



National Youth
Orchestra of Ireland
*Ceolfhoireann Náisiúnta
Óige na hÉireann*

Child Welfare Policy & Procedures

Updated: August 2023

Next update due: August 2025

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 1 – GENERAL

Introduction

The company is registered as the Irish Youth Orchestra CLG. However, in everyday use, the organisation is called the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland.

Mission

Our mission is to provide exceptional educational and performance opportunities for young musicians from across the island of Ireland in the full symphonic repertoire to support their development to the greatest extent of their talents

Values

At all times the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland believes that the welfare of children and young people in our care is paramount. We place a high value on

- **EXCELLENCE** in realising the creativity and artistry of our members
- **AMBITION** for the fullest musical realisation of our members' potential, driving everyone who participates in our work
- Active **PARTICIPATION** in our work, making it a far-reaching social and cultural as well as an artistic experience for everyone involved
- Our **CONNECTION** with players, parents, teachers, peer organisations and professional ensembles ensures our place in the continuum of music performance in Ireland
- **RESPONSIBILITY** in our approach to the care and nurture of young people at a formative time in their lives

Glossary of terms used in this Statement

Child & children: as per the Child Care Act 1991 a child is defined as a 'person under the age of 18 years other than a person who is or has been married'. In the case of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland a child is a member of any of our musical ensemble under the age of 18.

Young person: a member of our musical ensemble under the age of 18.

Primary Carer(s): a member's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Office Staff: full-time or part-time employees who work in the company office and who do not normally work in residence at the courses.

Residential Staff: adults who work with orchestra members at our residential courses either as Course Staff (general manager, orchestra manager and welfare staff) as musical staff (conductors and tutors) or as performers (soloists)

Audition panels: adults who sit on our panels during the yearly auditions for membership of the orchestra. For the purposes of this policy they are included under residential staff.

What form does contact with children and young people take in the NYOI?

In general, the members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland come together in residence and performance twice a year during school holidays – once just after Christmas and again during the summer. These residential courses normally range in length from six to ten days.

Exceptionally, there may be other, shorter rehearsal and/or performance projects held throughout the year either of a residential or non-residential nature.

Besides live encounters, the members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland may encounter office and course staff online, normally on conference calls.

Aside from these, the only contact that members normally have with employees or other staff is during auditions, which take place in the case of each member for less than two hours once a year, or during short visits to the Company office.

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 2 - POLICY

Child Protection Policy Statement

The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland is committed to a child-centered approach to our work with children and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. We will adhere to the provisions of the Children First Act 2015.

Child Protection Policies and Procedures

The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland has implemented policies and procedures covering:

- Codes of behaviour
- Confidentiality
- Involvement of primary carers
- Complaints and comments
- Incidents and accidents
- Recruitment, selection, and management of staff
- Child abuse
- Abuse allegations and reporting procedures

Designated persons, review

The designated person with responsibility for all child welfare issues in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland is the General Manager. During all residential courses, the General Manager is assisted by his/her deputy, the Orchestra Manager.

This policy will be reviewed on every two years and adopted by the Board.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors

Chairman

Date: _____

Signed by the General Manager

General Manager

Date: _____

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 3 – CODES OF BEHAVIOUR

3.1 Code of behavior for residential staff

At all times, residential staff will **adopt the following standards**:

- A child-centred approach: treat all children and young people equally and as individuals
- Listen to and respect children and young people
- Provide encouragement, support and praise
- Use appropriate language to communicate with different age groups and use age-appropriate teaching methods
- Encourage a positive atmosphere during rehearsals, offering constructive criticism when needed
- Respect a child's or young person's personal space
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers
- Create an atmosphere of trust
- Respect differences in ability

At all times, residential staff will **follow good practice**, in

- Having emergency procedures in place and making all staff aware of these procedures
- Adhering to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland anti-bullying policy
- Encouraging children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of anti-bullying policy¹
- Not, if at all possible, giving a lift to a child/young person or, if you do, making sure that primary carers are informed and that another staff member is in the vehicle
- Maintaining awareness around language and comments made; if you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, try to address it in a sensitive manner
- Conducting each session in open environments with the full knowledge and consent of primary carers
- Reporting and recording any incidents and accidents
- Keeping primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children
- Ensuring proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved
- Observing appropriate gender balance for residential courses
- Reporting any child protection concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures
- Being proactive in relation to concerns, i.e., don't 'do nothing' and don't let problems get out of control.

¹ For further information on anti-bullying policy section X below

Residential staff will **avoid inappropriate behavior**, which means

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people
- Do not use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language
- Do not single out a particular child/young person 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/young people
- Do not socialise inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities
- Only use physical contact in an emergency or dangerous situation.
- Do not engage in horseplay or inappropriate touch at any time

Residential staff will be mindful of the **health and safety** of children and young people in their care, which means

- Providing a safe environment
- Not leaving children unattended or unsupervised
- Managing any dangerous equipment used with musical instruments
- Being aware of and following the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland accident procedure²

² National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Accident Procedure Section X

3.2 Code of behavior for orchestra members

Members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will agree to the following Code of Behavior:

- I will accept rules concerning group discipline while under rehearsal and performance or in residence which are based on common sense, safety, consideration for others and the requirements of performance
- I will work hard during rehearsals to the best of my ability and will perform to the highest level possible
- I will switch my mobile phone off fully during all rehearsals
- I, or my primary carers, will pay for any damage caused to property by me whether in residence during rehearsal periods or on tour
- I will observe quiet in bedrooms after midnight in public and private accommodation in order to allow others who are asleep or who wish to sleep to rest undisturbed
- I will not bring a penknife or any weapon on a course
- I accept that all players on the course will be treated equally
- I accept that it is my responsibility to help and encourage all other players to reach their potential on this course
- I accept that bullying, in any form, is not acceptable behaviour by me or anyone else
- I will not bully any other player or take part in any bullying perpetrated by anyone else
- I will report any incidents of bullying I see or hear about to a member of staff as soon as possible
- I will not take photos of another player with a mobile phone without their permission
- I will not distribute or forward any images of another player by mobile phone without their permission
- I will not leave rehearsal, residential or concert venues without permission
- I will be in my designated bedroom at the specified time each evening
- I will not purchase or consume alcohol at any time
- I will only smoke in legally designated areas if I have brought a letter of consent from my primary carers and have given it to the orchestra manager. I accept that such a letter will be authenticated
- Replace with I will not smoke, vape or use e-cigarettes at any times
- I will not possess of consume and illegal drugs at any time.

3.3 Code of behavior for office staff

At all times, office staff at the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will adopt a **child-centred approach**.

This means:

- Treating all children and young people equally and as individuals
- Listening to and respecting children and young people
- Using appropriate language to communicate with different age groups
- Respecting a child's or young person's personal space
- Being aware of a child's or young person's other commitments when scheduling rehearsals and performances

Office staff will follow **good practice** in engaging with children and young people who are members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. This means:

- Registering each child/young person (name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact)
- Avoiding contact with players while on your own in the office
- Not, if at all possible, giving a lift to a child/young person and, if you do, then making sure that primary carers are informed and another person is in the vehicle
- Maintaining awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.
- Making primary carers, children/young people, staff and aware of the Child Welfare Policy and procedures.
- Reporting and recording any incidents and accidents, and being aware of the accident and emergency procedures
- Adhering to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland anti-bullying policy
- Providing appropriate briefing for staff and volunteers
- Updating and reviewing policies and procedures regularly
- Keeping primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children
- Ensuring proper supervision based on adequate ratios according to age, abilities and activities involved
- To the greatest extent possible, observing appropriate gender balance for residential courses.
- Reporting any child protection concerns to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures
- Adopting a proactive approach: don't be passive in relation to concerns, i.e., don't 'do nothing' and don't let problems get out of control.

Office staff will avoid **inappropriate behavior** in engaging with children and young people who are members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. This means:

- Not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people
- Not using or allowing offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language
- Not singling out a particular child/young person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus or attention
- Not allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- Never hitting or physically chastising children or young people
- Not socialising inappropriately with children/young people, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities
- Only using physical contact in an emergency or dangerous situation
- Avoiding horseplay or inappropriate touch at any time

Office staff will have regard for the **health and safety** of the children and young people who are members of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. This means:

- Not leaving children unattended or unsupervised
- Managing any dangerous materials.
- Providing a safe environment.
- Being aware of and following the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland accident procedure³

³ See National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Accident Procedures Section X

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 4 – ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying has no place in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. Staff will promote a positive anti-bullying ethos during residential courses and raise awareness, amongst their professional colleagues and players, that bullying should not be tolerated. By emphasizing the Players Code of Behavior, Staff should create an environment in which all players are valued as individuals with rights and are encouraged and affirmed.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behavior that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs or residential courses, such as ours. It includes behaviors such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting and extortion by one or more players against a victim or victims.

The effects of bullying can last for some time and can significantly affect an individual's wellbeing, causing poor social development and depression. The outcomes of bullying can include:

- physical injury, headaches, stomach aches
- stress symptoms such as sleep or eating disorders and panic attacks
- loss of confidence and self-esteem
- reluctance to take part in the orchestra anymore
- lowered academic achievement
- exclusion and isolation
- consideration of suicide

It is important for staff to take a pro-active role in investigating whether bullying is occurring because many players will not tell. However, a player may confide in anyone so everyone should be aware of how to handle such a confidence. If a player tells you that he/she is being bullied, you should:

- **Listen** calmly and accept what is said. If possible there should be two staff present (but this should be determined by the needs of the child), if not leave the door open so passers-by can see the staff member but not the player.
- **Take notes following the conversation** and keep these on file as this forms the basis of the bullying report. Notes should include nature of incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history and staff member's response.
- **Reassure** the player that help is available, action will be taken, the player was right to tell, it is not his or her fault and it could happen to anyone.
- **Negotiate confidentiality** and be clear you'll only tell people who need to know.
- **Ensure the player's safety.** Safety is paramount and that this can be maintained through appropriate supervision. Liaise with primary carers in relation to a solution and possible actions.
- **Tell the player that you'll keep her/him informed** as to how you intend to proceed.
- **Make an intervention and ensure that** all your actions will be guided by the needs of the child. The following is a list of possible actions:

- ◆ Inform the Orchestra Manager, **Head of Welfare Team** and General Manager if available, of your concerns.
- ◆ Decide whom to consult with: Orchestra Manager, **Head of Welfare Team** General Manager, Primary carers.
- ◆ Decide whom to interview: witnesses, alleged bullies, and uninvolved players.
- ◆ Find out: what, where, when, who, how, why? Act in a non-confrontational manner.
- ◆ Resolve the problem: Make bullying the responsibility of all players on the Course or, if the behavior is confined to a section, all the players in that section. Alternatively, approach the victim and the bully (explain why the bully's behavior is wrong, how it makes the victim feel and request an apology); parents/legal guardians and bully (if sanctions linked to the behavior are to be employed, request the parents/legal guardians to reinforce these).
- ◆ Refer on in difficult cases: if it remains unresolved on the Course a report should be fully written up and referred on to the Board of Directors. The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form can be used for this but may require additional sheets added. The report should include any of the notes taken during the course (see point 2 above).
- **Make a record** of facts rather than opinions. Include details from the bullying report (i.e. nature of incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history and Staff member's response), details recounted by others involved, any agreements made, an account of action taken and suggestions for follow up and monitoring.
- **Use the official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Report Form for the bullying report.** Reassure the players that this report will be kept in confidence and its contents will only be revealed to those who need to know. This form must be returned to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office for safe-keeping and to be used in any subsequent actions or follow-up to the incident.

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SECTION 5 – APPROACH TO COMMUNICATIONS

Approach to communication - general

When speaking with players, staff will maintain the conversation at a level appropriate to the age of the player, using both tone and emphasis that lets them know of our sincerity and respect for them and their views. Staff will always be respectful of players and not involve them in critical conversations about others.

We will maintain open and full communications with primary carers, at all times trying to develop a better understanding of the benefits of orchestra membership for their child/ward and what is expected of both their child/ward and themselves to improve the experience for all. We will try to ensure that primary carers feel comfortable talking with all staff working for the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. We will be open to all concerns and queries that primary carers may have.

5.1 Communications with parents, guardians

Staff of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will give continuous attention to the relationship with primary carers. In our dealings with them we will:

- appreciate the trust which primary carers place in us
- listen carefully to what primary carers say about their children
- try to understand primary carers' concerns from their perspective and seek to establish a common ground
- inform primary carers of any accidents and how they happened. Primary carers are understanding and accept scrapes and bumps occur
- inform primary carers about our Codes of Behavior and this Child Welfare Policy.
- provide information to primary carers of new members as soon as they gain an orchestral place
- not assume that primary carers know what happens in the ensemble
- ensure that anything we distribute to primary carers in writing is accurate and clearly stated. Providing clear information on times, dates and location of courses/events and avoiding the use of orchestra and musical jargon
- use a form of reproduction that is easy to read for notes, consent forms, requests and explanations of our activities
- send our communication to the primary carers far enough in advance so that they can consider it and act, if we expect a response
- keep a copy of written communications
- share good news of activities of the orchestras through such activities newsletters, concert programme and the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland website and social media as relevant

5.2 Sensible use of mobile phones

The use of mobile phones including smart phones (with internet connection) is now the norm for most children and young people and we recognize that aside from their function as a communication device, they play a significant role in the social lives of young people. Notwithstanding this, the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland will exercise its duty of care concerning the way mobile phones are used on courses and at auditions, having regard at all times for the safety and welfare of children and young people in our care.

Camera phones should be used safely and responsibly. Pictures can be very powerful and stir up strong emotions. Camera phone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people without their permission. Staff and players should not send pictures that are

obscene, indecent or menacing and should be sensitive to other people's gender, creed, religion or personal background.

Children should be advised to avoid sending a picture or video to someone without their permission. Apart from not being sure what that person will do with it, a picture may contain something that could help them trace or find out more about the child. Clues in the picture may be in the background – number or front of a house, a street name, school uniform and these snippets of information may help those who want to harm children.

While players are **in residence on one of our courses or attending an audition**, the following standards will apply in relation to the use of mobile phones:

- **The phone numbers of National Youth Orchestra of Ireland staff members are provided to primary carers before each course;** they are the primary point of communication and are to be contacted if there is an emergency or change to previously agreed arrangements
- There will a stated preferred time period when primary carers may make contact if they wish; primary carers should note that contact outside of this time may not be possible due to the fact that players are required to switch off their phones during rehearsals. In cases of emergency a staff member's number will be provided and should be used
- the use of mobile phones including text messaging or playing games is not allowed to be a distraction from a safe awareness of the environment or to interfere with players' full participation in audition, rehearsal or performance
- **in the interest of the welfare of all of our players, the use of mobile phones in bedrooms/dormitories after lights out is not permitted. All phones and digital devices(tablets) etc are required to be handed up to night staff at lights out and will be returned in the morning.**

5.3 Photographs and images of children

Photographs can be powerful tools to promote the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland but we are aware that they can also be dangerous and promote the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention directed at a player or players appearing in photographs.

The use of images of players on our website and publications can be very useful and in general we try to use illustrations and non-personal musical imagery when promoting our activities. There may be instances where we would like to use photographs of individual players or groups. To reduce the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention directed at players appearing in such photographs we will follow these rules:

- When a player's photograph is used, their name will not be published without permission
- For players over the age of 18, the player's permission will be requested
- For players under 18 the primary carers' permission will also be requested.
- We will only use images of players in appropriate dress. The content of the photographs will focus on the activity not on any particular child.
- Where we wish to use particular photographs on our website and want to caption the images with names the permission of the players (and primary carers for players under 18) will be specifically requested.

- **At the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland activities and** performances, where possible audiences will be made aware of the Child Welfare responsibilities of our organisation and they will be asked not to take photographs during performances. Outside of the actual performance audiences will be advised to only take photographs of their own family members or of other players with their permission **and** the permission of their primary carers (if under 18).
- If a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland staff has any doubts in these situations they should request that no photographs are taken of any players in our care. Any refusal to accede to this request will be reported to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office and to the Board if considered serious enough.
- At official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland or other press **photoshoots** there will be a National Youth Orchestra of Ireland staff member in charge. They will ensure that the photographer(s) are clear about our expectations of them in relation to child welfare. They will also:
 - ◆ Provide a clear brief to the photographer(s) about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
 - ◆ Make sure that the photographer's name, contact details and accreditations are recorded and kept in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office.
 - ◆ Inform players and primary carers that a photographer will be in attendance at the activity and check that they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
 - ◆ Not allow unsupervised access to players or one-to-one photo sessions.
 - ◆ Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the activity or at a Player's home.

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SECTION 6 – CONFIDENTIALITY

We in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

- Procedures will be put in place for the confidential recording and storing of information.
- Personal information, such as addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, dates of birth will not be passed on to any third party for musical purposes without the permission
 - of an over-18 member
 - of the under-18 member and his/her primary carers
- Personal information will only be forwarded for other purposes on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child/young person. Giving such information to others for the protection of a child or young person is not a breach of confidentiality.
- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child or young person are at risk.
- Primary carers, children and young people will be told if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to **Tusla**/the Health Service Executive, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk.

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 7 – INVOLVEMENT OF PRIMARY CARERS

In the context of this document “primary carer” means an orchestra member’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s). We are committed to being open with all primary carers. To that end we undertake to:

- Advise primary carers of our Child Welfare Policy and Procedures.
- Inform primary carers and schools of all activities and potential activities.
- Issue contact/consent forms where relevant.
- Comply with health and safety practices.
- Adhere to our Communications procedures - see Section X.
- Adhere to our staff recruitment guidelines – see Section X.
- Ensure as far as possible that the activities are appropriate for different ages and abilities of our members.

If we have **concerns about the welfare** of the child/young person, we will:

- respond to the needs of the child or young person
- inform the primary carers on an on-going basis unless this action puts the child or young person at further risk
- be obliged to pass on any child protection and welfare concerns to the Duty Social Worker and, in an emergency, the Gardaí
- ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform primary carers as appropriate in the event of a complaint against a member of staff.

7 As a child-centred organisation, the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland is committed to putting the interest of the child/young person first. To that end we will:

- contact local **Tusla**/Health Service Executive and Gardaí where there is a child protection welfare concern
- encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us to ensure the safety of their children
- have a designated contact person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person’s welfare.

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 8 – STAFF AND COURSE PERSONNEL

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT

We will ensure that employees are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job
- Posts will be advertised widely
- We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel
- Candidates will be required to complete an application form
- Candidates will be asked to sign a declaration form in relation to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Child Welfare Policy and Procedures
- At least two written references that are recent, relevant, independent and verbally confirmed will be required

Office management and staff will be selected by a panel of at least two (or more) representatives of the Board through an interview process. No person who would be deemed to constitute a risk to the Orchestra will be employed. Some grounds for exclusion would include:

- any child-related convictions
- refusal to sign Application and Child Welfare Declaration forms
- insufficient documentary evidence of identification
- concealing information on a person's suitability for working with children

There will be a probationary period of six months. All staff are required to be Garda vetted.

We will ensure that all **course personnel** (residential welfare staff, tutors, conductors, orchestra managers) are carefully selected and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principles:

- we will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel
- candidates will be asked to sign a declaration form in relation to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Child Welfare Policy and Procedures
- no person who would be deemed to constitute a risk to children or young people will be employed.

Some of grounds for exclusion would include:

- any child-related convictions.
- refusal to sign Application and Child Welfare Declaration forms.
- insufficient documentary evidence of identification.
- concealing information on a person's suitability for working with children.

All course staff are required to be Garda vetted.

To protect both staff (employees and residential) and children/young people, we undertake that new employees will:

- participate in an induction training session as soon as possible

- be given a copy of the company Staff Handbook
- receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices
- be made aware of the NYOI's code of conduct, child protection procedures, and the identity and role of who has been designated to deal with issues of concern.
- be provided with a copy of this document – the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Child Welfare Policy & Procedures which they will be required to read, understand and accept.
- sign the appropriate Declaration Form before starting work⁴
- undergo a probationary or trial period.

⁴ Declaration form see Appendix X

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 9 – COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS

Introduction

The National Youth Orchestra will deal promptly and courteously with suggestions, comments or expressions of concern from orchestra members, parents/guardians, welfare or professional staff with a view to resolving these satisfactorily and in a timely way. Complaints will be accepted and investigated irrespective of the nature of the complaint or who the person making the complaint is. This policy is underpinned by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Aged Childcare) Regulations 2018.

Summary for NYOI members

You are welcome to come and talk to us any time - as a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland, you should feel free to tell us if there is anything you are unhappy about.

- If you have a comment or complaint, please tell us as soon as possible.
- You can speak to the Orchestra Manager, Head of Welfare Team or to the General Manager. We are always here to listen to you.
- If you would prefer to write down your complaint, you can give us a letter, send an email ([email address here](#)) or send us a text ([phone number here](#)).
- You can also ask your mum or dad, granny or grandad, aunt or uncle or another guardian to make a complaint on your behalf – there's more about this below. If you need help with making a complaint, please ask any staff member in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. We will acknowledge any complaint you make as soon as possible, no more than 5 days after you have made the complaint.
- When we receive a complaint from you, we will investigate that complaint in the same way that we would investigate a complaint that comes in from an adult. We take all complaints seriously and we will always listen to all children that make a complaint or have comments to make about our work.
- We will try to make improvements based on complaints and try to resolve the issue that is causing you concern quickly and informally.
- The NYOI aims to deal with formal complaints within 1 month. You will always be kept informed about your complaint, please let us know how you would like us to update you. We will talk to you about your complaint if we have questions or need to find out more about what happened.
- After our investigation into the complaint, we will let you know what we find out and the changes, if any, we are going to make in NYOI because of the complaint.
- If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, please let us know and you will have an opportunity to appeal it. The appeal of the complaint will be looked after by different people in the NYOI than those who looked after the complaint the first time.

COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS

We understand that at times children or young people, their parents/guardians or others may have a concern about the way we do our work. This procedure is intended to provide a process for addressing these and helping us to learn from them so we can maintain our high standards and our reputation for excellence.

At all times the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland believes that the welfare of children and young people in our care is paramount. We place a high value on **excellence** (in realising the creativity and artistry of our members); **ambition** (for the fullest musical realisation of our members' potential, driving everyone who participates in our work); active **participation** in our work (making it a far-reaching social and cultural as well as an artistic experience for everyone involved); our **connection** with players, parents, teachers, peer organisations and professional ensembles (ensuring our place in the continuum of music performance in Ireland); and **responsibility** in our approach to the care and nurture of young people at a formative time in their lives

The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland is committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone we deal with. If children or their parents/guardians/other individuals have any comments or complaints about our work, we would like to hear from you. We are committed to listening to all complaints and to treating them seriously so that we can learn from them and continuously improve our work with children and young people.

In the first instance, we hope that complaints can be handled informally. In the event that a complaint cannot be handled informally within the context of our engagement with the members of our orchestra, we advise individuals to follow the procedure set out in this policy.

All complaints made are treated confidentially. We respect the voice of our members and their right to raise comments or complaints about our work. We have a child friendly complaints policy available to all children in our service. We accept complaints directly from children and via their parents/guardians.

How to make a complaint

Informal

Where possible we endeavour to handle all complaints informally in the first instance. This should ideally be done in person and can be a conversation with the relevant manager (usually the General Manager of the Orchestra) or a person nominated by her/him if possible.

We aim to resolve a complaint informally as soon as possible but within a maximum of 5 working days. If your complaint cannot be dealt with informally, we will direct you to our formal complaints procedure. We aim to ensure that making a complaint is as easy as possible and to deal with it promptly and politely. We endeavour to learn from complaints and use them to improve our work. We review our complaints policy regularly along with all our policies and procedures.

Formal

There may be instances times when a complaint cannot be handled informally. In these circumstances we direct children or young people or their parents/guardians/other individuals to make a formal complaint in writing.

If you wish to make a formal complaint we request that you follow the steps set out below.

- You can make a formal complaint by email, addressed to manager@nyoi.ie or by post to General Manager, NYOI, Unit 11E Duleek Business Park, Duleek, Co. Meath A92 PX38, Ireland. If the subject of your complaint is the General Manager you should address your concern to chairman@nyoi.ie or by post to the same address marked "confidential".

- If you have a difficulty with submitting a complaint in writing, please contact us by phone or in person and we can support you with making the complaint.
- Please be clear about what you are hoping to achieve (apology, explanation etc.), provide copies of any relevant documentation and include the following information when making a complaint to the General Manager: your name, address, a daytime telephone number, an email address together with full details of the complaint including relevant dates and times; the names of those involved (including staff). Please State your preferred method of communication (telephone, email letter, etc).

Dealing with your formal complaint

We will take the following steps in dealing with your complaint:

1. We will formally acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.
2. The General Manager/Chairman (or the Chairman, if the complaint relates to the General Manager) will assess the complaint and the level of risk posed.
3. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately.
4. The General Manager will confirm that the issue raised in the complaint is within the control of the organisation.
5. If there is more than one issue raised in the complaint, the General Manager will determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed.
6. The General Manager will consider how best to address the complaint. We will let you know if this includes an investigation. If the complaint is straightforward, generally someone from the organisation will investigate - we will let you know who will be doing this.
7. If necessary, the Board of NYOI will create a panel to investigate the complaint. The persons investigating the complaint are in no way involved in the complaint, are not related to the complainant or any staff members involved in the complaint. Following investigating of the complaint, a separate HR procedure may need to be invoked.
8. A full response to the complaint will issue within 30 working days.
9. If there is likely to be a delay to the timeline of issuing a response we will notify the person making the complaint as soon as possible.
10. The person making the complaint will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint.

Investigation

Depending on the nature of the complaint received, the General Manager will determine the type of investigation that will take place. All complaints are thoroughly and objectively investigated. The investigation is handled appropriately and sensitively. The person investigating the complaint will aim first to establish the facts related to the case. In complex cases, an investigation plan will be drawn up outlining how the complaint will be investigated. When investigating a complaint, all relevant evidence will be looked at.

In the process of the investigation we may need to meet with the complainant to discuss your complaint further. Complainants can bring a person with them to any such meeting. All staff must participate in the investigation of a complaint, as required. Any staff member involved in the complaint will be supported throughout the process.

Outcome and Response

Following the formal investigation of your complaint, we will let you know what we have found via your preferred form of communication. If necessary, we will produce a longer report. We will explain how and

why we came to our conclusions and outline any changes to policies/procedures, practice and risk management arising from the investigation.

Where no grounds for the complaint are found, the person making the complaint will be notified and information detailing the next stage will be provided. We will share any recommendations from our investigation with the complainant and also all relevant staff. We will outline the appeals process as part of the complaint response.

Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to the complaint, then there is the opportunity to appeal it. The appeal must be submitted within 5 working days.

The appeal is handled by someone who was not involved in the original complaint process.

Record of complaints and confidentiality

An accurate and detailed record of each complaint is kept for a period of 2 years from the date the complaint has been dealt with. Complaint information is stored confidentially and is only accessed by the General Manager/the Chairman. The record held on file clearly outlines what the complaint was and how it was dealt with. The record of complaints will be made available for inspection purposes by authorised persons as determined by the Board.

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 10 – ACCIDENT PREVENTION & PROCEDURES

To **prevent and minimise accidents** we will:

1. maintain an up-to-date register of the contact details of all children/young people involved in the organisation and make these available to all Residential Staff and medical personnel as necessary
2. make the location of accident/incident book known to staff
3. record the details of any accident fully on an official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident report form – see Appendix 2
4. cross-reference children/young people's details between the register and official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland incident forms
5. return the form to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office for safe keeping
6. make sure that first-aid boxes are available during residential courses, concert rehearsals and performances
7. make sure that first-aid boxes are re-stocked prior to any residential course
8. make the location of the first-aid boxes made known to all residential staff
9. ensure that the availability of first-aid will be in accordance with the organisation's Health and Safety guidelines
10. advise players of the risks of any dangerous material used on residential courses
11. take steps to minimise risk with the use of dangerous items such as bassoon knives
12. ensure that all external organisations with whom we deal have provided proof that they have public liability insurance.

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 11 – CHILD ABUSE

Introduction

In the event of allegations being made against a member of staff (employee or course staff)), the protection of the child/young person is the first and paramount consideration. We have a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and employee. The same person will not have responsibility for dealing with the child/young person welfare issues and the staff employment issues.

An allegation against an employee will be assessed promptly and carefully. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, a formal report to Tusla/the Health Service Executive should be made. The reporting procedures outlined in Section X of these guidelines will be followed.

We will maintain a close liaison with the Tusla/the Health Service Executive and the Gardaí. We will ensure that our actions do not undermine or frustrate any assessment or investigation by Tusla/the Health Service Executive and the Gardaí.

All procedures will follow in the context of the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. We will take protective measures appropriate to the level of risk while not unreasonably penalising the worker – unless necessary to protect the child/young person. Protective measures might mean increased supervision, assignment to different duties, or suspension. We may need to seek legal advice on procedures or protocol to deal with allegations against staff.

Definitions of abuse

There are four main categories of abuse as outlined in Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. The following is a synopsis of the information contained in that document. Full definitions can be found on the publication Children First: National Guidelines (2011), Part II.

Neglect

Neglect can be defined as being where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care....The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected." (Children First p.31)

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse usually happens where there is a relationship between a carer and a child rather than as a specific incident or incidents. "Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms" (Children First p.31). Rather, it can manifest in the child's behaviour or physical functioning. Examples of these include 'anxious' attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement and uncooperative or hostile behaviour. "The threshold of significant harm is reached when interaction is predominantly abusive and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/ carer." (Children First p.32).

Examples of emotional abuse in children include:

- Imposition of negative attributes on children, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming
- Emotional unavailability by the child's primary carers
- Unresponsiveness, inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child
- Premature imposition of responsibility on the child
- Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control him/herself in a certain way
- Under or over-protection of the child
- Use of unreasonably harsh discipline
- Exposure to domestic violence

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from willful or neglectful failure to protect a child. Examples of physical injury include the following:

- Shaking.
- Use of excessive force in handling.
- Deliberate poisoning.
- Suffocation.
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant physical harm to a child.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves the use of a child for gratification or sexual arousal by a person for themselves or others. Examples of sexual abuse include:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of the child or involvement of the child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child whether oral, vaginal or anal
- Sexual exploitation of a child... may also include showing sexually explicit material to children which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an under- age person

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

SECTION 11 – ABUSE ALLEGATIONS AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

Introduction

The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland understands clearly that the safety and welfare of children is everybody's responsibility, and it has adopted the principles set out in Children First - A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns⁵.

The General Manager has been designated as the person to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's or young person's safety and welfare. It is their responsibility to support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child welfare and to ensure that procedures are followed. It is also the responsibility of the Designated Person to liaise with the Health Service Executive or Gardaí where appropriate.

During residential courses, the relevant Orchestra Manager has been designated as deputy to the General Manager in matters of a child's or young person's safety and welfare. Their contact details will be found on the first page of the Course Form which should be kept by all primary carers. However, when an allegation is made against a member of the staff the General Manager has been designated to deal with the staff member while the Orchestra Managers will deal with the issue from the child's point of view. See 'Dealing with an allegation against a member of staff' below.

Abuse concerns, disclosures and allegations

During residential courses any member of staff may be approached by a player with a possible abuse claim or concern. Or a staff member may have suspicions or observations about a player and should bring these to the notice of the Orchestra Manager. At this point the steps to be taken are considered to be the assessment period and all facts, thoughts and concerns should be recorded on a National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incidents Form (Appendix X).

The following excerpt from Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (4.3.2 - p.38) shows what would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- specific indication from the child or young person that s/he has been abused;
- an account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused;
- evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way;
- an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse [an example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour];
- consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

⁵ https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/4214-TUSLA_Guide_to_Reporters_Guide_A4_v3.pdf

Procedure

A three stage procedure – set out below - will be followed with any disclosure of allegation of or concern about a possible case of child abuse. The first stage is an **assessment** of the worry or claim. The second stage is the **decision** making of what actions should be taken. And the third is the stage when those **actions** will be carried out.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment may take a number of forms - dealing with a staff concern, dealing with a disclosure, or an allegation against a member of staff – and there are specific steps to be taken in each case.

Dealing with a staff concern

1. All members of the residential staff will bring any concern of possible abuse to the notice of the Orchestra Manager
2. A National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form will be used to record all suspicions, concerns, worrying observations or behavioural changes
3. If the Orchestra Manager feels that the concern is genuine, s/he will inform the General Manager and start an assessment of the issue
4. During the assessment all details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure will be recorded on the official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form. Information recorded should be factual. Any opinions should be supported by facts

Dealing with a disclosure

1. Stay calm and listen to the child/young person, allow him or her enough time to say what s/he needs to say
2. Don't use leading questions or prompt details
3. Reassure the child/young person but do not promise to keep anything secret.
4. Don't make the child/young person repeat the details unnecessarily
5. The child/young person will be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner
6. Explain to the child/young person what will happen next (explanation should be age-appropriate)
7. Inform the Orchestra Manager as soon as possible. If the allegation is against the Orchestra Manager then inform the General Manager
8. At this stage record all details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure in an official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form. Information recorded should be factual

Dealing with an allegation against a member of staff

The first priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk. Two separate procedures will be followed in tandem:

- Procedure (1). The Orchestra Manager will deal with issues related to the child/young person. If allegations are made against the Orchestra Manager, then the General Manager will be contacted.
- Procedure (2). In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made, the General Manager will deal with issues related to the staff member. If allegations are made against the General Manager, then the Chairman of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Board will be contacted.

Steps to be taken

1. Both the primary carers and child/young person will be informed of actions planned and taken (1)
2. The child/young person will be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner (1)
3. Primary carers will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible (1)
4. The staff member will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation (2)
5. The staff member will be given the opportunity to respond (2)
6. The Chairman of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Board of the organisation will be informed as soon as possible (1 & 2)
7. Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee will be taken in consultation with the Health Service Executive and Gardaí (2)
8. After consultation with the Health Service Executive and Gardaí, the Chairman of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Board will advise the person accused what is going to happen next (2)

Decision stage

The most appropriate person should discuss or consult the concern, disclosure or allegation with primary carers, unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk.

The General Manager may contact Tusla/the Health Service Executive Duty Social Work Department for an informal consultation prior to making a report. However, at this stage no names, facts or actual details should be given as this will mean that an actual report is being made verbally instead of looking just for advice on the issue.

All decisions made on actions to be taken should be clearly added to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident form started during the assessment stage.

Action stage

If the claim is not considered to be abuse but bullying it will be dealt with as such (see Section X).

All other outcomes such as disciplinary or protective measures, except for a report to Tusla/the Health Service Executive, will be clearly recorded on a National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident Form.

Any protective measures deemed necessary will follow the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. Protective measures will be appropriate to the level of risk while not unreasonably penalising the employee or staff member – unless necessary to protect the child/young person.

Protective measures might mean increased supervision, assignment to different duties, or suspension.

If there are reasonable grounds for concern, the designated person will contact the Duty Social Worker in Tusla/the Health Service Executive area using the standard reporting form. (See Appendix X for sample.)

Reports to the Duty Social Worker may be made verbally initially and then followed by the standard reporting form. Reports will be made to Tusla/the Health Service Executive without delay.

Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis (see Section X: Confidentiality statement) Primary carers should be made aware of a report to Tusla/the Health Service Executive unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk.

If the Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person is not available, contact the local Duty Social Worker of the Health Service Executive directly.

In case of emergencies outside of Tusla/the Health Service Executive Social Work Department hours, contact the Gardaí. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/ young person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí.

Please note that in making a 'bona fide report' the Orchestra Managers, General Manager or other adults are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998.

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

APPENDIX 1

CHILD PROTECTION DECLARATION FORM – FOR ALL ADULTS WORKING WITH NYOI

Seasons 2023/2024/2025

Surname:

First name:

.....

Date of Birth:

Place and Country of

birth.....

Any other name(s) previously known by:

.....

Contact details

Address:

Telephone:

Mobile:

Email:

Preferred method of communication prior to the course: Email Mobile Telephone Post (please tick)

Occupation:

.....

Experience - Do you work with or have experience of working with children and/or young people in other areas of your life? If yes, please give details:

.....

.....

.....

Declaration: National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Child Welfare Policy

I have read, understood and accepted the procedures and Course staff Code of Behaviour as set out in the current National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Child Welfare policy Yes No

Is there any reason that you would be considered unsuitable to work with children and young people?
Yes No

If yes, please outline the reason below:

.....
.....
.....

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence? Yes No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s):

.....
.....
.....

Has an accusation of abuse or inappropriate conduct ever been made against you? Yes No

If yes, please state below the investigation carried out and the outcome:

.....
.....
.....

Signed:

Date:

Please return no later than **.....insert date.....** to:

**General Manager
The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland,
Unit 11E,
Duleek Business Park,
Duleek, Co. Meath A92 PX38**

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

APPENDIX 2

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

This form must be filled in as fully as possible and any extra details noted on the back or on separate sheet and stapled to this form. Completed forms will be kept in the official National Youth Orchestra of Ireland Incident folder which **must** be returned to the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland office as soon as possible after the incident. If any information is not to hand, please return immediately and forward this information to the office later.

Course
Date

Nature of incident (please tick)
Medical _____ Accident _____ Disciplinary _____
Other ____ (give details)
.....
.....
.....

Fill out the following 3 boxes in cases or **Medical** or **Accident**:

<u>Contact details</u>
Name:
Email
Address:
.....
.....
Mobile phone
Other phone (work/Home)

Fill out the following 3 boxes in cases of **Disciplinary** or **Other**:

Name(s) of those involved:

Details of incident, including date and time:

Action(s) taken, including date, time and by whom action taken:

Give details of outcome of actions taken and any follow-up actions agreed upon:

Signature of player(s) involved	.....	Date
Signature of player(s) involved	.....	Date
Signature of player(s) involved	.....	Date
Signature of staff member involved	.....	Date
Signature of staff member involved	.....	Date
Signature of parent/guardian (if necessary)	.....	Date.....

Please return as soon as possible after incident to:

General Manager
The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland,
Unit 11E,
Duleek Business Park,
Duleek, Co. Meath A92 PX38.

NYOI CHILD WELFARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

APPENDIX 3

FORM FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND/OR WELFARE CONCERNS

This is the form you will be required to fill out is the decision is taken to make a formal report to the Health Service Executive in cases of suspected child abuse and/or welfare concerns.

Please read the Guidance Notes carefully before completed this form.

1.	<u>Details of child</u>		
	Name:	Male:	Female: (please tick)
	Address:	Age/Date of birth:	
1a.	Name of Mother:	Name of Father:	
	Address of Mother, if different to child:	Address of Father, if different to child:	
	Telephone number:	Telephone number:	
1b.	Care and Custody arrangements regarding child, if known:		

1c.	<u>Household composition</u>			
	Name:	Relationship to child:	Date of birth:	Additional information – eg, School/occupation
Note: A separate report form must be completed in respect of each child being reported.				

2.	<u>Report details</u>
	Give details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) with date(s), time(s), who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent/legal guardian view(s), child view(s), if known:
Note: Use a separate sheet for more information, if necessary and attach carefully to completed form.	

3.	<u>Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child</u>			
	Name:	Age:	Male:	Female:
	Address:			
	Relationship to child:			
	Occupation:			

4a.	<u>Parents/Legal Guardians</u>		
	Are the Parents/Legal Guardians aware of this referral to the Social Work Dept? If No, give reason why:	Yes:	No:
4b.	Are the Parents/Legal Guardians supportive? If No, do they give reason any reason why not?:	Yes:	No:

5.	<u>Name and address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child, (if known)</u>		
	Social workers:	Name of school:	
		School address:	
	Public health nurse:		
	Doctor/G.P.	Gardaí:	
	Hospital:	Pre-School/Crèche/:	
	Other, please specify, eg. Youth Groups, sporting Clubs, after-School Clubs:		

6.	<u>Details of person reporting concerns</u> (Please see Guidance notes re. Limitations of Confidentiality)	
	Name:	Occupation:
	Address:	
	Telephone:	Mobile:
	Nature and extent of contact with Child/Family:	

7.	<u>Details of person completing form</u>	
	Name:	Date:
	Occupation:	
	Signed: _____	

Guidance Notes:

Tusla/the Health Service Executive has a statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act, 1991, to promote the welfare and protection of children in their area. Tusla/the Health Service Executive therefore has an obligation to receive information about any child who is not receiving adequate care and/or protection.

This reporting form should be filled in by:

- The Designated Person in NYOI after the decision has been taken during the Action stage of our Report procedures – See Section **X**.

- Any professional, individual or group involved in services to children who becomes aware of a child protection or welfare concern, or to whom a child protection or child welfare concern is reported.
- Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. (Health Service Executive personnel should do this in consultation with their line manager). This will assist the Social Work Department in assessing the level of risk to the child, or support services required. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate by putting a line through the question. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report.
- Tusla/the Health Service Executive aims to work in partnership with parents. If you are making this report in confidence you should note that the Health Service Executive cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality as
- A Court could order that information be disclosed.
- Under the Freedom of Information Act 1997, the Freedom of Information Commissioner may order that information be disclosed.
- You should also note that in making a 'bona fide report' you are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998. If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone the duty social worker and discuss your concerns with him/her. **NOTE: don't mention names** - during any discussions don't give any specific details. If you mention any names then the conversation then becomes an official report.

NYOI arrangements

List of duty social workers – an up-to-date list will be provided to the staff of any NYOI event by the office.

In the event that you are not certain which duty social worker to call your first duty is to the safety of the child.

If the incident has happened during the event then the local duty social worker should be your first port of call.

If you have been told about an incident at the child's place of residence, their local social worker should be contacted.