



## Child Safeguarding Statement

### Name of service:

Helium Arts, 28 Pearse Street, Mullingar, County Westmeath. (CHY Number 19236)

### 1. Purpose and Values

Helium Arts is a national children's arts and health organisation. We bring arts, creativity and play to children and young people in hospitals and healthcare settings across Ireland. One of Helium's core values is **Childhood Wellbeing** - we value a child's right to a quality childhood, regardless of the state of their health. We respect the individuality and autonomy of older children and teenagers and are attentive to their different needs. We believe nurturing imagination and expressing creativity is a principal part of developing childhood wellbeing. We place children at the centre of our work and their safety and wellbeing is the responsibility of all staff and contracted artists.

### 2. Activities

- **Artist in Residence** - an artist or artists work with a healthcare community over a number of months. Our current artist residency is [Fireflies](#), a three-year project (2015-2018) for teenagers in hospital investigating how the arts can support transition to adult care by promoting independence, decision making skills, communication skills and improved self-esteem.
- **Community Health** – an artist or artists work with children/teenagers with chronic illness in a community setting. Our current project is Two Suitcases, a film project where teenagers collaborate with professional filmmakers and artists to develop and make their own films.
- **Early Years** - Helium Arts' current early years project is a multi-sensory performance experience created for families with young children who have complex needs. Artists visits families in their homes, using music, sound, puppetry, movement and tactile environments to provide families with new ways of bonding with their child.
- **Professional development** - Training and support is provided for artists and healthcare staff to support their practice in working with children and young people

### 3. Principles to safeguard children from harm

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- All staff and contracted artists are Garda vetted.
- All staff and contracted artists have been made aware of and encouraged to undertake Tusla online Child Protection Training.
- All staff and contracted artists have a copy of Helium Arts' Child Protection Policy and have signed a declaration that they are familiar with the procedures contained within it.
- All child protection or welfare concerns will be reported to Tusla/Gardaí in a timely manner.
- All children engaging with Helium Arts' activities will have parental consent to do so.
- Informed consent is sought for the use of any images/videos of children taking part in workshops/events or images/videos of their work. All data is stored in compliance with GDPR. In the case of hospital based projects, it is Helium's policy to work in consultation with each hospital to agree a procedures on consent around the use of images.
- All programmes are developed in consultation with children, their parents, healthcare staff, and/or patient support groups.

- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.

#### 4. Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1	Lack of awareness of child protection duty and noncompliance with Child Protection Policy (e.g. delays in making necessary referrals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff, artists and project partners are provided with the Child Protection Policy.</li> <li>• Staff and artists are provided with training every two years to ensure they are equipped to deal with disclosures and to make referrals if required.</li> <li>• Staff and artists are encouraged to complete the Tusla Children First E-Learning programme. Completion of the programme will be a requirement within future contracts for artists.</li> <li>• A list of staff who are mandated persons (if any) as defined by the Children's Act 2017.</li> <li>• A relevant person will be appointed as the first point of contact regarding this Child Safeguarding Statement.</li> <li>• The Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually.</li> </ul>
2	Allegation of abuse where a member of Helium Arts' staff/contracted artist is the alleged perpetrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and contractors are Garda Vetted before they begin work.</li> <li>• All staff are familiar with the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Person or directly to Tusla.</li> <li>• Internal disciplinary processes are in place where the issue concerns an employee.</li> </ul>
3	Allegation of abuse where a parent/guardian, healthcare professional, support worker is the alleged perpetrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff are familiar with the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Person or directly to Tusla.</li> <li>• Project partners will be notified.</li> </ul>
4	Child makes a disclosure to a member of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff are familiar with the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Person or directly to Tusla.</li> </ul>
5	A suspicion of child abuse is determined by a member of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff are familiar with the procedures to make a referral to the Designated Person or directly to Tusla.</li> </ul>
6	A partner discloses something	Helium Arts will engage with partners on joint report making where appropriate. Our Child Protection Policy is shared with partners in advance of projects and Helium received a copy of Child protection Policies from all partners.

## 5. Procedures

We, at Helium Arts, are committed to a child-centred 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 adhere to the recommendations of the guidelines and sources listed below for the continuous development and implementation of the Helium Arts Child Protection Policy. All Helium Arts staff and artists are additionally required to comply with all hospital/health centre and partner organisations' policies during their work with such groups on behalf of Helium Arts.

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017), and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children;
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

## 6. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.



Signed:  
Helene Hugel, CEO/Artistic Director

**For queries, please contact:** Helene Hugel, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

Designated Liaison Person.

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