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## **FEIS DHOIRE CHOLMCILLE**

### **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

This policy highlights the value base, standards and procedures required for Feis Dhoire Cholmcille to ensure effective protection for children and young people at risk.

#### **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to our Trustees, Committee Members, Adjudicators, Accompanists, Musicians, Teachers, Volunteers, and students or anyone working on behalf of the Feis Dhoire Cholmcille.

#### **PURPOSE:**

The health, safety, and wellbeing of all our children and young people at risk are of paramount importance to all committee trustees, members and volunteers who are part of Feis Dhoire Cholmcille. In alignment with NI safeguarding guidance, all Feis personnel will identify emerging concerns early and engage with early help processes. Safeguarding is not limited to responding after harms occurs. Everyone has the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, class, race, culture, or disability. They have a right to be safe as participants in all our competitions and activities. The Feis is committed to ensuring a safe environment for children and young people and believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to recommend best practice which protects them.



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Feis Dhoire Cholmcille has a 'zero tolerance' policy with regard to abuse, intimidation, bullying (physical or emotional), racism and sexist behaviour directed towards children and young people. All Feis Dhoire Cholmcille committee members and volunteers must be aware of this policy, and it is their duty to guarantee its implementation.

In our activities we value our children and young people at risk. A culture of mutual respect between children and young people and those who represent the organisation in all its activities will be encouraged with adults modelling good practice in this context.

Feis Dhoire Cholmcille recognises that good safeguarding policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved with our work including Adjudicators, Musicians, Accompanists, Volunteers, Teachers and Parents as these policies can help protect them from erroneous or malicious allegations.

**To achieve this, we will:**

- develop an awareness of the issues which may lead to children and young people being harmed
- create an open environment by identifying a 'Designated Officer' to whom children and young people can turn to if they need to talk
- adopt safeguarding guidelines through codes of conduct for trustees and members in the organisation
- ensure safer recruitment as required by all organisations working with children in NI ([education-ni.gov.uk](http://education-ni.gov.uk)) through our selection and management procedures
- share information about concerns with children and young people, parents/guardians and others who need to know
- ensure good and safe practices



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- be involved in safeguarding training made available through the various agencies and strengthen links with these agencies
- keep safeguarding policies under regular review

The Feis commits to incorporating trauma-informed approaches as endorsed by the Safeguarding Board for NI (SBNi) including promoting emotional safety and recognising the impact of trauma on behaviour ([safeguardingni.org](http://safeguardingni.org)). Children have the right to be safe. All volunteers should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

### **SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT:**

This statement applies to all those involved in Feis Dhoire Cholmcille including Trustees, Committee Members, Adjudicators, Accompanists, Musicians, Teachers, Volunteers and students or anyone working on behalf of the Feis Dhoire Cholmcille.

### **Feis Environment**

It is the policy of our Feis to provide to our competitors, parents, guardians, carers, and teachers in as far as it is reasonably practical, a safe environment at our Feis. However, it must be stressed that responsibility for children under 18 years of age and vulnerable adults (those with learning difficulties) rests with parents, guardians, carers, teachers – not with Feis trustees, members or volunteers. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously, responded to swiftly and appropriately and the Feis Committee and Volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns, contacting external agencies, as necessary.



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All safeguarding concerns, decisions, actions and referrals must be recorded contemporaneously and stored securely in accordance with UK GDPR and SBNI procedures. <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/northern-ireland>

### **Feis Personnel**

For both Members of the Feis Committee and appointed volunteers, all names, addresses, and phone numbers are kept on file. All will wear official badges at the Feis to identify them clearly. Anyone wearing a badge may be approached and will report their concerns to Mrs. Collette Craig (Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)). All concerns and problems will be taken seriously, discussed in a restricted area provided, documented, and dated.

All volunteers, adjudicators, accompanists, and anyone working directly with children must undergo:

- AccessNI enhanced checks
- Barred list checks (where the role meets criteria for regulated activity), in compliance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (revised) and DE Circular 2025/06 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk); [education-ni.gov.uk](http://education-ni.gov.uk))

### **Attendance at the Feis**

This Policy is shared with all parents, guardians, carers, teachers, and schools who then become partners in implementing this, Policy. It is the responsibility of parents, guardians, teachers, and carers to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are supervised at all times.



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## **Performance Area and Changing Areas**

As the Feis is held in public buildings, parents, guardians, carers, and teachers are reminded that children and vulnerable adults must be supervised at all times including while they are in public areas e.g., Toilets and Practice Rooms. We are unable to provide changing facilities.

## **Photographs, Video recording, and Press Photography**

The Feis Committee bans the taking of photographs and videos during the Feis week except in the circumstance that consent has been agreed. Parents/guardians need to be aware when taking photographs of images that these may include other children/young people and always obtain consent. Photographs may be taken by the Feis organisation or local press, provided they have obtained permission from those with parental responsibility. Photographs by Accredited Photographers will be released to the media, may be used on the Feis Webpages, and Social Media platform. Any parent with a concern re an image on any of the Feis websites or social media platforms should contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or a member of the Feis committee to voice this. Action will be taken to resolve any concerns parents or guardians have.

## **The legislation and guidance that supports this policy**

UK GDPR and DPA 2018 requirements for consent, secure storage and deletion of images

Online safety considerations for image sharing ([earnl.org.uk](http://earnl.org.uk))

The Children Order (NI) 1995

Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978

The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (Northern Ireland) 1979



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The Police Act 1997

UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018  
eani.org.uk (superseding The Data Protection Act 1998)

The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Northern Ireland) Order 2003

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.

## **Policy Review**

The Feis Committee will review their Policy annually revising and enhancing it, as necessary. This Policy was last reviewed October 2021

## **CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT:**

Feis Dhoire Cholmcille will never promise to keep secrets. Confidential information will be shared in line with **UK GDPR (2021), Data Protection Act 2018**, and statutory safeguarding duties. Information may be shared without where a child is at risk of harm, in accordance with NI safeguarding guidance (eani.org.uk), with the welfare of the child or young person being paramount. Considerations of confidentiality will not be allowed to override the rights of children or young people to be protected from harm.

A full safeguarding code of practice statement has been communicated to all volunteers, trustees and members of the organisation.

## **KNOWLEDGE OF ABUSE:**

Background knowledge in relation to child abuse, the general principles of safeguarding and the ability to recognise and respond to abuse are important issues.



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Of primary concern for Feis Dhoire Cholmcille is the issue of safeguarding our children and young people within the operation of the organisation.

However, being cognisant of the indicators of abuse of children and young people by others outside the organisation is of an equal importance for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Volunteers and committee members involved with children and young people have a great opportunity to be a positive role model and help build an individual's confidence. The following is a code of conduct for volunteers and committee members of Feis Dhoire Cholmcille Committee members, volunteers, paid participants, teachers and parents participating the Feis are expected to:

- ensure the safety of all children and young people by careful supervision, proper pre-planning of activities, always using safe methods
- encourage and guide children and young people to accept responsibility for their own behaviour
- treat all children and young people equally and ensure they feel valued and have no favourites
- encourage all children and young people not to discriminate on the grounds of religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes, or lack of ability
- not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, and discourage the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour
- appreciate the efforts of all children and young people
- be positive, approachable, and offer praise to always promote the objectives of the organisation



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- not let any allegations of abuse of any kind to go unchallenged or unrecorded if appropriate. Incidents and accidents to be recorded in the incident/accident book of the arena it happens in. Parents/guardians will be informed
- report accidents or incidents of alleged abuse or poor practice to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)
- administer minor first-aid in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents to the organisation's "first aider" and to the responsible volunteers of the arena in which it occurs
- have access to telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required
- not abuse children and young people physically, emotionally, or sexually
- maintain confidentiality about sensitive information
- respect and listen to the opinions of children and young people
- take time to explain any instructions about activities to ensure they are clearly understood
- develop an appropriate working relationship with children and young people based on mutual trust and respect
- be a role model, displaying consistently high standard of behaviour and appearance remember children and young people learn by example
- refrain from smoking and consumption of alcohol during organisational activities
- never condone rule violations, rough play, or the use of prohibited substances
- protect themselves from false accusation by:
  - not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children and young people away from others
  - never taking children and young people to their home
  - not administering First-Aid involving the removing of a child/young person's clothing unless in the presence of others.



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Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). Persistent breach of the code of conduct could result in dismissal from the organisation.

#### CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE:

Feis Dhoire Cholmcille is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people. The organisation believes that it is important that volunteers, children and young people, and parents/guardians associated with the organisation should, always, show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Therefore, children and young people are encouraged to be always open and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the organisation with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

This organisation is for children and young people and should offer a positive experience where they can experience new things in a safe and positive environment.

Children and young people are expected to:

- be supportive and committed to other children and young people, offer comfort when required
- not get involved in inappropriate peer pressure and push others into something they do not want to do
- take care of equipment owned by the organisation
- all children and young people must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of age, gender, ability, race, cultural background or religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- refrain from the use of bad language or racial/sectarian references. This includes bullying using modern technologies like chatrooms, social network sites, or text messaging



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- refrain from bullying or persistent use of rough and dangerous play
- children and young people should keep to agreed timings for events and inform the relevant person if they are going to be late
- children and young people are not allowed to smoke on organisation premises or whilst representing the organisation
- children and young people are not allowed to consume alcohol or drugs of any kind on organisation premises or whilst representing the organisation
- show respect to other children and young people
- keep themselves safe
- report inappropriate behaviour or risky situations for children and young people
- challenge or report the bullying of your peers
- not be violent or aggressive.

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be addressed by volunteers and reported verbally to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). Parents/guardians will be informed at all stages.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS:**

Feis Dhoire Cholmcille is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children and young people.

We believe that it is important that parents/guardians associated with the organisation should, always, show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Therefore, parents/guardians are encouraged to be always open and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the organisation with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)



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Children and young people attending competitions should have a positive experience where they can learn new things in a safe and positive environment.

A parent/guardian of a child/young person who attends the Feis are expected to abide by the following code of conduct.

- positively reinforce your child/young person and show an interest in their chosen activity
- support your child/young person's involvement and help them to enjoy the competitions
- do not place your child/young person under pressure or push them into activities they do not want to do
- accompany all children under the age of twelve to all competitions
- deliver and collect the child/young person punctually to and from competitions
- encourage your child/young person to abide by the rules of competitions and teach them that they can only do their best
- set a good example by recognising fair play and applauding good performances of all
- behave responsibly; do not embarrass your child/young person
- use correct and proper language at all times
- encourage and guide your child/young person to accept responsibility for their own behaviour
- show appreciation and support the volunteers working at competitions
- ensure your child/young person is punctual
- be realistic and supportive
- ensure your child/young person's hygiene and nutritional needs are met
- acknowledge the importance and role of the organisation's volunteers, who provide their time to ensure child/young person's participation in the competitions is a pleasant experience.



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As parents/guardians you have the right to:

- know your child/young person is safe
- be informed of problems or concerns relating to your child/young person
- be informed if your child/young person is injured
- have your consent sought for issues such as photography, media, etc.
- contribute to decisions within the organisation
- complain if you have concerns

Any misdemeanours and breach of this code of conduct will be dealt with immediately by the organisation

### **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ADULTS (Required under NI Guidance)**

**Managing allegations against Trustees, members, volunteers or any adult involved in the Feis.**

All allegations or concerns about an adult who works with children must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will contact:

- the PSNI Central Referral Unit (CRU), and
- the local HSC Trust Gateway Team

in line with NI reporting protocols ([eani.org.uk](http://eani.org.uk))

### **WHISTLEBLOWING STATEMENT:**

A whistleblowing procedure exists to ensure trustees, members and volunteers can report concerns about unsafe practice. This follows SBNI standards and the organisations duty to ensure safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.



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### **ONLINE SAFETY:**

The Feis recognises online safety as part of safeguarding in accordance with SBNI 2024-2025 priorities. Measures include:

- preventing online bullying, harassment and grooming
- guidance for volunteers, parents and young people on digital conduct
- reporting mechanisms for harmful online behaviour ([safeguardingni.org](https://safeguardingni.org))