Rutland Youth Service CLG

Child Safeguarding Policy

Child Safeguarding Policy
Approved

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1 Introduction

Rutland Youth Service is a Youth Service based in Dublin North East City Centre working with children and young people aged between 10 - 24 years. Rutland Youth Service (RYS) envisions a society where all young people have a voice, are valued, belong and thrive as participating members of their community.

Our mission aims to empower all young people to discover meaning and direction for their lives, develop positive relationships with other, reach their full potential and to contribute positively to the community in which they live. RYS is managed by a volunteer Board of Management. There is a Youth Service Manager, Project Leader, 3 full time youth workers and 4 part time youth workers.

We work with young people aged 10-24 years through provision of a range of services including:

Group Work	One to One Support	Outreach
Residentials	Community Work	Support Programmes
Drop In's	Adventure Programmes	Advocacy
Interest Based programmes		

We aim to provide a safe environment for all of the children and young people we engage with, within which our programme activities can be enjoyed in a safe and respectful manner.

The purpose of this document is to provide a common understanding within our service of the practices expected of those involved in RYS, and to provide the policy and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection to be adhered to by all of those involved in our service.

1.1 Statement of Commitment

RYS is committed to the protection of the children and young people with whom we work; and are committed to promoting the rights of the child including the participation of children and young people in matters that affect them. We are committed to adherence to the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 on which this policy is based.

1.2 Scope of this policy

This policy document covers all of those in a paid, volunteer and student work placement role who engage with children and young people in a leadership capacity in RYS, the generic term of 'Leaders' will be used throughout this document to capture all of these adults with responsibilities for the supervision of children and young people.
The procedures outlined in this policy document support RYS Child Safeguarding Statement and are in response to the risks identified in the Safeguarding Risk Assessment.
This policy will be communicated throughout RYS by the following means:

- Adoption and Ratification by RYS Board of Directors.
- Dissemination from the Board of Directors to RYS Project Leaders, DLP and staff.
- Made available to Volunteers and Students in their induction.
- Displayed in RYS premises.
- Displayed on the website – not current available
- Made available on request to parents, young people, members of the public, funders and the statutory authorities

2 Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

RYS has appointed a Designated Liaison Person (DLP). They are a resource for all Leaders within the service who have any queries or concerns relating to child safeguarding and protection. The DLP will liaise with outside agencies on behalf of the service and will receive regular and appropriate training for this role.

2.1 DLP's role and responsibilities

- Be fully familiar with the services duties in relation to the safeguarding and protection of children.
- Have good knowledge of the Children First guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that the reporting procedures are followed, so that child protection and welfare concerns are referred promptly to Tusla, The Child and Family Agency and/or An Garda Siochana (hereafter referred to as statutory agencies) when appropriate.
- Receive child protection and welfare concerns from all of those within RYS and consider if reasonable grounds for reporting to the statutory agencies exist.
- When relevant, consult informally with a Duty Social Workers and seek their advice.
- Participate in a Meitheal or support a staff member to engage in Meitheal, when appropriate.
- Where appropriate, make a formal report of a child protection or welfare concern to the statutory agencies using the appropriate standard reporting forms and reporting channel.
- Provide guidance to those within the service around informing the child's parents/guardians when a report is being submitted to the statutory agencies.
- Record all concerns or allegations of child abuse brought to their attention as well as any decisions taken in response to these concerns.
- Provide feedback to the referrer, as appropriate.
- Ensure that a secure system is in place to manage confidential records.
- Act as an ongoing liaison with the statutory agencies.
- Ensure implementation of these safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Coordinate the ongoing review of the Safeguarding Risk Assessment and review the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- To undertake any training appropriate to the role

2.2 DLP contact details

Name	Role	Contact Details
Daniel Rawat	Youth Service Manager	Daniel@rutlandyouthservice.ie 086 1989992

2.3 Deputy DLP contact details

In the event the DLP is unavailable please contact one of our Deputy DLP's

Name	Role	Contact Details
James O Callaghan	Project Leader	James@rutlandyouthservice.ie 086 1989991
Dave O'Hara	Youth Engagement Co-ordinator	Dave@rutlandyouthservice.ie 086 198 9994

2.4 Mandated Persons

The Children First Act 2015, defines certain persons as "Mandated Persons". All staff that have a direct working role with young people are deemed 'Mandated Persons' under this legislation. A list of mandated persons is held by the DLP and Line managers in RYS.
Mandated Persons are informed that they are mandated and briefed on what his means by their Line Manager during their induction.

2.4.1 Procedure for maintaining list of Mandated Persons

The list of mandated persons will be maintained by the DLP, who will be responsible for updating it in the event of any personnel change or changes to role/job descriptions. It will also be reviewed in line with any changes to this policy document and the Child Safeguarding Statement every 24 months or sooner, and in the event of any change to national policy or legislation.

2.4.2 Procedure for appointing a Relevant Person

The Board of Directors have responsibility for appointing a Relevant Person, the role of the relevant person is to be the first point of contact in relation to the Child Safeguarding Statement. The DLP will be the Relevant Person, unless decided otherwise.

2.4.3 Role and Responsibilities of Mandated Persons

Mandated persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns which meet or exceed a particular threshold of 'harm' (see section 3.5) and to cooperate with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency (hereafter referred to as Tusla) in the assessment of mandated reports, where requested to do so.
All mandated persons have been informed in writing that they are mandated and have been briefed on their role and responsibilities under the Children First Act 2015. Any new staff member that is mandated in their role will be briefed about their responsibilities on commencement of their employment.
See section 4.4 for mandated person's responsibilities in reporting procedures.

3 Recognising Child Protection and Welfare Concerns

It is important that everyone in RYS is aware of the ways in which children and young people can be harmed and have knowledge about the types of abuse and how they may be recognised. The definitions of child abuse which are referenced here are in accordance with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.

Note: The Child Care Act 1991 defines "a child" as a person under the age of 18 years, who is not, or has not, been married. The age of sexual consent is 17 years.

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: **neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse.** A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger and can be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, this will be considered a child protection issue for both children, and we will follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the *impact* of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the person harming them. The definitions of neglect and abuse referenced in this policy are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised. Please see Tusla's website for definitions of Child

Abuse which are taken from the Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 https://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/definitions-of-child-abuse/

3.1 Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm:

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.

3.2 Peer Abuse

In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, child protection procedures must be adhered to for both the victim(s) and the alleged abuser(s). The report will be treated as a child protection issue for all children involved. Any reasonable grounds of concerns relating to the abuse or harm of a child by another child will be addressed in line with the procedures as set out in section 4. If there is any conflict of interest between the welfare of the alleged abuser and the victim, the victim's welfare will take precedence. Abusive behaviour which is perpetrated by children will be taken seriously and it is important that such cases are referred to statutory agencies, where appropriate. Children who are abusive towards other children may require comprehensive assessment and therapeutic intervention by skilled professionals. Treatment is more likely to be effective if begun early in the child's life.

3.3 Bullying

Bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare. Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it is verbal, psychological or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyber-bullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices.
RYS is committed to dealing with all bullying, including homophobic and transphobic bullying, and have in place Codes of Behaviour for young people. In cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, we will make a referral to the statutory authorities.

3.4 Reasonable Grounds for Concern

RYS will inform the appropriate statutory authorities when there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. We will not ignore what may be symptoms of abuse, as it could result in ongoing harm to the child. When we are considering whether reasonable grounds have been met, we understand that it is not necessary to prove that abuse has occurred to in order to report a concern. All that is required is that there are *reasonable grounds for concern*. It is the statutory agencies' role to assess concerns that are reported to them.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- 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 the child being abused.

3.5 Threshold of Harm for Mandated Persons

Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies who is a mandated person. Within RYS the Youth Work Managers and Youth Work Staff are mandated persons under this legislation. When a Mandated Person is considering whether they should make a mandated report of harm to a child, the Children First Act 2015 defines 'harm' in a relation to a child as

- 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
- 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. Section 14(1) of the Children First Act 2015 states:…where a Mandated Persons knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information that he or she has received, acquired or becomes aware of in the course of his or her employment or profession as such a mandated person, that a child—
- Has been harmed,
- Is being harmed, or
- Is at risk of being harmed, He or she shall, as soon as practicable, report that knowledge, belief or suspicion, as the case may be, to the statutory authorities.

Section 14(2) of the Children First Act 2015 places obligations on mandated persons to report any disclosures made by a child:

- "Where a child believes that he or she–
    - Has been harmed,
    - Is being harmed, or
    - Is at risk of being harmed,

and discloses this belief to a mandated person in the course of a mandated person's employment or profession as such a person, the mandated person shall, as soon as practicable, report that disclosure to [Tusla]."

4 Responding to and reporting child protection concerns

RYS has the following procedures in place for responding to, and reporting, child protection and welfare concerns. These procedures cover circumstances where a child may disclose abuse and also other circumstances where there are reasonable grounds for concern which may arise.

4.1 Dealing with a Disclosure

All Leaders within RYS should deal with any disclosure of abuse from a child or young person sensitively and carefully and follow the guidance below:

- React calmly
- Listen carefully and attentively
- Take the child seriously
- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you
- Do not promise to keep anything secret
- Ask questions for clarification only.
- Do not ask leading questions
- Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser

- Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible
- Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of the National Guidance and legislation.

(Extract from Children First National Guidance 2017)

4.2 Reporting Child Protection Concerns

All Leaders in RYS (*not just mandated persons*) have a responsibility to report any concerns they may have in respect of child safeguarding and child protection. **All Leaders are expected and required to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with the DLP or Deputy DLP**.
Following on from a disclosure from a child, or from observations/interactions with a child relating to child welfare, neglect or abuse, the following are the steps to be followed –

- If you consider the child to be in immediate risk/in an emergency situation, make contact directly and immediately with An Garda Siochána. You should then follow up with a report to the DLP and Tusla.
- If the concern is not urgent or does not involve immediate risk to the child - contact the DLP. See DLP's contact details in section 2.2 above
- If you are unsure if a report should be made you can contact the DLP's who can discuss it with you. If the DLP is also unsure if the concern meets the threshold for reporting they can seek advice from a Duty Social Worker who can provide guidance. http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact/
- If reasonable grounds for concern and/or the threshold of harm is reached the DLP will complete the relevant form and submit it via the online portal at https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/web-portal/
- Parents should be informed that a report is to be made to the statutory agencies in respect of their child, unless doing so would put a child at further risk, put the reporter at risk, or hinder the investigation and/or assessment. This can be discussed with the DLP and if unsure whether to inform parents, the DLP can seek advice from the statutory agencies
- In order to maintain the confidentiality of the process, information must only be shared on a "need to know" basis and must not be discussed among Leaders. See section 5.1 for more information on confidentiality.
- The DLP is required to keep a record of all observations, actions and communications in relation to child welfare and protection concerns and reports and to store them safely.

NOTE: If the alleged person causing harm or abuse is a child, the reporting procedures above are followed for both children. See section 3.2 for more details on dealing with allegations against children.

4.3 Mandated Persons Reporting Procedure

Mandated Persons in RYS should inform the DLP if making a report of harm. DLP's cannot make a mandated report on behalf of a mandated person; however the DLP and mandated person should make the report jointly. If the mandated person and/or the DLP are in doubt about whether the concern reaches the legal definition of harm for making a mandated report, guidance from the statutory agencies should be sought.
Where a mandated person has a concern that they believe does not reach the threshold for a mandated report, they should consider whether the concern meets reasonable grounds for concern. If the mandated person thinks the concern does meet reasonable grounds for concern, they should report the concern to their DLP, in line with current policies and legislation.

4.4 Non-Reporting

If the DLP decides that the grounds to make a report are not met, they must inform (in writing) the Leader who brought it to their attention as to their rationale and advise them that they are still entitled to make a report to

the statutory agencies, and that they are protected under the 'Protection for Persons Reporting Act 1998', should they report independently.
When the decision is taken by the DLP not to report the concern, the DLP must maintain a record of all actions and communications, and outline their reasons for not reporting, including any advice received from the statutory agencies.

4.5 Retrospective Reporting

If a DLP or a Mandated Person receives a disclosure from an adult about abuse they suffered as a child, and there is current or future risk of harm to other children, this will be reported to the statutory agencies, in line with procedures outlined above.

4.6 Responding to Allegations against Staff/Volunteers/Students

If an allegation is made against a Leader within RYS, the priority is to protect the child, while taking account of the rights of the person against whom the allegation has been made. RYS will endeavour to ensure that everyone involved is dealt with appropriately and fairly. The allegation will be handled in accordance with Children First Guidance and will apply fair procedure and relevant employment law.
Where there is an allegation, suspicion or concern of child abuse against a Leader within RYS that gives rise to reasonable grounds for concern, the following procedures must be followed.

- The DLP will follow the reporting procedure to the statutory agencies as outlined above, see section 4.2
- The internal personnel procedure for dealing with the staff member will be the responsibility of the Youth Service Manager
- The procedure for responding to allegations against Volunteers/Students will be the Youth Service Manager

In all of its dealing with allegations:

The safety of children and young people is the first priority and all necessary measures will be taken to ensure their protection. The measures taken will be proportionate to the level of risk. In cases of allegations against staff members, these measures should not unreasonably penalise the employee, unless necessary to protect young people. The measures which can be taken to ensure the safety of children and young people may include the suspension (without prejudice) from duty of the person against whom the allegation has been made while acknowledging that measures such as suspension do not imply guilt on behalf of the individual under suspension. The DLP and Board of Directors will work in co-operation with the statutory agencies and any action to be taken in regard to the person, against whom the allegation has been made may be taken in consultation with these agencies. Consideration will be given as to the provision of supports to the person against whom the allegation has been made during this period. Staff have access to EAP through our contract with https://www.healthassured.org. Throughout the process all interactions will be recorded and appropriate levels of confidentiality will be maintained.

4.6.1 Allegations against Young People

Where an allegation is made, or a concern is raised, in relation to a young person involved in RYS (under the age of 18 years) the child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser, that is, it should be considered a child protection issue for both children. The concern should be reported to the DLP, who will report it to the statutory agencies in line with this policy.

4.6.2 Anonymous reports

If the DLP receives an anonymous report regarding a concern about a child or adult Leader within RYS, they will follow the reporting procedure outlined above. However, it will likely be much more difficult to establish

reasonable grounds for concern without having information directly from the reporter who has raised the concern, and this may impede on any subsequent investigation**.**

5 Managing Information

RYS are committed to ensuring that when dealing with child welfare and protection issues that the following procedures are followed in relation to managing sensitive information.

5.1 Confidentiality

When child protection and welfare concerns arise, information will only be shared on a need to know basis, and in the best interest of the child. It is important that children within the service are made aware that if they disclose abuse they understand that it cannot be kept secret, but will only be shared with people who are in a position who can help them. Parents and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so puts the child at further risk.

5.2 Recording and Sharing of Information

- Records will be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- Records will be shared with the statutory authorities where a child protection or welfare issue arises.
- Records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures will be kept securely and safely within the organisation. This will be coordinated and managed by the DLP
- Records will only be used for the purpose for which they are intended.
- Records will only be shared on a need to know basis in the best interests of the child/young person.
- Records will be held confidentially under the custody of the DLP and Deputy DLP in the RYS premises.

6 Safe Recruitment, Selection and Training Procedures

6.1 Recruitment and Selection

RYS is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable adults work with young people in our organisation. This includes a robust recruitment procedure for staff which includes background checks (garda vetting and references), interview with the applicant, induction, training and a probation period.

- Garda vetting is renewed for all relevant staff every three years.
- Supervision and support is provided on every 6 to 8 weeks to all staff from their line manager.
- Students will be assessed on their suitability firstly through the college (who have responsibility for carrying out garda vetting) and through a meeting/interview their placement supervisor/RYS staff member.
- Volunteers suitability will be assessed through meeting/interview, garda vetting, training and supervision. Parental consent will be obtained when conducting Garda vetting for 16-18 year olds
- Students and Volunteers will not have sole supervision responsibility for young people without a youth worker present.

6.2 Training Strategy

RYS is committed to ensuring all Leaders who engage regularly with young people are aware of their responsibilities and requirements under this policy and generally under Children First policy and legislation. To this end child protection awareness is delivered to all new staff within 3 months of starting work staff and refreshed at least every two years, DLP training is provided to both DLP and Deputy DLP and the Board are

briefed at least once a year on their responsibilities. Training records are maintained by the DLP and non-attendance at training is followed up.

7 Code of Behaviour

7.1 Code of Behaviour for Leaders

All Leaders must abide by the RYS Code of Behaviour which outlines what is expected of them when working with young people. This Code is given to all Leaders and is discussed regularly at team meetings and at child protection awareness training. Any Leader who breaches this Code of Behaviour may be subject to sanctions in line with the organisations policies. **Please see the Code of Behaviour in Appendix One**

8 Non-compliance

8.1 Breaches of Code of Behaviour and Child Protection Policy

Where there is an alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour or the Child Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which does not give rise to an immediate child safeguarding concern, management will deal with the matter as part of its disciplinary process. When the breach of the Code of Behaviour or Policy is related to a child safeguarding or protection concern, the procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied. See section 4.6.

9 Working In Partnership

9.1 Working with Parents/Guardians

RYS is committed to forming positive relationships with parents/guardians and will do this through the following measures:

- Informing parents on the organisations guiding principles and commitment to safeguarding and protection.
- Making the Child Safeguarding Statement available to them on request and communicating these procedures in an appropriate manner.
- Keeping them informed as to their child's welfare
- Ensuring that they are spoken to about concerns relating to the child's welfare.
- Providing a platform for open communication with parents/guardians about their child.

9.2 Working with External Agencies

There will be occasions when the service works in partnership or close proximity with another organisation. This may take many forms including delivery of programmes.

When RYS is working in partnership with another organisation, there will be agreement, in writing, as to whom incidents or suspected child protection or welfare concerns should be reported to. For example if the service is operating within a school/classroom environment it is important to be clear on agreement to follow the schools child protection policies and procedures.

Everyone involved should be aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and of any changes to their usual practice as a result of partnership working. When the service is operating in a premises/space which is shared with other service providers there will arrangements put in place regarding supervision responsibilities. It should be made clear that children and young people attending the RYS are under their Leaders responsibility and risks of harm to them should be considered and responded to.

10 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

RYS is committed to ensuring that this policy and the procedures outlined are implemented across the organisation and that they are monitored and reviewed regularly.

10.1 Overview of arrangements to ensure implementation, monitoring and review

The procedures contained in this document will be reviewed regularly by the DLP and Board of Directors and implementation will be monitored on an on- going basis.

- The DLP will report to the Board of Directors any issues that are considered to be significant in respect of child safeguarding. Such reports will be cognisant of confidentiality and will be anonymised, unless exceptional circumstances exist.
- A standing agenda item of child safeguarding and protection will be included in both staff and board meetings at regular intervals.
- The DLP will ensure that this policy, and the accompanying Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement, will be reviewed at least every 2 years and will also ensure they are updated to take account of any substantive changes to relevant policy/legislation or changes in work practice.

11 Appendix 1 RYS Code of Behaviour for Adult Leaders

This Code of Behaviour applies to all adults with supervision responsibility for children and young people engaged in the services of RYS. These include the Youth Service Manager, Project Leader, youth work staff, adult volunteers, students (over the age of 18 years), tutors or contractors engaged by RYS to engage with young people, staff from other agencies or services working with our children and young people.
General

- We will provide a safe fun environment and treat all children and young people with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- We will ensure young people are listened to and their full participation is facilitated
- We will encourage young people to report any cases of inappropriate behaviour or bullying by young people or adults

Supervision

- We will operate all activities with a minimum of two adult leaders present (both offline and online).
- We will operate with an adult to child ratio of 7:1 and male and female leaders present when caring for mixed group of children, where possible. When engaged in off-site activities, specific activities, trips or residentials this ratio will be adjusted accordingly.
- If working on a one-to-one basis we will do so in a planned/structured way and where possible within eyesight/earshot of other staff/volunteers or within public spaces. Staff will carry ID when conducting one to ones within public spaces. In the case of an emergency situation with a young person where you are left alone a senior member of staff will be contacted as soon possible. Contact another staff member?
- If we are alone with a young person for a period of time in an unplanned situation we will inform our line manager as soon as possible.
- We will respect young people's privacy at all times, especially in bathrooms, changing rooms or sleeping areas.

One to One Work

- We will have in place a supervision structure to support this work and address any issues which may arise
- We will inform parents/guardians as to the nature and purpose of this work and seek their consent
- We will have a clear code of behaviour for both Leader and young person
- We will inform the young person engaged in one to one work that they can discuss the work and raise any concerns they may have with a different Leader

Parents/Guardians

- We will seek written permission for each young person who joins our service through our parental consent forms and request specific written permission for off-site or particular activities (Residentials, High Risk, external consent forms, developmental programmes, events/parades)

  We will inform parents/guardians, when appropriate, if there is a concern about their child's welfare or protection

  Where scheduled trips are delayed or end early, parents will be informed by text/phone call.

We will inform parents/guardians, if there is any accident or incident concerning their child

Behaviour

- We will use positive language and will respect young people space and boundaries
- We will challenge unsafe behaviour in a constructive manner and never use disrespectful or threatening language
- We will never engage or encourage sexually provocative games or make suggestive comments.
- We understand that while physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring and showing concern for children, it will only take place when it is appropriate, open and acceptable to all persons concerned. We will consider the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities

Team behaviour

- Communication between team members should always be clear and respectful especially during sessions with young people
- Team feedback should always be conducted privately
- During sessions with young people staff communication should be around group and non-inclusive conversations should be limited
- Adult Leaders should not engage in conversations that undermine the credibility of another adult leader/stakeholder and/or can create conflict

Online Engagement

- We will seek written permission from parents/young people for young people to engage with our service online (text, WhatsApp or email confirmation will be retained)
- We will inform and educate young people about their online safety while on social media platforms, gaming etc…
- We will use RYS phone/email/website/social media accounts eg. Facebook, TikTok, Instagram accounts etc..to contact and engage with young people
- We will not contact or engage or return correspondence with young people via our personal phone numbers/email/social media accounts
- We will establish boundaries around our online engagement with young people and agree a code of conduct
- We will request parents to be present if engaging with children under the age of 12 years
- We will use an appropriate online platform to engage with young people
- We will ensure that we have a minimum of two adult leaders present during online engagement with young people
- We will ensure we have a quiet space and appropriate background for online engagement sessions
- Due to the possibility of sensitive and/or inappropriate voice notes and videos from young people, voice notes should not be listened to, videos should not be watched and young person should be contacted to inform them to call or text to discuss.
- We will ensure young people are supervised during online engagement, including when joining and leaving sessions, through the use of the applications settings
- We will not permit recording of the online engagement, unless for a specified reason, and with permission from the Project Leader
- We will report any child safeguarding and protection issues or concerns to the DLP and in line with our organisational policy and procedures

Streetwork/Outreach

- We will always operate street work and outreach according to an agreed timetable and location/s and with permission from Line Manager
- We will carry out a risk assessment in relation to off-site activities
- We will have in place agreed safety procedures in the event of unsafe situations
- We will dress in an appropriate and clearly identifiable way (RAYS branded clothes)
- We will not engage, encourage or assist in any anti-social or criminal activity
- We will report any concerns in relation to child protection

Residentials/Trips Abroad

- We will involve young people, as much as possible, in the planning of the trip,
- We will have in place an agreed a behaviour contract with consequences, agreed boundaries around unstructured time,
- We will have in place contingency plans in cases of emergencies, young people getting lost, ‘,
- We will have provided young people and their families detailed itineraries including for pick up and drop off of young people/participants.
- We will have an appropriate paperwork is in place, e.g. passports, visa are accessible
- We will have provided information on currency, climate, time zones, cultural, legal differences e.g. drinking, age of consent, drugs etc... •
- We will have in place regular scheduled check in and debriefing sessions with all Leaders and young people.

Record Keeping

- We will maintain an up-to-date register of young people attending RYS and parents/guardians contact details and consent forms
- We will have up to date information and accessible information on any relevant medical details including allergies, dietary requirements, medical conditions
- We will record all incidents and accidents as per our Health and Safety Policy
- We will record programme activities as per funding requirements

12 Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Statement

1.Name of Service being provided: Rutland Youth Service CLG

2. Nature of Service and principles to safeguard children from harm:

RYS is a community-based youth organisation based in Dublin's North East Inner City, working with young people aged 10–25. We operate from a youth development model, supporting young people to thrive, participate actively in their communities, and reach their full potential.

Services include:

Group Work	One to One Support	Outreach
Overnight Trips	Outreach & detached work	Educational Programmes
Drop-in sessions	Adventure Programmes	Youth Advocacy
Interest Based programmes	Inter-agency collaborations	Thematic Programmes

RYS is governed by a voluntary Board of Management. The staff team includes a Youth Service Manager, Project Leaders, full-time and part-time youth workers, and administrative staff.

Safeguarding Principles: Rutland Youth Service and its Board of Directors are committed to ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all children and young people. We are guided by *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*, the *Children First Act 2015*, and *Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. We believe that child safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, that the welfare of the child is paramount, and that children must be listened to, supported, and treated with respect at all times.

3. Risk Assessment

We have completed a comprehensive **Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment (2025)**. The assessment considered all areas of our service, including online and off-site engagement.

Below is a summary of the headline risks identified and the core procedures in place to manage them. A full copy of the detailed risk assessment is available upon request.

Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
Engagement with Young People Risks relating to bullying, unsafe behaviour, peer harm, or exclusion	RYS Code of Behaviour; Child Safeguarding Policy; Anti-Bullying Procedures; EDI Policy; Inclusion & Supervision Guidance; Training for staff and young people on behaviour, inclusion and safeguarding practices
Online Engagement & Communication Risks from inappropriate messaging, online abuse, or poor protocols	RYS Social Media Policy (2025); Communication Policy (2024); Child Safeguarding Policy; Staff training on online boundaries; Acceptable use guidelines; Consent for media use
Reporting & Allegations Failure to report, unclear DLP role, or mishandling of disclosures	RYS Child Safeguarding Policy; Safeguarding Statement; DLP and Deputy roles appointed; Reporting Flowcharts; Training Policy; Annual refresher and briefings; Induction and policy sign-off
Safe Recruitment & Selection Unsuitable staff/volunteers or lack of proper onboarding	Garda Vetting Policy (2024); Volunteer Policy (2025); Recruitment Procedures (in Handbook); Supervision and placement protocols; Mandatory induction; Named supervisors; Role-specific safeguarding training
External Environments (Trips, Home Visits, Shared Spaces) Inadequate supervision, third-party risks	Residential Policy; Transport & Travel Policy; Home Visit Policy (2025); Interagency protocols; Vetting confirmation from partners; Staff debriefing and risk checklists; Scenario-based safeguarding guidance

4. Procedures

This 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 (2017)**, and **Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice**.

Rutland Youth Service has a comprehensive suite of procedures in place to manage and reduce identified risks of harm, including:

- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla and An Garda Síochána, including the role of the Designated Liaison Person and Mandated Persons.
- Procedure for the management of allegations or suspicions of abuse or misconduct involving a child by staff, volunteers, students, or another young person, whether occurring within or outside the service.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment, selection, and vetting of staff, volunteers, and students, including garda vetting, references, probationary periods, and supervision planning.
- Procedure for providing access to child safeguarding training and information, including induction, regular refresher sessions, and role-specific supports for identifying and responding to harm.
- Procedure for maintaining an up-to-date list of Mandated Persons as required under the Children First Act 2015.
- Procedure for the appointment of a Relevant Person, as defined under the Act, who is responsible for this statement and related safeguarding procedures.
- Procedure for safeguarding children in all youth work activities, including one-to-one work, group sessions, outreach, residentials, trips, and digital engagement.
- Procedure for safe and appropriate online and digital engagement, including social media contact, remote group work, and digital media use.
- Procedure for working in partnership with external organisations or in shared spaces, including vetting confirmation, MOUs, and safeguarding protocols for third-party staff.

PLEASE NOTE: All procedures listed above are available upon request from Rutland Youth Service.

5. Implementation

Rutland Youth Service is fully committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children and young people safe from harm while availing of our service. This statement has been made available to all staff, volunteers, students, and board members, and is publicly displayed on our premises and website.

It will be reviewed every two years, or as soon as practicable after a material change occurs in any matter to which the statement refers.

Date: Signed:

13 Appendix 3 – Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Introduction

Rutland Youth Service (RYS) is a community-based youth service providing programmes and supports to young people aged 10–25, including:

- One-to-one support
- Group work and small group interventions
- Outreach and Detached work
- Thematic support programmes (e.g. young parents, drugs education, employment)
- Drop-ins
- Residentials and trips
- Inter-agency collaborations
- Youth advocacy and participation

In accordance with **Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015**, this risk assessment identifies **potential risks of harm** to children and young people and outlines the **procedures in place to manage those risks**. The risk assessment refers only to the **risk of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect)** and **not general health and safety risks**. It will be reviewed **biannually**, or sooner if service changes occur.

Risk Assessment Title:	Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment			**Risk Register:**	00
Assessment Date:	29.07.2025	**Review Date:**	28.07.2027	**Version No:**	1.0
Name of Assessor(s):	Daniel Rawat	**Persons at Risk:**	Young People		

Engagement with Young People

Potential Risk of Harm	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Owner**	**Controls in Place**	**Actions Required**
Harm or bullying from peers or staff	High	**Low**	Staff, DLP, Management	RYS Child Safeguarding Policy, RYS Code of Conduct for Adult Leaders, Anti-Bullying Procedures in Safeguarding Policy	Biannual review of Code of Behaviour, refresher safeguarding training
Inappropriate use of ICT (accessing harmful material, cyberbullying)	High	**Low**	Staff, Management	RYS Social Media Policy (2025), RYS Communication Policy (2024), Safeguarding Policy on ICT Use	Ongoing staff and young person digital safety sessions
Violent or unsafe behaviour by young people (weapons, threats, drugs)	High	**Medium**	Staff, Youth Participants	Code of Conduct for Young People, Incident Response Protocol (Handbook), Behaviour Management Procedures	Implement behaviour-specific risk assessments
Poor practice by staff or volunteers	Medium	**Low**	Management, DLP	RYS Volunteer Policy (2025), Induction Protocols (Handbook), Garda Vetting Policy (2024)	Include Code of Conduct in all staff and student inductions

Inadequate supervision onsite/offsite	High	**Low**	Staff, Volunteers	RYS Child Safeguarding Policy, RYS Residential Policy, RYS Transport and Travel Policy	Enforce staff ratios, add supervision plans to trip prep
Emotional harm or exclusion of minority youth due to lack of inclusive safeguarding practice	Medium	**Medium**	Staff, DLP	RYS EDI Policy (2025); Inclusive induction; Cultural sensitivity promoted	Add cultural safeguarding scenarios to training; provide translated safeguarding summaries
Retraumatisation or safety risks from engaging high-risk youth without proper planning	High	**Medium**	Staff, Keyworkers, DLP	Individual support plans; Interagency collaboration; Staff safeguarding training	Include trauma-informed practice in Code of Behaviour; require safeguarding checks during referrals
Peer coercion or emotional/sexual harm in imbalanced peer relationships	High	**Medium**	Staff, DLP	Anti-Bullying Policy; Group contracts; Safeguarding training; Code of Behaviour	Train staff to detect coercive peer dynamics; reinforce peer conduct expectations regularly

Online Engagement & Communication					
Potential Risk of Harm	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Owner**	**Controls in Place**	**Actions Required**
Inappropriate communication via social media or messaging	High	**Medium**	Staff, Management	RYS Communication Policy (2024), RYS Social Media Policy (2025), Clear Safeguarding Guidelines	Deliver ongoing digital conduct workshops
Poor procedures for remote/online engagement	Medium	**Low**	DLP, Management	RYS Social Media Policy, Child Safeguarding Policy	Expand scenario-based procedures and guidance

Reporting & Allegations					
Potential Risk of Harm	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Owner**	**Controls in Place**	**Actions Required**
No DLP/DDLP or unclear reporting structures	High	**Medium**	Board, Management	Safeguarding Statement, RYS Child Safeguarding Policy	Complete NYCI Board checklist; post contact details visibly
Failure to report disclosure or concern	High	**Medium**	Staff, DLP	Training Policy (2025), Safeguarding Policy, Tusla e-learning module	Refresher sessions and DLP briefings annually
Lack of clarity around mandated persons	High	**Low**	Management	Safeguarding Policy, Induction Procedure	Add mandate awareness to staff meetings
Mishandling of allegations	High	**Low**	DLP, Management	RYS Child Safeguarding Policy, Employee Handbook	Annual allegations procedure training
Underreporting of abuse or bullying due to lack of awareness among young people	Medium	**Medium**	Youth Workers, Management	Group sessions on rights; child-friendly safeguarding posters; Staff-led safeguarding discussions	Develop child-friendly CSS summary; integrate safeguarding education into programmes

Safe recruitment & Selection					
Potential Risk of Harm	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Owner**	**Controls in Place**	**Actions Required**
Unvetted or unsuitable personnel	High	**Low**	Board, Management	Garda Vetting Policy (2024), Volunteer Policy (2025), Recruitment section in Handbook	Revetting every 3 years; document audit annually
Incomplete induction or unclear roles	Medium	**Low**	Management	Volunteer Policy, Training Policy, Induction Pack (Handbook)	Track completions; add onboarding checklists
Inadequate supervision of volunteers or student placements leads to boundary issues or failure to report harm	High	**Medium**		RYS Volunteer Policy (2025); Induction protocol; Garda Vetting; Named supervisor; Signposting to DLP	Placement checklist with safeguarding section; Schedule first-month check-ins; Train volunteers on scenarios and reporting process
Boundary violations or grooming by volunteers engaging privately with youth	High	**Low**	Management, DLP	RYS Volunteer Policy (2025); Garda Vetting; Code of Conduct; Parental Consent protocol	Reinforce boundaries annually in volunteer induction; enforce no unsupervised external meetings

Residentials and Off-Site Activities					
Potential Risk of Harm	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Owner**	**Controls in Place**	**Actions Required**
Inadequate supervision during trips	High	**Medium**	Staff, Management	Residential Policy, Transport and Travel Policy, Supervision Ratio Guidelines	Implement standard off-site checklist
Harm from external personnel	High	**Low**	Staff	Vetting Confirmation from partners, Interagency Guidance	Conduct vetting audits for shared programmes

Training & Policy Awareness					
Potential Risk of Harm	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Owner**	**Controls in Place**	**Actions Required**
Staff unaware of policy procedures	Medium	**Low**	Management	Safeguarding Policy, Training Policy, Signed Acknowledgement in HR files	Add to staff meeting agenda quarterly
Inadequate or outdated training	High	**Low**	Management	Tusla modules, in-house CPD, Induction content	Annual role-specific CPD log maintained

Use of Photography and Media					
Potential Risk of Harm	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Owner**	**Controls in Place**	**Actions Required**
Unauthorised or harmful use of photos/video	High	**Low**	Staff, DLP	Social Media Policy, Consent Procedures (Safeguarding Policy)	Reconfirm photo consent yearly; include reminders in youth sessions
Youth accessing or sharing harmful content on unsupervised devices	High	**Medium**	Staff, Management	RYS Social Media Policy (2025); Acceptable Use Agreements; Device use monitored in sessions	Reinforce supervision protocols; share digital safety tips with parents and young people

Other					
Potential Risk of Harm	**Impact**	**Likelihood**	**Owner**	**Controls in Place**	**Actions Required**
Harm from shared space users or visitors	High	**Medium**	Management, DLP	Board Handbook (oversight), Vetting confirmation from other agencies, Visitor Protocols	Review all MOUs annually; update space access signage
Staff member's personal relationship with young person/family leads to underreporting or biased intervention	High	**Medium**	Management, Staff	RYS Conflict of Interest Policy (2025); Safeguarding induction; Regular supervision meetings; Clear escalation process to DLP	Raise in induction and team supervision; Add boundary scenarios to refresher training; DLP monitors reports from known youth
Staff may fail to recognise/report concerns during a home visit (e.g. neglect, exposure to harm, unsupervised minors)	High	**Medium**	Staff, DLP	RYS Home Visit Policy (2025); Reporting pathway to DLP; Guidance for staff on environmental indicators of harm	Add reflective debrief to visit log; Include safeguarding 'spotting signs' checklist in home visit training

Staff witness concerning situations during informal visits or drop-offs and fail to act appropriately	Medium	**Low**	Staff, DLP	Covered under Home Visit Policy; Reporting flowchart in Safeguarding Policy; Supervision debriefing	Remind staff to log informal safeguarding observations; Include example scenarios in training; DLP to monitor for patterns

Conclusion & Sign-Off

This risk assessment reflects the commitment of Rutland Youth Service to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and harm. While all risks cannot be entirely eliminated, this framework ensures that they are identified, mitigated, and managed responsibly.

Review Date: Every 2 years or following significant change

Approved By:

- Chairperson of the Board
- Regional Youth Service Manager
- Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

14 Document Control

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