

Child Safeguarding Statement

This document is aimed at staff, volunteers, participants, and parents of participants involved in Visual.

POLICY STATEMENT

We at Visual recognise that the welfare of children is paramount and are committed to best practice in accordance with Child Protection and Welfare Guidelines, which promotes the general welfare, health, development and safety of children and protects them from harm of all kinds

We will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in line with the Human Resource Handbook
- Adopting child protection guidelines through the Code of Behaviour and Best Practice for staff and volunteers when working with young people.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Having a detailed Reporting Procedure in place for staff and volunteers who have a concern about the welfare of young person.
- Visuals Child Protection Policy adheres to National Policy Guidelines and Best Practice. Our Designated Child Protection Officer will attend regular training with key agencies that have a remit in the area of Child Protection. The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed annually.
- Informing parents, children and staff on how to voice their concerns or complain if there is anything they are not happy about.
- All staff, volunteers, parents and children will be made familiar with Visual Child Protection Policy document. This will be done by induction and training for staff and volunteers. Parents will be advised by letter and through information on Application/Permission Forms of the policy and invited to read a copy.

TEXT OF THE POLICY

This Policy was formed from and adheres to the following documents

National Documents

Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011

The Children First Guidelines were issued by the Department of Children and Youth affairs in 2011 and outline procedures, which all organisations dealing with children and young people should put in place. They state that all such organisations should put in place a child protection policy tailored to their specific needs. This policy should outline the procedures and arrangements in place to protect children in line with “Children First”.

Our Duty to Care

Our Duty to Care was published by the Department of Health and Children in October 2002. It offers a practical guide to staff and volunteers who work with children by outlining a number of fundamental principles of good practice.

National Children’s Strategy

The overall vision of this strategy is; *‘An Ireland where children are respected as young citizens with a valued contribution to make and a voice of their own; where all children are cherished and supported by family and the wider society; where they enjoy a fulfilling childhood and realise their potential.’*

International Documents

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN in 1989 and ratified by Ireland in 1992. The National Children’s Strategy is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and as such, sets out the vision for children in Ireland over a ten-year period. *We believe that all work with children and young people should, by its very nature, recognise, implement and promote the fundamental tenets of the Convention.*

The Child Care Act, 1991 defines a child as someone under 18 years of age who is not married. The UN Convention defines a child as someone under 18 years of age and the National Children’s Strategy in Ireland, similarly defines a child as someone less than 18 years of age, who is not married.

MANAGEMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff and volunteers will adhere to relevant Child Protection Policy Document including Visuals Human Resource Handbook.

Induction

Induction training for any new staff/volunteers engaging with children will include training on Visuals Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour.

All staff, students, volunteers whether temporary or permanent are required to sign the Acceptance of Visuals Child Protection Policy form.

Training

All staff of Visual engaging with children will be expected to participate in relevant training from time to time. Those working directly with children/young people must have received some training on the issue of child protection.

Visual will co-ordinate the training needs of all staff and volunteers in relation to Child Protection. It is recognised that on-going study and training will enhance the job performance of staff.

Where young people, under 18 years, are assisting in the work of Visual, they will receive appropriate information on the Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour at a level suitable to their age and experience. These young people will always work in partnership with or under the supervision of an adult.

Supervision and Support of Staff and Volunteers

Staff is supported by their direct Line Manager while volunteers are supported through their assigned Volunteer Supervisor. When external supervision or counselling is needed the staff member will report to the relevant development or line manager and Visual will endeavour to provide this.

Reporting

In any event that there is an incident or a disclosure which requires information to be shared with the HSE or the An Garda Siochana, parents should be notified unless doing so is likely to endanger the young person.

A full copy of the Visuals Child Protection Policy will be made available for downloading at our website www.visualcarlow.ie

Information about Visual and its activities is also available through its website. Information leaflets and notices are available at our premises. Parents are reminded and encouraged to contact Visual for any further queries:

Child Protection officer: Derek Blanche

Address: Visual, Old Dublin Road, Co Carlow

Phone: 0599172400 **Email:** boxoffice@visualcarlow.ie