

## Section 1

### Child Protection Policy Statement

St. Canice's N.S Instrumental Music Programme is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with the children in the Music Programme. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child is paramount. We will adhere to the recommendations of

Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of children, published by the Department of Health and Children.

We have implemented procedures covering:

- Code of behaviour for all staff (paid or unpaid)
- Reporting Suspected or disclosed abuse
- Confidentiality
- Involvement of parents/Carers
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff/ volunteers
- Complaints and Comments
- Incidents and Accidents

The policy is available to all staff and volunteers and, when requested, to primary carers. It is adapted from "Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of children.in the Arts Sector"- The Arts Council and IAYO Child Protection Policy.

## **Section 2**

### **Code of behaviour for staff**

A Code of behaviour will help to create a supportive environment for providing a child centred approach for children. The code of behaviour can be categorized under the following headings;

- Child centred Approach
- Good practice
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Physical contact
- Health and safety

#### **Child centred approach**

- Treat all children equally
- Listen to and respect children
- Involve children in decision making as appropriate
- Provide encouragement, support, and praise (regardless of ability)
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal)
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere
- Offer constructive criticism when needed
- Use appropriate language (both physical and verbal)
- Treat all children as individuals
- Respect a child's personal space
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions with children and their parents/carers
- Agree group contract before beginning session
- Encourage feedback from group
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials
- Lead by example
- Be aware of a child's other commitments when scheduling rehearsals or activities e.g. school or exams;
- Be cognisant of a child's limitations, due to a medical condition for example
- Create an atmosphere of trust;
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race etc.

#### **Good Practice**

- Ensure each child is registered via registration form (name, address, phone, special requirements, emergency contact,)
- Make parents, carers, children, visitors, and facilitators aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures
- Have emergency procedures in place and make all aware of these procedures
- Be inclusive of children with special needs

- Plan and be prepared, both mentally and physically
- Report any concerns to the designated person and follow reporting procedures
- Encourage children to report bullying, concerns or worries.
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour
- Evaluate work practices on a regular basis
- Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers
- Report and record any incidents and accidents
- Update and review policies and procedures regularly
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children
- Ensure proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved
- Do not be passive in relation to concerns i.e. do not do nothing
- Do not let a problem get out of control
- Avoid taking a session on your own. Where this is not possible then it should be in an open environment with the full knowledge and consent of primary carers
- Maintain awareness of language and comments made. If you think something you said may have caused offence or upset then try to address this in a sensitive manner

### **Inappropriate Behaviour**

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children
- Do not use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language
- Do not single out a particular child for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule or unwelcome focus or attention
- Do not allow/ engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Do not hit or physically chastise children
- Do not socialize inappropriately with children e.g. outside of structured organizational activity

### **Physical Contact**

- Seek consent of child in relation to physical contact (except in case of emergency or dangerous situation)
- Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch
- Check with children about their level of comfort when doing physical exercises

### **Health and Safety**

- Do not leave children unattended or unsupervised
- Manage any dangerous materials
- Provide a safe environment
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR CHILDREN (as per IAYO)**

At the beginning of the academic year a short meeting should be held to talk through the code of Behaviour for children.

It is the policy of St. Canice's Instrumental Music Programme to safeguard the welfare of children who participate in our programme by safeguarding them from harm. We are also committed to providing a positive and enlightened environment, to facilitate the best possible educational outcome for participants in our courses. The welfare of the child in our care is paramount.

The following are the rules which all children on our courses are required to follow:

All children must:

- Make sure a teacher is informed if they are unable to attend a class or will be late for any reason
- Not engage in rough play
- Not use inappropriate language
- Not partake in any Behaviour that would affect the effective management of the music classes

St. Canice's Instrumental Music Programme wishes to promote a positive and inclusive atmosphere and asks children to be aware of and follow these guidelines:

- Treat each other and all teachers and helpers with courtesy, respect, and dignity
- Respect the fact that teachers may not wish to work alone with a child
- Be aware that bullying will not be accepted or tolerated. Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, - verbal, psychological or physical –which is conducted by an individual or group against others. Examples of bullying include the following – name- calling, physical fighting of any form, making offensive comments, intimidation, threatening, ignoring, or excluding others, damaging property, sending abusive text messages or voicemails, spreading rumours, sarcasm, mocking, derogatory remarks & gestures
- Treat each other equally but also as individuals
- Listen to and respect each other
- Have fun and encourage a positive inclusive atmosphere
- Respect each others personal space
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race, and sexual orientation
- Be aware of any special needs people

In general, we ask that all participants use 'common sense' about what is acceptable behaviour and treat each other as they would expect to be treated themselves

## Section 3

### Reporting Procedures

#### Designated Person:

Ruth Morrissey has been designated as the person to contact if you have an issue or any concern about any aspect of a child's safety and welfare. It is the responsibility of this person to support and advise staff and volunteers about policy and procedures in relation to child protection and to ensure that procedures are followed. It is also the responsibility of the designated person to liaise with the H.S.E or Gardai as appropriate. Ruth Morrissey can be contacted at 087-9010764.

#### Reporting Procedures

St. Canice's Instrumental Music Programme has a confidential incident file where concerns about the protection of children are recorded. This is stored Principal Office St. Canice's National School and Ruth Morrissey has access to it. It is important that confidentiality is maintained

The following information in relation to children should be recorded on this file/book:

- Suspicions concerns
- Worrying observations
- Behavioural changes
- Actions and outcomes

The incident report file will be kept in a locked cabinet in the principal of St Canice's NS Mr Hanrahan's Office. Any reports will be kept safely by the designated person until they can be added to the file.

#### Reporting Procedures

##### Dealing with a Disclosure

- Stay calm and listen to the child, allow him/her enough time to say what she/he needs to say
- Do not prompt or use leading questions
- Reassure the child but do not promise to keep anything secret
- Do not make the child repeat anything unnecessarily
- Explain in an age-appropriate way what will happen next

Reporting procedures should be known and accessible to all staff and volunteers.

All incidents should be reported to the designated person, or where unavailable the deputy designated Person.

All details should be recorded on the confidential Incident report form.

Only information should be recorded including date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure. Any opinions should be supported by facts.

The Designated person or deputy, or most appropriate person as appointed by them should discuss the concern or consult with the parents/carers and discuss the incident informally with the H.S.E. duty social worker. Should the Designated person decide that a report to H.S.E is necessary they should complete the standard reporting form available from the H.S.E (see appendix 2 for sample form) Reports to the duty social worker can be made verbally and followed by the standard form. Reports should be made without delay. A formal report should only be made where there are 'reasonable grounds for concern' as outlined above.

If the designated person or deputy is not available, contact should be made with the local H.S.E duty Social Worker directly, or where they are unavailable, the Gardai. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of the child, it may be necessary to contact the Gardai

Parents, carers, or responsible adults should be made aware of a report to the H.S.E unless it is likely to put the child at further risk.

The Designated Person or Deputy is committed to

- keeping all information confidential and sharing it on a 'need to know' basis. (See section 4 confidentiality statement)
- Keeping the person who reports the incident informed

## Section 4

### Confidentiality Statement

St Canice's Instrumental Music Programme is committed to ensuring people's rights to confidentiality. However, in relation to child protection we undertake that:

- Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis to safeguard the child
- Giving such information to others for the protection of the child is not a breach of confidentiality
- We cannot guarantee confidentiality where the best interests of the child are at risk.
- Parents/carers, and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the Health Service Executive, unless doing so would put the child at further risk.
- Images of a child containing identifying information will not be used for any reason without the consent of a parent/carer (however we cannot guarantee that cameras /videos will not be used at public performances)
- Procedures will be put in place to request the consent of carers to use images for publicity purposes
- Procedures will also be put in place for the recording and storing of information in line with our confidentiality policy

## **Section 5**

### **Staff recruitment and selection**

Staff recruitment and selection, management, and supervision, if applicable, will be done as per Arts Council Guidelines.

But:

- Roles will be defined for every job – paid or voluntary
- No Person who is deemed 'a risk' will be employed or accepted as a volunteer. Some exclusions would include: any child related convictions, Refusal to sign declaration form (Appendix. 3), Insufficient documentary evidence of identification, Concealing information on one's suitability to work with children
- All staff and volunteers will be required to consent to Garda clearance being sought and where available this will be sought, and to sign a declaration form as outlined above.

All staff paid and voluntary will be made aware of policies and procedures.



## **Section 6**

### **Involvement of Parents/primary carers**

St. Canice's Instrumental Music Programme is committed to being open with all parents/carers. We undertake to:

- Advise parents/primary carers of our child protection policy statement
- Inform parents/carers of all activities and potential activities
- Issue contact/ consent forms where relevant
- Comply with health and Safety practices
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice
- Ensure as far as possible that activities are age appropriate
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parent(s), carer(s), responsible adult(s) where appropriate

If St. Canice's Instrumental Music Programme has concerns about the welfare of a child we will follow our reporting procedures as outlined in section Three and in event of a complaint against a member of staff or volunteer we will follow procedures outlined in section 7

## **Section 7**

### **Dealing with allegations against music teachers/staff/volunteers**

In the event of such an allegation being made, St. Canice's Instrumental Programme's first responsibility is the safety of the child

Two separate procedures must be followed

1. In respect of the child either the Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person will deal with the issues relating to the child.
2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made The Designated Person in conjunction with the School Principal will deal with the issues relating to the staff/ volunteers

The reporting procedures in Section 3 should be followed and the parents/carers and the child should be kept informed of actions planned and taken. The child should be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner.

The music teacher/volunteer will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and given the opportunity to respond.

Any action taken following an allegation of abuse against a staff member, teacher or volunteer should be taken in consultation with the Health Service Executive and the Gardai. After consultation Ruth Morrissey should advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.

## **Section 8**

### **Complaints and Comments Procedure**

Parents, children, Volunteers, and teachers should be aware of these procedures.

A complaint will be responded within 4 to 6 weeks.

The Committee Chairperson has responsibility for directing complaints to the appropriate person

Verbal complaints will be logged on file in Principals Office and responded by Designated Person.

## **Section 9**

### **Accidents Procedure**

St. Canice's Instrumental Music Programme will maintain an up-to-date register of all children involved in the programme

St Canice's Instrumental Music Programme will record any incidents in the confidential incidents file using the confidential incident form.

St Canice's Instrumental Music Programme has public liability insurance with Alliance

A First aid box is available from the First Aid Room.