



Crois Dhearg na hÉireann
Irish Red Cross

Irish Red Cross Child Safeguarding Statement 2024-2026

Name of Service: Irish Red Cross

Address of Service: 16 Merrion Square, Dublin, D02 XF85. Ireland.

Nature of Service and Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm

The Irish Red Cross is a registered charity. The vision of the Irish Red Cross is to be a leading humanitarian organisation providing impartial services and support to vulnerable communities both at home and abroad. Our mission is to identify and deliver humanitarian assistance, both at home and abroad, to those who are most in need. In achieving this we will be guided by the fundamental principles of the Red Cross.

The Irish Red Cross delivers a range of services across Ireland through its network of volunteers and staff. You can read more about the services we provide and the activities we undertake on our website at <https://www.redcross.ie/>

We engage with children and young people through the services we provide, and through our youth membership structures. Through our programmes and activities children and young people (4-18 years) meet on a weekly basis to learn new skills and engage in personal development programmes. Children from 4-9 years engage in interactive and fun activities to develop their understanding of belonging, feelings, health and hygiene, and First Aid. Our older Red Cross youth take part in fun challenges, youth camps and other activities that develop their leadership skills and promote positive mental health, HIV Awareness, support for the LGBTI+ community, and a humanitarian response towards asylum seekers and refugees. Some also provide First Aid services at sporting events, festivals and concerts. You can read more about our youth programmes and activities on our website at <https://www.redcross.ie/irc-youth/>

The Irish Red Cross has a National Safeguarding Committee which is mandated by the Board in the area of safeguarding. You can read more about how the Irish Red Cross is governed at: <https://www.redcross.ie/uncategorized/corporate-governance/>

The Irish Red Cross (IRC) is committed to the protection and welfare of the children and young people with whom we work equally, regardless of race, ability, ethnicity, sexuality or

sexual orientation. We are also committed to promoting the rights of children and young people and involving them in decision making, in matters that affect their lives.

Our safeguarding policies and practices are based on the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Children Act 2001, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The best interests and welfare of the child is the paramount consideration underpinning all IRC interactions and decisions concerning children and young people. Furthermore we adhere to the safeguarding principles that:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- Children and young people have the right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm.
- Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where it is necessary for the State to intervene to keep children safe, the minimum intervention necessary should be used and it should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights of the parents/carers and family. Parents/carers should be consulted and involved in decision about their children, unless to do so would place the child at risk of harm.
- Children should only be removed from their parents/carers when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.

Risk Assessment of Any Potential Risk of Harm

The IRC have carried out a comprehensive assessment of any potential risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015¹) to a child while availing of our services. The areas of risk and the policies and procedures identified to address them are contained in the table below. This is a live risk assessment and open to change as necessary.

¹ As defined in the Children First Act 2015, harms 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'.

Risk Identified	Policies and Procedures to Mitigate Risk
<p>Harm of a child by a member of staff/volunteer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Definition and forms of abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff/volunteers, <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting Procedures ○ Garda Vetting Policy ○ Protected Disclosure Policy ○ Bullying Prevention Policy ○ Personal Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure ○ Staff Handbook
<p>Harm of a child by a peer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Peer abuse <input type="checkbox"/> What is bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure ○ Code of behaviour for youth members
<p>Harm of a child by visitors to the centre or by members of the public while out on activities/duties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ratios of adults to young people <input type="checkbox"/> Trips away from home guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Safe management of activities
<p>Volunteer/Staff access to children and young people alone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Ratios of adults to young people <input type="checkbox"/> Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff/volunteers, <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children

	<input type="checkbox"/> General guidelines for Members
Harm of child on outings/residential by staff/volunteer/peer/stranger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Ratios of adults to young people <input type="checkbox"/> Safe management of activities <input type="checkbox"/> Trips away from home guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children <input type="checkbox"/> General guidelines for Members ○ Consent form
Inappropriate places for activities/outings/residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Safe management of activities <input type="checkbox"/> Trips away from home guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children
Harm caused by lack of supervision/unsafe adult-child ratios	<p>IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Ratios of adults to young people <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children <input type="checkbox"/> General guidelines for Members
Staff/volunteers driving children/young people in their car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Trips away from home procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children
Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of a child or crossing boundaries by volunteer/staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Ratios of adults to young people <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> General guidelines for Members ○ Staff Handbook
Relationship continuing beyond agreed time period or outside agreed boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children <input type="checkbox"/> General guidelines for Members ○ Staff Handbook
Staff/volunteer not recognizing signs of harm or abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Definitions of Abuse
Staff/volunteers unaware of reporting procedures or not passing on concerns or disclosures of abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility to report child abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting Procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Handbook ○ Staff Handbook ○ Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Grooming or commencing a sexual relationship by staff/volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting procedures ○ Staff Handbook ○ Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Wilfully permitting harm to come to a child/young person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and training procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility to report child abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting procedures ○ Staff Handbook ○ Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Emotional/psychological harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recruitment and training procedure ○ Code of behaviour for adults working with children ○ Access to psychological first aid support ○ Youth mental Health programmes
Harm of child through access to ICT (unauthorized photography, social media, electronic contact, internet access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRC Safeguarding Policy Statement which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> General guidelines for Members <input type="checkbox"/> Code of behaviour for adults working with children ○ Social Networking Policy

Procedures

The IRC Child Safeguarding statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance 2017, Tusla Best Practice for Organisations in Developing Children First Training Programmes and Tusla Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the policies and procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children and young people while they are availing of our services.

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff/volunteers, of a child availing of our services
- Procedure for the reporting of a child protection or welfare concern to Tusla
- Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons in the IRC
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person

Procedures are available on request.

Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children and young people safe from harm while availing of our services.

Review of Statement

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in March 2026 and two years thereafter, or following any material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

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