Gaisce-The President's Award: Child Safeguarding Statement

Name of service being provided

1. Gaisce - The President's Award is a three-tiered self-development programme for young people aged 14-25 which enhances confidence and wellbeing through participation in personal, physical and community challenges.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Management and Council of Gaisce have agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document

- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Marion Irwin-Gowran (Project Manager)
- The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Karol Quinn (Head of Programme and Strategic Developments)

Nature of the Organisation and Principles to Safeguard Children from harm

2. As an organisation, Gaisce - The President's Award is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who participate in the Gaisce Award programme, and to ensuring they are safeguarded from harm. All Gaisce staff is appropriately vetted by the organisation and Garda vetted, in addition all staff attend Children First Child Protection Training organised by the National Youth Council of Ireland. Towards ensuring that the individuals (President's Award Leaders - PALs) and organisations (Gaisce Award Partners - GAPs) that deliver the Gaisce Award programme and Gaisce Staff and Volunteers are aware of their responsibilities under the Children First Act 2015, Gaisce has produced its own Safeguarding Policy. In recognition of the fact that Gaisce does not deliver the programme, a Gaisce Safeguarding Guidance for PALs and GAPs has also been developed and is provided to all PALs/GAPs.

In our Safeguarding Policy document Gaisce – The President's Award provides information and best practice in relation to the following:

- Categories and Definitions of Child Abuse
- Recognising abuse
- Dealing with a disclosure
- Reporting abuse
- Gaisce's Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse
- Codes of Behaviour when carrying out duties associated with Gaisce – The President's Award

This policy outlines Gaisce's safeguarding and Child Protection commitments in relation to the recruitment of Gaisce Staff and volunteers. In our Safeguarding Guidance for PALs, Gaisce clearly outlines the practice and procedures in place for the process of becoming a Gaisce PAL including mandatory training and Garda vetting.

3. Gaisce-The President's Award: Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015, the following is the written Risk Assessment of Gaisce-the President's Award.

A. List of Gaisce's activities

Gaisce - The President's Award is a three-tiered self-development programme for young people aged 14-25 which enhances confidence and wellbeing through participation in personal, physical and community challenges.

B. Gaisce has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities

Potential Risk of harm to a Young Person/Vulnerable Adult Identified	**Procedure in place to manage risks identified**
Risk of harm to a Young Person being left alone with a Gaisce Staff or volunteer at an event.	All Gaisce staff are vetted and have to attend Children First Training. Safeguarding policy in place for all Gaisce Staff and volunteers. Gaisce Staff have attended an internal briefing on Safeguarding and Child Protection.
Risk of harm to a Young Person through peer or other abuse on a trip organised by or because of Gaisce.	Safeguarding policy in place for all staff and volunteers. Good practice guidelines in place for PALs and Gaisce staff including guidelines for overnight trips. Policy includes protocol and procedures when dealing with a disclosure.
Risk of harm to a Young Person by Gaisce staff or volunteer visiting a school or any organisation working with Young People.	As above.
Risk of harm to a Young Person volunteering with/for Gaisce e.g., Focus Group, Áras Garden Party and Ceremonies.	Ensure all Young People volunteering with Gaisce are aware of Gaisce's Safeguarding policy and reporting procedures.
Risk to a Young Person's personal data regarding inappropriate contact with Gaisce HQ via phone, e-mail, or social media.	Clear guidelines in place regarding data protection and appropriate use of personal information.
Inappropriate use of data, photos, images by Gaisce Staff or volunteers.	As above.
(Given the Gaisce programme is not delivered directly by the organisation), risk of harm to a Young Person whilst participating in the Gaisce programme.	Clarity in PAL training that the organisation in which a Young Person is doing Gaisce is primarily responsible for them; Reminder to PALs of their Children First responsibilities; PAL Handbook and an overview of Gaisce's Safeguarding policy during PAL training provided.
Working from home: Staff and PALs have increased use of online engagement & communication with participants and potential for disclosures from a Young Person.	Communication to PALs to follow Safeguarding policies and procedures. DLP to brief staff on Safeguarding guidelines and reporting procedures that are in place. Staff to copy DLP in communications with young people. 'Guidance for Online Engagement', a document created by Gaisce's DLP following best practice, is available for all staff.

It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of "harm" as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk.

In undertaking this risk assessment, the management and Council of Gaisce have endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to Gaisce and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, Gaisce has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

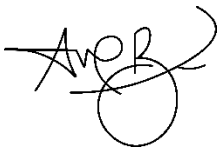
This risk assessment has been completed on 20.11.2025

It shall be reviewed as part of Gaisce's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed

Date: 27th November 2025

Chairperson, Council of Gaisce-The President's Award

Signed 

CEO, Gaisce-The President's Award

Date: 27th November 2025

Procedures

4. Gaisce's Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance, and Tulsa'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 that we may come into contact with, and to ensure as far as possible that children undertaking Gaisce are safe from harm.

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse against Gaisce staff/volunteers of a Young Person participating in the Gaisce Award is outlined in Section 13 of Gaisce's Safeguarding Policy.

- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of Gaisce Staff is outlined in Gaisce's Safeguarding Policy Section 4, P.5 recruitment and selection of Staff and volunteers.

- Procedure for the selection and training requirements of Gaisce PALS including Garda vetting requirements is set out in Gaisce's Safeguarding Guide for PALs, Section 4. Gaisce's Commitment in the Recruitment of PALs. In addition, Gaisce recognises that Gaisce Award Partners have their own Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies in place and that PALs will be bound by and required to follow them. Therefore, Gaisce aims to offer additional support for PALs by outlining best practice with respect to the protection and safety of

children and young people in the delivery of the Gaisce Award programme. In all likelihood, the information contained within Gaisce's Safeguarding document is included in the respective Safeguarding policies that PALs are already required to adhere to in the GAP where they are delivering the programme. Where there are disparities, PALs should use Gaisce's Safeguarding policy as an additional support tool and reference point for themselves, ensuring the best possible approach to keeping children and young people safe. Although developed specifically for PALs, Gaisce – The President's Award recognises that other adults within a Gaisce Award Partner may be involved in the delivery of Gaisce. The information in Gaisce's Safeguarding policy will be relevant to these individuals also.

- All Gaisce Staff must attend Child Safeguarding Training annually.
- All PALs are informed about Gaisce's Safeguarding Policy and Gaisce's Safeguarding Guide for PALs at Gaisce PAL training which is a mandatory part of becoming a PAL.
- The procedure for the reporting of Child Protection concerns is outlined in Gaisce's Safeguarding Policy Section 12: Reporting abuse: Responsibility to report Child abuse or Neglect.
- List of all Gaisce's Mandated Persons is outlined in Gaisce's Safeguarding Policy Section 3: Procedures and Responsibility.
- Based on her current role as Designated Liaison Person and as a Mandated Person under the Children Frist Act 2015 Gaisce has appointed Marion Irwin-Gowran as the Relevant Person.

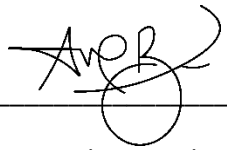
All procedures listed are available upon request.

Implementation

5. Gaisce recognises that implementation is an ongoing process and as such is committed to the implementation of this Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children we come into contact with safe from harm and to ensure that in as far as is possible young people participating in the Award programme are safe from harm. This Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Designated Liaison Person, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:

Chairperson, Council of Gaisce-The President's Award

Signed: 

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