

Risk Assessment for Poetry Ireland's Writers in Schools Scheme

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015, the following is the Risk Assessment for Poetry Ireland's Writers in Schools Scheme.

Poetry Ireland Writers in Schools (WIS) Activities

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- Writer in Schools single visits to schools / libraries
- Writers in Schools residencies in schools / libraries
- Workshops for children in the Poetry Ireland Centre
- WIS Mentoring Programme
- Poetry Aloud
- Recruitment of artists for WIS Programme
- Recruitment of staff for PI Education Programme
- Use of video/ photography and other media to record events
- Virtual WIS visits to schools

Poetry Ireland has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities:

- Inadequate supervision of children / young people during writer visits / residencies / onsite events in the Poetry Ireland Centre
- Inadequate safeguarding training and/or provision of information and instruction to WIS artists
- Inadequate safeguarding training and/or provision of information and instruction to PI Education staff
- Lack of awareness among WIS artists / PI Education Staff of policy and procedures around reporting of an incident
- Concerns about abuse / harm not being reported
- Inappropriate relationship / communications between child and another adult
- Lack of adherence to procedures with regards to photography / video / social media
- Risk of unauthorised access to online event

Poetry Ireland Writers in Schools has the following procedures in place to address and manage the risks of harm identified in this assessment.

All Poetry Ireland staff:

- must be familiar with Children First National Guidance 2017, and it is recommended that they complete the Tusla Children First e-learning programme
- be provided with a copy of the WIS Child Safeguarding Guidelines which includes details on procedures with regard to reporting a concern and codes of behaviour
- be provided with a copy of the WIS Child Safeguarding Statement
- must complete and submit a vetting application
- encourage board of management members to avail of relevant training

All WIS artists:

- must be familiar with Children First National Guidance 2017, and it is recommended that they complete the Tusla Children First e-learning programme
- be provided with a copy of the WIS Child Safeguarding Statement
- be provided with a copy of the WIS Child Safeguarding Guidelines
- complete and submit a vetting application

Procedures to be observed during a WIS visit/ event:

- Teacher / responsible adult must remain with the visiting writer to a school / library at all times.
- All students under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a parent / guardian / carer excluding time spent in the workshop / event at the Poetry Ireland Centre.
- If a child approaches a Poetry Ireland staff member with a request to go to the bathroom or leave the event space for any reason, Poetry Ireland will defer to the child's parent/ guardian/caregiver or teacher and will not accompany a child alone to another area of the event space.
- Parental consent forms issued for events where permission necessary for photographic / video recording.
- Poetry Ireland events involving children and young people will not be advertised to the general public.
- School must issue a password protected invitation for an online event with an artist
- School must host and moderate a virtual writer visit.
- Teacher is in attendance at all times during a virtual visit.
- Teacher must ensure that all safety features are enabled.