures, and ensuring that policies and procedures are consistent with best practice. **Julie Burke** is also the **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)**. The DLP will be responsible for receiving concerns about child safety and welfare and will liaise with statutory agencies responsible for child protection and welfare such as the duty social worker at Tusla or An Garda Síochána. Julie has completed HSE child protection training and completed the Tusla e-learning module.



Oisín Marsh, Library Visitor Services Supervisor, is the **Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)**. In the event of the absence of the DLP, will receive concerns about child welfare and contact the relevant bodies. Oisín has completed Tusla e-learning module.

Julie Burke, DLP & Oisín Marsh, DDLP are the **mandated persons** for the library as they have the responsibility of *'performing the child welfare and protection function of...recreational, cultural, educational and other bodies and organisations offering services to children.'*

(15. (i) of Appendix 1: List of Mandated Persons. A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns)

As mandated persons Julie and Oisín, are required under the Children First Act 2015:

- to report suspected or disclosed harm to a child, above a defined threshold, to Tusla
- To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report

3. Procedures for reporting child protection or welfare concerns

Identifying reasonable grounds for concern

Indicators for a child protection or welfare concern may be:

- Evidence that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to have been caused in any other way, e.g. an injury or behaviour.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.

(Source: A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns, TUSLA)

Categories and indicators of abuse

Neglect

Neglect is the most frequent reported category of abuse. This is when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally.

Some features of child neglect are:

- child being left alone without adequate care or supervision
- malnourishment, lacking food
- non-organic failure to thrive
- failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation
- inattention to basic hygiene

Emotional

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between parent/carer and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms. Examples may include:

- the imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming

- conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions
- emotional unavailability of the child's parent/carer
- unresponsiveness of the parent/carer and/or 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 himself or herself in a certain way
- under- or over-protection of the child
- failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the child's cognitive and emotional development
- use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures
- exposure to domestic violence
- exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology
- emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour

Physical

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents. Physical abuse can involve:

- severe physical punishment
- beating, slapping, hitting or kicking
- pushing, shaking or throwing
- pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling
- terrorising with threats
- observing violence
- use of excessive force in handling
- deliberate poisoning
- suffocation
- fabricated/induced illness
- allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child

Sexual

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or that of others. Examples may include:

- exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child
- intentional touching or molesting of the child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation
- sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
- sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse

Complicating factors and circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm

Parent or carer factors:

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Addiction
- Mental health issues
- Parental disability issues
- Domestic violence

Child factors:

- Age, gender, sexuality, disability, mental health issues, communication difficulties, exploitation, previous abuse, young carer

Community factors:

- Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction
- Culture-specific practices such as, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, honour-based violence

Environmental factors:

- Housing issues
- Children not living with their parents
- Poverty
- Bullying
- Internet and social media-related concerns

(Source: *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*)

Responding to concerns

Any concern, that is witnessed or heard by a member of staff, intern or volunteer, must be reported to the DLP (or DDLP in the absence of the DLP). If reasonable grounds for concern exist, the DLP will report to the Tusla duty social worker.

NB:

- **Advice and guidance can be given by the Tusla duty social worker if the DLP/DDLP or member of staff/intern or volunteer are unsure of whether a report should be made.**
- **If the DLP/DDLP decides not to make a report to Tusla, the member of staff, intern or volunteer is still entitled to make a report to Tusla under *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of children*.**

The DLP will make a record of all concerns on Marsh's Library's Child Protection & Welfare Report Form, whether it has been reported to Tusla or not.

Responding to a child/young person who discloses abuse

When dealing with a disclosure from a child/young person, we will:

- Listen to the child/young person in a calm manner, allowing him or her enough time to say what s/he needs to say. We will not use leading questions, make suggestions, or put words into a child's mouth.

- Not make the child/young person repeat the details unnecessarily.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have taken the right action and that we will only speak to people who know how to respond to the situation, we will not promise to keep secret anything revealed to us.
- Not express any opinions about the alleged abuser.
- Explain to the child/young person what will happen next in an appropriate and sensitive way according to their age.

Responding to adults who disclose childhood abuse

If an adult discloses retrospective abuse, we will:

- Follow the same guidelines as above.
- Make a report to Tusla, as there may be a potential future risk to children from the person against whom there is an allegation. This will be done by completing a **Retrospective Abuse Form**.

Information sharing and record keeping

- All significant concerns, allegations and disclosures will be recorded and kept securely and safely by being stored in the Library's safe.
- All records will be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- These records will be shared with Tusla or Gardai if ever a child protection or welfare issue arises.

Confidentiality

- Information must be shared with the appropriate bodies i.e. Tusla/Gardai in the best interests of the child/young person. Informing the appropriate statutory bodies or individuals does not constitute a breach of confidentiality or data protection legislation.
- **Fears about sharing information must not get in the way of promoting the welfare and protection of children.**
- We cannot promise to keep secret any disclosure by a child/young person in our care.
- Parents and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared with above bodies, unless in doing so the child/young person is likely to be put at further risk.
- Records for any Child Protection issues will be stored in the safe and the DLP, Deputy DLP and senior management will have access to these records alone.
- These records will be kept on file indefinitely.

Responding to allegations of abuse made against workers/volunteers

The DLP will then:

- Contact the appropriate Tusla agency of where the child resides.
- Contact the Director of the Library and the Chairman of the Governors and Guardians to inform them of the disclosure.
- Decide whether or not to discuss the concern with the child's primary carer(s). Parents, legal guardians or carers should be made aware of a report to Tusla, unless the DLP believes that such information would be likely to put the child/young person at further risk.
- Share information with Marsh's Library staff only on a strictly 'need to know' basis.
- If there are reasonable grounds for concern, the DLP will formally contact Tusla and complete the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form. Formal reports to Tusla can be made over the phone and then followed-up with the submission of the written standard reporting form. Reports should be made to Tusla without delay.

- If the DLP or Deputy DLP is not available for any reason, the member of staff to whom the disclosure has been made can contact Tusla directly, and also contact the Chairman of the Governors and Guardians, who is always the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin. The Archbishop can be contacted at The See House, 17 Temple Road, Dartry.
- In case of emergencies outside Tusla hours, the staff member to whom the disclosure has been made should contact the Gardai.
- In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/vulnerable person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardai first and then report to Tusla.

Reporting allegations of abuse made against workers/volunteers to Tusla

If an allegation is made against a member of staff the DLP will deal with the child/young person concerned as per the guidelines outlined above.

It is important to state that if a complaint is made against one of our colleagues, our overriding concern is for the welfare of the child/young person. There can be no way in which 'loyalty' to the Library or a colleague can ever override the protection of a child.

In addition to the normal procedures outlined above, when there is a complaint against a member of staff, the Director of the Library will deal with the member of staff in line with the standard organisational disciplinary procedures. The Director will inform the employee/volunteer of the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her. The Director will also outline the nature of the allegation. The employee will have an opportunity to respond to the allegation. This response will be recorded in writing and passed on to duty social worker at Tusla or/and An Garda Síochána.

The protective action should be proportionate to the level of risk to the child. Any action taken by the Director against the employee/intern/volunteer should be guided by agreed procedures, the applicable employment contract, and the rules of natural justice.

The child's parents/legal guardians/carers will be informed by the Director of actions planned and taken.

The Director will liaise closely with Tusla and the Gardai where appropriate to ensure that any investigations launched by them are not undermined or hindered by staff at Marsh's Library in any way.

4. Working safely with children and young people

Procedures for recruiting and selecting workers, interns and volunteers

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 principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job.
- Posts will be advertised widely.
- We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel.
- Candidates will be required to complete an application form and provide to forms of ID.
- Candidates will be asked to sign a declaration that there is nothing in their past which would disqualify them from working with children.
- At least two references that are recent, relevant, independent and verbally 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 criteria for excluding a candidate would include:

- Any child-related conviction.
- Refusal to sign application form and declaration.
- Insufficient documentary evidence of identification.
- Concealing information on one's suitability to working with children.

There will be a six-month probationary period for all new appointments.

Vetting by the National Vetting Bureau

All staff, interns and volunteers will be required to consent to Garda vetting, and this will be sought via the Garda Vetting Service provided by 'Create' of which Marsh's Library is a member.

Marsh's Library will not employ any individual who declines or refuses to consent to checks by the Garda Vetting Service.

Child safeguarding training strategy

The DLP and DDLP:

- as mandated persons, will attend appropriate training courses to keep updated with their statutory responsibilities under the Children First Act 2015
- will meet twice a year to discuss child safeguarding procedures and to keep updated with any new developments, to update records on workers and volunteers garda vetting certificates and renewals and to identify training needs
- will deliver in-house training consistent with *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Children First Act 2015* and *Tusla's Best Practice Principles for Organisations in Developing Children First Training Programmes*

All staff, interns and volunteers:

- will be given a copy of the guiding principles before they start working/volunteering in the library so they are acquainted with the persons responsible for and procedures in place for safeguarding and welfare of children.
- In-house training will be used to ensure all staff, interns and volunteers are familiar with our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures. As new members of staff, interns or volunteers join us, individual or small group in-house training will take place as soon as possible from their start date
- If new procedures are put in place the staff, interns and volunteers will be briefed immediately and refresher in house training will be given if necessary.
- All staff, interns and volunteers will be encouraged to complete the Tusla elearning module during their working hours online at:
<http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/>
- Refresher in-house training will take place every two years.

Training will include:

- Guidance on how to recognise child abuse
- Guidance on responding appropriately to child protection or welfare concerns
- How we as staff will work together to protect children/young people
- Information on our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures

- Collaborative work on hypothetical scenarios to consolidate our understanding and knowledge of the correct procedures to follow

Training Records will include:

- Dates and names of any training programmes delivered, and who has attended
- A list of workers and volunteers who did not attend training and need to complete it
- Training programmes completed by each worker/intern/volunteer and any certificates
- A signed receipt of all the workers/interns/volunteers who have been given a copy of our declaration of guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures

Safe management of activities

We will ensure that all activities being undertaken in the library are appropriate for the ages and abilities of the children/young persons attending. No child will be excluded from these activities. We will make sure that equipment and materials meet appropriate safety and quality standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of the children, and that protective equipment will be used if necessary. All activities will be risk assessed and well planned to negate any possibility of injury.

Keeping a register of children and young people

If children are attending a workshop in the library, parents/guardians are required to provide full information on their child/children including address, contact numbers, emergency contact numbers. Medical details and any individual needs will also be required. In addition to this they will be required to sign and date a consent form allowing their child/children to take part in the activity.

These details will be kept in a file and be at hand during the workshop and a copy will also be in the office for any assistance needed in contacting a parent/guardian/carer.

Maintaining good record-keeping

Records will be kept of:

- Attendance
- Accidents (also recorded in the Accidents book)
- Incidents
- Consent forms
- Any complaints or grievances

Health and safety responsibilities

We will ensure that when children are on site for a workshop that:

- children are briefed about safety at all times
- toilet facilities are accessible and meet health and safety standards
- fire precautions are in place
- first aid facilities and equipment are sufficiently stocked and in the correct place
- there is access to a telephone
- equipment being used is checked
- insurance cover is adequate

Accidents and Incidents

Marsh's has a Health and Safety Policy. Procedures to follow in the event of an accident can be found in the **Marsh's Library Governance Manual: Health and Safety Policy**.

First aid boxes are available and located in the kitchen & Old Reading Room. They are regularly re-stocked.

Accident Procedure for children/young persons

- Teachers/parents/carers will be asked to inform us of any medical information which may be important in relation to their students working in or visiting the library, e.g. allergies.
- Parents/guardians/carers of children attending workshops will be asked for consent to administer first aid in the event of an accident on the consent form e.g. permission to apply plasters/bandages. They will be contacted as soon as possible if first aid is administered.
- In case of a head injury, parents/guardians/carers will be asked to collect their child/young person immediately as a precautionary measure.
- All medical attention given to a child or young person will be recorded and logged in an accidents book and will be communicated with the parent/guardian/carer when appropriate.

Safe supervision of children and young people

We will:

- Make clear in advance of any workshop or class our expectations concerning children's behaviour. These expectations will be communicated in advance to parents/guardians/carers. They will be made clear to children on their arrival at Marsh's.
- Ensure good planning & preparation for activities/workshops with a fully-trained staff member supervising the activity/workshop at all times.
- Have emergency/first-aid procedures and supplies in place.
- Ensure that contact details for all parents/guardians/carers are available to the member of staff supervising the activity/workshop & a copy with the office.
- Provide a fun, safe, encouraging and respectful environment for children/young persons.
- Treat all children/young persons equally, regardless of their ability, gender, special needs, culture, race or religion.
- Listen to and respect children's contributions, opinions and decisions.
- Respect the personal space of children/young persons.

Safe adult-child ratios

We expect that appropriate adult/child ratios are followed by all our visiting school/Out-of-school groups.

If children are attending a workshop without parents/guardians/carers, we follow the national guidelines:

- **1 adult** for every **6 pupils** in school years 1 to 3 (ages 6 to 9)
- **1 adult** for every **10-15 pupils** in school years 4 to 6 (ages 10-12)
- **1 adult** for every **15-20 pupils** at secondary level (ages 13+)

NB: There will always be two members of staff (or a staff member & intern/volunteer) supervising an activity/workshop. If an external provider is delivering a workshop this is not included in this ratio and is an additional adult.

External providers - whose reporting procedures apply?

If an outside provider attends the library to work with a group of children/young persons, the provider must be garda vetted through their agency or organisation, however they will be provided with our own guidelines and procedures which will take precedent as the children's care will be our responsibility. If the provider is an individual and is self employed we will require them to be garda vetted through our own agency (Create).

If the Education & Outreach Officer, Librarian or Director are working in collaboration on an event, project or other initiative it will be made clear prior to the work which organisation's guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures will be followed, if at all different. Everyone involved will be made aware of their responsibilities in relation to child safeguarding and welfare.

Use of Photography, Video and/or Social/Digital Media

- No member of staff, intern or volunteer will use their own mobile device or camera to take an image of a child in the library.
- Any images where parental consent is given and signed will be taken with the library camera/ipad and once uploaded to social media will be deleted from the said device.
- No member of staff, intern or volunteer will ever contact a child outside of work on any social media site or app or via any email account.

Managing Workers, Interns and Volunteers

Code of behaviour for workers and volunteers

We will

- Always use appropriate language.
- Wear appropriate clothing.
- Keep close watch for any incidents of verbal, emotional or physical bullying or abuse of children attending workshops or classes.
- Pay attention to any signs that children/young persons attending workshops or seminars are subject to verbal, emotional or physical bullying or abuse in social settings outside Marsh's Library.
- Try to address sensitively anything said or done by a member of staff or child that may have caused offence to a child/young person.
- Evaluate our activities/workshops regularly to ensure good and continually improved practice.
- Report and record any incidents or accidents involving the children/young people in our care.
- Inform parents/carers of any incidents concerning their child/children which occurred before, during or after a workshop or activity at Marsh's Library.
- Report **ANY** concerns regarding child welfare and safety to the DLP/DDLP.

We Will Not:

- Provide a workshop or class without at least one other member of staff present.
- Leave children/young persons unattended or unsupervised.
- Enter a toilet with a child/young person.
- Spend time alone in a closed or locked room with a child/young person.
- Be passive in relation to concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- Let problems within a group of children, or between staff and a child or group of children, get out of control.
- Get involved with, or seek to initiate 'horseplay' or any inappropriate touching of children/young people.
- Use inappropriate language. Language of a crude, offensive or sexual nature is unacceptable.
- Touch a child in any way other than a handshake as a greeting. The only times at which it may be appropriate or essential to touch a child is in a medical emergency (e.g. cleaning or applying dressings to wounds); to ensure a child's safety (e.g. stop them physically touching something that will injure them); or if another child's safety is at risk due to the behaviour of another.
- Give a lift in a vehicle to a child/young person.

- Socialise in person or electronically with children/young persons outside of Marsh's working hours.
- Take photographs or videos of children/young persons for our website and/or social media without parental/carer consent.
- Allow any allegations made by a child about emotional, physical or sexual abuse to go unrecorded or ignored.
- Contact a child via an app, a social media platform or an email account.

Dealing with a concern about another worker/volunteer

Marsh's Library fosters an open and supportive environment within a small team where staff, interns and volunteers feel comfortable and safe to pass on any concerns about colleagues behaviour. This may include a breach of the code of conduct, a breach of professional standards or codes of ethics or suspected or witnessed abuse.

If a worker/volunteer has a concern, they will:

- Bring it to the attention of the DLP/DDLP or senior management team.
- Make a record of the concern, if this constitutes a child protection concern the reporting procedures for child safeguarding or welfare will be followed.
- Contact Tusla or An Garda Síochána directly **ONLY if they feel worried about bringing the concern to the attention of the DLP/DDLP or management**

Disciplinary procedures

Staff and volunteers can access this in Section 9 of Marsh's Library Governance Code Manual for all disciplinary procedures and appeals against disciplinary action.

5. Procedures for sharing our guiding principles and safeguarding procedures

Teachers/leaders and parents/carers can access our Safeguarding statement and guiding principles available on our website via the heading [Governance](#) and can be given a hard copy of these upon request. A hard copy will also be available to read with the staff at the entrance for anyone who requests it.

Empowering children and young people to claim their rights

We will promote amongst our staff, interns and volunteers a culture which will enable and support children/young people to:

- take an active participation in their experience in the library
- to be inquisitive and to feel comfortable in speaking out without the fear of suffering emotional harm
- know that their opinions and questions are listened to, relevant and valued
- share their feelings and opinions about their experience in the library

Anti-bullying policy

An anti bullying policy can be accessed by all staff, interns and volunteers in the Governance.. An Anti-bullying policy for children should be drawn up in collaboration with children and young

persons, which is difficult to achieve for the library with mostly one off visits. We will however provide schools/out-of-school groups with an anti bullying agreement of values, rights and responsibilities that we can expect and that children/young persons can read and discuss prior to their visit to the library. They can discuss, amend or add to these as a group when they arrive and will be given an opportunity to respond during their introduction to the library. Children/young persons attending a workshop will also receive a framework to read with their parents/guardians/carers at home and can respond individually during introductions at the start of a workshop.

A framework will include:

Elements - The way we treat each other, how we will manage difficulties and conflict, health & safety

Consequences - Encouraging young people to recognise the logical effects on others through their actions, encourage taking responsibility of their own actions, building and maintaining a positive relationship

Rights and Responsibilities - Mutual respect, respect for property, self respect, fairness and honesty, care and consideration for others, self-discipline

Values - The right to be safe, the right to a fair hearing, the right to be heard, the right to be treated with respect, the right to be able to work, learn and play without unnecessary disruption

(Headings taken from 'Let's Beat Bullying' by National Youth Council of Ireland)

Guidelines for working in partnership with parents/guardians and children/young people and families

Wherever possible we will work closely with parents/guardians/carers to help safeguard children and young people visiting the library in particular for a workshop/event. The first point of contact should be **Julie Burke** (Education & Outreach Officer and DLP) and if not available, **Oisín Marsh** (Library Visitor Service Supervisor and DDLP).

We will:

- Endeavour to involve family members who play a key role in the child's life to form a positive relationship.
- Provide parents/guardians with full information on the event their child/young person is taking part in, including our declaration of guiding principles & anti-bullying agreement.
- Allow parents/guardians/carers to feel comfortable in informing us of any issues that the child/young person may have to form a better knowledge and understanding of the child. But at the same time ensuring that we respect their right to confidentiality and inform anyone of any issues on a need-to-know basis.
- Foster an open door policy and be as informal as possible to form mutual trust & to reassure parents/guardians/carers that the welfare of their child/children is paramount.
- Make sure parents/guardians/carers know that they will be consulted/spoken to of any concern that may arise (NB Unless we feel that the child/young person is at risk of further harm).
- Give parents/guardians/carers an opportunity to respond to any concerns, or complaints if necessary.

Communications strategy

We will:

Display

- our guidelines for child safeguarding & welfare will be displayed in the shared staff area (i.e. kitchen) for staff, interns and volunteers with photos of the DLP and DDLP.
- these guidelines on the library website for teachers/leaders & parents/guardians/carers
- events and visiting school groups are displayed on a weekly calendar for all staff, interns and

volunteers in the kitchen and electronically for permanent staff and interns with access to the calendar.

Inform

- other organisations of our guiding principles if working collaboratively and agree protocols
- children/young people whenever appropriate of their right to be protected, listened to and to have their views taken into consideration

Ask

- for appropriate information and be mindful of confidentiality
- for evidence that parents/guardians/carers have been informed of our guiding principles on consent forms
- for feedback to find out what was successful, could be improved upon or changed to inform future events/activities for children/young people

Complaints procedure

- A complaint given to any employee in relation to Child Protection will be directed to and managed by our DLP, and, in her absence, the Deputy DLP.
- All complaints should be put in writing.
- Complaints will be responded to as soon as possible. The response must not exceed a period of 2 weeks
- Staff members have a right to be informed in writing how the complaint they brought to the attention of the DLP was dealt with. If the staff member is unhappy in any way with how the complaint was handled, they can bring the matter to the attention of the Director or the Chairman of the Governors and Guardians.

Defining a complaint and who can make a complaint

Complaints may occur in response to:

- An alleged breach of the code of behaviour by a worker/intern/volunteer
- A particular practice issue
- Perceived poor attitude of a worker
- A child/young person feeling unhappy about a particular incident or event
- A parent/guardian/carer feeling unhappy about a particular incident or event involving their child
- Dissatisfaction in relation to an aspect of the service being provided

The library will be open to receiving complaints from: Parents/guardians/carers, a child/young person, an external agency or organisation (e.g. school), a member of the visiting public or another who may have a legitimate concern.

NB Issues raised by staff members/interns/volunteers will be brought to the attention of the relevant line manager

Publicising the complaints procedure

We will:

- encourage visiting school/out-of-school groups to evaluate their visit to the library, what they enjoyed/learnt and what could be done better. This can also provide a teacher/leader the opportunity to inform us of any complaints. This form can be found on the Education page of our website and will also be sent via email to the organiser of the visit.

Processing a complaint

After a person has made a complaint they can reasonably expect to be told the actions taken so as

long as child safety and confidentiality allow. If the complainant is unhappy they will be directed to bring the matter to the attention of the Director of the library or the Chairman of the Governors and Guardians.

They will also be informed of their right to bring the matter to the attention of Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

6. Implementing, monitoring and reviewing our guiding principles and safeguarding procedures

Step 1 - Explore/review, plan and resource

The DLP and DDLP will collaborate closely throughout the year and meet formally each April to develop and review the current practice in regards to child safeguarding and welfare. This may include becoming aware of new legislation, providing more services for children/young persons or becoming aware of failures in existing practices. We will then meet with the senior management team to discuss resourcing of any changes required.

Step 2 - Implement and operate

An implementation plan will be in place to discuss and review our guidelines and procedures in the above meetings. This will include:

- aims and objectives
- how these will be achieved
- who will take responsibility for these specific tasks
- any resources that are needed
- a target date for completion

Step 3 - Review and evaluate

We may from time to time use tools to review our performance in terms of safeguarding children, these may include questionnaires to teachers/leaders of school/out-of-school groups or observations by senior management.

In addition to this, any complaints, child protection concerns and feedback from children/young people, parents/guardians/carers, teachers/leaders will be collated and analysed to inform the implementation of procedures and how effective they are.