

# Child Safeguarding Statement

## 1. Name of service being provided:

Meitheal Residential Summer School

## 2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

Meitheal Residential Summer School is a week-long summer school in Irish Traditional Music providing instrumental education to students over the age of 13.

In accordance with the requirements of the [Children First Act 2015](#), [Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017](#), the [Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools 2017 \(and revised 2023\)](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Meitheal Summer School has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

Meitheal Summer School recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. Meitheal Summer School will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

1. recognise that the protection and welfare of all students attending is of paramount importance, and strive to promote the welfare, health and personal development of all students and protect them from harm of all kinds,
2. fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children (see appendix 1 for list of legislation);
3. fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
4. adopt and consistently apply a rigorous and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting staff;
5. adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to students attending and protect staff from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
6. shall plan an appropriate response procedure in relation to concerns, allegations, incidents and disclosures of alleged or suspected incidents of abuse;
7. ensure best practice with regards to photography and videography;
8. develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
9. fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The Meitheal Safeguarding policy should be reviewed every 2 years in advance of the Summer School, i.e. on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> June

## The following measures are in place

- Meitheal Summer School has an appointed Designated Liaison Person (DLP), Ernestine Healy, and Assistant DLPs, Orla Healy and Eimear Ní Mhaolmhuaidh, for matters in relation to Child Protection and Guidelines and Procedures in respect of Involvement with Children/Young persons and Vulnerable Adults.
- Ernestine Healy will be the first point of contact in respect of the school's child safeguarding statement.
- All Meitheal staff are requested by Meitheal to apply for Garda Vetting
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all Meitheal staff are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015,
- Parents and guardians of students attending the summer school are at all times notified of appropriate schedules, locations etc. of activities.
- Meitheal directors may need to contact parents in relation to students' activities at different stages. Parents/guardians are asked to provide their mobile numbers/ email addresses in this regard. Meitheal does not knowingly communicate with a pupil / minor using any means of digital or other communication including / social media.
- An audio/visual release form is given to all attendees each year at the summer school. The subjects of any photographs must be informed in advance that their picture has been taken and may be used for promotional purposes by Meitheal, if under 18 years. All parents or their guardians must sign approval on the official form before the summer school commences.
- The class register/attendance sheet is an important element of Child Protection Policy implementation.
- Meitheal staff are clear on their role and responsibility in terms of appropriate supervision of students while in their care and the general supervision practices of the summer school
- Health and Safety procedures have been considered and put in place in relation to the layout of all builds and areas accessed during the course of the summer school
- All activities at Meitheal are understood to be group activities. If a 1:1 adult-student tuition/activity situation arises, the door of the room must remain open and the adult must give prior notification that the 1:1 situation has arisen
- All staff are recommended to complete the online TUSLA's Access to Children First E-Learning Programme

### 3. Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services including the area of online safety when accessing the internet. 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 identified risk</b>
1	A 'substitute' tutor who needs to be engaged due to need but who does not have Garda Vetting.	The summer school has a policy in relation to same – If such a tutor is considered to teach a class / co- ordinate an activity on a once-off basis a Garda-Vetted adult remains in the classroom area at all times
2	Clarifying responsibility in terms of the care of Meitheal students at public and participative events	Ensuring that parents/guardians are aware of the remit of the Meitheal staff in relation to the summer school participation in public events and of parental/guardian duties in terms of accompanying their children and/or making provisions for the adequate care and supervision of their child/ minor
3	Inappropriate use of electronic devices including mobile phones/ smart phones/iPads by pupils during Meitheal summer school activities	Meitheal has a guideline document in place in relation to the use of electronic devices during the summer school classes/activities. Parents/guardians are informed of these guidelines
4	Use of images in Meitheal publicity material	Meitheal Summer School has a policy of requesting appropriate consent regarding the use of images of minors/vulnerable adults used in promotional- publicity material/communications.
5	Class tutor is running late	One of the Meitheal staff stays with the class until the tutor arrives
6	1:1 activities	All activities at Meitheal are understood to be group activities. If a 1:1 adult-student tuition/activity situation arises, the door of the room must remain open and the adult must give prior notification that the 1:1 situation has arisen
7	The maintaining of an attendance register	The class register/attendance sheet is an important element of Child Protection Policy implementation. All staff/tutors will maintain a class register which is coordinated by the executive director

## 4. 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/volunteers of a child availing of our service;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff a to work with the students;
- Procedure for Garda Vetting all Meitheal personnel
- 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 appointing and maintaining a list of the appointed persons in Meitheal who are mandated persons (DLP);
- Procedure for maintaining an updated Child Protection Policy and Guidelines document

All procedures listed are available upon request.

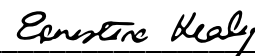
## 5. Implementation

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 every two years

Signed:   
Meitheal Co-ordinator

Date: 31.05.2024

Signed:   
Meitheal Executive Director

Date: 31.05.2024

For queries, please contact **Ernestine Healy**, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

## Appendix 1

### List of Legislation, Policies and Procedures relevant to Child Protection and Safeguarding

- Children First Act 2015
- Children First National Guidance for the Protection and of Welfare of Children 2017
- Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and of
- Welfare of Children 2019
- Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy Procedure and Practice 2019
- General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2014
- Privacy Directive (2002/58/EC as amended by 2009/136/EC)
- Data Sharing and Governance Act 2018
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- Criminal Justice Act 2006, Section 176: Reckless Endangerment of Children
- Protected Disclosures Act 2014
- Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- Child Care Act 1991
- Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- Education Act 1998
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989