



## **Child Safeguarding Statement**

The Gaiety School of Acting – The National Theatre School of Ireland is a Not for Profit organisation founded in 1986 by the internationally renowned theatre director Joe Dowling, in response to the lack of full time actor training programmes in Ireland at that time. The School is now widely regarded as the country's premier training facility for actors.

Our policy is to train actors for theatre, film and television. The School has a broad offering; ranging from its two-year full time intensive actor training, adult One Year Part Time training, adult 10 week courses, weekend workshops to its successful Young Gaiety Drama classes for under 18s. The school also has a broad corporate and outreach offering.

We engage and work directly with young people through the following activities:

- Drama workshops
- Rehearsals
- Theatre productions and performances
- Auditions
- Camps
- Youth participation including online and in person focus groups, consultation, one on ones etc.
- We communicate with young people online and via email and have procedures in place to manage this

### **We believe the following:**

1. Our priority to ensure the welfare and safety of every child and young person who attends our school 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, race, ability, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

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.

Our Relevant Person is **Nicole McCarthy**

Contact details: [coordinator@gaietyschool.com](mailto:coordinator@gaietyschool.com)

## Risk assessment of potential harm to children whilst availing of our services:

Note: Section 2 of the Children's First Act 2015 defines harm as follows: '*(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*'.

We have carried out an assessment of any potential harm to a child/ young person 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	Procedures in place to manage identified risk
1	Risk of a young person being harmed by GSA personnel	Procedure for safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers to work with children including procedures for Garda Vetting. All personnel receive child protection training annually. Policy for the supervision and training and support of staff and volunteers. Code of Behaviour to be adhered to for staff and volunteers.
2	Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by GSA personnel	All personnel are garda vetted and trained in child protection annually. They are also provided with procedures for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla, including roles and responsibilities of the Designated Liaison Person and Mandated Persons.
3	Risk of harm due to bullying of a young person	Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour for all students to be adhered to. For all Youth Companies a group contract is created with participants on commencement of programmes.
4	Risk of harm not being recognised by GSA personnel	Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training, induction and information including the identification of the occurrence of harm. Annual training in Child Protection training for all personnel

5	Risk of harm caused to a young person due to an insufficient number of trained staff present whilst participating at a GSA event or programme	Policy on Adult/ Young People Ratios Code of Behaviour for Staff
6	Risk of continued harm arising from the mishandling of an allegation of misconduct or abuse by a young person against a member of GSA personnel	Procedure for reporting and managing allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers
7	Risk of harm caused by GSA personnel communicating with young people in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner	Code of Behaviour for Staff which includes a policy on communication with students
8	Risk of harm caused to a young person by GSA personnel through inappropriate use of video/images taken by a staff member / participant while attending a GSA programme	Photography Policy and permission Code of behaviour for staff Student handbook and group contract with participants regarding respect within the school. No phones allowed within the classroom
9	Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of young people's personal data	Data Protection Policy Privacy Policy
10	Risk of harm caused to young person through an online learning format	Code of Behaviour for students and GSA Online Learning Etiquette, ensuring same class ethics upheld regardless of classes held online or in person
11	Risk of harm caused to young person through exposure to non age appropriate content or materials within classes or other GSA activity	Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training, induction and information including the identification of what is age appropriate material. Code of Behaviour for staff

## **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. 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 services.

- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Health and Safety Policies and Procedures
- Student Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy
- 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 The Gaiety School of Acting.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available on request.

## **Procedure for the Management of Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct Against Workers / Volunteers**

- Any allegation, concern or suspicion of abuse or misconduct against a worker or volunteer in relation to a child availing of the service will be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.
- All allegations or concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). Where the allegation concerns the DLP, it must be reported to the Deputy DLP or the Chairperson / relevant senior officer.
- The safety and welfare of the child is the primary consideration. The DLP will ensure that any immediate protective actions necessary to safeguard the child are taken.
- The DLP will assess the allegation in line with Children First: National Guidance and, where reasonable grounds for concern exist, will make a report to Tusla – Child and Family Agency without delay. Where appropriate, An Garda Síochána will also be notified.
- The organisation will not investigate the allegation internally or interview the child or the person against whom the allegation has been made.
- The worker or volunteer will be informed that an allegation has been made against them, unless advised otherwise by Tusla or An Garda Síochána. Any actions taken, such as temporary reassignment or suspension, are precautionary and not disciplinary.

- The organisation will apply fair procedures and natural justice to all parties and will maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis.
- A written record of the allegation and actions taken will be maintained in accordance with data protection requirements.

## 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 services. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed by 28 March 2025 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Will Wollen', with a horizontal line underneath.

Will Wollen

**Director**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Maeve Whelan'.

Maeve Whelan

**General Manager**

The Gaiety School of Acting - The National Theatre School of Ireland  
Temple Bar, Essex St West, Dublin 8.