



## CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

### **Name of service:**

Kids' Own Publishing Partnership, 40 Wolfe Tone Street, Sligo, Co. Sligo. (Charity number: 20639)

### **1. The purpose and aims of Kids' Own are:**

Founded in 1997, Kids' Own is a children's arts organisation and dedicated publisher of books by children, for children. Kids' Own's vision is for a society that recognises children as independent writers, thinkers and creators and that truly values the arts in the lives of all children. Kids' Own's mission is to develop, publish and promote artwork and writing created by children for children and their communities, through meaningful engagement with professional artists.

### **Our aims are to:**

- **Create opportunities for children and artists to work together**

Increase opportunities for children to develop artwork and writing through meaningful engagement with professional artists, and in community with each other.

- **Give visibility to children's artwork and writing**

Increase the visibility of children's artwork and writing by publishing (in print and online), exhibition and dissemination.

- **Support professional artists in their practice with children**

Support and develop the practice of artists and other professionals who work with children and young people. Provide a leading model of best practice within the sector.

- **Advocate for children's equal status as artists and writers**

Champion children's right to actively engage in the arts, and advocate for recognition of the societal value of children's artwork and writing.

- **Build our capacity**

Translate our ambition into tangible and measurable impacts, by ensuring the necessary resources, processes and structures are in place.

### **2. We meet these aims by delivering the following activities:**

- Workshops with children (with and without their parents) in community settings – through our book-making projects and festival events.
- Workshops with young children and childcare practitioners in Early Childhood Care and Education settings – through our early years residency projects.
- Workshops with children and their teachers in sites of learning – e.g. in school settings.

- Workshops with artists to support their practice working with children and young people, as part of artist development initiatives.
- Public exhibitions that are open to children and families – in partnership with host venues.

#### **Accompanying adults**

- Parental consent is a prerequisite for children’s participation in these events. Parents may sometimes be present, but are not always present during these activities.
- All our activities are led by two artists or by one artist in collaboration with another adult, such as a teacher or an early childhood care and education practitioner.

#### **3. Principles to safeguard children from harm:**

- All staff and contracted artists are Garda vetted.
- All staff and contracted artists have been made aware of and encouraged to undertake Tusla online Child Protection Training.
- All staff and contracted artists have a copy of Kids’ Own’s Child Protection Policy and have signed a declaration that they are familiar with the procedures contained within it.
- All child protection or welfare concerns will be reported to Tusla/Gardaí in a timely manner.
- All children engaging with Kids’ Own activities will have parental consent to do so.
- There will always be two adults present during activities delivered by Kids’ Own.
- The safety and welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- 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.

#### **4. Risk assessment**

Note: the definition of harm in relation to a child is: ‘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’.

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 areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	<b>Risk identified</b>	<b>Procedure in place to manage risk identified</b>
1	Lack of awareness of child protection duty and non-compliance with Child Protection Policy (e.g. delays in making necessary referrals).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff, artists and partners are provided with the Child Protection Policy.</li> <li>• Staff and artists are provided with training every 2 years, to ensure they are equipped to deal with disclosures and to make referrals if required.</li> <li>• Staff and artists are encouraged to complete the TUSLA e-learning programme. Completion of the programme will be a requirement within future contracts for artists.</li> <li>• Any breach of the Child Protection Policy will be reported to CEO.</li> <li>• A list of staff (if any) who are Mandated Persons (as defined by the Children First Act 2017) will be maintained.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Relevant Person will be appointed to be the first point of contact regarding this Child Safeguarding Statement.</li> <li>• The Child Protection Policy is reviewed every two years.</li> </ul>
2	Receipt of complaints of alleged child abuse where a Kids' Own staff/contractee is the alleged perpetrator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and contractors are Garda vetted before they begin work.</li> <li>• All staff know the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Liaison Person or directly to Tusla.</li> <li>• Internal disciplinary processes are in place where the issue concerns an employee.</li> </ul>
3	Receipt of complaint of alleged child abuse where a parent/guardian/teacher/or partner staff member is the alleged perpetrator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff know the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Liaison Person or directly to Tusla.</li> <li>• The school/venue/partner will be notified.</li> </ul>
4	Child makes a disclosure to a member of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Kids' Own staff and contracted artists know the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Liaison Person or directly to Tusla.</li> <li>• Artists are supported to have a context-specific awareness of children's circumstances within a given project.</li> <li>• Artists are trained to be aware of emotional sensitivities within the creative process and to respond appropriately to disclosures. The key points are listed under "3.0 Reporting Procedures" within our Child Protection Policy (page 8).</li> </ul>
5	A suspicion of child abuse is determined by a member of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff and contracted artists know the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Liaison Person or directly to Tusla.</li> </ul>
6	A partner tells you something.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kids' Own will engage with partners on joint report making where appropriate. Our Child Protection Policy is shared with partners in advance of projects.</li> </ul>

## 5. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, and the Children First: National Guidance, 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 (outlined in our Child Protection Policy) support our intention to safeguard children while they are engaged in our activities:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff/contracted artists of a child availing of our services.

- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff/contracted artists to work with children – vetting and checking references.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla or the Gardaí as appropriate – reporting form is annex of our policy.
- Procedure for maintaining the contact details of relevant Tusla staff and the Designated Liaison Person, and making these available to staff/contracted artists.

## 6. Implementation

Kids' Own recognises that implementation is an ongoing 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 Statement will be reviewed by **1 January 2024** or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:   
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*Emma Kavanagh, Relevant Person under the Act/Designated Liaison Person*

Signed:   
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*Naomi Feely, Chairperson*

For queries please contact:

Emma Kavanagh, Relevant Person under the Act and Designated Liaison Person

Kids' Own Publishing Partnership, 40 Wolfe Tone Street, Sligo. 07191-70759

[emma@kidsown.ie](mailto:emma@kidsown.ie)

[www.kidsown.ie](http://www.kidsown.ie)