

The Circle Studio

Child Safeguarding Statement

Greystones, Co. Wicklow

Version	1.0
Date Adopted	28 May 2026
Review Date	28 May 2027
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Imogen Doel
Deputy DLP	Tom O'Donohoe
Document Owner	The Circle Studio

1. Our Commitment

The Circle Studio is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people who participate in our drama programmes. We recognise that the safety and protection of children is the responsibility of every adult working or volunteering with us.

This Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, the Children First National Guidance (2017), and Tusla's guidance for relevant organisations.

This statement applies to all staff, freelance tutors, contractors, and volunteers associated with The Circle Studio.

2. Nature of Our Services

We provide the following services to children and young people under the age of 18:

- Drama tuition, workshops and classes
- Physical theatre and movement training
- Voice and speech coaching
- Rehearsal and performance preparation
- Holiday intensives and short courses
- Youth theatre productions and showcases

All services are provided in supervised group settings. One-to-one tuition, where it occurs, takes place in a designated space with appropriate visibility measures in place.

3. Risk Assessment

We have carried out a risk assessment to identify any potential for harm to children in the context of our work. The risks identified and the measures in place to address them are set out below.

Risk	Likelihood	Mitigation
Inappropriate physical contact during movement/physical theatre exercises	Low	All tutors trained in appropriate physical contact; contact only where educationally necessary and with prior explanation to students; all sessions conducted in groups
Unsupervised one-to-one access to a child	Low	One-to-one sessions only in visible, designated spaces; door windows or open doors maintained; second adult present where possible
Grooming behaviour by a staff member or volunteer	Low	All staff Garda vetted; Children First training mandatory; code of conduct signed by all staff; parents/guardians informed of our reporting obligations
Inappropriate online communication with students	Low	No direct messaging between staff and students; all digital communications via official school channels with parental visibility
Physical injury during drama/movement activities	Medium	Risk assessments of physical spaces; warm-up and cool-down protocols; first aid trained staff on site; parental consent forms capture medical information
Emotional harm arising from performance feedback	Low	Age-appropriate and constructive feedback methods; staff trained in trauma-informed and positive approaches; complaints procedure available to parents and students
Unvetted adult access to children	Low	All staff, tutors, contractors and volunteers working with children are Garda vetted prior to commencing work

4. Procedures for Reporting Concerns

We have the following procedures in place for reporting child welfare and protection concerns:

4.1 Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Our Designated Liaison Person is responsible for receiving and managing all child protection concerns. All staff and volunteers must report any concerns to the DLP immediately.

DLP Name: Imogen Doel

Contact: imogen@thecirclestudio.ie | 0838825966

4.2 Reporting to Tusla

Where the DLP has reasonable grounds to believe that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected, a report will be made to Tusla (the Child and Family Agency) without delay.

Tusla Duty Social Work: Wicklow: 0818 787 807

Out of Hours Emergency: 0818 787 807 (Duty Social Work)

An Garda Síochána: Greystones Garda Station: 01 666 5800

4.3 Mandated Persons

Certain staff at The Circle Studio may be Mandated Persons under the Children First Act 2015 by virtue of their role. Mandated Persons have a legal obligation to report harm or risk of harm to Tusla directly, and to assist Tusla in assessments. The DLP will maintain a register of Mandated Persons within the organisation.

4.4 Allegations Against Staff

Where a concern or allegation relates to a member of staff or a volunteer, the DLP will report the matter to Tusla and, where appropriate, An Garda Síochána. The staff member concerned will be removed from any role involving access to children pending the outcome of any investigation.

5. Garda Vetting

All staff, tutors, volunteers and contractors who have unsupervised access to children as part of their role with The Circle Studio are required to be Garda vetted prior to commencing work.

- Vetting is obtained through the National Vetting Bureau (NVB) in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016
- No person will be permitted to work unsupervised with children until a clear vetting disclosure has been received
- Vetting disclosures are reviewed periodically and updated at least every three years
- A register of all vetting disclosures is maintained securely by the DLP

6. Children First Training

We are committed to ensuring that all relevant staff and volunteers complete Children First awareness training. The free Tusla e-learning module (available at childrenfirst.ie) is mandatory for all staff working with children prior to commencing work.

Mandated Persons will complete the additional Mandated Person training as required.

7. Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers

All staff, tutors, contractors and volunteers working at The Circle Studio are required to sign and adhere to our Code of Behaviour. Key principles include:

- Always working in observable spaces; avoiding one-to-one situations with children
- Not communicating with students through personal social media or messaging apps
- Using appropriate physical contact only where educationally necessary
- Treating all children with respect and dignity at all times
- Never engaging in behaviour that could be perceived as grooming
- Reporting any concern about a child's welfare to the DLP immediately
- Maintaining confidentiality except where there is a duty to report

8. Recruitment

In recruiting staff and volunteers who will work with children, The Circle Studio will:

- Obtain at least two references and follow up on them
- Require all candidates to disclose any previous convictions or pending charges
- Complete Garda vetting before appointment
- Ensure all new staff and volunteers receive an induction covering this Safeguarding Statement, our Child Protection Policy, and our Code of Behaviour

9. Dealing with Disclosures from Children

If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that person should:

- Listen calmly and carefully without expressing shock or disbelief
- Not ask leading questions; use open questions only ('Tell me more', 'What happened next?')
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Not promise confidentiality
- Record what was said as soon as possible after the disclosure, using the child's own words
- Report to the DLP immediately

10. Parent and Guardian Communication

Parents and guardians will be informed of this Safeguarding Statement on enrolment and will be provided with a copy on request. It is also displayed on our website and at our premises.

Where a child protection concern is reported to Tusla, parents will generally be informed unless doing so would put the child at greater risk.

11. Review

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- There is a change in the services we provide
- A safeguarding concern arises that warrants review of our procedures
- There is a change in relevant legislation or national guidance

12. Display and Availability

This statement is displayed prominently at our premises and on our website. A copy will be provided to parents, students, staff, and volunteers on request and on enrolment.

Signed (DLP / Principal):	Date:
Imogen Doel	28 May 2026

Next Review Date: 28 May 2027

For queries regarding this statement, contact: admin@thecirclestudio.ie