



## **Guiding Principles and Child Safeguarding Procedures of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland**

**Name of Organisation:** Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland

Cruit Éireann, Harp Ireland is a collective of harp players working together to promote our national instrument, gain recognition for its unique status and secure its sustainability. Enabling inclusive contemporary expression of our 1000-year-old harp tradition is at the heart of what we do. We enable creative expression across a broad range of harp genres. We affirm and promote the harp as Ireland's national emblem, and we seek sustainable supports for the harp in Ireland.

Our activities include but are not limited to an annual harp day celebration, harp workshops, fundraising events, ensemble gatherings, concerts, recitals, harping festivals and use of video/photography and other media to record harp events.

### **Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland believes the following:**

1. Our priority to ensure the welfare and safety of every child and young person who attends Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland events is paramount, regardless of all other considerations.
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 access an organisation that respects them as individuals and encourages them to reach their potential, regardless of their background.
4. We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who accesses our organisation, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm and to be listened to and heard.
5. Our guiding principles apply to everyone in Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland.
6. Workers/volunteers must conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland.
7. Child Protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland life and this must be reflected in all our policies, procedures, practices and activities.

**Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland will:**

1. fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
2. fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
3. adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children, and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
4. adhere to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau Acts 2012 and 2016 in relation to the selection or recruitment of staff/tutors.
5. develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland activities;
6. make our Guiding Principles and Child Safeguarding Procedures document available to everyone on the Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland website
7. fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.
8. adhere to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare.

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland directors have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending events or activities organised by the group. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the procedures for managing those risks is attached as an appendix to this document. (Appendix 1)

This document is available on the Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland website. A copy will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.

Our guiding principles are underpinned by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice 2nd Edition, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and current legislation such as the Children First Act 2015, Child Care Act 1991, Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 and the National Vetting Bureau Act 2012.

The named person designated with lead responsibility for the development, review and implementation of the guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures is Aileen Kennedy.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Aibhlín McCrann 087 2800390

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) is Aileen Kennedy 087 2291447

## **Roles and responsibilities of DLP/Deputy DLP**

- Be fully familiar with Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland's responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding of children.
- Have good knowledge of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland's guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland's reporting procedure is followed, so that child protection and welfare concerns are referred promptly to Tusla.
- Receive child protection and welfare concerns from workers and volunteers and consider if reasonable grounds for reporting to Tusla exist.
- Consult informally with a Tusla Duty Social Worker through the Dedicated Contact Point, if necessary.
- Where appropriate, make a formal report of a child protection or welfare concern to Tusla on behalf of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland, using the Tusla Web Portal or the Tusla Child Protection and Welfare Report Form.
- Inform the child's parents/guardians that a report is to be submitted to Tusla or The Garda Síochána, unless:
  - Informing the parents/guardians is likely to endanger the child or young person;
  - Informing the parents/guardians may place you as the reporter at risk of harm from the family;
  - The family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment.
- Record all child protection or welfare concerns, or allegations of child abuse, brought to your attention as well as any action taken in response to these concerns.
- Provide feedback to the referrer, as appropriate. In the case where the DLP/DDLP decides not to make a report to Tusla, a written reason for not reporting should be provided to the person who brought the concern to the DLP/DDLP.
- Ensure that a secure system is in place to manage and store confidential records
- Act as a liaison with Tusla and The Garda Síochána, as appropriate.
- Where appropriate, jointly report with a mandated person.

## Reporting Procedure

- Regardless of how a concern comes to a worker/volunteer's attention, it should be reported to the Designated Liaison Person or in their absence the Deputy Designated Liaison Person of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland. (For definitions and features of child abuse please see "Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children")
- The Designated Liaison Person, in consultation with the person who raised the concern, will decide if reasonable grounds for concern exist (see below for definition of "reasonable grounds for concern"). If reasonable grounds for concern exist, the Designated Liaison Person will report to Tusla through either the Tusla Web Portal or relevant Dedicated Contact Point.
- If the DLP decides not to make a report, the worker/volunteer with the reasonable concern is still entitled to make a report to Tusla under Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, should they wish to do so. In reporting to Tusla, the individual worker has protections under the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, should they report independently. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children states that if a Designated Liaison Person decides not to report a concern to Tusla, the following steps should be taken:
  - The reasons for not reporting are to be recorded;
  - If any actions are taken as a result of the concern, these should be recorded;
  - The worker or volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla;
  - The worker or volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla or The Garda Síochána. The worker or volunteer who raised the concern should also be reassured that if they do choose to report to Tusla, they are covered by the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998. Designated Liaison Person Reasonable Grounds for Concern Tusla.
- Under the Children First Act 2015, certain classes of professionals are designated as mandated persons. The full list can be found at Appendix 2 of this document. Mandated persons have a statutory responsibility to report directly to Tusla concerns above the threshold of "harm". A list of mandated persons in Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland can be found at Appendix 3. This list will be updated as part of the review. Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland expresses a preference that mandated reports are made jointly between the mandated person and the DLP, except where there is disagreement and the mandated person is obliged to discharge their duty to report. In this instance the mandated person informs Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland's DLP that a mandated report has been made and provides the DLP with a copy of the report.

## **Reasonable grounds for concern**

Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland follows the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children definition of reasonable grounds for concern:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way;
- 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 a child being abused.

## **Dealing with disclosures**

Responding to a child/young person who discloses abuse

- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked. Do not panic.
- Do not promise to keep secrets
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child/young person.
- Remember, the child or young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child/young person has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child/young person. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief.
- Accept what the child or young person has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child/young person quite possibly may love or strongly like the alleged abuser while also disliking what was done to them. It is important therefore to avoid expressing any judgement of, or anger towards the alleged perpetrator while talking with the child/young person
- It may be necessary to reassure the child/young person that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you. Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only. Do not ask leading questions.
- Explain to the child/young person that this information will only be shared with people who can help. By refusing to make a commitment to secrecy to the child/young person, you do run the risk that they may not tell you everything (or, indeed, anything) there and then. However, it is better to do this than to tell a lie and ruin the child/young person's

confidence in yet another adult. By being honest, it is more likely that the child/young person will return to you at another time.

*At the earliest possible opportunity:*

- Record in writing, in a factual manner, what the child/young person has said, including, as far as possible, the exact words used by the child/young person.
- Inform the DLP immediately and agree measures to protect the child/young person, e.g. report the matter directly to Tusla.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

*On-going support following a disclosure by a child/young person*

It is important that the worker/volunteer continues in a supportive relationship with the child/young person. Disclosure is a huge step for a child/young person.

*Workers/volunteers should continue to offer support, particularly by:*

- Maintaining a positive relationship with the child/young person;
- Keeping lines of communication open by listening carefully to the child/young person;
- Continuing to include the child/young person in the usual activities. Any further disclosure should be treated as a first disclosure and responded to as indicated above. Where necessary, immediate action should be taken to ensure the child/young person's safety.

## **Reporting adult disclosures of childhood abuse**

Adults disclosing abuse may not choose to come forward personally to report their concerns. If you are aware that there may be an on-going risk to a child you should make a report to Tusla. If you are unsure about whether to report or not, consult with the DLP or the Tusla Dedicated Contact Point in your area. The Tusla Web Portal is the preferred pathway to report disclosures of childhood abuse by adults. Alternatively, the Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF) form is available on the Tusla website.

## **Procedure to deal with allegations of abuse against workers/volunteers/management**

If an allegation is made against a worker/volunteer in the organisation we must ensure that everyone involved is dealt with appropriately and in accordance with the Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland's guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures, the rules of natural justice and any relevant employment law. The organisation has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and the worker/volunteer. There are two separate procedures to be followed:

- The reporting procedure to Tusla in respect of the child/young person and the alleged abuser;
- The internal personnel procedure for dealing with the worker/volunteer.

When an allegation is made against a worker/volunteer a quick resolution should be sought for the benefit of all concerned. It is recommended that the same person should not have responsibility for dealing with the child protection reporting procedure and the employment/contractual issues. The agreed reporting procedure should always be followed by mandated persons and/or the DLP.

In addition:

- Management must be alerted to the allegation by the reporter, whether mandated person or DLP;
- The first priority is for the safety of the child/young person; management must make sure no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk;
- Parents/guardians should be informed of any action planned while having regard to the rights to confidentiality of others, such as the person against whom the allegation has been made.
- Tusla will follow relevant policy when assessing allegations of abuse made against workers or volunteers.

### **Internal procedures for dealing with a worker/volunteer who is the subject of an allegation of abuse.**

Allegations of child abuse are very serious for both the child involved and the worker/volunteer concerned. In the event that Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland needs to deal with a situation where a worker/volunteer is the subject of an allegation of abuse, the worker/volunteer will be asked to stand down from their position while the allegation is being investigated.

### **Where a worker/volunteer has a concern about a colleague**

In this instance they should:

- Bring it to the attention of the DLP or a senior manager. If the concern relates to poor practice it should be discussed with the relevant manager. If the concern involves suspected or witnessed abusive behaviour, this should be reported without delay to the DLP (following the organisation's reporting procedure).
- Keep a record of the concern. The DLP will consider if the concern constitutes a child protection concern, if so he/she must follow the organisation's reporting procedures for child protection or welfare concerns. It will also be necessary to follow Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland's procedure for responding to allegations of abuse against workers and volunteers.

### **Confidentiality**

- Where child protection and welfare concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child/young person with the relevant statutory authorities and with parents/guardians.
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given.
- The proportionate provision of information to the statutory agencies necessary for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.

- Parents/guardians and children/young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk or may put the reporter at risk.

### **Record Keeping and Information Sharing**

- Records should be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland will cooperate in the sharing of records with Tusla where a child protection or welfare issue arises. An example of this could be information needed for a Child Protection Conference or Strategy Meeting or information important for the assessment of risk to a child.
- Records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures will be kept securely and safely in the office of Communique International, 26 Herbert Place, Dublin 2.
- Records should only be used for the purpose for which they are intended.
- Records should only be shared on a need-to-know basis in the best interests of the child/young person.
- The people within the organisation who have access to child protection records are the DLP and the DDLP (where appropriate). In cases where there is an allegation of abuse against a worker/volunteer, directors will be made aware and have access to information.
- Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland store child protection records in the office of Communique International, 26 Herbert Place, Dublin 2.
- Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland will retain child protection records in line with Data Protection legislation.
- Child protection and welfare records should be updated as required and reviewed regularly by the Designated Liaison Person.
- You must be aware of and abide by any regulations specific to your sector or area of work with regard to record-keeping.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the directors of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland at a meeting on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 1

# Written Assessment of Risk of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland

### 1. List of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland activities

Workshops given by Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland personnel and by outside personnel  
Fundraising events.  
Concerts.  
Ensemble Gatherings.  
National Harp Day events.  
Use of video/photography/other media to record group events

### 2. Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities -

- Risk of harm not being recognised by Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland personnel
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland personnel
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland personnel
- Risk of child being harmed during Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland activities by another child
- Risk of child being harmed by a volunteer or visitor to a Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland event.
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland activities e.g. fundraising event
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland activities
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm caused by member of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland personnel communicating with pupils in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of harm caused by member of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner

**3. Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -**

- All Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland personnel are provided with a copy of the Guiding Principles and Child Safeguarding Procedures of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland
- The directors ensure that there is appropriate supervision of children during all Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland activities as listed above.
- Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation
- Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland –
  - Has provided each advisory group member with a copy of the Guiding Principles and Child Safeguarding Procedures of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland.
  - Ensures all new staff/advisory group members are provided with a copy of the Guiding Principles and Child Safeguarding Procedures of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland.
  - Encourages advisory group members to avail of relevant training

**Important Note:** It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of “harm” as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk.

In undertaking this risk assessment, the directors have endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland has in place, the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

This risk assessment was completed by the directors of Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland in February 2021. It shall be reviewed as part of the Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland biannual review of its Guiding Principles and Child Safeguarding Procedures.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary

## **Appendix 2**

### **Definition of Mandated Person**

Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies the following classes of persons as Mandated Persons for the purposes of the Act:

1. Registered medical practitioner within the meaning of section 2 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007.
2. Registered nurse or registered midwife within the meaning of section 2(1) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011.
3. Physiotherapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
4. Speech and language therapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
5. Occupational therapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
6. Registered dentist within the meaning of section 2 of the Dentists Act 1985.
7. Psychologist who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in the register (if any) of members of that profession.
8. Social care worker who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register of that profession.
9. Social worker who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register (if any) of that profession.
10. Emergency medical technician, paramedic and advanced paramedic registered with the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council under the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (Establishment) Order 2000 (S.I. No. 109 of 2000).
11. Probation officer within the meaning of section 1 of the Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act 1983.
12. Teacher registered with the Teaching Council.
13. Member of An Garda Síochána.
14. Guardian ad litem appointed in accordance with section 26 of the Child Care Act 1991.
15. Person employed in any of the following capacities:

- (a) manager of a domestic violence shelter;
- (b) manager of homeless provision or emergency accommodation facility;
- (c) manager of asylum seeker accommodation (direct provision) centre;
- (d) addiction counsellor employed by a body funded, wholly or partly, out of moneys provided by the Oireachtas;
- (e) psychotherapist or a person providing counselling who is registered with one of the voluntary professional bodies;
- (f) manager of a language school or other recreational school where children reside away from home;
- (g) member of the clergy (howsoever described) or pastoral care worker (howsoever described) of a church or other religious community;
- (h) director of any institution where a child is detained by an order of a court;
- (i) safeguarding officer, child protection officer or other person (howsoever described) who is employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection function of religious, sporting, recreational, cultural, educational and other bodies and organisations offering services to children;
- (j) child care staff member employed in a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991;
- (k) person responsible for the care or management of a youth work service within the meaning of section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.

16. Youth worker who—

- (a) holds a professional qualification that is recognised by the National Qualifications Authority in youth work within the meaning of section 3 of the Youth Work Act 2001 or a related discipline, and
- (b) is employed in a youth work service within the meaning of section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.

17. Foster carer registered with the Agency.

18. A person carrying on a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991

### **Appendix 3 Mandated Persons in Cruit Éireann/Harp Ireland**

Aibhlín McCrann

Aileen Kennedy

Deirdre Granville

Damhnait Sweeney