



Child Protection Policy Document

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is:

Brid O Callaghan- Chairperson

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) is:

Mary O Callaghan- Cast Liaison Officer

Emergency Contact Details

- Social Worker at St. Margaret's Road, Killarney,
064 66 36030
- Social Welfare Department, HSE Community Services,
Rathass, Tralee
066 7121566.
- Killarney Garda Station
064 66 31222

- Killarney Musical Society is committed to safeguarding all children and young people under 18 years of age in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can rehearse and perform.
- We are committed to child centred practice in all our work with children and young people.
- We recognise the right of children to be protected from harm, treated with respect, listened to and have their views taken into consideration in matters that affect them.

As part of the policy Killarney Musical Society will:-

- Appoint both a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and a Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) for dealing with child protection concerns
- All committee members and volunteers who supervise children will complete the Introduction to Children First eLearning Module and the secretary will keep a copy of certificates.
- All committee members and volunteers who supervise children will be Garda vetted for Killarney Musical Society and Certificates will be kept on file by the secretary.
- Provide supervision for children attending rehearsals and the show. We will abide by supervision ratios of 1 adult for 12 children.
- Share information about the Child Protection and Welfare Policy with families and children on our website.
- On registration members and parents of junior members will sign that they have read our Child Protection Policy and Safety Statement. We will email it to any member of parent of a member on request.
- This policy will be reviewed each time an incident is reported or every 3 years if that is sooner.
- Work and cooperate with the relevant statutory agencies as required.

Overall Responsibility of Society Members and Volunteers

Although the DLP and the DDL have a lead on issues relating to the protection and welfare of children, it is the responsibility of all members, volunteers and employees to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children in the care of the society.

All members, volunteers and employees are required to read, understand and sign off on the Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

Under the Children First Act 2015, certain people must by law report to Tusla any incidences of harm that meet or exceed a specified threshold. These people are known as ‘mandated persons’ under the legislation. Mandated persons are people who have ongoing contact with children and who because of their qualifications, training and experience are in a key position to protect children from harm.

List of Mandated people Not complete

Lucy O Mahony

Linda O Donoghue
Mary O Callaghan
Sorcha O Connor
Amanda Spillane

Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015:

- To report harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla.
- To help Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

The Children First Act 2015 defines harm as follows: 'harm' means, in relation to a child— (a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or (b) sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances, or otherwise.

Definition of a child:

The Child Care Act 1991 defines a child as a 'person under the age of 18 years other than a person who is or has been married' (S.2.1).

Section 1

Killarney Musical Society is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people.

This work is primarily involved in the production of a musical show and performing in other settings that we ourselves organise.

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 the Children's First Act (2015): 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 senior members;
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse
- Confidentiality
- Involvement of primary carers
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by members
- Complaints and comments
- Incidents and accidents

Section 2 - Code of behaviour for senior members

A code of behaviour for senior members is an essential element of this organisation's Child Protection Policy. This will help to create a supportive environment for members to provide a child-centred approach for children and young people. A senior member of the society is any member 18 years or over.

The code of behaviour can be categorised 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.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability).
- Use appropriate forms of communication (physical and verbal).
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere.
- 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.
 - Respect the male and female dressing rooms
 - Bring own refreshments during rehearsals and performances
 - Refrain from using phones and social media
 - Refrain from taking photographs –only the musical society photographer is allowed to put photos of the show up on social media.
 - respectful behaviour is essential back stage
 - Respect adult members working with them.
- 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 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, allergies, attendance, and emergency contact). All members of the society under the age of 18 must have a consent form signed by a parent or guardian in order to participate in a society's production.
- This form will also act as a photography and video recording consent for the purpose of promotion, documentation and archival purposes of the production nationally and otherwise.
- Make primary carers, children/young people, members and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures.

- Have fire safety emergency procedures in place and make all members aware of these procedures. (see Safety Statement)
- Be inclusive of children and young people with special needs.
- Report any concerns to the DLP or DDLP.
- Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of our Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy.
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour.
- Evaluate practices on a regular basis.
- Report and record any incidents and accidents and report at all committee meetings.
- Update and review policies and procedures every three years.
- 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.
- Act on all concerns.
- Do not transport a child who is not a family member under any circumstances.
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then address it in a sensitive manner.

Inappropriate behaviour

- Do not spend time alone with children/young people.
- Do not use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive communication.
- Do not single out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, unwelcome focus or attention.
- Do not purchase alcohol, cigarettes or illegal substances for anyone under the age of 18.

Physical Contact

- Do not allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form, horseplay or any unnecessary physical touching.
- Do not hit or physically chastise children/young people
- Do not socialise inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities

Health and safety

- Do not leave children unattended or unsupervised
- Manage any dangerous materials
- Provide a safe environment
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly.
 - Administer minor first aid if parents have given written permission.
 - Ring parent.

Section 3-Code of behaviour for junior members

- A junior member of the society is any individual under the age of 18.
- All children/young people and adults are required to follow the code of behaviour of the society.
- On registration parents will sign a form to confirm they and their child have read the code and agree to abide by it.

All children/young people must have a form of consent signed by a parent or guardian when they first join the society. The signing of the form allows them to officially partake in the production and allow their image to be photographed, recorded and reproduced for promotional purposes. If parents/guardians do not want their child to be photographed for promotional purposes they must inform the Chairperson of the committee and sign the appropriate forms.

Children/young people are to behave in an appropriate, courteous and kind manner at all times at rehearsals and during performances. The society does not tolerate bullying. Our Code of Behaviour and anti-Bullying Policy will be adhered to. In particular we ask children to :

- Respect the male and female dressing rooms
- Bring own refreshments during rehearsals and performances
- Refrain from using phones and social media
- Refrain from taking photographs –the musical society photographer is the only person to put photos up on social media.
- Respectful behaviour is essential back stage
- Respect adult members working with them.
- The consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and/or illegal substances by members under 18 years of age is illegal. Any member under 18 years of age who breaks this rule whilst under the supervision of Killarney Musical Society will have their parents/guardians contacted and will be removed from the society with immediate effect.
- Junior members of the society who partake in the adult chorus are welcome to join in some social activities, i.e. parties, AIMS ball, provided they have a parent/guardian to supervise them.

Section 4 – Reporting procedures

Abuse is categorised under the following headings

- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual Abuse

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

- (i) Specific indication from the child or young person that s/he has been abused
- (ii) An account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused
- (iii) Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way
- (iv) 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 it 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]
- (v) Consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect

Brid O Callaghan DLP and Mary O Callaghan DDLP have been designated as the people to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's or young person's safety and welfare.

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk pending Child & Family Agency intervention. In the event of an emergency and unavailability of a Duty Social Worker, the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána

If the child has made a disclosure, a written record will be made. If there are other grounds for concern that the child has been abused or neglected, a written record will be made

If there are reasonable grounds for concern the DLP will complete the Standard Report Form (in Child Protection folder) without delay and send it to the Duty Social Work Team in the Child and Family Agency (See below for contact details).

Duty Social Work Team, Tusla - Child & Family Agency	An Garda Síochána
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child and Family Agency, Social Work Dept, St. Margaret's Road, Killarney, 064 66 36030	Killarney Garda Station, New Road 064 66 31222

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Welfare Department, HSE Community Services, Rathass, Tralee <p>066 71 21566.</p>	
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- If the concern is urgent and the child is in immediate danger, the report to the Child & Family Agency will be made by telephone and followed up with the completed Standard Report Form.
- In the event of an emergency and the unavailability of a Duty Social Worker the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána
- The DLP may use the process of informal consultation with the Duty Social worker to discuss the response to a child protection & welfare concern and whether or not it warrants reasonable grounds for concern. Informal consultation is carried out without providing the name of the family or the child. If advised to do so, a formal report will be made.
- The DLP will record information about the concern, informal consultation (if carried out) and details regarding if and when the parents were informed.

Recording procedures

Killarney Musical Society will have an incident book for recording concerns about the protection of children and young people. This book will be kept with the society's Secretary and the DLP- both will have access to the incident book.

K.M.S. will report on child safety issues at the beginning of each meeting.

Members will 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 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 (in an age-appropriate way)

(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)

The most appropriate person will discuss the concern or consult with parents/primary carers. Parents, carers or responsible adults will be made aware of a report to the Health Service Executive unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk.

In case of emergencies outside of Health Service Executive Social Work Department hours, the Gardaí will be contacted. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/ young person, the Gardaí will be contacted.

Section 5 - Confidentiality statement

We in Killarney Musical Society are 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.
- Parents/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 consent of the parent/ carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/ videos will not be used at public performances). All members under the age of 18 will be required to have a parent or guardian to sign a consent form when they join the society in order to uphold this.

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 Gardaí where there is a child protection welfare concern .
- Have the Designated Liaison Person or the Deputy Designated Liaison Person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person's welfare.

Section 6 - Dealing with allegations

In the event of allegations being made, the protection of the child/young person is the first and paramount consideration.

Killarney Musical Society has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and the alleged person.

The same person will not have responsibility for dealing with the child/young person welfare issues and the alleged person.

An allegation will be assessed promptly and carefully. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, a formal report to the Health Service Executive will be made.

The reporting procedures outlined in Section 4 of these guidelines will be followed.

Killarney Musical Society will maintain a close liaison with the Health Service Executive and the Gardaí.

Members will ensure that their actions do not undermine or frustrate any assessment or investigation by Health Service Executive and the Gardaí.

If allegations are made against the Designated Liaison Person, then the Deputy Designated Person will be contacted.

The reporting procedures outlined in Section 3 of these guidelines will be followed. Both the primary carers and child/young person will be informed of actions planned and taken. The child/ young person will be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner.

The alleged person will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation

The alleged person will be given the opportunity to respond.

Any action following an allegation of abuse, will be taken in consultation with Health Service Executive and Gardaí.

After consultation, the chairperson will advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed in consultation with the Health Service Executive and Gardaí.

Section 7 - Complaints and comments procedures

In the event of complaints or comments:

- Complaints or comments will be responded to within 1 - 2 weeks by the DLP and DDLP.
- Verbal complaints will be logged in the incident book and responded to promptly.

Accidents procedure

Killarney Musical Society will maintain an up-to-date register of the contact details of all children/young people involved in the group. All society members under the age of 18 must have a consent form signed by a parent or guardian in order to participate in productions.

- First-aid boxes will be available and regularly re-stocked. (Phil)
- The location of the first-aid box(es) will be made known to members.
- Availability of first-aid will be in accordance with the organisation's Health and Safety guidelines. The location of accident/incident books will be made known to members.

Parents will be contacted if an accident occurs.

- Children and young people will be advised of risks of dangerous material.

The Child Protection Policy will be available to all members, children and parents involved with Killarney Musical Society.

The policy will be reviewed every three years with the next review date being August 2025.