

**axis arts and community
resource centre**

Child Safeguarding Statement

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SECTION 1:

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

AXIS ARTS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

axis. Ballymun's Arts & Community Resource Centre is a fully integrated cultural and social facility including a theatre, gallery, art rooms, dance studio, recording studio, conference rooms, workshops, performance areas, quality office accommodation, support services and enterprises including a bar / café and crèche. These facilities are housed in a modern high quality building of over 30,000 sq.ft.

axis was the culmination of a lengthy and innovative process of consultation and development with representatives of local arts and community groups supported by the Ballymun Partnership, Regeneration of Urban North Dublin Limited (the EU Urban Initiative), and Architects from Ballymun Regeneration Limited. A project team of nominees from the Forum for the Arts in Ballymun (FAB), and the evolving Community Group Network, both stimulated by the project, met with the above agencies on a weekly basis over 3 years.

The project evolved from two separate projects – St Pappins Arts Centre and the proposed Civic Centre – part of the original EU Urban programme for Ballymun.

The facilities include:

Theatre 211 seats.

Second Performance Space / Dance Studio.

Basement Recording and 2 rehearsal studios.

Mezzanine Gallery

Art / Print Rooms.

Large divisible meeting / seminar / conference room to house 200 people

Workshops/Classes

Crèche with play areas to serve the centre users.

Restaurant / Café / Bar.

Large foyer.

Offices, 15 – 18 no. to provide 5 – 6 workstations each and meeting space.

AXIS' COMMITMENT TO CHILD PROTECTION

axis is committed to promoting and facilitating the full participation of children and young people in our work. We aim to create a safe and healthy environment and experience for the young people with whom we work and we are committed at all times to ensuring their safety and welfare.

The axis creche has further detailed policy and procedures relating to their specific area. This is available on request form the creche manager.

Children have a lot to gain from involvement in arts and cultural activities. These processes and activities provide an opportunity to learn new skills, explore new environments, gain confidence and of course have fun. The full potential of these benefits can only be gained with a positive and

progressive approach to the child's involvement. The focus should be on the needs of the child rather than on competition or success. A child-centred approach to arts and cultural activities involving young people will result in continued participation, and long-term benefits in terms of the well-being of our future adult population.

In order to ensure mutual protection, staff/volunteers/artists and other organisations working in axis will be made familiar with axis' Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Code of Behaviour in relation to participation in children and young people's activities.

Children are usually in the care of a parent/guardian or teacher when using the services of axis. There are exceptions to this, for instance when they attend workshops, summer schools etc. An axis member of staff will be present at all workshops, events and relevant performances and procedures will be put in place for same. For public workshops where parents are leaving the building axis has a registration form which parents must fill out and sign on which will be a contact telephone number if they need to be contacted for any reason. (see appendix)

As appropriate, parents/ guardians will be encouraged to attend events with the children in their care. Teachers must accompany schools groups and remain in attendance at all times whilst in axis or at axis related events.

A child in need of personal support because of illness, physical needs or any form of distress, shall be referred in the first place to his/her parent/guardian or teacher. In the absence of a guardian, the staff member who is working with or supervising that activity will provide such support. A parent/guardian or teacher should inform a member of staff if there are any specific needs required during a child's participation at axis.

These guidelines are based on "Children First – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children" (2017) and "Our Duty to Care – The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People".

PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE IN OUR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

axis involves children and young people in our programme and activities at all levels. The range of activities which they might be involved in include the following:

axis creche.

Summer arts activities.

Arts in education programmes

Youth Arts Festival.

Borradh buan.

axis café clients.

Music lessons.

Ongoing arts groups who use the facilities for children's workshops eg dance classes

axis tenants

Rentals

Our Child Protection Policy covers all the activities and the differing circumstances in our work with young people.

Everybody who works with children has a duty of care to them and this is a responsibility, which must be taken seriously. These guidelines aim to provide information and promote good practice for those involved in working with children in axis so that staff will be aware of what to do in situations where the safety or welfare of a child may be at risk.

Good Practice Guidelines

Safe practice is essential in our work and we have put in place the following procedures to govern our work with children and young people:

- All staff and those assisting axis in our work are aware of the good practice guidelines and are familiar with the overall child protection policy of axis
- All staff will:
 - *treat the child's welfare as paramount;*
 - *treat them with fairness, dignity and respect;*
 - *be alert to indicators of abuse and neglect;*
 - *• be alert to the risks that individual abusers or potential abusers may pose to them;*
 - *protect them from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation;*
 - *allow them to express their views on matters that affect them;*
 - *co-operate fully with other agencies in the interests of safeguarding children and young people; and*
 - *report any concerns*
- Children and young people involved with our work will be informed of our guidelines and procedures;
- Parents of children involved with our work are also informed of our guidelines and procedures at point of enrolment. An abridged version for parents and artists is available on request.
- axis has appointed a 'Designated Liaison Person' to deal with any complaints or issues arising which concern the safety or welfare of any child/young person who attends any events or meetings organised by axis or with axis staff. This person is appropriately trained and familiar with the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation, concern or disclosure of child abuse;
- axis has put in place a complaints procedure;
- When organising events/classes/workshops/meetings for children/young people or their attendance at same, the following information/documentation is requested by axis in relation to each child/young person attending:
 - An application form to include parental consent; (see sample in Appendix1)
 - Contact details for the family/guardians, including emergency contact numbers;
 - All relevant medical information;
 - Information relating to any special needs which the child or young person may have in terms of access, diet, language assistance, etc.;
 - Permission to take photography / video event will also be requested at this juncture

- An appropriate ratio of adults to young people is put in place for each events/classes/workshops/meetings held in axis. The ratio may vary depending on the particular situation, the age of the participants and their dis/ability or other special needs.
- All adults working with young people directly will have gone through Garda Vetting procedures
- When young people under the age of 16 are booking tickets for a show a parental consent form must be obtained. If anyone under the age of 16 approaches box office on the night of a show a phone call must be made to parent / guardian of same and this documented
- Staff and facilitators show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of the children and young people;
- Inappropriate behaviour/language by the children/young people will not go unchallenged;
- axis has a code of behaviour for young people attending classes and workshops.
- This code is visible and directed to on our registration forms
- Children changing their clothes or being changed in a public area is not permitted. Children may change in rehearsal space or in toilets
- A system is in place for recording any incidents or accidents while the child is involved in an activity in axis (see sample form at Appendix 5);
- A clear system of registration and departure of participants is in place at all events. (see appendix)
- There are clear channels of communication and access to relevant staff if parents/guardians or children/young people wish to voice their concerns if there is something they are not happy about;
- axis will make every effort to ensure that during its events, the physical surroundings will be comfortable, fully accessible and appropriate for the work being undertaken;
- Employees and volunteers should not take one young person alone in a car on journeys. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full consent and knowledge of the parents/guardians and a senior member of the staff in axis.
- There should be no unnecessary physical contact between an adult and a young person although there are times when for example, placing a hand on a distressed child/young person's shoulder to comfort him/her would be appropriate. Physical contact should only be in response to the needs of the child and should be appropriate to the age and the level of development of the child.
- axis respects and promotes the principles of equality and diversity and works with all children in a culturally sensitive way within the context of the Irish constitution and law and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Procedures for axis Classes / Lessons / Projects

Co-Ordinator should:

- monitor and review the work of facilitators and know what is planned to go on in lessons and in rehearsals;
- be aware of class times and locations, and the pupils involved;
- undertake visits to monitor the appropriateness of what is going on, but also to support the facilitator in their inclusion in the wider work of the organisation;
- ensure that systems are in place to promote a safe environment for children, young people and staff, especially where the facilitator is working in isolation;
- make sure that the child or young person and their guardian is comfortable with any arrangements that take place outside of normal classroom activities;
- make sure that other staff who are only involved occasionally in activities, for example during the a performance, are aware of these guidelines and follow them
- make sure that children and young people are clear about what they can expect in the activities, know the organisation's complaints procedures and, where necessary, have an appropriate advocate.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring the safe collection and transportation of their children to and from rehearsals and performances / workshops. It is not the responsibility of axis to collect/deliver children to/from their home

Procedure for Rental Clients:

- All clients renting space in axis to run private classes must be aware of and adhere to axis' child protection policy and guidelines
- All clients are expected to adhere to best practice in their procedures for classes (see axis' procedures for further reference).
- In the case of a rental for workshops. The client is responsible for the health and safety / conduct and child protection of their students.
- All class participants must remain in the spaces hired unless authorised
- Children changing their clothes or being changed in a public area is not permitted.
- Parents / Guardians must wait in the agreed area for their children.

Chaperones

- The person responsible for child protection will decide when the use of chaperones during a production is appropriate.
- Guidelines for chaperones will then be issued on an ad hoc basis by the person responsible for child protection.

One-to-one situations

- While we recognise that sometimes it is appropriate for staff to work on a one to one basis with a child or young person, staff/volunteers should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with an individual child/young person. Where an adult needs to meet with a child/young person alone, the door should be left open and another adult informed of the meeting; axis has ensured that the basement facilities are fitted with cctv cameras for both security and child protection awareness
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door wherever possible (see above)
- Try to ensure that there are other staff around or aware of the meeting / class.
- If you have reason to be concerned about a one-to-one meeting in advance, because of a pupil's previous behaviour or vulnerability, arrange for a colleague to be present, especially where there is a gender difference.
- Staff, visiting artists, facilitators and volunteers should not meet with children outside organised activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of parents and a person in charge at axis.
- This would be particular to some music classes / workshops in the basement studio. If working on a one to one it should be with the full consent and knowledge of the parents/guardians and a senior member of the staff in axis . Separate procedures are in place for application to each activity, the door to room should be left open and another adult informed of the meeting.

SECTION 3:

Risk assessment

A copy of our risk assessment is available from reception in axis Ballymun.

SECTION 4:

Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015 and in line *with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children and young people while they are availing of our service:

- RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING
- KEEPING PARENTS AND GUARDIANS INFORMED
- PROCEDURES FOR TRAVEL INVOLVING CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE
- ACTIVITIES INVOLVING OVERNIGHT STAYS AWAY FROM HOME
- WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER AGENCIES
- DEALING WITH CHALLENGING OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR
- BULLYING
- DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE
- ROLE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER/DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON
- REPORTING PROCEDURE IN RESPECT OF CHILD ABUSE
- ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN AN ALLEGATION IS MADE AGAINST A STAFF MEMBER
- COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE IN RELATION TO CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION
- RECORD KEEPING
- CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT
- ACCIDENTS PROCEDURE

All procedures listed are available as part of our Child Protection Policy which is available on our website [here](#).

SECTION 5: 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 March 2020, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material changes in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:

Aifric Ni Ruairc
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01 8832123

RELEVANT PERSON:

Child Protection Officer/Designated Liaison Person for axis

Mark O'Brien
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