

Child Safeguarding Statement

This Child Safeguarding Statement is in compliance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015 and of Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. The statement sets out the services being provided by and the principles and procedures that are in place to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child/young person availing of, or in contact with, Aiseiri services is safe from abuse or harm. This statement includes an assessment of risk of “harm” to a child/young person while residing in or in contact with Aiseiri services. Procedures to manage and mitigate such risks are also specified. This statement has been reviewed in full as a result of an internal audit to ensure continued compliance with legislation, best practice, and organisational standards.

This document has been developed with reference to the following:

Children First Act 2015

“Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children”. DYCA 2017

“Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement” (tusla.ie)

“What is a risk assessment?” (tusla.ie)

Legal framework

Section 11(3) of the Children First Act 2015 states that a “child safeguarding statement **shall** include a written assessment of the risk and, in that regard, specify the procedures that are in place:

- a) To manage any risks identified
- b) In respect of any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of the relevant service.
- c) For the selection or recruitment of any person as a member of staff of the provider with regard to that person’s suitability to work with children
- d) For the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to members of staff of the provider in relation to the identification of the occurrence of harm
- e) For reporting to the Agency (TUSLA, Child and Family Agency) by the provider or a member of staff of the provider (whether a mandated person or otherwise) in accordance with this act or the guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 6 (Children First National Guidelines, 2017)
- f) For maintaining a list of persons (if any) of the relevant service who are mandated persons, and
- g) For appointing a relevant person for the purposes of this part of the Act.

The relevant person for Aiseiri is Sara Cassidy, Head of Clinical Services, who is also the Designated Liaison Person for Children First.

Named Person

Children First national guidance states that providers of relevant services should appoint a named person to lead the implementation of guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures. This person is also responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures are aligned with best practice as set out in Children First national guidance 2017.

The named person for Aiseiri is Sara Cassidy, Head of Clinical Services, 052-7441166

Name of Service being provided

Aiseiri provides community, residential and detox services to help young people, adults and families overcome addiction and lead meaningful lives in recovery.

Nature of Service

Aiseiri has 2 residential adult centres located in Cahir, Co. Tipperary and Roxborough, Co. Wexford. Aislinn, is our adolescent residential centre, in Ballyraggett, Co. Kilkenny.

Aiseiri also provides secondary care and supportive housing in Waterford City.

Aiseiri employs (approx.) 127 staff members and 80 volunteers.

The primary activity of the volunteers is to act as facilitators for groups attending the aftercare programme.

Principles to Safeguard Children and keep them safe from harm

The Aiseiri organisation recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of all children and young people and is committed to ensuring their safety and well-being; and we will work in partnership with family members, guardians and agency partners to do this.

Aiseiri is committed to the following principles to keep children safe from harm:

- a child-centred approach in the provision of services and the use of our services by all persons under 18 years
- That the safety and welfare of children/young people is everyone's responsibility
- That the promotion of the welfare, health and safety of children/young people is paramount
- That children/young people residing in and in contact with Aiseiri services are to be respected as individuals and encouraged to reach their potential, regardless of background
- That children/young people raising welfare or abuse concerns will be treated equally and listened to by staff members and/or volunteers
- That any identified welfare or protection concern of a child/young person that becomes known to Aiseiri staff or volunteers will be managed in a safe manner by the company. The response will be in compliance with best practice as set out in Children First National Guidance 2017 and will adhere to Aiseiri Policy and Procedures for the Protection and Safeguarding of Children 2023.
- That Aiseiri respects the confidential nature of information that our clients and families share with us. However, there are exceptions and limits to this confidentiality, including when information needs to be shared to protect a child.
- That safe management procedures are in place for all staff, volunteers and students, covering in particular; recruitment, Garda vetting and a person's suitability to work with children and vulnerable persons
- That designated liaison persons and mandated persons in respect of child safeguarding are identified, trained and are known to all staff members and volunteers.

Note - all registered counsellors, nurses and social care workers employed by Aiseiri are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015

- That Aiseiri retains and maintains a list of all staff who are mandated persons
- That safe procedures are in place and implemented, to respond to an allegation of abuse of a child/young person against a staff member, volunteer, student or other adult.

- That procedures are in place to respond to an allegation of abuse of a child/young person by another child/young person.
- That a specific safeguarding children training plan is in place to ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of their role in keeping children/young people safe and to raise organisational awareness of this issue.
- That a specific safeguarding children communications plan is in place to ensure that staff, service users, volunteers, partners and the general public are aware of the policy and procedures in place to safeguard children/young people engaged with Aiseiri.
- That Aiseiri has developed and is maintaining clear and secure record keeping procedures in respect of child protection and welfare concerns. Such records are held by the Designated Liaison Person.
- That a code of conduct is in place for staff, volunteers and other adults, which sets out their responsibilities in their engagement with children and young people.
- That a code of conduct is in place which outlines the responsibilities of children and young people in their interactions with each other and adults whilst attending an Aiseiri facility or engaging with its services.
- That Aiseiri recognises the importance of multi-agency working in keeping children and young people safe and on that basis working relationships have been developed with the relevant statutory agencies e.g. An Garda Síochána and Tusla.

Note

For the purpose of this document, a child is a person between the ages of 0 and 12 years, and a young person is a person between the ages of 13 and 18 years.

Risk Assessment

On the basis of being a relevant service as defined under Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015 Aiseiri has completed a safeguarding children risk assessment. This is with a view to having a safeguarding plan in place which minimises the risk, as far as practicable, to any child/young person attending their facilities and/or having contact with the services.

The completed risk assessment framework is set out below.

Note

Section 11(1) (a) of the Children First Act 2015 defines risk as 'any potential for harm to a child while availing of the service'

Section 2 of the Act defines harms as 'harm means in relation to a child:

- a) Assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or
- b) Sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstances or a series or combination of acts omissions or circumstances or otherwise'

The table below sets out the identified risks to the safety of children and young people, involved with or attending Aiseiri services and the steps taken to manage and minimise the risk of harm. These risks are relevant to Aiseiri.

The risk rating rationale is as follows:

I-Low – Such risks are mitigated and are in direct control of Aiseiri and can be monitored and controlled effectively on an ongoing basis

M-Medium – While the risk is mitigated and policies and procedures are in place, the risk may not be in direct control of Aiseiri entirely and reliance on other third parties may be required and demonstrable for control measures to be fully effective

H-High – While the risk may have control measures in place and supported by policies and procedures, the risk is still vulnerable and the likelihood for an occurrence is high

Note

Responsibility is placed on relevant services contracted by or in partnership with Aiseiri, in contact with children/young people, to manage the risk issues relevant to them and to take steps to minimise the risk of harm.

Aiseiri Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment October 2025

No.	Risk Description	Risk Level	Controls / Mitigations in Place	Evidence / Supporting Information	Responsible Person / Department
1	Risk of harm to children by staff	Low	Safe recruitment in place. Induction in place. Staff code of conduct in place. Lone working policy in place. Safeguarding policy and procedures implemented.	Garda vetting evidenced. Training log evidenced. Policies and procedures evidenced. Staff acknowledging compliance with policy.	Managers
2	Risk of harm to children by other adults	Low	Protocol on room usage by external groups implemented in units. High levels of staff supervision on site plus 24-hour monitored CCTV.	Staffing levels and CCTV monitoring evidenced.	Managers
3	Unsafe recruitment of staff and contractors	Low	Safe recruitment of staff in place. Safe procedures in place for contractors.	Evidenced via access to database. Contractors working with clients are Garda vetted.	Managers
4	Risk of harm to a child from another service user	Low	Responsibility for supervision of residents in operation across the staff group and 24-hour monitored CCTV in operation. Code of behaviour also	Evidenced.	Managers

			in place for residents and staff.		
5	A child safeguarding statement is not in place, reviewed and revised a minimum of biannually	Low	Child Safeguarding Statement in place. Statement on website.	Poster for the statement evidenced on site. Evidenced on website.	Managers
6	Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are not operational	Low	Policy and procedures signed off by CEO. Reports of child protection and/or welfare concerns received by DLP and forwarded to TUSLA when appropriate.	Policies and procedures evidenced. Evidence of a redacted report to Tusla received.	DLP
7	Bullying of a child	Low	Guidance regarding bullying within policy and procedures.	Guidance evidenced within policy and procedures.	Clinical
8	Staff not reporting a concern	Low	All staff have completed Children First briefing and mandated staff will be completing in-house half-day Children First training before end of 2025.	Training records evidenced. Details of reports made by staff to DLP evidenced.	Compliance
9	Exposure of children to violence, challenging behaviour or substance misuse	Medium	These issues are managed by staff on a daily basis and through the young person's treatment programme which is	Policies in place, Challenging behaviour training being rolled out November 25	Clinical

			subject to daily updates.		
10	Access to inappropriate media content by staff or children	Low	While resident, the young people do not have access to communication devices.	Evidenced. On document 009.AAK – items not to bring.	Clinical
11	Cyber bullying of a child and inappropriate use of ICT	Low	As above.	Mobile phones are prohibited as per 009.AAK document.	Clinical
12	System not in place to recognise, respond, report and record child protection or welfare concerns	Low	System implemented through safeguarding children policy and procedures.	Evidenced and to be enhanced by half-day Children First training in last quarter of 2025.	Clinical
13	All staff not in receipt of relevant Children First training	Low	All staff have completed Children First briefing and mandated staff will complete half-day Children First training before end of 2025.	Evidence re briefings seen.	Clinical
14	Staff handbook is not Children First compliant	Low	Staff handbook being revised as part of a process to strengthen staff induction.	Work in progress – will be finalised by end of Quarter 4 2025. Digital one available on SharePoint.	Managers
15	Clear signage is not in place re use of toilet and shower facilities	Low	All residents' bedrooms have ensuite.	Sole use only signs in place in all ensuites.	Managers
16	Risk assessments are not completed by groups booking Aislinn facilities	Low	Event management plans are in place. Staff member attends	Evidenced.	Managers

			fellowship meetings.		
17	Clear signage is not in place re the use of camera facility on phones	Low	An issue for visitors and/or contractors.	Completed and displayed, external sign to be purchased in Q4.	Manager
18	Images of children are posted online without consent	Low	During treatment, residents do not have access to communication devices.	Signage in place re no use of cameras.	Manager
19	Records not maintained of mandated and non-mandated reports by the DLP	Low	Copies of reports submitted to Tusla are retained by the DLP. Copies of reports not submitted to Tusla are retained by the DLP.	Evidenced. To be actioned and records retained by DLP end of November 2025.	DLP
20	Safeguarding and child protection information is not available to service users or the general public	Low	On website and on statement poster.	Evidenced.	DLP
21	The Child Safeguarding Statement is not reviewed biannually as required by the Act	Low	Reviewed bi-annually along with the child safeguarding policy and procedures.	Evidenced.	Clinical
22	Harm or potential harm to children is not recognised by staff	Low	All staff have completed Children First briefing and mandated persons will be attending in-house Children First Training. Staff receive	Briefing evidenced.	Clinical

			monthly group supervision and individual supervision.		
23	Staff unclear re procedure to respond to a lost or missing child	Low	Procedure for all residents. Specific guidance regarding missing children in policy and procedures.	Procedure evidenced.	Managers
24	A named person is not in place as required by the Act	Low	Named person appointed.	Named person identified by role in the statement.	DLP
25	A list of mandated persons is not maintained	Low	List established and maintained by DLP.	List completed and stored on computer.	DLP
26	All mandated persons have not been informed of their role and responsibilities under Children First	Medium	Mandated persons to receive half-day Children First training led by the DLP.	Across all Aiséirí units in November.	Clinical
27	There is not a policy in place to respond to information requests from young people	Low	Initial information on the service is on the website for young people.	Policy in place.	Compliance
28	There is no staff training in the management of challenging behaviour	Low	Train the trainer programme to begin rollout across the Aiséirí system in October 2025.	Pending completion of training.	Clinical
29	The staff handbook is not reviewed on a regular basis	Low	Staff handbook currently under review.	Digital copy available and will be reviewed annually	Compliance

30	Staff are not trained in responding to abuse disclosures from service users	Low	Staff training to be enhanced by half-day Children First training led by the DLP. Guidance also in policy and procedures for safeguarding children.	Evidenced.	Clinical
31	Staff do not receive regular professional supervision	Low	See 23.	See 23, supervision takes place once a month.	Clinical
32	There is not a Protected Disclosures policy in operation	Low	Policy in place.	Whistleblowing Policy in place.	Clinical
33	Children and families have not been made aware of the code of behaviour for children/young people	Low	Admission pack in place.	Evidenced.	Compliance
34	Children/young people are not informed of their right to be protected, consulted, and treated with respect	Low	See 33 above.	Evidenced.	Clinical
35	The safeguarding policy and procedures are not made available to parents/guardians and relevant bodies	Low	On website and link on Statement poster.	Evidenced.	Management
36	A partnership policy regarding working with parents is not operational	Low	Contract on admission is countersigned by parents. Family support	Evidenced.	Clinical

			policy also in place.		
37	Regular, recorded management team meetings do not take place	Low	Monthly management meetings are in place. Safeguarding and clinical governance are standing items.	Evidenced terms of reference for management team meetings.	Clinical
38	The staff induction programme does not include training in respect of Aiséirí safeguarding children policy and procedures	Low	Half-day Children First training before end of 2025 for all relevant staff.	All staff are required to complete Children First training prior to starting employment.	Managers
39	There is no evidence of service level agreements with partner organisations	Low	Service Level Agreements in place with HSE and Probation Service. Arrangements with Tusla on a case-by-case basis.	SLA's evidenced. No SLA with Tusla.	DLP
40	There is no system in place to record complaints and compliments	Low	Complaints and compliments policy in place. Quarterly reports on activity to Board and HSE.	Policy in place. Clients also complete evaluation forms before discharge from treatment.	Clinical

Note: A definition of staff in this table includes paid staff, volunteers, and students.

Procedures for Managing Risks

In addition to the mitigating procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Aiseiri child safeguarding statement (2025)

- Aiseiri child safeguarding risk assessment and plan (2025)
- Aiseiri policies and procedures for the protection and safeguarding of children (2025)
- Aiseiri case notes and written records policy (8-AGP-CM)
- Aiseiri protocol on room usage by external groups, guidance in place for staff
- Aiseiri Work Place Dignity & Respect Policy & Procedures (6-AGP-HR)
- Aiseiri online safety for children guidance (2025)
- Aiseiri CCTV policy (21-AGP-CO)
- Aiseiri Recruitment policy & procedures (9-AGP-HR).
- Aiseiri Garda vetting policy (2-AGP-HR)
- Aiseiri Induction policy and procedure (11-AGP-HR)
- Aiseiri Complaints Policy and Procedures (7-AGP-HR)
- Aiseiri code of ethics for staff, volunteers & students with regard to their interactions with children and young people.
- Aiseiri code of conduct for children and young people for when they are availing of Aiseiri services and facilities.
- Aiseiri Aislinn anti bullying policy and procedures (31-AGP-CM)
- Aiseiri Whistleblowing Policy & Procedures (21-AGP-HR)
- Aiseiri Grievance Policy & Procedure (1-AGP-HR)
- Aiseiri Disciplinary Policy & Procedure (28-AGP-HR)
- Aiseiri safeguarding children training plan 2025
- Aiseiri safeguarding children communication plan 2025
- Aiseiri lone working policy and procedure (15-AGP-HR)
- Aiseiri confidentiality guidance in respect of safeguarding children

All procedures and policies listed above are available on request or are available on the Aiseiri SharePoint site.

Implementation

In undertaking this risk assessment the board of management has endeavoured to identify, as far as practicable, the risks of harm that are relevant to Aiseiri and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage the identified risks.

This Child Safeguarding Statement has now been provided to;


- All staff, volunteers, contractors and partners linked with Aiseiri
- On request it will be provided to a parent/guardian (primary carer) of a child/young person availing of our services or activities
- Or to TUSLA, Child and Family Agency.

This statement is also available on line on the Aiseiri web-site www.aiseiri.ie

Aiseiri is committed to the implementation of this child safeguarding statement and to the policies and procedures that will support our intention to keep children and young people

(under 18 years) safe from abuse or harm, as far as practicable, while attending our facilities and/or services.

This child safeguarding statement will be reviewed no later than 2 years from the date of issue of this document or as soon as practicable if there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

Signed: 
Date 28 / 10 / 2025

Chairperson, Board of Management, Aiseiri