



# Irish Forest School Association

## Child Safeguarding Statement

March 2019

### Introduction

This policy is written as a demonstration of our commitment to the highest standards of child protection in activities carried out by the members of IFSA. All IFSA members providing FS activities must have an up to date and complete Child Safeguarding statement based on the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, DCYA, 2017, Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Practice and Procedure, Tusla, 2018, and the Children First Act 2015.

### Name Of Service And Activities Provided

**Name of organisation:** Irish Forest School Association (IFSA)

**Activities provided:** IFSA is a membership organisation of adults established to promote and support the development of Forest School learning in Ireland. Our members comprise practitioners (that is trained Forest School leaders), researchers, teachers, early years' practitioners, and organisations and individuals interested in innovation, creativity, education, play, science, environmental awareness and care, and the outdoors. Our aim is to support the development of quality Forest Schools in a diverse range of settings in Ireland, through our annual gatherings and associated events and activities, including our social media platforms.

### Management Structure:

IFSA is governed by a Management Committee (ACORN) who meet regularly to ensure good management of the activities of the association. Current membership and positions held on the management committee are available on our website, [www.irishforestschoolassociation.ie](http://www.irishforestschoolassociation.ie).

### Commitment To Safeguard Children From Harm

- The IFSA is committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends any forest school events organised by members of our organisation, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to, and heard.
- IFSA policy and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and legislation and are underpinned by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, DCYA, 2017, Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Practice and Procedure, Tusla, 2018, and the Children First Act 2015.
- Our policy declaration applies to all members of our organisation. All members must

abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our child safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures. All IFSA members are required to report any concerns about child protection and welfare to the relevant person/designated liaison person (DLP). A child is a person up to the age of 18 years unless married. If an adult (over 18) discloses retrospective abuse the same applies and a report must be made to the DLP. Further information at this link: <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-firstguidance-and-legislation/>

- We recognise the importance of providing members with a policy and procedures to support and protect children.
- We will review our child safeguarding statement and accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures every 2 years or sooner if necessary, due to organisation issues or changes in legislation or national policy.
- Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child Protection

**DLP:** Joan Whelan | **Deputy:** Gretta Murphy

### Risk Assessment

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Irish Forest School Association has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child in relation to the role of the IFSA Management Committee Members in the delivery of IFSA Forest School events. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the Committee's procedures for managing those risks is summarised below:

Risk Identified	Policies and/or Procedures in place to manage Risk
Recruitment of members to IFSA Management Committee	All IFSA Management Committee members must complete the Tusla e-learning Children First online module within six weeks of the first committee meeting and make the certificate available to the Chairperson. This is the link : <a href="http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learningprogramme">www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learningprogramme</a> Copies of all polices are given to new committee members as part of ftheir induction onto the committee. DLP and deputy DLP in place.
Advice sought from IFSA Executive committee	All queries regarding child protection are referred to Tusla Child Protection Guidelines at this link <a href="https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-firstguidance-and-legislation/">https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-firstguidance-and-legislation/</a>
Concerns raised in training and /or at IFSA Events	Child Protection and Welfare Policy Child Safeguarding Statement DLP and deputy DLP in place. All queries regarding child protection are referred to Tusla Child Protection Guidelines at this link <a href="https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-firstguidance-and-legislation/">https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-firstguidance-and-legislation/</a>

Concerns raised on site visits	Child Protection and Welfare Policy Child Safeguarding Statement DLP and deputy DLP in place. All queries regarding child protection are referred to Tusla Child Protection Guidelines at this link <a href="https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-firstguidance-and-legislation/">https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-firstguidance-and-legislation/</a>
Inappropriate material shared via our social media platforms	Inclusion of social media procedures within child protection policy Procedure is in place to remove such material and report onwards as appropriate. See social media policy
Children and/or vulnerable adults attending our events	Any children or vulnerable adults attending our events should be under the supervision of a parent/guardian at all times.

## Child Safeguarding Policies And Procedures

### Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

- Child Protection Policy Statement
- Garda Vetting Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Child Protection is a standing item on all meeting Agendas of the Executive Committee

### Implementation And Review

The IFSA recognises that implementation is an ongoing process. Our Committee is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures.

- This Statement will be reviewed every 2 years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers
- This statement is published on the IFSA website. It has been provided to all members and any other persons involved with the IFSA Committee.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Chairperson Name and Contact Details:

Joan Whelan - Irish Forest School Association, [info@irishforestschoollassociation.ie](mailto:info@irishforestschoollassociation.ie)

For further information on this Statement, contact Relevant Person: Joan Whelan [info@irishforestschoollassociation.ie](mailto:info@irishforestschoollassociation.ie)



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