

Child Safeguarding Statement Emerald Cultural Institute at Palmerston school.

The Emerald Cultural Institute offers winter and summer junior language and cultural programmes to students from all over the world. Our programmes run in our specialised centres for education. We also do tours of the city led by specialised staff and trips out into different areas of Ireland.

It is the policy of Emerald Cultural Institute (hereafter known as The Company) to protect the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm or abuse. Mandated people are the Centre Manager, Teachers and Staff.

Our Child Safeguarding Statement and Good Codes of Practice aim to raise awareness and understanding of the various categories of child abuse, the situations that might constitute reasonable grounds for concern and advice on how to respond to disclosure.

This Child Safeguarding Statement is based on and in compliance with the current child protection guidelines, legislation in the Republic of Ireland, 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*.

Workers of the company should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of young people and children, and should conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the company.

The company is committed to listening to children and young people and recognises that "each child has a right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account" in any matter or procedure" (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). The UN Convention on the Rights of the child should be respected in all aspects of the company's activities.

The company endeavours to ensure that children and young people are protected and kept safe from harm while taking part in educational programmes and events, at any time when required to work with children or young people.

We do this by;

- Familiarizing all employees and the company with the Child Safeguarding Policy Statement.
- Setting down codes of behaviour between workers and children and familiarising all and workers with them.
- Ensuring fair and consistent recruitment practices.



- Generating awareness and understanding of the various categories of child abuse, the situations that might constitute reasonable grounds for concern and advice on how to respond to disclosure.
- Monitoring procedures for responding to accidents and complaints.
- Putting in place a designated person to act as a liaison with outside agencies in relation to child protection accidents and complaints.
- Co-operating with TUSLA and professionals by sharing information when necessary and working together towards the best possible outcome for the children concerned.
- Carrying out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child or young person while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

1. Procedures

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 service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/visitors of a child/young person availing of our service;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and visitors to work with children and young persons;
- 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 the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

2. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. 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 service.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on **29th May 2026** or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: _____

[Mauro Biondi
Managing Director]
Emerald Cultural Institute

Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the possible areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Potential Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
	Paperwork	
1	No Safeguarding training completed	Safeguarding training completed
2	Recommended supervision ratios not met	Correct level of supervision in place of number of Adults in charge of Young persons/children.
3.	Poor behaviour by Adults to Young people	Discuss with the Adult and talk to Manager, monitor behaviour going forward.
4.	Failing to abide by company policies and procedures	Ensure all Adults are familiar with Company policies in his regard.
	Breaches of the Code of Good Practice	
1.	No awareness of reporting procedures (for the reporting of child protection concerns)	Action taken to highlight reporting procedures. Refresher training provided to Managers.
2.	Insufficient awareness of general complaints procedure, general complaints not been taking seriously	Training provided including Designated Liaison Training . Staff in doubt instructed to seek advice of Designated Liaison Person
	Reporting Procedures	
1.	Requirement for clear organisation reporting procedure within the Company	Policies and procedures available to staff and form part of training. Refresher training provided as needed. Staff in doubt should seek advice of DLP. (See Tusla guidelines 3.1)
2.	Lack of knowledge of statutory reporting procedure (for the reporting of child protection concerns)	Policies and procedures available to staff and form part of training. Refresher training provided as needed. In the event of doubt, staff should seek advice of DLP. (See Tusla guidelines)
3.	Concerns of child abuse not reported	Information provided on Company's internal and external reporting process and procedures. Safeguarding statement displayed in prominent place. DLP available for advice and clarification as needed.

4.	Unclear who young people should report to	Names of Manager and DLP in Company known and named on notices. Safeguarding statement displayed in prominent place.
Facilities		
1.	Unauthorised access toilets, showers etc	Responsibilities clarified with staff at training stage and before activities start.
2.	Sharing facilities with adults e.g. toilets,	Plan with facilities management to ensure separate facilities for adults and children, Where this is not possible, in a shared environment monitoring and supervision should be looked at.
3.	Unauthorised taking and use of inappropriate photography, filming or recording in prohibited areas	Child Safeguarding communicated. As appropriate seek advice from DLP. Enforce policy in private changing areas. Monitoring is in place.
Recruitment		
1.	Recruitment of inappropriate people	All Staff are required to be Garda Vetted. Recruitment follows "Safe Recruitment and Selection" guidelines by Tusla and is reviewed on an ongoing basis (point 4.1)
2.	Current staff	Procedure in place to ensure current staff are Garda Vetted and have the appropriate training in regards to safeguarding of students and ensure that everyone has an understanding of mandatory reporting.
3.	No job descriptions or inadequate job descriptions	Job descriptions are clear and supervision in place.
4.	Unqualified Adults in management/supervisory/teaching roles	Ensure relevant training is provided and review Adults on an ongoing basis.
5.	Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' with members and visitors	Communicate Child Safeguarding statement and monitor ongoing safety.
Communications		
1.	No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement or Code of Practice to members or visitors	Communicate Child Safeguarding statement, distribute parts or sections as appropriate to Young people, children and Adults.
3.	Risk due to underage member caused by inappropriately using computers, social media, phones and other devices	Put signage up to make young people aware of the risks posed by online activity. Contact DLP for support. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
4.	Risk caused by communicating with underage members in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner	Ensure proper training is given to Adults regarding this. Ensure ongoing monitoring. Contact DLP Team for support.
5.	Harm not being recognised	Contact DLP for support.

6.	Harm caused by: - Child to child - Adult to child - Visitor to child	Put up signage and ensure all Young people, children, Adults and Visitors are aware of company's rules about behaviour. Ensure there is a rota done to ensure proper supervision and monitoring at all times. Contact DLP for support.
7.	Comforting a distressed child	Ensure to listen and encourage the child to talk. Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring of the situation.
8.	Too casual and unthinking familiarity with the children/Young people in their charge	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
9.	Never allow a betrayal of the trust of children/young people, parents and fellow workers	Help young people to know the difference between confidentiality and secrecy. Ensure relevant training is given to Managers.
10.	Never impart inappropriate knowledge or interact with children/young people in a manner that is unwanted and will result in hurt to the children/young person	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
11.	Never seek to control and/or create dependence in a children/young person	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
12.	Respect the personal and sexual boundaries of others	Treat Young People and Children with dignity, sensitivity and respect. Ensure relevant training is given to Managers.
13.	Do not engage in sexually provocative touching of any form	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
14.	Never make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
15.	Workers should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact activities	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
16.	While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring and showing concern for children/young people, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all persons concerned	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. There should be no physical contact even if it is meant in good faith. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
17.	Workers should never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to children/Young people, nor should they even tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
18.1	Workers should be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism, or becoming over involved or spending a great deal of time with any one child/Young person	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure all children/Young people are treated the same. Ensure ongoing monitoring.

19.	Encourage Young people to report cases of bullying/cyberbullying to either a designated person, or a worker of their choice. Complaints must be brought to the attention of management	Ensure training is given to all staff with direct and in direct access to the students with strategies to prevent bullying in the Centre (see anti-bullying policy and see appendix 9 in Tusla guidelines). Ensure ongoing monitoring.
20.	Respect the personal space, safety and privacy of individuals	Ensure relevant training is given to Managers.
21.	It is not recommended that workers give lifts in their cars to individual children/Young people, especially for long journeys.	If an Adult feels they should give a lift to a Young person/child they should call the Parent/Guardian first. Ensure relevant training is given to Managers. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
22.	Activities in the Greater Dublin area and Ireland	All Activity Staff and teachers will be trained on how to effectively run the activities. Ensure that risk assessments that are conducted for each venue and staff are trained to effectively control large groups as well as usage of headcounts. Ensure ongoing monitoring.
23.	Care of Children with Special needs, including intimate care	Policy on Intimate Care (See TUSLA guidelines).

***Refer to Appendix A and Appendix B**

The Role of the Designated Person

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

The Company has a designated person to act as a liaison with outside agencies in relation to child protection matters within the company. This person will liaise with statutory agencies responsible for child protection and welfare and will be the resource person to any worker or visitor who has child protection concerns.

The DLP at the centre is Mr. Mark Mullally. The DDLP is Mr. Ben Gordon.

**(01)4973361,
086 8112047**

Duties:

- Acting as a resource to any staff member who has a child protection concern.
- Is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the Director of the company, TUSLA or An Garda Síochána.

The company endeavours to ensure that this person remains informed with sufficient knowledge about child abuse and child safeguarding procedures.

Definitions

Definition of a child:

For the purpose of this policy, a child is defined as a person who is under the age of 18. The fact that a child of 16 years of age is living independently or is in further education, does not change their status as a child for the purpose of this policy.

Responsibilities within the Child Safeguarding Statement

All members of the company are responsible for the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Statement; however there is a particular onus on adults to do so.

It is the responsibility of all such adults to ensure that;

- Their behaviour is appropriate at all times.
- They observe the guidelines established for the safety and security of young people.
- They follow the reporting procedures, following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse.
- They recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed and maintain a policy of transparency.

Equality Statement

The company is an equal opportunities employer and is therefore committed to creating and maintaining an environment that does not permit direct or indirect discrimination or discrimination by association, on any of the nine discriminatory grounds (Equality Acts 1998-2004), race, age, civil status, family status, and membership of the travelling community, gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs or disability.

Workers should endeavour to provide reasonable accommodation to persons that have disabilities.

Good Codes of Behaviour between Workers and Children

The company sets down the following codes of behaviour;

- Actions such as comforting a distressed children/young person should be guided by the needs of the children/young person. The company workers need to be aware that particular actions if taken out of context could be negatively interpreted and may allow unfounded accusations of impropriety to be raised against a worker.
- Workers need to be aware of the dangers of a too casual and unthinking familiarity with the children/young people in their charge.
- Never allow to a betrayal of the trust of children/young people, parents and fellow workers.
- Never impart inappropriate knowledge or interact with children/young people in a manner that is unwanted and will result in hurt to the children/young person.
- Never seek to control and/or create dependence in a children/young person.
- Respect the personal and sexual boundaries of others.
- Do not engage in sexually provocative touching of any form.

- Never make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun.
- Workers should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact activities.
- While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring and showing concern for children/young people, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all persons concerned.
- Workers should never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to children/young people, nor should they even tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Workers should be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism, or becoming over involved or spending a great deal of time with any one child/young person.
- Children/young people should be encouraged to report cases of bullying to either a designated person, or a worker of their choice. Complaints must be brought to the attention of management
- Everyone involved in the organization, should respect the personal space, safety and privacy of individuals.
- It is not recommended that workers give lifts in their cars to individual children/young people, especially for long journeys.

Protect and promote children's rights by:

- Treating Young People and children with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Making time to listen, talk to and get to know the children/young people.
- Making sure that children/young people know the company's rules about behaviour.
- Enabling children/young people to regard their bodies as their own property.
- Encouraging them to express feelings, fears and experiences openly.
- Giving written information about the organisation to children/young people and their parents/carers.
- Knowing about the principles and practices of child protection including their legal duties.
- Never engaging in sexually provocative games or make suggestive comments, even in fun.
- Respecting children's/young people's privacy in bathrooms or changing rooms.
- Sensitively ensuring that children/young people know about the Child Protection Policy.
- Always responding to complaints or allegations.
- Helping children/young people realise the difference between confidentiality and secrecy.
- Being sensitive to the fact that some children/young people are more vulnerable and have special needs.
- Never using physical punishment with children/young people.

Behavioural Awareness

Act in an open and visible manner

When working with young people or children, workers should ensure that an open environment exists. If a situation arises where privacy is required, always have someone with you or make sure that others are informed, are within your vision and, preferably, within earshot.

It is imperative that there is another adult present, in itself to comply with the company's rules for the safety of the young people and children, as well as for the security of being less likely to be accused of doing something improper.

Be positive in your conversation

The way you speak to a young person or child about themselves or others can create a positive and supportive atmosphere. Improper comments, suggestion or inappropriate humour can result in creating hurt and confusion in a child/young person. Avoid making suggestive or salacious remarks in the presence of children/young people. Keeping your conversation at the appropriate level for the age of the child/young person will help avoid causing hurt and misinterpretation of your intentions and will provide a positive example to a child/young person.

Mixed genders sections should have mixed gender leadership

Workers should endeavour to have mixed gender leadership; in the instance should emergencies, accidents or arguments arise, so that no accusations of impropriety can be levelled at any worker when dealing with the opposite gender. In some situations young people will feel more comfortable having support of a worker of the same gender.

Be alert to your own emotional feelings and the feelings of others

Young people and children can sometimes “hero –worship” a worker or develop a “Crush” on a worker or volunteer.

This type of situation needs to be handled sensitively without causing a feeling of rejection or of encouragement. Use the support of other workers to deal with such situations, as this will help to avoid any perception of encouragement on your part. Our emotions can fluctuate due to trauma, stress, bereavement and many other causes. If support is required talk things through with another trusted adult. Avoid involving young people in your emotional problems.

Consider the Situation

Workers need to be aware of the need to consider our approaches to each situation. While your intentions may be based on the most innocent and altruistic of motive, if in doubt about how your actions might be interpreted then adopt a safer course of action.

Protect your good name

While your good work as a worker may have earned you respect, this may prove little defence in the event of any allegations of improper conduct being made against you. It is therefore important that your motives are understood to be guided by the needs of the child/young person and that your actions are open and positive.

Categories of Child Abuse;

Child Abuse can be categorized into 4 types:

1. Neglect
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Physical Abuse
4. Sexual Abuse

A child/young person may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at any given time.

NEGLECT is normally defined in terms of an omission, where a child/young person 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

Whether the harm caused is significant is determined by the child's/young person's development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child/young person of similar age.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE occurs when an individual suffers harm as a result of being intimidated, being exposed to constant degradation or verbal attacks or when their needs for affection, approval, consistency and security go unmet.

Examples of emotional abuse are as follows;

Inappropriate "initiation" practices.

- Inappropriate "rite of passage"
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility, or blaming.
- Unsupported, unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of a child's/young person's capacity to understand something or to behave and control him/herself in a certain way.

Risk assessments should be carried out prior to activities in order to eliminate (or minimize) the potential risks to children.

PHYSICAL ABUSE is any form of non- accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child/young person, or injury that results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child/young person.

Examples of physical abuse are as follows:

- Shaking
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Hitting and kicking
- Burning and kicking
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child/young person.

SEXUAL ABUSE occurs when a child/young person is used by another person for his/her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. Every child/young person has a basic right to be cared for and protected at all times. *The company and workers should also be alert to the possibility that abuse can take place in a context of peers or that it may be organized.*

PEER ABUSE occurs in cases where the alleged abuser is also a child/young person. It occurs when they engage in any form of sexual activity with another individual that they have power over by virtue of age, emotional maturity, gender, physical strength, intellect, and where the victim in this situation suffers a sexual exploitation and betrayal of trust. Physical and emotional abuse can also occur in a peer context in these situations the Child Protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

ORGANISED ABUSE occurs when a person moves into an area/institution and systematically entraps children/young people for abusive purposes or when two or more adults conspire to similarly abuse children/young people using inducements.

Reasonable Grounds for Concern

It is important that the company and workers are alert to the possible signs of abuse, or indicators which constitute reasonable grounds for concern. Examples of these include:

- Disclosures by the child/young person in question or someone else.
- Age inappropriate sexual play or knowledge.
- Injuries or patterns of injuries that lack an adequate explanation.
- Consistent indication over time of neglect, for example failure to gain weight appropriate to age, withdrawal or behaviour out of character.

Possible indicators of inappropriate behaviour:

- Paying an unusual amount of attention to children/young people and provides them with presents, money or 'favours'.
- Seeking out vulnerable children/young people.
- Seeking opportunities to spend significant amounts of time alone with a single child/young person or a small group of children/young people on a regular basis.
- Encouraging secretiveness about their activities and time spent with children/young people.
- Taking a child/children/young person/young people to his/her own home.
- Being vague about previous employment.
- Having an unusual amount of physical contact with a child or children/young person or persons.
- Talking to children/young people in an inappropriate manner.
- Touching children/young people in an inappropriate manner.
- Avoiding close supervision and management at work.

Responding to accidents and complaints or to alleged or suspected child abuse

The company endeavours to respond quickly to complaints and allegations at all times.

Should workers receive a complaint, they must contact the designated person mentioned.

In the event of an accident, there are first aid boxes located at various points around the campus

Incident and accident report books are located at:

Centre Manager's Office

Procedure for suspected cases of child abuse:

The primary responsibility of the person who first suspects or is told of abuse is to report it and to ensure that their concern is taken seriously.



The guiding **principles** in regards **to reporting child abuse** within the company are as follows;

- Talk to the designated person if any concerns arise about a child's/young person's safety or their welfare.
- The actual decision about whether abuse is likely to have occurred must be left to the professionals.
- Remember your role is to be supportive not investigative.
- The safety and well-being of the child or young person must take priority.
- Reports should be made without delay.
- The principle of natural justice should apply, which means that a person is **innocent until proven otherwise**.
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- The principle of confidentiality should apply, whereby only those that need to know should be told of a suspicion/ allegation/ disclosure of abuse and the number that need to be kept informed should be kept to a minimum.

Procedures for reporting child abuse:

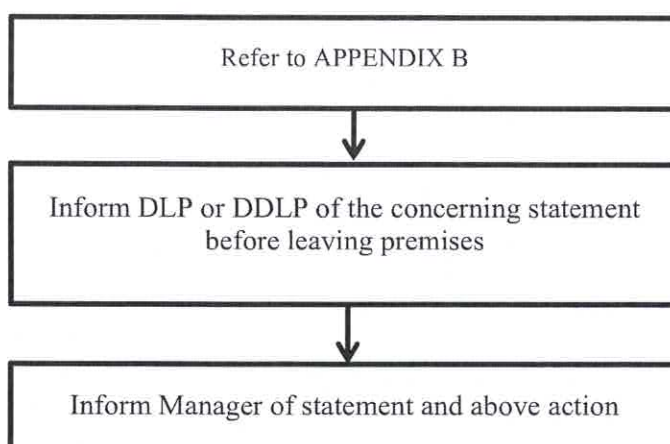
A worker who knows or suspects that a child/young person has been or is at risk of being harmed, has a duty to convey this concern to the designated person in the company and also the Director, who will report the information to TUSLA. TUSLA will, in turn, notify An Garda Síochána. In an emergency, a report must be made directly to An Garda Síochána.

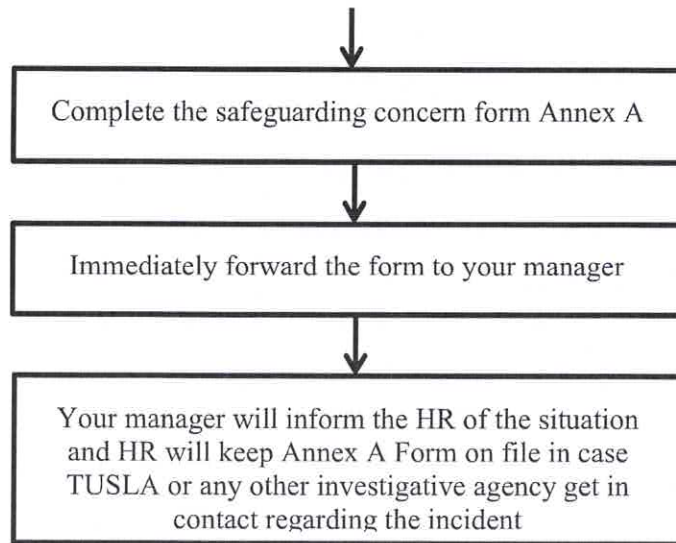
If the suspected abuser is an employee of the company, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Director of the company using APPENDIX A. When the designated person and Director of the company have been notified, they should refer the matter as soon as possible to the health board, who will in turn notify An Garda Síochána. In this regards the company should be sensitive to the fact that those with a need to know should be restricted to a minimum.

It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the health board or An Garda Síochána. Under no circumstances should any individual member of staff or volunteer or the organization itself attempt to deal with the problem of abuse alone.

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse “reasonably and in good faith” to TUSLA or An Garda Síochána.

How do I raise a concern?





If you are unsure of who to contact for your location, your manager or HR will be able to provide guidance.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Anyone with a child protection concern should remember that the safety of the child/young person is paramount, and that the alleged abuser is innocent until proven otherwise. They should treat the information confidentially and share only with those people that need to know. Information should be stored in a safe and secure location.

APPENDIX A

SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM

Name of child/vulnerable adult:	
Date of birth (child/vulnerable adult)**	Gender (M/F):
Time, location, date and any other relevant information:	
The child/vulnerable adult's account:	
Description of the safeguarding issue (including any visible signs or injuries):	
Any other observations/information:	
Witness(es) to the incident:	
Details of person alleged to have caused incident/injury – names, address, DOB or approx. age**:	

Action taken (including who has been informed):	
Signed:	Date:
Name and position:	Time:

**if available

APPENDIX B

How to respond to disclosure

In the event that a young person/child discloses a child protection concern to a worker or to another young person:

DO

- React calmly and listen carefully.
- Take what the child/vulnerable adult says seriously.
- Reassure that it is right to tell.
- Use language they understand and can relate to.
- Try to record the exact words expressed and the demeanour of the individual.
- Ask questions only for the purpose of clarification.
- Explain to the child/young person what may happen next i.e. relevant establishment/people will be informed - age appropriately.
- Write down series of events immediately after what was said, noting as much information as possible.
- Raise the concern and inform your manager or nominated senior.
- Remember you may need support and seek advice.
- Be honest and explain that you will have to tell someone else to help with the situation.
- Sign and date the record.
- Pass the information to the designated person within the company.

If a worker/volunteer fears that a young person might be in immediate danger they should directly contact An Garda Síochána as a matter of urgency, following this, report to the designated person.

DON'T

- Panic.
- Delay.
- Promise to keep information a secret.
- Ask leading questions or seek intimate details beyond those volunteered.

- Express any judgmental opinion on the alleged abuser/situation.
- Discuss the disclosure with anyone other than the relevant Person and your manager.
- Investigate.
- Get involved any further than noting down the incident in full and following the safeguarding procedure.
- Do not contact the alleged abuser.

When a child safeguarding concern arises it is important that everyone follows closely that agreed reporting procedure.

I have read the Child Safeguarding Statement for Emerald Cultural Institute at Palmerston Park

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