

## **Wicklow Hospice Foundation CLG.**

### **Child Protection Policy.**

This policy applies to the members of the Board of the company, employees, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of the Wicklow Hospice Foundation CLG.

- The purpose of the policy is: to protect children and young people who take part in events and activities of the Wicklow Hospice Foundation.
- To provide principles that guides our approach to child protection.

Wicklow Hospice Foundation believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind.

We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and keep them safe. Accordingly we are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount as enshrined in the Child First Act 2015 and first National guidance for the protection and welfare of children.
- All children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them and listening to them.
- Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for board members, officers, employees, and volunteers.

- Appointing a Child Protection Officer responsible for disseminating information on child protection and the implementation of the child protection code of practice.
- By reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

### **Procedures for responding to allegations of child abuse.**

Where a child or young person discloses child abuse to a person working in any capacity in the Wicklow Hospice Foundation it is important that the situation is handled sensitively.

The following guidelines should be observed.

- The person receiving the allegation should listen to the child or young person with understanding, they should facilitate them to tell about the problem but avoid interviewing them.
- The person receiving the allegation should be conscious that the child may need support and reassurance that they have done the right thing in making the report.
- The person receiving the allegation should avoid appearing judgemental about the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The child or young person should not be questioned unless the nature of what is being said is unclear. It is necessary to ensure that what was said has been correctly understood.
- The steps that are likely to follow should be explained to the child or young person.
- It should be made clear that the information given will be treated confidentially and will only be shared with those who have a right to hear it.
- Parents and guardians should be informed.
- In the case of an adult disclosing child abuse, the general guidance outlined above should be followed.
- The person who receives the allegation should actively encourage the person making it to report it to the authorities and appropriate arrangements should be made to support them in doing so.

- The person receiving the allegation should record in writing all relevant information received, including for example date, time, names. Location and context.
- Whether the person making the allegation wishes to report it to the authorities, it should be explained to them that the W.H.F. child protection procedures require that the allegation be referred to the WHF Child Protection Officer who will inform the Board and report it to the statutory authority.

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