

OSSORY YOUTH - CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Name of Service: Ossory Youth

Ossory Youth is a voluntary non-profit youth work organisation working with and for young people within the Diocese of Ossory, covering County Kilkenny and parts of Laois and Offaly. Our mission is to support young people to connect, experience, learn and grow.

Our services are in the areas of:

- Urban and Rural Youth Work
- Rural Youth Clubs
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Youth Information
- School and Community Based Programmes
- New Communities
- Mentoring
- Arts and Creativity
- Autism
- LGBTQIA+
- Ethnic Minorities
- Counselling
- Alcohol and Drugs
- Youth Diversion

Procedures:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our services.

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers by a child while availing of our service.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children.
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available on request.

Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm:

Ossory Youth is committed to the principles laid out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. These are:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm.
- Interventions by the State should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family.
- 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.
- Children should only be separated from parents/carers when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted.
- Children have a 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.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect, and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/carers and families.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.

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

Ossory Youth have included the risk of harm to a child as a new category in the organisations Risk Management Policy and Procedures. A comprehensive risk assessment has been conducted to identify potential areas of harm and to implement measures to reduce the risk as per the Risk Management Process. The risks and how they will be managed are as follows:

Risk Identified	Procedures in place to manage risk identified
A child or young person could be harmed if an unsuitable person was recruited as a staff member or volunteer	• OY Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures • OY Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures • OY Garda Vetting Policy and Procedures • OY Induction Policy and Procedures • OY Support and Supervision Policy and Procedures • OY Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers • OY Disciplinary Policy and Procedures • OY Lone Working Policy • OY Code of Ethics Policy and Procedures
A child could be harmed if staff or volunteers failed to recognise or report a disclosure or concern	• OY Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures • Staff and volunteers must complete Child Protection Awareness Training and Tusla Introduction to Children First' e-learning training • OY Incident Reporting Procedures
A child or young person may be harmed by being bullied or abused by another child or young person during activities, after activities, on the premises or via social media	• Clear process in place of contracting/setting ground rules with all groups • OY Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers • OY Social Media Policy and Procedures • OY Complaints Policy and Procedures • OY Dignity and Respect in the Workplace Policy and Procedures • Working with Young People within Ossory Youth Guidance Document
A child may be harmed if the organisation failed to have in place robust processes for planning activities, trips and events at local, regional, national or international levels	• All activities, trips and events are planned carefully in advance to ensure risks are avoided • Programmes agreed in advance and communicated with parents and young people • Risk assessments conducted for all activities, trips and events • Consent secured from parents • Clear agreements on expectations and acceptable behaviour • Insurance cover in place for all activities, trips and events • Ratios and supervision standards clearly set and communicated
A child or young person may be harmed if the organisation fails to manage multi-purpose situations appropriately i.e. where members of the public may be on the premises or be encountered during external activities/events	• OY Health & Safety Policy and Procedures • OY CCTV Policy and Procedures • Computerised booking system used in Desart Hall (OY Headquarters) • Suitability of all new and external venues assessed in advance • Adequate supervision maintained at all times
A child or young person may be harmed by accessing inappropriate internet content, unauthorised photography or recording, cyberbullying via social media, mobile phone or other digital devices or inappropriate online contact with young people/adults	• OY Social Media Policy and Procedures • Parental consent forms • Code of behaviour for young people • Internet firewall in place and ongoing monitoring conducted. • OY Incident Reporting Procedures • OY Complaints Policy and Procedures

Implementation:

Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our services. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed by 23rd April 2027 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

For queries, please contact: Patrick Bookle Tel: (056) 7761200 Mob: (087) 2129006 Email: pbookle@ossoryyouth.com Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

Signed:



Liam Connolly
Chairperson, Board of Directors.
24th April 2025



For further details contact:

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