



Child Safeguarding Statement
Catherine Sheridan — Independent Artist and Creative Arts Facilitator
www.csheridan.ie

My commitment

I am committed to safeguarding the children and young people who participate in my work and to creating an environment where they feel safe, respected, included and heard. As an independent artist and facilitator, my work includes creative arts workshops, drama, theatre and arts-in-education activities, delivered independently and in partnership with schools, arts organisations and community groups.

This statement applies to my work with children and young people under 18. It explains my safeguarding commitments to participants, parents, guardians and the organisations with which I work.

My practice is guided by the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*, its applicable addenda, and supporting guidance issued by Tusla. I also draw on the Arts Council's safeguarding guidance for individual artists and the National Youth Council of Ireland's guidance on good safeguarding practice.

Putting children first

Children's welfare takes priority in the planning and delivery of my activities. I will:

- Treat every child with dignity, fairness and respect.
- Listen to children, take their concerns seriously and support them to express their views.
- Adapt activities to participants' ages, abilities, communication needs and circumstances.
- Respect personal boundaries and a child's choice not to participate in a particular activity.
- Challenge bullying, discrimination, intimidation and inappropriate behaviour.
- Work openly with parents, guardians and partner organisations.

Children will never be required to disclose personal experiences as part of a creative activity.

Safe creative practice

Before each project, I will consider potential safeguarding risks and agree appropriate arrangements with the host or commissioning organisation. These include supervision, individual contact, attendance, collection, access to activity spaces, online participation and the use of photographs or recordings.

I will maintain clear professional boundaries. Any necessary physical contact must be appropriate to the activity, explained and respectful of the child's wishes, except where immediate action is needed to prevent injury.

I will avoid isolated one-to-one situations. Where individual work is necessary, it will be agreed in advance and take place in an observable setting with appropriate safeguards.

Communication with children and families will use agreed professional channels. I will not engage in secret or inappropriate private communication with children or connect with them through personal social-media accounts.

Photography, filming and publication of children's work will follow agreed permissions and purposes, respecting the child's wishes and protecting identifying information.

Working with schools and other organisations

When delivering activities for another organisation, I will familiarise myself with its safeguarding procedures and identify its Designated Liaison Person before work begins.

I will clarify who is responsible for supervision and responding to concerns. Following a host organisation's procedures does not remove my own responsibility to act on a safeguarding concern or fulfil any reporting duty that applies to me.

Recognising and responding to concerns

I will remain alert to signs of neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse, including abuse occurring online or between children. I recognise that communication barriers, disability, isolation, family difficulties and other circumstances can make some children more vulnerable. These circumstances do not themselves establish abuse; concerns must be considered in the context of the individual child.

Where I have reasonable grounds to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, is being harmed or is at risk, I will report the concern to Tusla without delay. I do not need proof before reporting, and it is not my role to investigate or determine whether abuse has occurred.

Where I am uncertain, I will seek advice from Tusla. Consultation or discussion with a host organisation must not delay urgent protective action. Where statutory mandated-person duties apply to my role, I will meet those duties, including mandated reporting and assisting Tusla when required. Please note I am not a mandated person.

Responding to a child's disclosure

If a child tells me something that raises a safeguarding concern, I will listen calmly, take them seriously and reassure them that telling me was the right thing to do.

I will avoid leading questions, explain what will happen next in language they can understand, and make an accurate record as soon as possible. I will not promise secrecy: information may need to be shared with people who can help protect them.

Parents, guardians and confidentiality

I will normally discuss concerns with parents or guardians and explain when a report is being made. I will not inform them beforehand where doing so could increase the risk to the child, interfere with Tusla's assessment or place me at risk of harm. Where necessary, I will seek Tusla's advice.

Parental permission is not required to report a child protection or welfare concern.

If an adult discloses childhood abuse, I will respond sensitively, consider any current risk to children and follow Tusla's reporting guidance and the applicable national guidance on retrospective disclosures.

Recording and sharing information

I will record safeguarding concerns, including those that do not initially meet the reporting threshold. Records will be factual, dated and attributable, distinguishing observations, disclosures and professional judgement.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely, with access restricted to those who need the information. Relevant information will be shared appropriately with Tusla, An Garda Síochána and other authorised persons for safeguarding purposes.

Records will be managed in accordance with applicable data protection requirements, including secure storage, justified retention and secure disposal. Requests for access will be considered with regard to the child's rights and the rights of others.

Training and Garda vetting

I completed the National Youth Council of Ireland Child Protection Awareness Programme, Sessions 1 and 2, at Youth Theatre Ireland on 29 May 2025. The programme addressed good practice in safeguarding for the youth work sector.

I am committed to maintaining and updating my safeguarding knowledge, keeping a record of training and undertaking further training appropriate to my work. I will comply with applicable Garda vetting requirements through the relevant commissioning or registered organisation. Where vetting is required, the necessary arrangements must be completed before the relevant work begins.

Raising a concern

Children, parents, guardians and partner organisations may raise concerns about my activities directly with me through the contact details on csheridan.ie.

Concerns may also be raised directly with the host organisation's Designated Liaison Person, Tusla or An Garda Síochána, including concerns about my own conduct. I will cooperate with statutory agencies and appropriate protective arrangements.

If a child is in immediate danger, call **112 or 999**. Where urgent protection is needed and Tusla cannot be reached, contact An Garda Síochána without delay.

Implementation and review

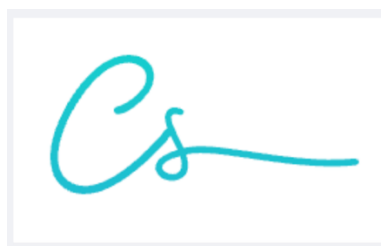
I take responsibility for putting these commitments into practice. I will review this statement and my supporting safeguarding procedures annually, and sooner if my activities, working arrangements or relevant guidance change.

Catherine Sheridan

Independent Artist and Creative Arts Facilitator

Website: csheridan.ie

Date adopted: 21st Sept 2026



Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment
Catherine Sheridan — Independent Artist and Creative Arts Facilitator
csheridan.ie

This assessment considers potential harm to children and young people participating in my creative arts workshops, drama, theatre, arts-in-education and other facilitated activities.

It supports my Child Safeguarding Statement and associated procedures. It applies to activities I deliver independently and those delivered with schools, youth theatres, arts organisations, community groups and other commissioning bodies.

The assessment focuses on safeguarding risks, including abuse, neglect and online harm. General health and safety risks are addressed separately.

I will review the risks for each project, taking account of the participants, activities, venue and supervision arrangements. Where a host organisation is involved, we will agree responsibilities before activities begin. I remain responsible for my own conduct and reporting obligations.

No.	Risk identified	Measures to manage the risk
1	Signs of abuse or neglect are not recognised.	I will maintain my safeguarding knowledge and follow the recognition guidance in Children First. I completed the NYCI Child Protection Awareness Programme, Sessions 1 and 2, at Youth Theatre Ireland on 29 May 2025. I will retain training records and review further training needs.
2	A safeguarding concern is not reported properly or promptly.	I will follow my written reporting procedure, report reasonable concerns to Tusla without delay and seek advice when uncertain. Before each project, I will identify relevant Tusla contacts and the host's Designated Liaison Person. Internal discussions will not delay a necessary report. Where mandated-person duties apply, I will fulfil them personally. In an emergency, I will contact An Garda Síochána on 112 or 999.
3	A child is harmed through inappropriate conduct by me or another adult involved in the activity.	I will follow my code of conduct, maintain professional boundaries and comply with applicable Garda vetting arrangements through the appropriate organisation. I will agree which adults are authorised to participate or supervise. If I engage another person to work on my behalf, I will first establish appropriate selection, vetting, induction and supervision arrangements and review my safeguarding obligations.
4	A child experiences bullying, discrimination, intimidation or harmful behaviour from another participant.	I will agree age-appropriate group expectations with participants and actively supervise interactions. I will intervene promptly, support affected children and record concerns. Behaviour suggesting abuse will be addressed

		through safeguarding reporting procedures. Children will be told how to seek help.
5	Insufficient supervision exposes children to abuse, neglect or unsafe contact.	Before delivery, I will agree supervision responsibilities and suitable adult-to-child arrangements based on ages, support needs, group size, setting and activity. This will include breaks, arrival, departure and collection. Where safe supervision cannot be maintained, I will pause or adapt the activity until appropriate arrangements are restored.
6	Isolated one-to-one contact creates an opportunity for harm.	I will avoid secluded or unplanned individual contact. Where individual work is necessary, it will be agreed in advance and take place in an observable setting with appropriate safeguards. I will not arrange private meetings or transport outside agreed project arrangements.
7	An allegation about my conduct, or another adult's conduct, is mishandled and a child remains at risk.	Children and families may raise concerns directly with the host organisation, Tusla or An Garda Síochána, including concerns about me. I will not investigate an allegation against myself. I will cooperate with statutory agencies and any necessary protective arrangements. Safeguarding action will take priority over routine complaints handling.
8	Inappropriate digital communication, online contact or content causes harm.	I will use agreed professional communication channels, normally involving parents, guardians or the host organisation. I will not use personal social-media connections, secret messages or disappearing messages with children. For online sessions, I will agree access controls, supervision, chat and recording arrangements, and prevent unauthorised participation.
9	Photographs, videos or recordings expose a child to exploitation, unwanted identification or inappropriate sharing.	I will agree who may record activities, for what purpose and where material may be published. Appropriate permissions will be obtained, and children's wishes respected. Recording on personal devices and participant sharing will be addressed in group expectations. Identifying information will be limited, and images stored and shared securely.
10	Personal information or safeguarding records are lost, misused or disclosed inappropriately.	I will collect only necessary information and keep safeguarding records securely, separately from routine activity records. Records will be factual, dated and attributable. Access and sharing will be limited to legitimate safeguarding or legal purposes. Retention, access requests and disposal will follow my documented data protection arrangements.
11	Third parties gain inappropriate access to children at a shared venue.	I will agree arrangements with the host for access to workshop spaces, visitors, toilets, dressing rooms and collection points. Private changing areas and controlled access will be arranged where relevant. I will report concerns about unauthorised adults and will not proceed where identified safeguarding risks remain inadequately controlled.
12	Creative exercises, physical contact or sensitive material cause emotional harm or cross personal boundaries.	I will plan age-appropriate material, explain activities and offer alternatives. Children will not be pressured to disclose personal experiences or accept unwanted touch. Any necessary physical contact will have a clear purpose and respect the child's agreement, except where immediate protective action is needed. Distress or

		disclosures will be handled through my safeguarding procedures.
13	A child's additional needs or communication barriers prevent them from participating safely or raising a concern.	I will discuss relevant support needs with the child, parent or guardian and host as appropriate. I will adapt communication and activities, provide accessible ways to ask for help and confirm who is responsible for any individual support or personal care. Information will be shared only as necessary.
14	Unclear responsibilities between me and a commissioning organisation result in safeguarding gaps.	Before delivery, I will agree reporting contacts, supervision, consent, records, photography and emergency arrangements. I will familiarise myself with the host's safeguarding procedures and resolve gaps before work begins. These arrangements will not replace my individual responsibility to report concerns.

Residential activities, overnight stays and travel

Residential activities and overnight accommodation require a separate assessment before I agree to participate. This must address supervision, sleeping and washing facilities, third-party access, transport, emergency contacts and the responsibilities of the organising body. The measures above alone are not sufficient for a residential programme.

Implementation and review

For each project, I will check which risks apply, identify any additional risks and confirm that the necessary measures are in place. Any outstanding action will have a named person responsible and a completion date. Activities will not proceed where an unresolved safeguarding risk makes delivery unsafe.

I will review this assessment annually and sooner following a safeguarding incident, significant change in activities or working arrangements, or updated guidance.

Person responsible: Catherine Sheridan

Date assessed and adopted: 21st Sept 2026

Signed: 