The Murder One Crime Writing Festival Child Protection Policy and Procedures

29 July 2024

The Murder One Crime Writing Festival Child Protection Policy

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Introduction

The Murder One Crime Writing Festival ('Murder One') is an Irish literary festival with a focus on crime writing. It is programmed by Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin who runs its parent company The Inkwell Group. The family and schools' events are programmed and run (in 2024) by Sarah Webb. In 2024 it will be presented in association with dlr Lexicon Library, Dún Laoghaire, which is the venue for all the family and schools' events.

The family and schools' events are aimed at families and schools with children and young people aged 9 to 15. At each event, Murder One requests that a parent, guardian or teacher is always present with the child or young person.

Our events bring us into direct contact with children and young people and this falls within the meaning of the term 'relevant services' under the Children First Act 2015.

Below are Murder One's principles and procedures which should be observed to ensure, to the best of our ability, that every child is safe from hard while attending one of our events.

Murder One Child Protection Policy

Murder One is committed to a child-centered approach to our work with children and young people. It is of vital important to the festival that children, young people and staff members, volunteers and artists are respected and kept safe from harm at all times while using our services. Our normal practices and behaviour actively promote delivery of excellent services to children and young people as individuals in a safe and engaging environment, where the welfare of the child is paramount. We will adhere to the *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)* by having and implementing child protection policies and procedures.

There is an obligation on anyone who is involved with children and young people to provide them with the highest possible standard of care. Those who accept responsibility for children and young people may be legally responsible for their failure to provide adequate care. Therefore, there is a two-fold benefit in the proper implementation of these policies: firstly, the protection of the child and secondly, the protection of the Murder One Crime Writing Festival.

In order to ensure mutual protection, staff, volunteers and artists and other organisations working with Murder One will be made familiar with our Child Protection Policy and Procedures in relation to participation in children's activities.

Our policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed

Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin, Murder One

Date: 29/07/2024

For any information about the Murder One Child Protection Policy and Procedures or Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact Sarah Webb who is the relevant person and Designated Liaison Person (DLP) as defined in the Children First Act.

Murder One Phone: 087 285382
Email: vanessa@writing.ie

Guiding principles for Murder One staff, volunteers and artists

By adhering to these guiding principles, staff, volunteers and artists can ensure that our events will be safe and fun for young participants, while those undertaking roles within our organisation will be protected.

Murder One guiding principles involve (where we refer to children, we also mean young people up to the age of 18):

- putting the child's welfare and safety first
- treating all children equally, and with respect and dignity
- making our events and workshops entertaining and enjoyable, as well as informative and creative
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and respect, which empowers children to share in the decision-making process
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback to children (workshops)
- using appropriate language (physical and verbal), adjusting language to the needs and sensitivity of the children present
- challenging use of inappropriate language by children
- planning and preparing appropriately so that each session suits the needs of the group and making sure no child is excluded from an activity due to individual requirements (e.g. making sure activities are age and ability appropriate and allow each child to participate in an enjoyable way)
- always working in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations at all times and encouraging an open environment
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children
- involving parents/guardians/caregivers/teachers wherever possible and keeping them informed of any issues that concern their children or children in their care
- ensuring that all children are accompanied at Murder One events and workshops by a parent/guardian/caregiver/teacher at all times
- maintaining accurate policies and procedures in relation to the care of children

It is important that all Murder One staff, volunteers and artists adhere to these guiding principles. By keeping children and young people at the forefront of our planning and practice we can be confident that participants will enjoy their experiences and that our actions will be regarded as safe.

In addition, staff, volunteers and artists should never:

- Exert undue influence over a child in order to gain personal benefit or reward
- Spend any time alone with a child online
- Leave children alone or unsupervised online or in person
- Make sexually suggestive comments about, to or in front of a child
- Engage in any sort of relationship with a young person online or in person. This is considered a breach of trust and a disciplinary matter.

Following any incident where a member of staff, a volunteer or an artist feels their actions or words could be misinterpreted, a written report should be submitted to Murder One's relevant person.

Recruiting and Selecting Staff and Volunteers

Murder One will recruit and select volunteers and staff in a transparent and equitable fashion.

Murder One recognises that anyone may have the potential to harm children in some way so we will take all reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

We will ensure that staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised by observing the following actions:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined
- Posts will be advertised widely
- All candidates will submit a CV and cover letter
- Staff will be selected by a panel of at least two (or more) representatives through an interview process
- At least two confidential references which are relevant, recent and independent will be sought and verbally confirmed
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo) will be collected from staff and volunteers
- There will be a six-month probationary period
- Any staff member whose role requires working with children or young people will be required to consent to Garda vetting and for their disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau to be held by Halfway up the Stairs
- No person will be employed who is deemed to constitute a risk
- Grounds for exclusion include:
  - Child-related convictions
  - Refusal to comply with Garda vetting procedures
  - Insufficient documentary evidence of identification
  - Concealing information about suitability for working with children

Staff Management Policy

To protect both our staff and volunteers and all children and young people we undertake that

New staff and volunteers will

- Take part in mandatory induction training session
- Be made aware of our guiding principles, Child Safeguarding Statement, Child Protection Policy and the identity and role of the relevant person and designated liaison person
- Undergo a probationary period of six months

All staff and volunteers will

- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices
- Read this Child Protection Policy and Halfway up the Stair's Child Safeguarding Statement
- Participate in child safeguarding training (at a minimum level, Tusla's Children First e-learning module)

Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm

- Murder One will ensure that training and provision of information on safeguarding of children is provided to all staff and volunteers so that they are clear on their responsibilities and understand the different forms of abuse and risks that children and young people may be exposed to in the course of our work with them.
- Murder One will ensure that any safeguarding training provided to staff or volunteers is consistent with 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*.
- Murder One will ensure that all staff or volunteers have attended child safeguarding training relevant to their role in the organisation. At a minimum, all staff or volunteers must have completed Tusla's e-learning training programme, Children First.
- Murder One will ensure that appropriate resources (financial and time) are available to the Designated Liaison Person and any other staff members who may require additional training.

Involvement of Primary Carers

We are committed to being open with parents/guardians and all primary carers.

As we are a child-centered organisation we are committed to putting the interest of the child first. To that end we will:

- Contact Tusla/Gardaí if there is a child safeguarding concern
- Expect parents/guardians/caregivers/teachers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by our organisation to ensure the safety of their children or children under their care
- Appoint a relevant person and Designated Liaison Person who is available for consultations.

We undertake to:

- Make parents/guardians/caregivers/teachers aware of our Child Protection Policy
- Inform parents/guardians/caregivers and teachers/schools of all activities and potential activities
- Issue contact/consent forms where relevant
- Operate child-centered policies in accordance with best practice
- Adhere to our recruitment guidelines
- Ensure as far as possible that the activities are age appropriate
- Encourage and facilitate parent/guardian/caregiver/teacher involvement where appropriate

If we have concerns about the welfare of the child/young person we will:

- Respond to the needs of the child or young person
- Inform the parents/guardians/caregivers on an ongoing basis unless this action puts the child or young person at further risk
- Where there are child protection and welfare concerns, Murder One is obliged to pass these on to Tusla and/or the Gardaí
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff/volunteer/artist/intern we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform parents/guardians/caregivers as appropriate

Relevant person and Designated Liaison Person

Murder One has appointed a relevant person. As defined in the Children First Act 2015, this 'means a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement'. Murder One's procedure for appointing a relevant person is to take into account which member of staff is most knowledgeable in the area of child safeguarding and is most familiar with Murder One's Safeguarding Statement.

Murder One has appointed a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in keeping with best practice in child safeguarding. This person is the resource person for any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns and will liaise with outside agencies. The DLP is knowledgeable about child protection and will be provided with any training considered necessary to fulfil this role.

The DLP is responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures are followed, so that child welfare and protection concerns are referred promptly to Tusla.

The relevant person is: Sarah Webb

The DLP is Sarah Webb

The Deputy DLP is Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin
Murder One Phone: 087285382
Email: vanessa@writing.ie

The DLP will be available on-call. In the absence of the DLP, due to illness or holiday, the Deputy DLP will be on-call on the same basis. In cases where it is inappropriate for the DLP to investigate issues, i.e. an allegation against the DLP, the Deputy DLP will take on the role of DLP.

Role of Designated Person

- Receives and considers all child protection concerns and decides whether reasonable grounds for reporting to Tusla exist
- Records all allegations of child abuse or other concerns as well as any action/inaction taken in response to same
- Liaises with appropriate authorities in Tusla and An Garda Síochána
- Ensures Murder One's' policy and procedures relating to child protection are followed
- Ensures Murder One's reporting procedures are followed so that any concerns are relayed promptly to Tusla
- Consult informally with a Tusla Duty Social Worker if necessary
- Provides information and advice on protection and welfare at Halfway up the Stairs
- Manages referrals to Tusla, with adequate confidential information
- Provides feedback to the referrer, as appropriate
- Informs the child's parents/guardians/caregivers if a referral is to be made to Tusla, unless:
  - informing the parents/guardians/caregivers is likely to endanger the child
  - informing the parents/guardians/caregivers is likely to place the DLP as reporter at risk of harm
  - the family's knowledge of the report could hinder Tusla's ability to carry out their assessment
- Consults with Murder One's staff, volunteers and artists with regard to child protection
- Ensures confidentiality/safe recording of child protection issues and of individual case histories
- Provides advice on child protection training needs
- Maintains training and awareness of child protection issues to keep updated on new

developments and to be fully aware of Halfway up the Stairs' duties in relation to the safeguarding of children

- Where requested, jointly reports with a mandated person

Mandated persons

The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on certain people, many of whom are professionals, to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla – Child and Family Agency. These mandated persons must also assist Tusla, on request, in its assessment of child protection concerns about children who have been the subject of a mandated report. Mandated persons are people who have contact with children and/or families who, by virtue of their qualifications, training and experience, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Mandated persons include key professionals working with children in the education, health, justice, youth and childcare sectors. Certain professionals who may not work directly with children, such as those in adult counselling or psychiatry, are also mandated persons. The list also includes registered foster carers and members of the clergy or pastoral care workers of a church or other religious community. The Children First Act 2015, Schedule 2, provides a full list of people who are classified as mandated persons. At present, Murder One has no mandated persons on its staff.

Confidentiality Statement

Murder One is committed to ensuring people's rights to confidentiality and is aware of its obligations under GDPR. However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

- Information will be forwarded to the relevant authorities on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the young person. Information about an incident should only be divulged if it is needed to remove the child from harm. Murder One will not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

- Murder One cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child are at risk.

- Primary carers and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to Tusla or An Garda Síochána, unless doing so could put the child at further risk.

- All information relating to children protection incidents will be stored appropriately and securely.

Rules to guide use of photography and video

- Images taken during a Murder One event or workshop of a child can only be captured with the written consent of a parent or guardian.
- Images featuring unidentifiable aspects of a child such as the back of a child's head or their hands can be captured without permission, but it must be impossible to identify an individual child based on that image.
- No live events or workshops featuring children will be recorded.
- The use of inappropriate images should be reported to the DLP.

Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse (as detailed in *Children First*, chapter 2)

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: **neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse** and **sexual abuse**. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

In the Children First: National Guidance, a 'child' means a person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or has been married.

Definition of **'neglect'** – Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and/or medical care.

Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is significant is determined by the child's health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child whose height or weight is significantly below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school may be being deprived of intellectual stimulation.

The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

Definition of **'emotional abuse'** – Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a parent/guardian/caregiver and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.

Examples may include:

(i) the imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
(ii) conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;
(iii) emotional unavailability of the child's parent/guardian/caregiver;
(iv) unresponsiveness of the parent/guardian/caregiver and/or inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
(v) premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
(vi) unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way;
(vii) under- or over-protection of the child;
(viii) failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the child's cognitive and emotional development;
(ix) use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
(x) exposure to domestic violence;
(xi) exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology.

Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour. The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/guardian/caregiver.

Definition of **'physical abuse'** – Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Physical abuse can involve:

(i) severe physical punishment;
(ii) beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;
(iii) pushing, shaking or throwing;
(iv) pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling;
(v) terrorising with threats;
(vi) observing violence;
(vii) use of excessive force in handling;
(viii) deliberate poisoning;
(ix) suffocation;
(x) fabricated/induced illness (see Appendix 1 for details);
(xi) allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child.

Definition of **'sexual abuse'** – Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.
Examples of child sexual abuse include:

(i) exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child;
(ii) intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
(iii) masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
(iv) sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal;
(v) sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modeling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse.
(vi) consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purposes of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. An Garda Síochána will deal with the criminal aspects of the case under the relevant legislation.

It should be noted that the definition of child sexual abuse presented in this section is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offence of sexual assault.

Murder One Procedure for Reporting

Procedure for Dealing with Concerns/Suspicion of Abuse

Staff, volunteers and artists working with children must share their concerns about child protection or child welfare with the DLP or, if the concern relates to the DLP, with the Deputy DLP.

Information that staff, volunteers and artists should record in relation to children and young people:

- suspicions
- concerns
- worrying observations
- behavioural changes

Reasonable Grounds for Concern

The statutory authorities must be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a young person may have been abused, is being abused, or is at risk of abuse. The following examples constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- Specific indication from the young person that she/he was abused
- An account by the person who saw the young person being abused
- Evidence such as injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in another way
- Consistent indication, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect. (It should be noted that Murder One staff, volunteers and artists will rarely be in an appropriate position to make informed judgments regarding this ground for concern as we largely only interact with a child once during events and workshops. Any queries or concerns in this regard should be discussed and actions authorised through the DLP.)

Procedure for Dealing with a Disclosure or Allegation

It is important that allegations are handled in a sensitive and discreet manner. Any response to a child making an allegation should take the following into consideration:

- Actively listen to the child, ensuring that they feel heard
- Inform the child of your duty to report their disclosure as early as possible in the conversation. Never agree to keep the disclosure secret.
- React calmly; overreaction may intimidate the child and increase any feelings of guilt.
- Reassure the child that it was right to tell someone what happened
- Be careful when asking questions. Conversation should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification. Never ask leading questions.
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser to the child.

Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla

- Record the concern, including the date, time and people involved in the concern/disclosure and the facts in Halfway up the Stairs' incident book and directly to the DLP. Information recorded should be factual. Any opinions recorded should be supported by facts.
- Inform the DLP or if unavailable the Deputy DLP.
- The most appropriate person should discuss the concern with parents/guardians/caregivers where necessary. Parents/guardians/caregivers should be told of a report to Tusla or An Garda Síochána unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk or put the reporter at risk from the family.
- The DLP may contact a Tusla Duty Social Worker for an informal consultation prior to making a report.
- Concerns should be reported in person, by telephone or in writing to the local social work duty service in the area where the child lives. Contact details for local social work teams are available on the Tusla website.
- Tusla has two forms for reporting child protection and welfare concerns – the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (CPWRF) and the Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF). The Child Protection and Welfare Report Form is to be completed and submitted to Tusla for concerns about children under the age of 18. A web portal has been developed to allow for the secure submission of CPWRFs to Tusla. The Retrospective Abuse Report Form is to be completed and submitted to Tusla for cases of adults disclosing childhood abuse. It is not currently possible to submit RARFs using the web portal. Both the CPWRF and RARF can be downloaded here. If using a hardcopy CPWRF or RARF, the completed form should be sent to the Duty Social Work team in the area where the child resides. Both forms can be found on the Tusla website.
- Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis.
- Reports will be made to Tusla without delay.
- In emergencies, which are out of Tusla hours, contact the Gardaí. There may be extreme situations, which threaten the immediate safety of a child where it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí.

Out-of-hours Emergencies

Any out-of-hours emergencies should be reported immediately to the DLP, or the Deputy DLP who will then decide whether to contact An Garda Síochána or Tusla where appropriate.

Concerns not requiring Tusla referral

The DLP will decide whether or not to refer matters to Tusla, recording their decision.

Any matters not referred to Tusla should be noted in Halfway up the Stairs' incident book, along with any decisions made, and should be signed by the DLP.

The DLP will inform the staff member, volunteer or artist in writing of any decision not to refer to Tusla.

If any staff member, volunteer or artist feels uncomfortable with a decision made in this context, they have the right and responsibility to file a report of their own.

Dealing with Allegations
In the event of an allegation against an employee/volunteer/artist:

There are two separate procedures to be followed:

1. The reporting procedure in respect of the child
2. The procedure for dealing with the worker

The DLP will deal with issues related to the child/young person in accordance with Halfway up the Stairs' reporting procedure and legal obligations under the Children First Act.

- The first priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk; in the case of an allegation, Murder One will take protective measures in the interests of the child. Protective measures do not presume guilt but will be put in place as a matter of urgency to put the child's welfare first.
- If allegations are made against the DLP, the disclosure should be made to the Deputy DLP. The Deputy DLP will be responsible for referring the allegation to Tusla.
- Parents/guardians/caregivers and children (if of an appropriate age) should be informed of actions planned and taken.
- The employee/volunteer/artist will be informed privately as soon as possible
    - that an allegation has been made against him/her
    - the nature of the allegation
- The employee/volunteer/intern/artist should be given the opportunity to respond.
- Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee should be taken in consultation with Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána. Tusla will not advise on employment matters but can advise in relation to child welfare and risk management.
- Any action taken should not undermine the ability of Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána to investigate the allegation.

Complaints Procedure

In the event of a complaint or comment from a participating child or their parent/guardian/caregiver

- Complaints and comments will be logged in the incident book, which is stored by the DLP
- Reports of complaints should include contact details of the person making the complaint, an outline of the complaint as well as details of the response of staff members present
- Complaints will be responded to within five working days
- All staff members have responsibility for directing complaints/comments to the DLP
- Verbal complaints will be responded to at the time of complaint and all details will be logged in the incident book
- Anyone who makes a verbal complaint should be encouraged to submit details of their complaint in writing also

Murder One Incident Report Form CONFIDENTIAL

Your name: Your position:

Child's name (Initials): Child's date of birth:

Parent/guardian/Caregiver names/s:

Child's home address (and phone number, if available):

What prompted your concerns (include date and time of any incident, also any physical and behavioural signs you have observed):

Have you spoken to the child about this? As best you can, record exactly what the child said and what you said: (remember, do not lead the child – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Action taken so far:
Has a parent/guardian/caregiver been contacted?
What has been said?

External agencies contacted (date & time)

Gardaí	Yes/no If 'yes' Name, unit and contact number: Details of advice received:
Tusla	Yes/no If 'yes' Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
Other (e.g. ISPCC, NSPCC) 24 hr. helpline: 1800 66 66 66 (ROI) or 0808 800 5000 (NI)	Which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:

Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Remember to maintain confidentiality on a *need to know* basis (information about an incident should only be divulged if it is needed to remove the child from harm. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know. If unsure get advice from Tusla before contacting child's parents.)

NB: A copy of this form should be sent to the HSE after the telephone report, with the original going to the Murder One Designated Liaison Person who will keep it in a locked drawer.

CONFIDENTIAL Murder One Volunteer/Staff Declaration

Position Applied For: _____

1. Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms) _____

Other surname previously known by: _____

2. Address _____

_____

Previous addresses within last 5 years:

i) _____

ii) _____

iii) _____

Tel No. (Daytime)_____ (Evening) _____

3. Date of Birth_____/_____/_____ Place of Birth _____

4. PPS number _____

5. Do you suffer from any illness/disability/medical condition, which may at times affect your ability to work with children? If so, please give details:

6. Please supply the name, address, telephone numbers and position of two people (non-relative), who know you well and can provide us with a reference.

6.1_____6.2 _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Tel No._____ Tel No. _____

Position_____ Position _____

7.You **must** tell us now if you have a case pending or if you have ever been convicted of a criminal offence, or cautioned by the police, or bound over. You must include all offences, even minor matters such as motoring offences, and spent conviction, that is, things which happened a long time ago. If you leave anything out it may affect your application. The disclosure of a criminal record or other information will not debar you from registration/appointment unless Murder One considers that the conviction renders you unsuitable. In making this decision Murder One will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago it was committed and what age you were at the time and other factors which may be relevant.

Please complete below to give us this information and return it with your application.

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution; a Bound Over Order; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?

Yes/No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please note you are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order (NI) 1987 you should declare all convictions including spent convictions.

8. I declare that the above information is true and agree that I will abide and accept the terms and conditions of membership/participation.

Signed:_____ Date: _____

For the purposes of your application for the post with Murder One it is our policy to ask for a check to be carried out by the National Vetting Bureau. The purpose of the check is to make sure that people are not appointed who might be a risk to vulnerable people. The check will tell us whether you have a criminal record, or whether the NVB holds any other information about you which might have a bearing on your suitability. Any information which we receive, will be treated confidentially, and will be discussed with you before we make a final decision. After that decision is made the information will be held by Murder One in a locked drawer accessible only to the Designated Liaison Person.

I understand that pre-employment Garda Vetting must be carried out before my application for registration/appointment can be confirmed. This has been explained to me and I am aware that spent convictions may be disclosed. I declare that the information I have given is accurate and I consent to the check being made. *Please sign the declaration above.*

Appendix Three

HSE Standard Report Form (link)
For reporting child protection and/or welfare concerns
https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/hrppg/children-first-standard-report-form.pdf

Appendix Four

Tusla Standard Report Form (link)
https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/

Appendix Five

Tusla Online Safety Guidelines (link)
https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla_-_Child_Safeguarding_-_A_Guide_for_Policy,_Procedure_and_Practice.pdf
(Page 96 – appendix 7 – Online Safety)

Appendix Six

Retrospective Abuse Report Form (link)
For reporting a disclosure by an adult of abuse that took place when they were a child
https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Retrospective_Abuse_Report_Form_FINAL.pdf

Child Safeguarding Statement – Murder One Family and Schools' Events

1/ Name of service being provided:
Literary events aimed at families and schools - children and young people aged 9 to 15 and their parents, guardians, carers and teachers.

2/ Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm:

The Murder One Crime Writing Festival is an Irish literary festival with a focus on crime writing. It is programmed by Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin and its parent company is The Inkwell Group. The family and schools' events are programmed and run (in 2024) by Sarah Webb. In 2024 it will be presented in association with dlr Lexicon Library, Dún Laoghaire, the venue for all the family and schools' events.

Murder One is dedicated to providing excellent book events for families and schools. They run the following types of events for families and schools (a 'general audience' as defined by the Arts Council). Children and young people are always accompanied by their parents/guardians, carers or teachers at the Murder One events.

Our events bring us into direct contact with children and young people (with their parents/guardians, carers or teachers). This falls within the meaning of the term 'relevant services' under the Children First Act 2015.

List of events which bring Murder One in contact with children:

- In person book events for families in dlr Lexicon library, Dún Laoghaire (booked by the parents or guardians, attended by families together)
- In person creative workshops for families in dlr Lexicon library, Dún Laoghaire (booked by the parents or guardians, attended by families together)
- School events at dlr Lexicon library, Dún Laoghaire, (booked by the teachers, attended by the teachers with their class)

Murder One takes a child-centered approach to every family and schools' event we programme and deliver. We are committed to ensuring that all our workshops and events are suitable for the age they are aimed at and that our staff or volunteers are well informed in relation to child safeguarding, how to manage the risk of harm and what the procedures are for reporting an incident.

Murder One is committed to ensuring that no child or young person is harmed, or placed at risk of harm, through their association with us.

3/ We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. See below for details

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:
These procedures include:

- 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 detailed in our Child Protection Policy which is publicly available on our website or can be sent by email on request.

5/ Implementation
We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our organisation 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 services.
This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on 1 September 2025 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:
Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin, Murder One

For queries, please contact Sarah Webb, Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.
Murder One Phone: 087285382
Email: vanessa@writing.ie

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015, the following is the risk assessment for Murder One.
In the risk assessment below, Murder One staff refers to all core staff members who work with the festival.

1/ List of activities which bring Murder One in contact with children:

- In person book events for families at dlr Lexicon Library, Dún Laoghaire (booked by the parents or guardians, attended by families together)
- In person creative workshops for families at dlr Lexicon Library, Dún Laoghaire (booked by the parents or guardians, attended by families together)
- School events at dlr Lexicon Library, Dún Laoghaire (booked by the teachers, attended by the teachers with their class)

2/ Murder One has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities.
School Events

- Lack of awareness around the area of child protection (speakers)
- Lack of awareness around the area of child protection (staff and volunteers)
- Inappropriate content in an event
- Inappropriate images in an event
- Children or young people being left alone with a speaker or staff member

In person family events

- Lack of awareness around the area of child protection (speakers)
- Lack of awareness around the area of child protection (staff and volunteers)
- Inappropriate content in an event or workshop
- Inappropriate images in an event or workshop
- Children or young people being left alone with a speaker or staff member

3/ Murder One has the following procedures in place to address and manage the risks of harm identified in this assessment
Digital Events

- All our in-person events and workshops are suitable for the age and the abilities of the children and young people they are aimed at

  All speakers in the family and schools events programme will be made aware of our Safeguarding Statement
- All staff members have been advised to take the Tusla Children First e-learning programme. We have discussed child protection at a staff meeting and have involved staff members working on events in the risk assessment.
- All staff members have been provided with a copy of the Murder One Child Safeguarding Statement
- Family Events - Our in-person events are aimed at families. The events are booked by a parent or guardian and a parent or guardian must attend with the child or young person under the age of 18.

- School Events will only be run where there is at least one class teacher attending with every class. During school events children or young people will never be alone with a speaker or staff member. During book signings at school events there will be at least 1 adult at all times at the signing desk with the author or illustrator.

- Children or young people will not be allowed to attend a Murder One family event unless there is a parent or guardian with them. During book signings at family events there will be at least 1 adult at all times at the signing desk with the author or illustrator (their parent/guardian will also be with them).

  Murder One is aware that children cannot be photographed without parental/guardian/caregiver consent and any images used on social media must avoid showing a child's face unless written consent is obtained.
- Murder One social media (Twitter, Instagram and Facebook) is aimed at adults (parents and teachers) and no correspondence with children will be entered into via our social media platforms. We will never knowingly communicate directly with children or young people.

- The Murder One Child Safeguarding Statement will be available on the festival's website for all to read.