

CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT – Updated 17th January 2024

TEEN-TURN is fully compliant with the Children First Act 2015 (“CHILDREN FIRST ACT”) and the National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2017 (“Children First Guidance, 2017”) developed by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

TEEN-TURN is a provider of what is described as a ‘relevant service’ in the CHILDREN FIRST ACT and, as a result, is responsible for: (1) risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child participant; (2) publication of a ‘child safeguarding statement’; and (3) appointment of a Designated Liaison Person to serve as the point of contact with respect to TEEN-TURN’s child safeguarding statement and for the purposes of the CHILDREN FIRST ACT.

1. Service

Teen-Turn (TEEN-TURN) provides teen girls the opportunity to gain hands-on STEM experience through after school activities and through summer work placements in career environments so that they can visualise themselves in those kinds of careers and therefore make third level course choices accordingly. As participants are under the age of 18, they are identified as children (Section 2 of the Child Care Act 1991).

2. Nature of Service and principles to safeguard children from harm

TEEN-TURN offers after school programmes which engage children in hands-on learning. The 12 –week Technovation Challenge Curriculum is an example. TEEN-TURN also coordinates work placements with third parties, including research centres, SME and multinational companies. To provide these services, TEEN-TURN enlists volunteers and it is governed by a voluntary Advisory Board.

TEEN-TURN makes every effort to safeguard the wellbeing of children while they are participating in TEEN-TURN after school activities, ensuring that activity leaders are Garda Vetted and that all volunteers not only adhere to a Code of Conduct but also confirm, by signed declaration, that they have no criminal convictions that would render them unsuitable for work with young persons or children. No after school activity is held without the presence of at least one Garda Vetted activity leader.

TEEN-TURN also works closely with companies to facilitate their compliance with the CHILDREN FIRST ACT when children are on those companies’ premises for work placements. TEEN-TURN cannot accept responsibility for the management of the work placements when the children are on the companies’ premises, but TEEN-TURN provides detailed information in its hosting agreements to make certain host companies are well guided on child safeguarding.

3. Risk assessment

TEEN-TURN complies with the CHILDREN FIRST ACT risk assessment requirement by evaluating any potential for harm to a child—physical, sexual, and psychological—prior to, during and after TEEN-TURN service offering.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1	Unsupervised interactions occur between a child and a Teen-Turn advisory board member, activity leader or volunteer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strict policy is in place which requires that any request and/or contact from a child, be it in person, by text, call or email, is responded to by including either a parent or school representative in the communication and directing all further interactions to be between the relevant adults.
2	A child is harmed by a Teen-Turn activity leader or volunteer at an after school activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity leaders are briefed on Child Safeguarding practices. Activity leaders are Garda Vetted, in keeping with statutory requirements. Volunteers are required to adhere to a Code of Conduct and confirm, by signed declaration, that they have no criminal convictions that would render them unsuitable for work with young persons or children. Volunteers are provided a document prior to attending any activity with a detailed explanation of Child Safeguarding practices and expectations, including those pertaining to interacting with children as well as supervising the use of computers or similar devices and the contact protocol for the Designated Liaison Person.
3	A child discloses harm by a Teen-Turn volunteer either at an after school activity or while on a work placement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All advisory board members, activity leaders, and volunteers are repeatedly made aware of the role of the Designated Liaison Person and advised to direct any such disclosure immediately to said individual. The Designated Liaison Person will follow best practice procedures, including the informing of Tusla and the Garda.
4	Video footage or photographs of a child is published without parental/guardian consent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only approved individuals by Teen-Turn are permitted to film or photography child participants. Volunteers are strictly prohibited from taking images of child participants. Any child who does not have parental/guardian consent for use of images will be made known to approved individuals to prevent that child from being filmed or photographed.
5	A child is exposed to potential harm while on a work placement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host companies are provided hosting agreement documentation prior to work placements with a detailed explanation of Child Safeguarding practices and expectations, including those pertaining to safety, appropriateness of work, interacting with children, field trips, image consent as well as supervising the use of computers or similar devices and the contact protocol for the Designated Liaison Person. Child participants are presented with Child Safeguarding practices during the mandatory inductions for all Teen-Turn work placements.

TEEN-TURN considers the likelihood of any of the risks set out above occurring to be low in light of the policies and procedures it has in place.

4. Procedures:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*, 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 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 safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children;
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available upon request.

TEEN-TURN's Designated Liaison Person and relevant person under the CHILDREN FIRST ACT is:

Main: Joanne Dolan | TEEN-TURN

306 Redford Park, Greystones, Wicklow A63 TW40

Telephone: +353 86 883 1698

Email: contact@teen-turn.com

Deputy: Margaret Malone | TEEN-TURN

39 Beaumont Crescent, Dublin 9 D09 CP21

Telephone: +353 087 221 1086

Email: contact@teen-turn.com

5. Implementation:

We recognise that implementation is an on-going 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 our service.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in **January 2025** or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

For queries, please contact the Designated Liaison Person listed above.

Appendix

TEEN-TURN's Volunteer Code of Conduct

Adults interacting with young persons and children are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that young persons and children are treated with integrity and respect, and the self-esteem of young people is enhanced.

All adult actions should be guided by what is best for the young person or child and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships. Physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect of any kind or threat of such abuse is totally unacceptable.

Volunteers are advised to:

- avoid unnecessary physical contact with the participants
- not exchange personal contact information with the participants
- avoid one-to-one mentoring or any interaction outside of work hours or supervised after-school sessions
- abide by safety rules and Child Safeguarding guidelines given by the Teen-Turn safety appointee
- treat each person equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion
- never use foul language or provocative language/gestures in the presence of a participant
- be positive so that participants leave with a sense of achievement and an increased level of self-esteem
- never photograph or film any participant without receiving written approval from Teen-Turn and evidence of parental/guardian consent

If a **ANYONE** witnesses any behaviour that he/she finds disturbing, it must be immediately brought to the attention of the Teen-Turn safety appointee who, if a staff member of an employer, will then advise Teen-Turn designated representative.