

Le Chéile Mentoring - Child Safeguarding Statement

Name of service being provided: Le Chéile Mentoring

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm:

Le Chéile Mentoring is a national, volunteer mentoring, restorative justice and family support service, which supports children, young people and their families, where the child or young person is involved in or at risk of offending. We provide tailored supports, in partnership with other organisations, working alongside young people and their families, to enable them to reach their potential now and into the future.

Le Chéile's services encompass:

- Youth Mentoring service
- Parent Mentoring service
- Administration of the Strengthening Families Programme on behalf of the Probation Service
- Parenting Programmes
- Family Support Interventions, and
- Restorative Justice Project in Counties Limerick, Clare and Cork.

Le Chéile Mentoring (Le Chéile) is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all children and young people with whom we work. Le Chéile is committed to promoting the rights of the child, including the participation of children and young people in matters that affect them.

Our guidelines are based on the Children First Act 2015; Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare for Children 2017; the Children Act 2001 and the UN Convention on the Rights for the Child. Le Chéile's guidelines are set out in this Child Safeguarding Statement and the Le Chéile Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All staff, Board of Management and volunteers involved with young people have been circulated this document and have agreed to adhere to these guidelines.

Le Chéile's principles to safeguard children from harm are:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm.
- Interventions by the State should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family.

- Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where it is necessary for the State to intervene to keep children safe, the minimum intervention necessary should be used.
- Children should only be separated from parents/carers when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted.
- 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.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/carers and families.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.

Risk Assessment of any potential for harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to a child while availing of our service:

Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

Risk Identified	Policy
Harm of a child by a member of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and selection procedure • Reporting procedure • Code of behaviour for staff working with children and young people. • Child protection and welfare allegations against staff policy and procedure • Policies, procedures and guidelines regarding safe practice and service delivery • Supervision Policy
Harm of a child by a volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and selection procedure • Reporting procedure • Code of behaviour for volunteers working with children and young people. • Child protection and welfare allegations against volunteers policy and procedure • Policies, procedures and guidelines regarding safe practice and service delivery • Volunteer handbook
Harm of a child by a peer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth participation policy • Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers

Staff and volunteers' access to young people alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Policy • Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers • Supervision Policy • Volunteer handbook
Harm of a child on outings by a member of staff/volunteer/peer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Policy • Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers • Supervision Policy • Volunteer handbook
Staff or volunteers not recognising abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction & Refresher Training • Child Protection Policy • Supervision Policy
Volunteers driving young people in their cars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can only be approved in exceptional circumstances by Coordinators • Volunteer Handbook
Not passing on information or taking appropriate action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction & Refresher Training • Child Protection Policy • Supervision policy
Making young person feel uncomfortable/crossing boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision Policy • Child Protection Policy • Staff role with young person
Unrealistic/inappropriate expectations of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision Policy • Child Protection Policy • Staff role with young person
Willfully permitting harm to come to young person during activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision Policy • Child Protection Policy • Staff role with young person
Bullying of a child by a member of staff/volunteer/peer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision Policy • Child Protection Policy • Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers • Volunteer handbook • Youth participation policy • Staff role with young person
Inappropriate places for activities – betting shops, bars, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision Policy • Child Protection Policy • Staff role with young person
Grooming or commencing a sexual relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and Police vetting policies • Supervision Policy • Child Protection Policy • Staff role with young person
Contact with or exploitation of a young person for criminal purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision Policy • Child Protection Policy • Staff role with young person
People known to volunteers presenting a risk e.g. exploitation, sexual abuse, criminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision policy • Child Protection Policy • Staff role with young person • Volunteer handbook
Mentor relationship continuing beyond agreed time period or outside agreed boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction & Refresher training • Volunteer handbook

Harm of a child by a visitor/contractor in the service;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and vetting procedures • Child protection Policy includes contractors and visitors
Harm of a child from unauthorised photography;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers • Youth participation policy
Harm of a child from online abuse through social media or internet access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No social media engagement between staff/volunteers and children allowed • IT and social networking guidance for staff and volunteers • Child Protection policy • Volunteer handbook

Procedures:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015; the Children First: National Guidance; 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 included in the full Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, 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 reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons in the relevant service, who are mandated persons
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers to work with children
- Procedure for the provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information.

List of Mandated Persons:

A current list of the Mandated Persons employed by Le Chéile has been collated and will be maintained by the CEO and will be updated whenever there are changes in relevant personnel.

Implementation:

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing 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 the service.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was created in March 2019 and will be reviewed every two years thereafter, or as soon as practical after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Date of last review September 2025

Date of next review September 2027

Signed:

Laura Walsh
Chief Execu

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Le Chéile Mentoring

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24 Tivoli Terrace South
Dún Laoghaire
Co. Dublin
A96 K522

Tel: 01 2144350/2144334

For queries, please contact: Laura Walsh - Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

Le Chéile's Designated Liaison Person is the CEO

Laura Walsh, CEO.

Mobile: 087 349 9814

Land Line: 01-2144350

Email: laurawalsh@lecheile.ie

Address: Le Chéile Mentoring, Tivoli Training Centre,

24 Tivoli Terrace South, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. A96 K522

Deputy Designated Liaison Persons 2025

Region/Project	DLP	Phone	Email
Dublin North (p/t)	Ingrid Cooney	086-3830700	Ingrid@lecheile.ie
Dublin North (p/t)	Maartje Van Stokkem	087-2721440	maartje@lecheile.ie
Dublin South and Dublin Youth Garda Project	Marie Vanasova	086-7966442	marie@lecheile.ie
Cork North & East	Ailbe Coleman	086-3864576	ailbecoleman@lecheile.ie
Cork South & West	Allison Gordon	086-0472419	allisongordon@lecheile.ie
Limerick	Lorna Walsh	087-9939758	lornawalsh@lecheile.ie
South East and Waterford Youth Garda Project	Heather Sinnott	086-3871214	heather@lecheile.ie
Midlands	Helen McCarthy	087-7966441	Helen@lecheile.ie
North East	Lyndsey McCabe	087-2916145	lyndsey@lecheile.ie
Restorative Justice	Simon Keating	087-0678336	simonkeating@lecheile.ie
Oberstown	Conor Byrne	087-2404004	conorbyrne@lecheile.ie
Whitetown	Laureen Christie	087-9767221	laureenchristie@lecheile.ie
Restorative Justice Cork/Kerry	Tom O'Sullivan	087-2742439	thomasosullivan@lecheile.ie
Galway	David Byrne	087-1252001	davidbyrne@lecheile.ie

All other staff member's Designated Liaison Person is the CEO.

The Deputy Designated Liaison Persons for the CEO are:

Position	DLP	Phone	Email
Regional Manager	Mary Daly	086-7805201	marydaly@lecheile.ie
Regional Manager	Alan Quinn	086-7966440	alan@lecheile.ie