



Child Protection Policy

CACKLE MGMT is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. The welfare of any child or young person who is taking part in or observing work undertaken by this company is paramount. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. We will adhere to the recommendations of the Children's First Act 2015.

We have implemented the following policies and procedures covering:

- Code of behaviour for all staff
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse
- Confidentiality
- Recruitment and selecting staff
- Managing and supervising staff
- Involvement of primary carers
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff
- Complaints and comments
- Incidents and accidents

The Mandated and Relevant person(s) for child protection is the Co-Directors of Cackle Mgmt; the Designated Person is the Scene + Heard Festival Co-ordinator, the Deputy Designated Person is the Scene + Heard Festival Production Manager. This policy will be reviewed in October 2024 and in that month annually.

Signed:

Clíona Dukes + Caoimhe Connolly

Directors

Codes of Behaviour

For all staff i.e. full or part-time and contracted staff.

Anyone employed by this company be they, full or part-time administrative staff or staff on limited contracts such as artists, actors, crew members, technical staff, must fully observe the following approach when working with people aged eighteen years or younger:

- Treat children and young people equally and as individuals
- Listen to and respect them
- Involve them in decision making, where appropriate
- Provide encouragement and support regardless of ability
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal)
- Encourage a positive awareness
- Respect their personal space
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, where appropriate with them and their primary carers
- Create an atmosphere of trust and encourage group feedback
- Lead by example
- Be aware of limitations i.e. due to medical condition
- Respect differences of culture, religion race and sexual orientation

Good Practice

- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour.
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made.
- Register each child i.e. name, address, phone, emergency contact.
- Make primary carers, young people, facilitators and visitors aware of these procedures.
- Be inclusive of people with special needs.
- Plan and be prepared
- Report any concerns about the well-being of the children/young people to the Designated Person and follow reporting procedures.
- Be aware of bullying and encourage children to report any concerns or worries.
- Evaluate work practices on a regular basis.
- Report and record any incidents or accidents.
- Review and update policy and procedures on an annual basis.
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children.
- Ensure proper supervision where possible. If a crew member is left alone with a group of young people he/she should make sure that it is in an easily accessible space i.e. leave exit doors open.
- Ensure clear communication between staff, groups and also with organisations.
- Don't be passive in relation to concerns.
- Don't let a problem get out of control.
- Filming sessions should be in an open environment.

Inappropriate behaviour:

- Avoid being left alone with a child or young person i.e. giving lift home in car. Notify carers if giving a lift is the only option.
- Do not use or allow offensive or sexually physical and/or verbal language.
- Do not single out a particular person for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule or unwelcome focus or attention.
- Do not allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Do not hit or physically chastise.
- Do not socialise inappropriately with children/young people e.g. outside of structured organisational activities.

Physical Contact:

- Seek consent in relation to physical contact (except in emergency).
- Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touching.
- Check level of comfort when doing touch and/or physical exercises/movements.

Health and Safety:

- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised
- Look after any dangerous materials
- Provide a safe environment
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly

Reporting Procedures

Cackle Mgmt has appointed the Co-Directors as their Designated Person(s) (DP) to deal with issues related to child protection and welfare and to respond to any concerns that may be identified while the company is working, in any way, with children or young people in a workshop or performance capacity.

It is the responsibility of the DP to support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child protection. It is also their responsibility to liaise with the Health Service Executive (HSE) or Gardaí where appropriate.

The DP can be contacted at (mobile) on 085 7667021 (Cliona Dukes) or 086 377 3548 (Caoimhe Connolly).

Reasonable Grounds for Concern include:-

- Specific indication from a person under 18 that s/he has been abused.
- An account by a person who saw the abuse taking place.
- Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused any other way.
- An injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation where there are indicators supporting the concern e.g. a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, dysfunctional behaviour.
- Consistent indication, over a period of time, which a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

Recording Procedures

Cackle Mgmt has 'An Incident /Accident Form' which is kept on site during the run of the Scene + Heard festival.

The following information needs to be recorded:-

- Suspicions
- Concerns
- Worrying observations
- Behavioural changes
- Actions and Outcomes

How to Deal with a Disclosure

- Stay calm and listen allowing the person to say what they need to say.
- Do not ask leading questions
- Do not prompt for more details
- Do not ask them to repeat details unnecessarily
- Do not promise to keep anything secret
- Reassure the person
- Explain that they did the right thing and what will happen next

Reporting Procedures

- Report all details, including date, time and people involved. Keep info factual. Do not make judgements.
- Inform the DP
- The most appropriate person should discuss the concern or consult with the Primary Carers.
- The DP may contact the HSE Duty Social Work Dept. for advice prior to making a report.
- Information is shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.
- Parents/Primary Carers should be made aware of a report to the HSE UNLESS it is likely to put the victim at further risk.
- If there is reasonable grounds for concern as outlined above the DP will contact the Duty Social Worker in the HSE area involved (numbers can be found in the attached contact sheet) using the standard HSE Reporting Form. See sample form at the back.
- Reports can be made verbally initially and then followed up with the Reporting Form.
- If the DP is not available contact the Duty Social Worker directly.
- In Emergencies outside the HSE hours contact the Gardaí.
- Reports should be made without delay.
- Actions and outcomes should be noted.
- The person who expressed the concern should be kept informed.

Confidentiality Statement

Cackle Mgmt is committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. All records are stored in a secure facility. Only the DP has access to this. However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

- Information will only be forwarded 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 a child or young person is at risk.
- Primary carers, children and young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the HSE, unless doing so could put the child at further risk.
- Images of a child/young person will not be used for any reason without the consent of the parent/carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public performances).
- Procedures will be put in place in relation to the use of images of children/young people.
- Procedures will also be put in place for the recording and storing of information in line with our confidentiality policy.

Recruiting and Selecting Staff

This policy operates in tandem with Cackle Mgmt's ordinary recruiting policy. This recruitment process refers to all staff that have, or are likely to have, contact with children or young people.

Recruitment Policy Statement

Cackle Mgmt will ensure that staff 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 suitable qualified personnel
- At least 2 written references that are recent, relevant, independent and verbally confirmed will be necessary
- Staff will be selected by a panel or at least two, where possible, through an interview process
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed. A 'risk' is defined as a person who has any child-related convictions, refuses to sign application form and declaration form, if they have insufficient documentary evidence of their identification or who are concealing information on their suitability
- There will be a relevant probation period
- All staff will be required to consent to Garda clearance, where required.

Staff Management

Policy Statement

Cackle Mgmt are making this statement in order to protect both staff (full-time and freelance) and young people. We undertake that all our staff will read and sign that they are aware of our Child Protection Policy statement. New full-time staff will receive induction and training in

Child Protection. Part-time or Freelance staff must agree to abide by our Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour. All staff will receive necessary supervision and their work practices will be reviewed on a project basis.

Involvement of Primary Carers

Policy Statement

Cackle Mgmt is committed to being open with all primary carers. We undertake to advise primary carers of our Child Protection Policy and to inform them of all activities including potential activities and ensure that these activities are age-appropriate. We will comply with Health & Safety practices

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

- Respond to the needs of the child
- Inform the primary carers on an on-going basis unless this action puts the child or young person at further risk.
- Where we have child protection or welfare concerns we are obliged to pass these on to the Duty Social worker and, in emergency, the Gardaí.
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff, we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform primary carers as appropriate.

Cackle Mgmt is committed to putting the interest of the child first.

To this end we will:

- Contact local HSE and Gardaí where there is a child protection welfare concern
- Encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by Cackle Mgmt in order 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.

Dealing with Allegations against Staff

In the event of allegations made against an employee of Cackle Mgmt, the protection of the child/young person is the first and paramount consideration. Cackle Mgmt has a DUAL responsibility in respect of both the child and the employee. The same person must not have responsibility for dealing with the child's welfare issues and the staff member's issues.

An allegation against an employee should be assessed promptly and carefully. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, a formal report to the HSE should be made. The reporting procedures outlined in these Guidelines should be followed. This organisation should maintain a close liaison with the HSE and the Gardaí. Cackle Mgmt should ensure that their actions do not undermine or frustrate any assessment or investigation by the HSE and the Gardaí.

Agreed procedures should be followed in the context of the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. The employee has a right to know of any allegation made and of their right to respond. Cackle Mgmt should take protective measures appropriate to the level of risk while not unreasonably penalising the worker – unless necessary to protect the child. Protective measures might mean increased supervision or assignment to different duties. The employees may be suspended pending assessment and investigation. Seek legal advice on procedures or protocol if in doubt.

Two separate procedures must be followed:

1. In respect of the child/young person the Director Cliona Dukes will deal with issues related to the child/young person.
2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made the Director Caoimhe Connolly will deal with issues related to the staff member.
 - First priority is to ensure that no child/young person is exposed to unnecessary risk.
 - If allegations are made against either of the DPs, then the other DP should be contacted.
 - The reporting procedures outlined above should be followed. Both primary carers and the child/young person should be informed of actions planned and taken. The child/young person should be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner.
 - The staff member will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation.
 - The staff member should be given the opportunity to respond.
 - Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee should be taken in consultation with the HSE and Gardaí.
 - After consultation, the DPs should advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.

Complaints and Comments procedures

Minor complaints or comments should be resolved at source.

In the event of a more serious complaint or a comment, Cackle Mgmt will respond within one week.

The DP has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to the appropriate person.

Verbal complaints will be logged with an Incident Form and responded to.

Accidents Procedure

In the event of an accident the following procedures should be followed:

- An up-to-date register of the contact details of all children/young people involved in the organisation
- External organisations with whom we are dealing with must provide proof of their public liability insurance
- A First aid box is available and regularly re-stocked
- There are qualified first aiders at every shoot/location. There is always a minimum of 1 first aider on duty at any given time.
- Children and young people must be advised of the risks of dangerous material
- Record details of risky equipment used and take steps to minimise risk
- Take cognisance of responsibility for first-aid on off-site trips.

Record of Concern form

Setting:	Date																								
Staff member's name:																									
Child's name:																									
<p>Concern</p> <p><u>What prompted this record?</u> (Please include dates, times, incidents, behaviours, what the child said) <u>Remember to record any questions that you asked</u> (do not ask leading questions, if you need more fact or detail think of T.E.D "Tell me....." "Explain to me....." "Describe to me.....")</p>																									
<p>Background</p> <p>Additional relevant information that relates to the child or family</p>																									
<p>Does the concern fall into one of the following categories?</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Neglect</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Sexual Abuse</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Physical Abuse</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Emotional Abuse</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>CSE</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Honour based violence</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>FGM</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Forced marriage</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Online/sexting</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peer on peer</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Radicalisation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Domestic abuse</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emotional Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	CSE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Honour based violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	FGM	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forced marriage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Online/sexting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer on peer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Radicalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
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PRINT_____

(Member of staff)

PRINT_____

(Designated member of staff
for children protection)

SIGNED _____

(Member of staff)

SIGNED_____

(Designated member of staff
for children protection)

Has this information been discussed/ passed to any other agencies? (Please give details) If not, please record reasons why

Actions by designated lead:

Outcome:

Front page chronology for CP/safeguarding files

Organisation Name:	
Childs name:	
Childs DofB:	
Date	Details

Declaration Form

To be filled in by any employee who will be working with or in regular contact with children or young people.

This form is confidential.

Name _____

Date of Birth _____ **Place of Birth** _____

Address _____

Tel: _____ Mobile _____

Email: _____

Any other name(s) previously known as: _____

Is there any reason that you would be considered unsuitable to work with children and young people?

Yes No

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

Signed _____ Date: _____