



## Child Protection Policy & Statement of Duty of Care

Pavilion Theatre is committed to providing a safe environment and a positive experience for all children with whom we interact.

In accordance with guidelines outlined in “Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children”, we believe that the welfare of children is of paramount importance; thus we have created this Child Protection Policy, which includes the following:

- Glossary of terms used in this document & Relevant Legislation that has informed this policy
- Code of behaviour and best practice for all Pavilion Theatre staff, visiting companies, and members of the public who visit Pavilion Theatre
- Policy statement on the use of Pavilion Theatre by other organisations
- Circumstances that may make children more vulnerable to harm
- Role of the Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Dealing with a disclosure & Reporting & recording procedures of suspected or disclosed abuse
- Mandated Persons
- Confidentiality statement
- Garda Vetting Policy
- Staff recruitment, training and management policy
- Policy statement on the involvement of primary carers
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff
- Procedures for dealing with complaints and comments
- Procedures for the recording of incidents and accidents.
- Appendix
- Contact details of some local supports

Any issues or concerns regarding the safety and welfare of children at Pavilion Theatre should be reported to the

### **Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection**

Niall Gomes O’Connell Tel: 01 2717902

### **Deputy Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection**

Ronan Fingleton Tel: 01 2717906

This policy will be reviewed in August 2025 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the policy refers.

Signed N.G.O’Connell Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection Date: 09/09/24

Signed R. Fingleton Deputy Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection Date: 09/09/24

## **Glossary of terms used in this document**

The meanings of words used in this document should be read as:

- **Child(ren)**: means any person(s) under the age of 18 years other than a person(s) who is or has been married
- **Primary Carers**: refers to all parents, guardians and carers of a child; where appropriate it also includes the visiting company, facilitators and their appointed chaperones.
- **Staff**: refers to all staff, volunteers, board of management of Pavilion Theatre
- **DLP**: Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection
- **CF**: Children’s First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children
- **The Child and Family Agency**: this agency (also known as TUSLA) is now the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. It represents the most comprehensive reform of child protection, early intervention and family support services ever undertaken in Ireland.
- **CPWR Form**: Child Protection and Welfare Report Form; the form used for reporting Child Protection & Welfare concerns to the Children and Family Agency.
- **Abuse**: includes neglect, emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Definitions are outlined in the Appendix.

## **Relevant Legislation and Guidelines that have informed this policy**

- Child Care Act 1991
- Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- Criminal Justice Act 2006
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016
- Children First Act 2015
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- Children First: National Guidance
- Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice

## **Code of behaviour at Pavilion Theatre**

The following code of behaviour for all persons employed by or volunteering with Pavilion Theatre has been drawn up to ensure a positive experience for all children using the theatre facilities.

### **Child Centred Approach**

- We will create and encourage a friendly, welcoming and positive atmosphere at all times
- We will listen to and respect children
- We will use appropriate physical behaviour (e.g. only initiating physical contact in the case of an emergency) and appropriate verbal language at all times
- We will respect a child's personal space
- We will treat all children equally and as individuals
- We will respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation
- Staff and primary carers must observe appropriate dress and behaviour when dealing with children in Pavilion Theatre

### **Best Practice**

- Make primary carers, children, visitors and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- Ensure all children are signed in and out of the building at the designated drop off and collection point. Unless otherwise arranged with the DLP, this designated point is the foyer area of Pavilion Theatre.
- Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities are maintained at all times. (*Appropriate ratios as outlined by the NSPCC April 2013 are listed below in Policy Statement on the use of Pavilion Theatre by other Organisations*)
- Encourage children to report any bullying, concerns or worries to any member of staff or supervisory adult.
- Ensure all children attending rehearsals, camps or workshops or who are participating in a performance are collected from within the building at the designated area in the foyer.
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children
- Staff must report any child protection concerns to the DLP, or any concerns they have about another worker.
- Staff must report and record any incidents and accidents (Recording and Reporting procedures are outlined in this document)
- Be inclusive of children with special needs.
- Be cognisant of a child's limitations (for example due to a medical condition).
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids, language and materials.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise regardless of ability
- Offer constructive criticism when needed.
- Any adult working with or spending time with children should plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically
- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children
- Keep a register of children attending theatre camps or other Pavilion Theatre run workshops detailing name, address, phone, special requirements and emergency contact details in accordance with GDPR
- Avoid escorting a child out of the building or giving a lift to a child

**(Code of behaviour at Pavilion Theatre continued...)**

**Inappropriate behaviour**

- Don't single out a particular child(ren) for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention
- Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language
- Don't socialise inappropriately with children e.g., outside of structured organisational activities
- Don't give out personal details such as a mobile number or any information from which a child could find your social media/networking account
- Inappropriate behaviour as outlined here includes behaviour of children towards other children

**Physical contact**

- Don't allow/engage in any inappropriate touching
- Don't hit or physically discipline children
- Do seek consent from all children in relation to physical contact except in an emergency or a dangerous situation
- No horseplay. This includes interactions between one child and another.
- If you are facilitating a workshop, check with children about their level of comfort when doing any activities that involve physical contact.

**Health and safety**

- All Pavilion Theatre Health and Safety policies will be adhered to at all times.
- In the event of an emergency, staff must be aware of and follow emergency procedures in place.
- Primary carers and children should be informed of emergency evacuation procedures
- Staff will facilitate entry and exit of school groups to matinee performances to assist teachers in keeping groups together
- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised
- Any dangerous materials and/or equipment in Pavilion Theatre will be managed appropriately.
- Staff should be aware of the Accidents Procedures and follow accordingly (as outlined in this document)

## **Policy Statement on the use of Pavilion Theatre by other Organisations**

All organisations and individuals who use the facilities of Pavilion Theatre for the benefit of young people (under 18 years) must show evidence that they abide by the guidelines of the State for Child Protection, as outlined in Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011. Visiting organisations/groups should send on their Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection policy in advance of visiting the theatre.

### **Organisations using the theatre for children’s performances and/or workshops must adhere to the following guidelines:**

- All visiting companies are required to provide the theatre with a copy of their Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection Policy. This provides evidence that the company are committed to abiding by the guidelines of Children’s First 2001.
- Pavilion Theatre’s Child Protection Policy and Health and Safety Policy will be strictly adhered to and any breaches of either may lead to the performance being cancelled.
- Each visiting organisation to Pavilion Theatre must have an appointed liaison person (and deputy liaison person) for Pavilion staff to speak with and coordinate with prior to and during the performance at Pavilion Theatre.
- The number of people allowed in the Pavilion Theatre backstage areas at any one time is 100. This includes all performers/children/company/crew. In certain circumstances this number may be reduced by the needs to the show, e.g. set, costumes etc.
- If a visiting company foresees that they will have more than this number, the following solutions can be discussed and agreed upon in advance of contract with the General Manager:
  - A certain percentage of the cast can sit in the auditorium (with chaperones if they are under 18)
  - Cast size of each performance can be reduced
  - Additional performances can be added (To be discussed with Pavilion’s Director and will likely incur extra costs)
  - An external building to be arranged for some of the cast to stay in when not needed in Pavilion Theatre
- When a show has more than 50 performers in its cast, Pavilion Theatre might place an extra duty manager to work backstage to help manage and maintain all Pavilion policies. When a show has any children in its cast, but the numbers are less than 50, the General Manager reserves the right to assess the need of placing an extra duty manager to work backstage to help manage and maintain all child protection policies. This will be at the expense of the incoming company.
- The visiting company must supply a list of all participants in a show who are under 18 years of age to the General Manager **at least one week** in advance of coming to the theatre. This must be accompanied with a list of the names of all personnel who are allowed backstage and involved with the company (i.e.

performers over 18 years, chaperones, crew, directors, company members, camerapeople/photographers etc.). These lists can be emailed.

- Performances **AND** rehearsals etc. may not be photographed/recorded unless a consent form from the parent/guardian of every participating child (under 18 years) in that event has been obtained by the company. Once obtained, the head of the company should write a formal email to the General Manager ([niall@paviliontheatre.ie](mailto:niall@paviliontheatre.ie)) and indicate that they have permission for all those involved in the show to be photographed/filmed. A blank version of the company's consent form should also be included. Individual copies of consent forms **do not** need to be given to anyone at Pavilion.
- If the visiting company are planning on professionally recording the show but they don't want audience members to take photos or film, please inform all parents/guardians of your decision in advance of coming to the theatre. Pavilion will include a note in the show reminder emails and, on the website, indicating the same. Camerapeople should also be informed if all consent forms have not been received prior to rehearsal times. An announcement needs to be made by the company at the beginning of each performance to inform the audience of this policy.
- All children must be signed in **and** out of the building by an appropriate supervisor/chaperone in the foyer. Each company must appoint a member of their team to stay in the foyer until all performers under 16 years have arrived. **All performers need to arrive to the theatre and be brought backstage a minimum of 1 hour in advance of the performance time, unless otherwise arranged with the General Manager.** The foyer needs to be cleared in preparation for the arrival of the audience. We recommend that the children are gathered in their assigned groups in the foyer and brought backstage as a group, rather than individually. All children must be escorted to the auditorium and backstage by a chaperone/supervisor.
- Where necessary, a Front of House and/or Technical representative from Pavilion Theatre will meet with all performers in advance of the performance/rehearsal, introduce themselves and layout the house rules.
- Any performers/crew that are aged between 16 and 18 years of age are permitted to sign themselves in and out of the building with the consent of the appointed liaison person.
- At the end of the show, Pavilion Theatre staff and ushers will ask all audience members to clear the auditorium and proceed to the foyer. Once the auditorium has been cleared, children can be brought from backstage to the foyer area. Children should **always be collected by parents/guardians at the auditorium door** in the foyer area of Pavilion Theatre. At least two supervisors must be present at this point to monitor the collection of children by the appropriate parent or guardian. Pavilion staff may position tensile barriers to aid with the signing out of children, and can also make announcements on the microphone of the foyer if requested by the company. Any performers between the ages of 16 and 18 years don't need a parent/guardian present to collect them once the appointed liaison person approves this.

- Parents/guardians are not allowed beyond the foyer doors to the auditorium when they are dropping off/collecting their child(ren). Parents are not allowed in the backstage areas unless they are listed as a chaperone, or unless there is an emergency concerning their child(ren). **We would ask that you inform all parents/guardians of this policy in advance of coming to the theatre.**
- Children must be supervised at all times, with at least two supervisors/chaperones to each room being used backstage and two in the corridor. The head of the visiting company is responsible for selecting all chaperones and for informing them of all of their responsibilities. The names of these guardians should be supplied in advance to the General Manager. Failure to provide adequate responsible chaperones may result in additional staff being required. This will be recharged to the visiting company. This decision will be made by the DLP and the Duty Manager of the Theatre.
  - Please note that the director of the company or stage manager(s) are not considered to be dedicated chaperones if they will also have other duties on the day
- **All chaperones need to arrive to the venue 30 minutes before the performers arrive.** Chaperones must work in pairs. Over 18s participating in the show cannot be named as chaperones. They must wear Chaperone badges (which can be provided by Box Office) or another form of identification (e.g. matching tshirts). All chaperones must be fully briefed in advance of their duties. Pavilion Theatre's General Manager can provide you with a list of guidelines to aid chaperones in their duties, if requested. **Please ensure this document is circulated to all chaperones in advance of coming to Pavilion Theatre.**
  - Be aware that Garda Vetting is a legal requirement now for certain roles. It is your responsibility to ensure that relevant and appropriate persons have been vetted.
  - Note: not all chaperones may be required to be vetted and you should consult with the Garda Vetting Office
- A Front of House and/or Technical representative from Pavilion Theatre will also meet with all chaperones in advance of the performers arriving, introduce themselves and layout the house rules.
- Organisations should ensure that all personnel and volunteers working with children are suitable to that role and are made aware of their responsibilities; they should have undergone any necessary training and be provided with a copy of both the company's and Pavilion's Child Protection Policies.
- As outlined by the NSPCC April 2013, the minimum adult/child ratio in any group should ideally be **one adult per group of ten children plus one other adult, and allowing an additional adult for each group of ten thereafter.** Local circumstances, the ages of the children, the experience of the chaperones/supervisors should be taken into consideration. Safety, ability/disability of the children and the nature of the activities being undertaken may require that these ratios be considerably lower.
- Mixed sex dressing rooms are not permitted between anyone under 18 years of age if any of the participants need to change their clothes. Other arrangements should be found if changing of clothes needs to happen.

- When there are more than 25 children using the green room area as a dressing room, Pavilion Theatre will set up the room in a suitable way, based on the plan created by General Manager. If there are no costumes or props needed (e.g. music shows) it may not be necessary to set up the green room in this way. Any cost for this will be at the expense of the visiting company.
- If a company has any special requirements (e.g. arrangements for a child/group of children to leave early), this has to be notified in advance to the General Manager. If it is something that occurs on the day, it needs to be approved by the Front of House Duty Manager. Once we are aware and the information has been communicated to us, we can plan and assist with this request.
- If a company wishes for a certain group of the performers to sit in the auditorium to watch part of the show, this needs to be arranged in advance with the General Manager. On the day of the show, the General Manager or Duty Manager must meet with the chaperones that are in charge of this group and discuss the procedure for entering and exiting from backstage to auditorium and vice versa.
- Cameras, camera phones or other recording devices are **not permitted** in the dressing room/backstage areas when there are children changing clothes in these areas
- For school/class and variety shows, where possible, the cast (especially very young members who may need help in getting changed) should arrive in costume
- Due to health and safety regulations only performers or anybody participating in the performance can be permitted on the stage and only performing group members or appointed supervisors in the backstage areas.
- Pavilion Theatre will endeavour at all times to keep the stage and backstage areas as free as possible of dangerous equipment. However, **stage performance by its very nature necessitates the use of electrical equipment and cables**. Therefore, it is important that care is taken and control maintained at all times to reduce the risk of accident.
- All policies in this section of the Child Protection Policy are for the benefit of the visiting company and participating performers to enhance a positive, safe and professional experience at Pavilion Theatre.
  - Please ensure that **all** people working with you on the day of the performance(s) are aware of all the policies in this section. Your time at Pavilion Theatre will run more smoothly and professionally if we are all on the same page.



## **Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm**

If you are dealing with children, you need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children you encounter. A child needs to have someone they can trust to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

Factors that may make children more vulnerable to harm include:

- Parent or Carer Factors
- Child Factors
- Community Factors
- Environmental Factors
- Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage

The full list is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/114c50-children-first-national-guidelines-for-the-protection-and-welfare-of/>

It is important for you to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

## **The role of the Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection**

**Niall Gomes O’Connell** is the Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection in Pavilion Theatre and is the designated contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child’s safety and welfare.

### **The role of the DLP:**

- To act as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns
- To ensure that they know the organisation’s child protection and welfare policies and procedures
- To ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and undertake any training considered necessary to keep themselves updated on new developments.
- To establish, in consultation with the individual who has raised the concern, if reasonable grounds for concern exist in relation to an allegation or report of child abuse
- To ensure that the Standard Reporting Procedure is followed and that suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are referred promptly to the Child and Family Agency’s Duty Social Worker (or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of Duty Social Worker contact An Garda Siochana)
- To inform primary carers if a report concerning their child is submitted to the Child and Family Agency, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

## **Child Safeguarding Statement**

The Children First Act 2015 requires organisations that are providers of relevant services to prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement. Pavilion Theatre's Child Safeguarding Statement provides an overview of the measures that our organisation has in place to ensure that children are protected from harm whilst availing of our services. This is a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of the service is safe from harm.

Pavilion Theatre's Child Safeguarding Statement is available on our website (<https://www.paviliontheatre.ie/childprotection>) or by requesting it from the DLP.

## **Dealing with a disclosure**

- Stay calm and listen to the child; allow them enough time to say what they need to say
- Don't use leading questions or prompt details
- Reassure the child but do not promise to keep anything secret
- Don't make the child repeat the details unnecessarily
- Record what the child has said in their own words.
- Explain to the child what will happen next (explanation should be age-appropriate)
- Pass the disclosure onto the DLP as soon as possible. The DLP should follow the reporting procedure in respect of the child
- Some disclosures may be retrospective i.e. that they happened in the past but are not currently happening. These should still be dealt with in the same manner as a current disclosure

## **Reporting procedures at Pavilion Theatre**

\*No matter how a case of Child Protection concern or suspicion of abuse comes to your attention, you must record and report it as follows: \*

Staff/Volunteer/Visiting Company reports to



Designated Liaison Person who refers to



The Child and Family Agency for advice or  
to make a standard referral using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form  
OR

An Garda Siochana, if a child is in immediate danger and the Child and Family Agency cannot be reached

\*DLP informs parents, or other appropriate primary carer, of any concern and action taken, unless this is likely to put the child at further risk. \*

If a concern is not reported to the Child and Family Agency, the issue may still be discussed with the leader of the visiting company and/or the child's parents/guardians.

## **What constitutes reasonable grounds for concern?**

According to Children First Guidance 2011 for the Protection and Welfare of Children the following would constitute reasonable grounds for concern, as per Child Protection & Welfare Practice Handbook 2.2 & 2.3:

- specific indication from the child or young person that they have been abused
- an account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused
- evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way
- 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)
- consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

Please note: Protection for Person Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998: provides protection from civil liability to anyone who reports child abuse “reasonably and in good faith”; creates a new offence of false reporting; offers significant protection for employees who report child abuse, including protection from discrimination/dismissal

Please note: “Where an organisation decides not to report concerns to the Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochana, the individual employee/volunteer/person who raised the concern should be given a clear written statement of the reasons why the organisation is not taking such action. The person should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, the Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochana” (CF, 3.8.1)

## **Mandated Persons**

The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on certain people, many of whom are professionals, to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to TUSLA. Mandated persons must also assist TUSLA in their assessment of child protection concerns about children who have been the subject of a mandated report, if requested to do so. People can be mandated by professional qualification or role within an organisation.

Section 14 of the Children First Act 2015 requires mandated persons to report a mandated concern to TUSLA ‘as soon as practicable’. A mandated person from the organisation will submit a report of the concern to TUSLA, on which they will indicate that they are a mandated person, and this report is about a mandated concern.

If the mandated person(s) feel that a child protection concern may require urgent attention to make the child safe, they will alert TUSLA in advance of submitting a written report. They will then submit a mandated report to TUSLA within three days. (Section 14(7) Children First Act 2015).

A list of who qualifies as a Mandated Person is in Children First Act 2015, Schedule 2, Section 2.

Pavilion Theatre does not currently have any Mandated Persons on staff.

Pavilion Theatre will update our Child Protection Policy if we employ any Mandated Persons as defined by the Children First Act 2015

## **Recording procedures**

Pavilion Theatre will strive to ensure that:

- All records are factual
- All records relating to Child Protection will include details of any concern or observation, any contacts or consultations that took place, and any actions that were taken
- All records are stored securely and safely
- All records are only used for the purpose for which they are intended

Any incidents involving children will be recorded in the Child Protection Incident Book held by the DLP in a secure area, to which only the DLP, Deputy DLP and Director of Pavilion Theatre have access.

Any accidents involving children will be recorded in the Accident Book located in the front office.

All details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure will be recorded on an SRF. Information recorded should be factual. Any opinions should be supported by facts

The DLP may contact the Child and Family Agency Duty Social Work Department for an informal consultation prior to making a report

If there are reasonable grounds for concern the DLP will contact the Duty Social Worker in the Child and Family Agency, verbally initially and then using the CPWR Form available from the Child and Family Agency.

Any person who expresses concern will be involved and kept informed, where appropriate and where it doesn't put the child(ren) at further risk.

Parents, carers or responsible adults will be made aware of a concern or report to the Child and Family Agency unless it is likely to put the child(ren) at further risk;

Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis (see confidentiality statement);

The incident book and any records or statements involving children will be held in a secure location by the DLP.

## **Confidentiality statement**

We in Pavilion Theatre are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child are at risk
- Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child
- Giving such information to others for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality
- Primary carers and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the Child and Family Agency, unless doing so could put the child at further risk

## **Consent Forms**

- There is no legal constraint on taking images of children in public settings. However, photographs or images are defined as data and therefore come within the scope of the Data Protection Acts 1998/2003. Children and young people, as well as adults, have a right to privacy and therefore their consent should be sought in relation to use of personal data, including images. In the case of children (up to 18 years of age) parental consent should be sought and information provided on how and for what purpose images will be used.
- While we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public performances, we will endeavour to enforce procedures to respect the rights of children and parents if consent forms have not been received.
- Pavilion Theatre has 2 types of consent form that can be used by visiting companies. Please contact the General Manager if you would like to use these templates. If you already have your own consent form that provides proof of consent for photographs/videos to be taken while in Pavilion Theatre, a blank copy of this accompanied with a letter from the company stating they have consent for all participants can be made available to Pavilion. Digital copies are preferred where possible.

## **Garda Vetting Policy**

Pavilion Theatre has a comprehensive Garda Vetting Policy that sets out the information and guidance on Garda Vetting procedures within Pavilion theatre.

Pavilion Theatre's Garda Vetting Officer is Niall Gomes O'Connell, who is also the DLP for Child Protection

Pavilion Theatre can only have staff or volunteers vetted if they are engaged in relevant work. For Pavilion Theatre, the National Vetting Bureau Office has defined relevant work as:

- Chaperones supervising children under 18 years backstage during shows (chaperones only)

A copy of this policy is available upon request from the DLP

## **Staff Recruitment, Training and Management Policy**

### **Staff Recruitment**

Pavilion Theatre is an equal opportunities employer and will ensure that staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children by observing the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job (paid or voluntary)
- Posts will be advertised widely
- We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel
- 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 or selected for voluntary duties. This includes, but is not exclusive to, the following:
  - someone who has any child-related convictions
  - who refuses to sign application form and declaration form
  - who has insufficient documentary evidence of identification
  - who is concealing information on one's suitability to working with children
- There will be a probationary period of at least six months for all newly employed staff and volunteers.
- All staff will be required to consent to Garda vetting, and where applicable, this will be sought.

### **Staff management and training**

To protect both staff and children, Pavilion Theatre undertakes that:

#### **New staff will:**

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

#### **All staff will**

- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices
- Be expected to have read and signed the Child Protection Policy
- Sign a declaration form, stating that there is no reason why they should not be allowed to work in proximity to children
- Be provided with child protection training

#### **Relevant staff will**

- Be expected to undergo Garda Vetting (dependent on their role within the organisation)
- Complete TUSLA's online Children First Child Safeguarding and Awareness Training. This training is found at the following link: <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/>

## **Policy statement on the involvement of primary carers**

Pavilion Theatre is committed to co-operating with all primary carers in an open and constructive manner to ensure that the interests and welfare of the child are paramount at all times. To that end we

- Encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by our organisation to ensure the safety of their children
- Have a designated Child Protection Officer available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person's welfare.

We undertake to

- Provide a copy of our Child Protection Policy to primary carers using our facility as a performance/workshop space
- Inform primary carers and schools of all activities and potential activities in the building that concern them
- Comply with Health and Safety practices
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice (as outlined in this document)
- Issue contact/consent forms for theatre camps and all children's workshops operated by Pavilion Theatre
- Adhere to our recruitment guidelines
- Ensure as far as possible that the activities are age-appropriate
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parent(s), carer(s) or responsible adult(s), where appropriate

If we have concerns about the welfare of the child, we will

- Respond to the needs of the child
- Inform the primary carers on an on-going basis unless this action puts the child at further risk
- Contact local Duty Social Worker of the Child and Family Agency and Gardaí, where appropriate
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff, we will immediately ensure the safety of the child and inform primary carers as appropriate.

## **Policy Statement on dealing with allegations against staff**

As has been previously stated, the DLP will deal with the reporting procedure in respect of the child

However, in respect of the person against whom the allegation is made, the Staff Liaison Officer (as selected by Pavilion Theatre's Director) will deal with issues related to the staff member.

- Our first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. This is important as protective measures may have to be taken as a matter of urgency. Any measures should be proportionate to the level of risk and should not unreasonably penalise the employee.
- Reporting procedures as outlined in our Child Protection Policy must be followed.
- If allegations are made against the DLP, the Deputy Designated Person should be contacted
- Both the primary carers and child will be informed of actions planned and taken.
- The child will be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner
- The staff member will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and will be given the opportunity to respond
- The chairperson/head of the organisation will be informed of any allegation against a staff member as soon as possible
- Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee will be taken in consultation with the Child and Family Agency and An Garda Siochana
- After consultation, the chairperson/head of organisation will advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.



## **Complaints and Comments Procedures related to Child Protection issues**

Pavilion Theatre recognises that primary carers, children, and staff have a right to make a complaint if they are not satisfied with the action taken in relation to any incident reported and to have that complaint addressed.

### **Complaints or comments will be dealt with as follows:**

- Complaints or comments will be responded to within four weeks.
- The DLP has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to a designated person on the Board of Directors of Pavilion Theatre.
- All verbal complaints will be logged and responded to.
- In relation to an allegation against staff, an appeals procedure is available by way of the Appointed Staff Liaison Officers on the Board of Directors of Pavilion Theatre.

## **Accidents Procedures at Pavilion**

Pavilion Theatre has a comprehensive Health and Safety Statement which is reviewed annually

- A risk assessment of every area of operation is carried out annually.
- External organisations with whom we work must provide proof that they have public liability insurance
- First-aid boxes are in both the front office and the technical office and are regularly re-stocked
- The locations of the first-aid boxes are known to all staff
- Single use icepacks are kept in the first aid kits, and reusable ice-packs are kept in the bar freezer
- Pavilion Theatre always has a defibrillator onsite, located behind Box Office
- The accident book is in the front office and is known to staff
- Children must be advised of any risks of dangerous material
- Pavilion Theatre currently has staff members that are trained, or in the process of being trained, in Occupational First Aid

In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child, it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí.

## Appendix

### Definitions of abuse

There are four main categories of abuse as outlined in Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. The following is a synopsis of the information contained in that document. For the full definitions please refer to Children First National Guidance 2011.

#### 1. Neglect

“Neglect can be defined as being where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.... The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child’s needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.” (Children First p.31)

#### 2. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse usually happens where there is a relationship between a carer and a child rather than as a specific incident or incidents. “Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.” (Children First p.31) Rather, it can manifest in the child’s behaviour or physical functioning. Examples of these include ‘anxious’ attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement and uncooperative or hostile behaviour. “The threshold of significant harm is reached when interaction is predominantly abusive and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/ carer.” (Children First p.32)

Examples of emotional abuse in children include:

- Imposition of negative attributes on children, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- Emotional unavailability by the child’s parent/carer;
- Unresponsiveness, 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 him/herself in a certain way;
- Under or over-protection of the child;
- Use of unreasonably harsh discipline;
- Exposure to domestic violence.

#### 3. Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child. Examples of physical injury include the following:

- Shaking;
- Use of excessive force in handling;
- Deliberate poisoning;
- Suffocation;
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant physical harm to a child.

#### **4. Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves the use of a child for gratification or sexual arousal by a person for themselves or others.

Examples of sexual abuse include:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
  - Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
  - Masturbation in the presence of the child or involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
  - Sexual intercourse with a child whether oral, vaginal or anal;
  - Sexual exploitation of a child... may also include showing sexually explicit material to children which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse;
  - Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an under-age person.
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## **Local Contacts and Supports**

### **TUSLA National Office**

TUSLA Child and Family Agency  
 The Brunel Building  
 Heuston South Quarter  
 Saint John's Road West  
 Dublin 8  
 D08 X01F  
 Tel: 01 7718500  
 Email: [info@tusla.ie](mailto:info@tusla.ie)

### **Dublin is split into 5 TUSLA areas. Dun Laoghaire is part of the Dublin South East Area:**

Child and Family Agency  
 Unit 9  
 Nutgrove Retail Park  
 Churchtown  
 Dublin 14  
 Tel: (01) 921 3400  
 Office Hours: 9am-5pm

### **Dun Laoghaire Garda Station**

Corrig Avenue  
 Dun Laoghaire  
 Co Dublin  
 Tel (01) 6665000

### **National Counselling Service**

South East Dublin/Dun Laoghaire & East Wicklow  
 1800 234 111

## **Forms**

Child Safeguarding Statement can be provided by the DLP or found by visiting:  
<https://www.paviliontheatre.ie/childprotection>

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form can be supplied by the DLP

Signed Staff Declaration Forms are kept on file in Pavilion Theatre by the DLP.

Copies of the Staff Application Forms are kept on file in Pavilion Theatre by our Administration Department.