

# SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The North/South Language Body comprises of Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency. Both agencies have their own chairperson, board, chief executive, senior management and staff. Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency operate on an all-island basis. The aims of the relevant agency can be found in Appendix 1. For the purposes of child protection and safeguarding each agency has its own designated safeguarding officer.

Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency provide a wide range of services which include funding groups to organise youth events and other activities for the public.

This Safeguarding Policy may also be commonly referred to as a Child Protection and Welfare Policy, however for consistency across our organisation, we continue to use the term Safeguarding Policy. Both terms are the same and cover all aspects of safeguarding/child protection.

The Language Body's written risk assessment document indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and gives the required policy, guidance or process documents required to alleviate these risks. The Risk Assessment was undertaken on 19 February 2018.

Our Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with the requirements of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and the Department of Health's Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young People (2017) and the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership's Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures (2016).

Our safeguarding policy contains:

- procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by staff/volunteers against a child, young person, or adult availing of our services;
- procedures for the safe recruitment of staff/volunteers who work with children, young people, or adults at risk;
- a training schedule that sets out access to safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- procedures for the report of safeguarding concerns to statutory authorities.

These policies and procedures will help us to work with our staff/volunteers to establish and implement agreed, consistent, minimum safeguarding standards and outline our expectations of those individuals or organisations we fund who provide any services for children, young people, or adults to effectively address safeguarding requirements. Funded organisations will be subject to compliance procedures as outlined in their offer of funding.

The Language Body believes that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Living a life that is free from harm and abuse is a fundamental right of every person. Everyone who comes into contact with children, young people, their families, and/or adults at risk has a role to play. Those most vulnerable are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together.

The Language Body has developed and will implement policies and procedures to ensure that everyone knows and accepts their responsibility in relation to their duty of care for children, young people, and adults at risk. We will endeavour to ensure our services and activities take place in an environment where children, young people, and adults are safe from the possibility of any form of ill-treatment.

This policy is applicable to all staff/volunteers in The Language Body including current board members of both agencies that may have direct or indirect contact with children, young people, and/or adults at risk. Staff/volunteers must be aware of their role and responsibility for undertaking best safeguarding practice. The Language Body will provide appropriate training to raise awareness of abuse issues and to familiarise staff/volunteers with its safeguarding policy, procedures, and guidelines.

This policy operates alongside other organisational policies and procedures, including:

- recruitment and selection;
- health and safety;
- equal opportunities;
- training;
- whistleblowing;
- disciplinary, grievance and appeals, etc.

All organisational policies will dovetail with this safeguarding policy. This holistic approach will ensure a safe and healthy organisation for staff, volunteers, and the children, young people and adults that use services provided or funded by The Language Body.

Everyone involved with The Language Body will be made aware of the safeguarding policy and the procedures that have been put in place to best protect children, young people, and adults. This will be achieved through dissemination of the policy, training, and awareness raising.

**All incidents or concerns must be reported to the designated safeguarding officer in accordance with the procedures laid out in this document.**

The safeguarding policy statement will be prominently displayed in offices and venues, as well as relevant sections of the website of each agency. It is internally reviewed on an annual basis and an external review is carried out every three years. Amendments are made in accordance with changes in legislation and practice guidelines.

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are approved by the boards of The Language Body, Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency.

***Current policy reviewed and approved ... March 2018***

***Internal review due... March 2019***

***External review due... March 2021***

Foras na Gaeilge's designated safeguarding officers are:

<b>Designated safeguarding officer:</b>	<b>Seosamh Ó Coinne</b>	<a href="mailto:socoinne@forasnagaeilge.ie">socoinne@forasnagaeilge.ie</a>	003531 6398400
<b>Deputy designated safeguarding officer:</b>	<b>Nuala Ní Scolláin</b>	<a href="mailto:nniscollain@forasnagaeilge.ie">nniscollain@forasnagaeilge.ie</a>	028 90 890970

