

TAISCE AN OILEÁIN

CHILD SAFE-GUARDING STATEMENT 2025/2026

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1. Introduction

Taisce an Oileáin are committed to a practice which protects children and young people from harm to provide a safe environment and experience where welfare for the child/young person is paramount.

This safeguarding statement applies to all staff and volunteers, as well as external service providers. All staff and volunteers/helpers accept and recognise their responsibilities in safeguarding children and young adults.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

1.1 **Policy objectives**

The objective of this policy is to protect children and young adults by:

- Outlining best practice procedures, including code of behaviour for staff and children
- Having clearly defined procedures for referring, reporting and dealing with incidents of suspected or disclosed abuse
- Ensuring appropriate reporting of and recording of complaints, comments, incidents and accidents
- Ensuring child protection responsibilities are fully understood and complied with

1.2 **About the Organisation:**

Name: Taisce an Oileáin (also trading as Féile Róise Rua, Árainn Mhór)

Nature of service: We are a voluntary community-based organisation who will run a recreational, cultural and social singing festival in May 2026 as well as other cultural events and activities. The festival and events celebrate music, singing and heritage in the community and involve people of all ages, including children. We are committed to safeguarding the children and all people involved in this festival.

Location: Arranmore Island, Co Donegal; various locations including but not limited to:

- The Community Centre (Ionad an Chrois Bhealaigh)
- Schools (Scoil Athphoirt, Scoil na Léibe, Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada)

- Arranmore Day Centre
- An Chultúrlann, Árann Mhór
- Various public houses including Early's, Neily's, Phil Bán's, The Glen Hotel
- Online

Staff:

- Ionad an Chrois Bhealaigh staff will follow their own safeguarding statement which concurs with the festival statement and have been vetted by the same organisation as committee of Taisce an Oileáin (Donegal Volunteer Centre). Staff will note for Taisce an Oileáin events, that the DLP is Fiona Ní Ghloinn and DDLP is Cróna Ní Ghloinn.
- Volunteers: Volunteers are recruited for each event
- Committee: Jerry Early, Hugh Rodgers, Mike Glynn, Grania Glynn, Fiona Ní Ghloinn, Brian MacGloinn, Diarmuid MacGloinn, John McCafferty, Kayla Early, Jesse Smith, Amélie Ní Chnámhsí, Erin McCafferty, Cróna Ní Ghloinn, Aibhín Nic Giolla Dé

Service users: Our organisation works mainly with adults but also includes children of all ages and abilities who wish to participate in the festival and other activities/events. We recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations, and as such, we are mindful of, and endeavour to cater for, the individual care needs of all children with help from parents/guardians/carers.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Taisce an Oileáin.

2. Responsibilities of Organisation and Employees

An Taisce Committee will ensure that:

- All staff are familiar with this Safe Guarding Statement, their obligations within this policy and are aware of the DLP and DDLP. Taisce an Oileáin will hold a Child Safeguarding meeting for all volunteers and organisers prior to the festival to ensure that all involved are clear on Child Safeguarding procedures and Designated Liaison Persons. All volunteers who work with or supervise under 18's or vulnerable adults will be garda vetted by The Donegal Volunteer Centre.
- All staff have completed the [Children First E-Learning Programme](#) on tusla.ie
- Children's groups will be managed by Garda Vetted facilitators

An Taisce staff and volunteers will have a responsibility to:

- Adhere to a code of behaviour between staff and children
- Fully comply with statutory obligations relating to the protection and welfare of children

- Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters
Be aware of the appropriate authorities to report to outside the organisation if they are inhibited from reporting internally, or where they are dissatisfied with the internal response.

3. Risk assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child or young person while availing of our services.

For the purposes of this policy, a 'child or young person' is a person who is under 18 years of age.

Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks. *TAO= Taisce an Oileáin

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1	Child is harmed by an *TAO staff member, TAO volunteer or other person, while availing of our services or events organised by TAO.	General (a) All TAO staff and TAO volunteers will complete the induction briefing on the Child Safeguarding Statement, which is informed by the Children First e-learning training and incorporates training on the recognition of harm; (b) TAO staff and TAO volunteers will be vetted in accordance with TAO's Garda Vetting Policy; (c) TAO have appointed a Designated Liaison Person (Fiona). The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for ensuring that appropriate training and information is provided to staff and volunteers regarding TAO's Child Safeguarding Statement before participation. (d) A record of the induction briefing provided to TAO staff members will be maintained by the Designated Liaison Person. These records will include written confirmation that TAO staff members/ TAO volunteers agree to adhere to TAO's Child Safeguarding Statement, Child Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct; (e) Where competitions are run on behalf of TAO, parent/teacher contact details are requested and parental consent to entry to the competition is obtained; (f) TAO obtain parental consent to take photographs and/or video footage of children. Individual or group photographs/or video footage of children is not permitted in the absence of this consent being obtained. Where a child's photograph or footage of a child is taken, children will be identified only by their first name (g) Clear signs will be placed in areas where filming or photographs are taking place, notifying persons in the

		area of this fact; (h) If a child is missing or found at an event managed by TAO, staff members/volunteers should inform the event organisers immediately; (i) Queries from websites such as www.féileroiserua.ie, Are directly linked to general email within the TAO team. Typical queries from children could be an enquiry to have a singer visit their school. Where further contact is required, a standard reply is formulated to request the child to engage their teacher/guardian to contact TAO on their behalf. Where a general query is received from a child, links to relevant websites may be sent from the general email by a member of the TAO team. Specific to public events (j) All TAO staff and TAO volunteers are given a verbal or electronic refresher briefing on TAO's Child Safeguarding Statement, Child Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct by the TAO team in advance of an TAO managed event; (k) At events directly managed by TAO, TAO will have oversight of the content to ensure it is appropriate where children are present; Specific to in-classroom events (l) All TAO staff and TAO volunteers attending a school must be accompanied by a teacher or other person assigned by the school to supervise the class at all times and should not allow themselves to be left unattended with children; (m) All TAO staff and TAO volunteers are asked to consider TAO's Child Safeguarding Statement when reviewing and selecting material for an in-classroom event appropriate for the intended audience; Funded/commissioned activities (n) An TAO event that is managed by TAO can require the engagement of sub-contractors for certain activities, e.g singing workshop tutors, folklore expert. TAO will require parties/subcontractors commissioned in this context to comply with the provisions of the Children First Act 2015, if applicable. Parties carrying out commissioned/subcontractor/funded activity at such an event will be required to meet or have a phone/email conversation with an TAO team member to be briefed about TAO's child safeguarding policies. Online/e.g. zoom workshops with TAO facilitators must be supervised by parents/school teachers and letters will be signed by parents to ensure this is clear. All facilitators will be briefed on TAO safeguarding policies, including online interactions. All facilitators will be Garda vetted.
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2	A child discloses to a TAO staff member or TAO volunteer that they are being harmed by persons either within or outside TAO and this disclosure is not appropriately reported to the Designated Liaison Person or Tusla.	(a) TAO has developed a guide for TAO staff and volunteers for reporting child welfare and protection concerns; (b) If any disclosures of harm are made to an TAO staff member or volunteer they should contact the Designated Liaison Person as a matter of urgency to seek advice on any necessary steps to take. See Appendices section 3.
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4. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, 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 support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

4.1 Procedure for the safe recruitment and management of workers and volunteers to work with children

We will ensure that staff are trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people.

To protect staff and children/young people, we undertake that new staff will take part in mandatory induction/briefing training sessions, be aware of TAO code of behaviour, child protection procedures and the identity of the person to whom reports are made. All staff will receive adequate and appropriate levels of supervision and be expected to have read the child protection policy.

Appropriate supervision will be provided and maintained for children who are involved in the festival while they are involved in activities and events. An appropriate ratio will therefore be maintained between the number of workers and the number of children who are under their supervision. These ratios will be governed by the following:

- The nature and location of the activity or event;
- The age and experience of the children being supervised;
- The role and experience of the worker

4.2 Procedure for dealing with a disclosure

It is important that a child who discloses harm feels supported and facilitated. Any negative feelings that the child has must not be increased by the response which the disclosure elicits. When a child makes a disclosure, the staff member or volunteers should:

- React calmly. Over-reacting may alarm the young person and cause feelings of anxiety or guilt.
- Listen carefully and attentively, take the person seriously. Do not ask the young person to repeat the story unnecessarily.
- Ask questions only for the purpose of clarification. Do not ask leading questions or seek intimate details beyond those disclosed voluntarily by the child.

- Reassure the young person that they have done the right thing in telling you about the harm
- Do not make promises regarding secrecy or confidentiality
- Do not express opinions or make comments about the individual who has allegedly caused harm
- Explain to the young person about the procedures that will follow
- Record the conversation as soon as possible. Treat the information confidentially and report it directly to the DLP, or the DDLP in the absence of the DLP

4.3 Procedure for reporting suspected (or disclosed) Child Protection & Welfare Concerns

Action to be taken on behalf of Taisce an Oileáin

If a member of staff receives an allegation or has a concern that a child may have experienced harm, or is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect he/she shall, without delay, report the matter to the Designated Liaison Person.

A written record of the report shall be made and placed in a secure location by the DLP. The need for confidentiality at all times, shall be borne in mind.

Where the allegation or concern relates to the DLP, the staff member shall, without delay, report the matter to DDLP.

Action to be taken by the Designated Liaison Person

In cases where there are concerns about a child, but the Designated Liaison Person is not sure whether to report the matter to Tusla (CFA), the DLP shall seek advice from the TUSLA (CFA) Children and Family Services. In consulting the TUSLA (CFA), the DLP shall be explicit that he/she is requesting advice and consultation and that he/she is not making a report. At this informal stage the DLP need not give identifying details.

If the TUSLA (CFA) advises that a report should not be made, the DLP shall as soon as possible inform the Chairperson of the TAO Committee of this fact. In the interest of protecting the anonymity of the child, no details of the case should be disclosed to the Management unless there are issues which need to be addressed directly by the Management.

If the TUSLA (CFA) advises that a report should be made, the DLP shall act on that advice. In all cases the DLP shall retain a record of the consultation with the TUSLA (CFA), which will note the date, the name of the TUSLA(CFA) official and the advice given.

If the DLP is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion or allegation he/she shall report the matter to the TUSLA (CFA) immediately.

Making a report

A report shall be made to the TUSLA (CFA) either through the Tusla Portal (<https://portal.tusla.ie>), by phone or in writing. Each TUSLA (CFA) area has a social worker on duty for a certain number of hours each day. The TUSLA (CFA) Children and Family Services are available to meet with, or talk on the telephone to, persons wishing to report child protection concerns.

It is generally most helpful if persons wishing to report child welfare concerns make personal contact with the TUSLA (CFA) Children and Family Services. This will facilitate the duty social worker in gathering as much information as possible about the child and his or her parents/carers.

In the event of an emergency, or the non-availability of TUSLA (CFA) staff, the report shall be made to An Garda Síochána. This may be done at any Garda Station.

It is recommended that all reports shall include as much as possible of the information sought in the Standard Reporting Form – ‘Information required when making a report’. In the case of any report (whether made initially by phone or in writing to either the TUSLA (CFA) or An Garda Síochána) the Standard Reporting Form, which can be found on the Tusla website <http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/publications-and-forms> , shall be completed and forwarded to the TUSLA (CFA) as soon as possible thereafter.

Although all information requested might not be available to the person making a report, the forms shall be completed as comprehensively as possible. When such a report is being made to the TUSLA (CFA), the Chairperson of the FRR committee will be informed. The DLP who is submitting a report to the TUSLA (CFA) or An Garda Síochána should inform a parent/carer unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk.

A record shall be made of the information communicated to the parent/carer. A decision not to inform a parent/carer shall be briefly recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

The DLP shall immediately, or as soon as possible thereafter, inform the Chairperson of the FRR committee that a report involving a child has been submitted to the TUSLA (CFA). In the interest of protecting the anonymity of the child, no details of the report should be disclosed to the Committee unless there are issues which need to be addressed directly by the Committee.

Where the TUSLA (CFA) advises that a report should not be made, the DLP shall inform the Chairperson of the Committee of this fact. Once again, in the interest of protecting the anonymity of the child, no details of the case should be disclosed to the Committee unless there are issues which need to be addressed directly by the Committee.

Any information or details that might identify a child should not be recorded in the minutes of FRR meetings.

If the DLP decides that the concerns of the member of staff should not be reported to the TUSLA (CFA), the member of staff shall be given a clear statement, in writing, as to the reasons why action is not being taken.

The member of staff should also be advised that, if he/she remains concerned about the situation, he/she is free to consult with or report to the TUSLA (CFA). He/she should use the Standard Reporting Form. It is essential that, at all times, the matter be treated in the strictest confidence and not discussed except among the parties mentioned

5. Implementation

We recognise 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 Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on , or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed (Provider): _____

Provider's name and contact details _____

Date: February 2026

Next Review Date: February 2027

For queries, please contact _____

Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

Appendices

1. General Principles

1. All Children and young adults should be treated with dignity and respect
2. We at TAO will have an awareness of the issues which cause children harm
3. We at TAO have adopted child protection guidelines for all staff and volunteers/helpers
4. We provide information about child protection and good practice to all staff, volunteers and parents
5. Child protection policies are reviewed annually
8. The person responsible for developing, training and reviewing these policies is the Designated Liaison Person.

2. Code of Behaviour for staff, parents, and volunteers/helpers and children

This code of behaviour is intended to advise, help and protect anybody working with children and young adults in TAO and should be followed at all times.

(i) Taisce an Oileáin Staff when working with children/young people should have a child centred approach and should:

- Listen to and respect them
- Use appropriate language (both physical and verbal)
- Have fun and encourage a positive and trusting atmosphere
- Respect their personal space
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation
- Be aware of any children with additional needs
- Ensure the code of behaviour for children is adhered to.

(ii) Good Practice

To ensure best practice, Taisce an Oileáin is committed to doing the following:

- We will hold public meetings to give information to the community, including the children, about the event and to organise community participation.
- We will ensure that staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people.

- We will ensure that signed permission forms are obtained from parents/guardians to allow children to participate and to give information to parents/guardians and children about the event.
- We will keep a register containing the name, address, phone number, special requirements, attendance and emergency contact of all children involved in performances.
- The children's group will be managed by Garda Vetted singing teachers. While the children's group will be asked to perform in one or more public locations with at least one designated and vetted supervisor, they may attend other events supervised by their parents/guardians.
- Taisce an Oileáin will hold a Child Safeguarding meeting for all volunteers and organisers prior to the festival to ensure that all involved are clear on Child Safeguarding procedures and Designated Liaison Persons.
- Children/young adults with additional needs will be facilitated where it is possible to provide an adequate environment to meet their needs.
- Emergency procedures will be in place, as outlined in Section 3 Appendices.
- Proper supervision will be monitored based on adequate ratios in accordance with activities, age and gender

(iii) Taisce an Oileáin requires its staff and volunteers to:

- Report any concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures as outlined in Section 3 below.
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour
- Avoid taking sessions/tutorials on their own with a young person, unless by prior agreement and in accordance with agreed teaching methods
- Avoid being on their own with a young person or being on their own in a room with a young person/child
- Where possible avoid giving a lift to a young person/child, and where necessary, ensure the primary carer has been informed
- Maintain awareness around language use

(iv) Code of Behaviour for students at Taisce an Oileáin

It is the policy of Taisce an Oileáin to safeguard the welfare of all the children and young people who attend our events, by protecting them from all forms of discernible harm. We are also committed to providing a positive and enlightened environment and to nurture and facilitate the best possible cultural development for those who participate in the festival. The welfare of the child/young person and therefore our pupils is paramount.

Young persons/children/students in Taisce an Oiléain are required to :

- Make sure a member of staff is informed if they are unable to attend an individual class or will be late for any reason
- Be aware of the physical boundaries of the property where teaching takes place and never leave them without permission from a member of staff during the course
- Not consume alcohol, drugs or smoke while participating in Taisce an Oileáin events.
- Not engage in rough play
- Not use inappropriate language

Taisce an Oileáin wishes to promote a positive and inclusive atmosphere and asks children/young persons/pupils to be aware of and follow these guidelines:

- Treat each other and all members of staff in TAO classes with courtesy, respect and dignity
- Treat each other equally but also as individuals
- Listen to and respect each other
- Have fun and encourage a positive, inclusive atmosphere
- Respect each other's personal space
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation
- Be aware of any special needs a pupil may have
- Be aware that bullying will not be accepted or tolerated.