**The Willow Tree Children’s Centre**

**Safety Statement**

*The team at The Willow Tree Children’s Centre are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, employees and all those affected by its activities and in compliance with the Safety, Health and Welfare Work Act, 2005 and all relevant regulations.*

**Safety Statement**

***The Willow Tree Childrens Centre***

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## Safety Statement

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all employees in the workplace. The Act applies to employees in all types of work and embraces all the activitiesof The Willow Tree Childrens Centre.

1.2 In compliance with the Act, The Willow Tree Childrens Centrehas prepared a written Framework Safety Statement describing the employer arrangements and the employee cooperation necessary to achieve this purpose. In addition, the Framework Safety Statement outlines The Willow Tree Childrens Centre’s policies on occupational health and safety matters and defining the necessary management structure for the implementation of these policies.

Specific health and safety issues of relevance to The Willow Tree Childrens Centreas a whole are detailed in this framework safety statement.

1.3 In compliance with the Framework Safety Statement, The Willow Tree Childrens Centrehas prepared our own local safety statement, documenting our own hazards, risks, risk control protective and preventive measures and resources for ensuring a safe and healthy work environment.

1.4 This Safety Statement is aimed at protecting employees, carers, children and visitors from potential injury or ill-health arising from our work activities.

1.5 This Safety Statement will be updated as necessary in light of new legislation, staff feedback, child care structural changes and practical experience. In addition, the Safety Statement will be reviewed annually.

1.6 This Safety Statement is available to Management, parents, all employees and visitors of The Willow Tree Childrens Centre.

### 2.0 Statement of Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Policy

2.1 The policy of The Willow Tree Childrens Centreis, in so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of all our employees and further to ensure that persons not in our employment, who may be affected by the work activities are not thereby exposed to risks to their safety and health.

2.2 In particular The Willow Tree Childrens Centrerecognise our express responsibilities under Section 8 of the Act will provide the necessary resources, structures and procedures required to safeguard our staff and visitors against the risks arising from activities in our workplace.

2.3 The Willow Tree Childrens Centreconsiders that it is the strict duty of all staff to conform to child care safety policies and practices and to carry out their responsibilities as detailed in this document and in accordance with any other relevant legislation. Staff members with specific responsibilities for safety, health and welfare must properly delegate these in their absence.

2.4 In addition to reviewing this Safety Statement, each employee is expected to make himself/herself familiar with all policies and procedures.

2.5 Staff and Carers who fail to cooperate with safety procedures may be subject to the normal disciplinary procedures.

2.6 The Willow Tree Childrens Centrewelcome feedback from staff or Carers regarding any aspect of this document or any other health and safety concerns.

Feedback in this regard should be directed to Laura MacKenna, Manager and/or Lisa Clifton, Deputy Manager

*Signed ……………………………… Date………………..*

Laura MacKenna, Manager

*Signed ……………………………… Date………………..*

Lisa Clifton, Deputy Manager

**3.0 Scope of Safety Statement**

# This safety statement deals in the main with the health and safety issues that fall within the remit of The Willow Tree Childrens Centre. Ourpreschool and operations are located at the following address:

*The Willow Tree Childrens Centre,*

*Ground Floor Unit,*

*96 Carraigbeag,*

*Clogher Faili,*

*Tralee,*

*Co. Kerry*

*V92Y510*

The scope of our operations includes a Sessional Pre-School, Full-time Day care and Afterschool Service.

**4.0 Health and Safety Management Structure and Responsibilities**

4.1 In accordance with the Framework Safety Statement, Laura MacKenna and Lisa Clifton, as part of theirmanagement function, is responsible for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practical, the health and safety of persons working, studying or visiting The Willow Tree Childrens Centre*.* In particular theyare responsible for the following:

1. To ensure that we have prepared a Safety Statement relevant to our operations which complies with Section 20 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act.
2. To ensure that the safety statement is reviewed at least annually.
3. To ensure that all hazards are identified and risks controlled.
4. To ensure that regular safety inspections/audits are carried out to monitor compliance with the Safety Statement and legal requirements and to ensure appropriate follow-up action is taken.
5. To investigate all accidents to staff /visitors in their area of responsibility and to complete the Injury/Incident Report forms as appropriate.
6. To ensure that the Evacuation and First Aid Procedures are implemented and that sufficient Fire Wardens/First Aid personnel are available.
7. To ensure that staff are appropriately trained to carry out their duties safely and to ensure the attendance of staff at designated training courses as appropriate.
8. To ensure that children are adequately supervised. (Adequate level of supervision to be determined having regard to the age, level of experience and status of the child).
9. Based on risk assessment, to arrange for the provision of adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment for employees.
10. To notify the management of any health and/or safety issues arising within their area of operation requiring action/input to resolve.
11. To ensure that all contractors carrying out work in their area operate under the Office Permit to Work system.

## 4.1 Employee Co-Operation

Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 imposes a number of obligations on employees while at work:

(1) An employee shall, while at work *a) Comply with the relevant statutory provisions, as appropriate, and takereasonable care to protect his or her safety, health and welfare and the safety,health and welfare of any other person who may be affected by the employee’sacts or omissions at work,*

1. *Ensure that (s)he is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that (s)he is in such a state as to endanger his or her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person,*
2. *If reasonably required by his or her employer, to submit to any appropriate, reasonable and proportionate tests for intoxicants by, or under the supervision of, a registered medical practitioner who is a competent person, as may be prescribed,*
3. *co-operate with his or her employer or any other person so far as is necessary to enable his or her employer or the other person to comply with the relevant statutory provision, as appropriate,*
4. *not engage in improper conduct or other behaviour that is likely to endanger his or her own safety, health and welfare at work or that of any other person,*
5. *attend such training and, as appropriate, undergo such assessment as may reasonably be required by his or her employer or as may be prescribed relating to safety, health and welfare at work or relating to the work carried out by the employee,*
6. *having regard to his or her training and the instructions given by his or her employer, make correct use of any article or substance provided for use by the employee at work or for the protection of his or her safety, health and welfare to work, including protective clothing or equipment,*
7. *report to his or her employer or to any other appropriate person, as soon as practicable.*
8. *any work being carried on, or likely to be carried on, in a manner which*

*may endanger the safety, health and welfare at work of the employee or that of any other person, ii.) any defect in the place of work, the system of work, any article or*

*substance which might endanger the safety, health or welfare at work of the employee or that of any other person, or iii.)any contravention of the relevant statutory provisions which may endanger the safety, health and welfare at work of the employee or that of any other person, of which (s)he is aware.*

(2) *An employee shall not, on entering into a contract of employment, misrepresent himself or herself to an employer with regard to the level of training as may be prescribed under subsection (1)(f)*

As well as these general duties, it is important that employees are aware of the health and safety duties assigned to them in this safety statement as part of their normal duties. These delegated duties are essential for the day to day implementation of safety measures, and employees are obliged to carry out these functions in accordance with Section 13(1)(d) of the Act, as above.

Section 14 of the Act applies to all persons and requires that:

*A person shall not intentionally, recklessly or without reasonable cause—* (a) *interfere with, misuse or damage anything provided under the relevant statutory provisions or otherwise for securing the safety, health and welfare of persons at work, Or*

(b) *place at risk the safety, health or welfare of persons in connection with work activities.*

In addition to the above legal requirements all staff of The Willow Tree Childrens Centre is required to immediately report to children’s parents and guardians

any accident resulting in loss or injury and any incident that could have resulted in loss or injury. The injured party is also required to co-operate in the investigation of the incident and the completion of the Injury/Incident Report Form.

## 5.0 Health & Safety Resources

5.1 Considerable resources are expended by The Willow Tree Childrens Centre in securing the health, safety and welfare of employees in terms of personnel, time, materials, equipment and the purchase of goods and services.

5.2 Where additional equipment, training etc is required (whether as a result of ongoing risk assessment or legislative change), resources will be allocated on a prioritised basis to meet the identified requirements.

## 6.0 Health and Safety Training

The provision of appropriate training and instruction is an important element in the management of safety and the implementation of this safety statement. Such training is also a legal requirement in controlling many of the risks identified in

The Willow Tree Childrens Centre. Training and instruction also serve to improve safety awareness and attitudes that are essential for effective safety management.

*In addition to our statutory duty to employees, The Willow Tree Childrens Centre also has a common law duty to all Carers, to provide such training as is necessary to enable the Carers to undertake their work in a manner which, in so far as it is reasonably practicable, is safe and does not give rise to risks to health or expose the individual or other persons to unacceptable levels of risk. The provision and extent of any necessary training is dependent upon the nature of the work being pursued, the experience and disposition of the Carer involved, their familiarity with any equipment/substances to be utilised, the environment/conditions where the activities may be discharged, and the extent to which supervision is necessary and available.*

**6.2** Staff are required to have completed Moving and Handling, Occupational First Aid and Food Safety Training, where necessary. Occupational First Aid refresher courses are undergone by all staff every two years. Management train new staff on fire, emergency, health and safety procedures upon induction and staff are updated on policies, procedures and ongoing risk assessments regularly at staff meetings. Other central training where risk assessment identifies specific needs, upcoming courses are advertised on an ongoing basis.

## 7.0 Fire and Emergency Management

**7.1 Evacuation Drills**

Evacuation Drills are organised by management on a monthly basis in cooperation with the staff. Feedback on performance in terms of time taken to evacuate and particular difficulties with alarm systems / building fabric are notified to all staff.

The Evacuation procedure is posted on the Noticeboard.

**7.3 Local measures**

All staff are required to familiarise themselves with the locations of

1. escape routes
2. fire alarm call points (red break glass units)
3. Fire extinguishers and fire blankets
4. Fire assembly points

## 7.4 First Aid and Injury/Illness Management

Fully stocked First Aid boxes are available inthe office and essential first aid materials in each room.

All members of staff are trained as Occupational First Aiders.

They are available to respond to First Aid incidents during normal opening hours.

**8.0 Care Environment**

## 8.1 Internal Environment

The internal environment in a childcare service should provide a balance between a child’s need to explore their world and a safe environment in which to do so. The Willow Tree Childrens Centre aim to provide an internal environment that is, as far as reasonable practicable, safe for the use of child care services. *In order to maintain a safe environment, regular inspections must be carried out. These safe checks are in addition to the risk assessments. In the internal environment these could include the following areas:*

* *Floors*
* *Walls*
* *Ceilings*
* *Doors*
* *Windows*
* *Electrical safety*
* *Fire safety*
* *Toys*
* *Use of Outdoor Area – supervision, restricted access*
* *Heating (maintained at 18 -20 degrees)*
* *Lighting*
* *Ventilation*
* *Water temperature (maintained below 43 degrees)*
* *First aid*
* *Furniture*
* *Fixtures and fittings – child sized, easily washable and non-toxic*

## 8.2 External Environment

Regulations 28 of the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations, 2006 requires that ‘children in part-time or full day care services should have access to the outdoors on a daily basis, weather permitting’.

* *Outdoor play areas should be checked each time they are used. The outdoor play area should be secure and safely fenced off to ensure that children cannot leave this area without adult supervision and that unauthorised access is prevented.*
* *Items like dangerous ponds, pits and all poisonous plants and berries should be eliminated from the area.*
* *Where there are sheds or stores in the outdoor play area, they should be secured to prevent unsupervised access by children.*
* *Children should be protected from extremes of weather. Children should always be protected from the sun with appropriate cover-up clothing and sunscreen.*

*Things to be checked in the external environment include:*

* *Discarded or broken glass bottles, cans, cigarette butts, etc*
* *Animal Faeces*
* *Biological Hazards e.g. used needles*
* *Damage to fencing/gate*
* *Exit gates unlocked*
* *Damage to fixed equipment*

*As with the internal environment, regular safety checks must be carried out.*

**9.0 Hygiene, Food Hygiene and Nutrition**

## 9.1 Hygiene

Hygiene is essential in maintaining a safe and healthy childcare services. Daily cleaning routines, proper hand washing procedures, promotion of oral health and policies to deal with infection and exclusion are crucial. The Willow Tree Childrens Centre have in place an Infection Control Policy which includes:

* A hand washing and good hygiene policy for both Staff and children
* A Cleaning schedule
* A sickness policy for staff and children
* Actions to be taken in the event of an outbreak
* Head lice

## 9.2 Food Hygiene and Nutrition

Provision of a healthy environment and adequate nutrition is essential to the well being of children and adults and to full participation in an active programme. The Willow Tree Childrens Centre aim to ensure that the child care service is operated in a hygienic way.

The Willow Tree Childrens Centre will provide the following minimum facilities:

* Adequate storage for food, utensils and cleaning agents.
* Refrigerated and freezer storage
* Sufficient and adequate food preparation surfaces
* Cooking facilities with extraction
* Hot holdings facilities
* Washing up facilities
* Separate hand washing facilities
* Refrigerated & freezer storage.

To ensure all foods are prepared and served appropriately,The Willow Tree Childrens Centre have implemented a detailed HACCP food management system, this focuses on the purchasing, storage and preparation of food in The Willow Tree Childrens Centre.

**10.0 Child Protection**

The Willow Tree Childrens Centre has a detailed child protection policy and procedures in place, thispolicy is to promote overall welfare and development of the child, contributing to the growth of his or her self-esteem and personal autonomy. The Willow Tree Childrens Centre aim to achieve this by creating an environment where trust, respect, equity and, in particular, a real willingness to listen to children is established and where a focus on what is in the interests of the child is the guiding principle.

All staff in The Willow Tree Childrens Centre are aware of the *Children first: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* and have completed Túsla’s ‘Always Children First’ training and intend to assist people in identifying and reporting child abuse/ neglect and to improve professional practice in all services where children are cared for.

## 11.0 Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment & Controlling Risks

11.1 A comprehensive review and assessment of hazards, risks and controls within the The Willow Tree Childrens Centre has been undertaken. This exercise has been carried out in accordance with the definitions and procedures noted below. Appendix 2 contains details of the current Risk Assessments & Control Measures in place in The Willow Tree Childrens Centre*.* All new and amended equipment, procedures and processes will be similarly assessed as they arise and the results similarly recorded. All staff are encouraged to review the hazards listed in Appendix 2 to identify any issues that are not currently assessed and to feedback to management.

## 11.2 Definitions

Hazard is *any substance, article, material or practice within a workplace which has the potential to cause harm to employees at work or visitors to that workplace.*

Hazards are categorised as Physical, Chemical, Biological, Organisational, Environmental or Human.

Risk *is the potential of the hazard to cause harm in the actual circumstances of use* Risk Assessment *is the evaluation of the likelihood that harm could arise from the hazard and the likely severity and extent of the harm.*

The outcome of qualitative risk assessment requires that the identified hazards be given a risk rating of ‘high’, ‘medium’, or ‘low’. Control measures are prioritized based on the risk rating and are commensurate with the level of risk.

## 11.3 Risk Control

In selecting controls the following hierarchy is adopted.

1. Elimination
2. Substitution
3. Enclosure
4. Guarding
5. Safe systems of work
6. Supervision
7. Training/Information
8. Personal protective equipment (ppe)

All final decisions on risk control must take into account the relevant legal requirements and industry codes of practice.

## 11.4 Unacceptable Risk

Where the risk cannot be reduced to acceptable levels and finance is not available to implement appropriate controls, it is the policy of The Willow Tree Childrens Centre to require that the activity cease or the area close.

## 13.0 Bullying and Harassment

The Willow Tree Childrens Centre’s Policy to Promote Respect and Protect Dignity outlines the procedures which should be followed by any member of the Child care Community who may experience sexual harassment, harassment or bullying.

## 14.0 Stress at Work

The Willow Tree Childrens Centre recognise that from time to time staff may experience work related stress. It is our aim to be proactive in the reduction / management of sources of stress. Staff who are subject to occupational stressors are encouraged to seek assistance from management.

## 15.0 Pregnant Employees

The Willow Tree Childrens Centre are committed to protecting the reproductive health of all employees and minimising risks to the unborn. In accordance with the Safety, Health & Welfare (Pregnant Employees) Regulations (Regulation 3) a pregnant employee of The Willow Tree Childrens Centre must notify her immediate supervisor of her condition ***‘as soon asis practicable after it occurs and, at the time of the notification, give to her employer or produce for her employer's inspection a medical or other appropriatecertificate confirming her condition***’.

Pregnant staffs are also encouraged to inform management of their condition such that appropriate risk assessment may be carried out.

**Appendix 1**

# Organisation for Safety

**Management Structure of The Willow Tree Childrens Centre**

Directors

Ciara O’Sullivan

Mary Wallace

Elaine Flynn

Sharina O’Sullivan

Committee Members

Rebecca Ryan Griffin - Chairperson

Jennifer Bailey – Secretary

Ciara O’Sullivan – Treasurer

Staff

Laura MacKenna – Manager / Inclusion Co-Ordinator

Lisa Clifton – Deputy Manager / Acorns Room Leader

Danielle Berry – Catkins Room Leader

Fiona Bailey – Early Years Assistant

Michelle Cotter – Early Years Assistant

Maeve O Halloran - Early Years Assistant

Ora Brookes - Early Years Assistant

Anna Matysek – Early Years Assistant

Monika Skowronska – Early Years Assistant

Laura O' Connor Smith – Access & Inclusion Model Support Assistant

**Appendix 2 Safety Checklist**

General Safety Schedule

The following will be carried out every day:

* Secureness of tables, shelves, mirrors, signage and edges of furniture
* Check that hazardous materials are out of reach of children
* Windows, Doors, Chairs, Toy boxes and toys
* Plugs, Hot water, Middle door locked
* No child is to be left outside unsupervised
* One staff member is responsible for ensuring children do not open the fire door
* Padlocks to be checked on gate every morning and when children access outdoors
* Doors to classroom are to be locked at all times

Kitchen Safety Schedule

The following tasks are to be carried out every day twice daily:

* Sinks and counters Disinfected

At the end of the day:

* Floor Swept and Disinfected
* Bin Bag Emptied and Replaced
* Check dates of snacks and add to shopping list if necessary
* Check stock of disinfectant wipes, latex gloves etc.
* Any bedding, stuffed animals, blankets or dress up clothes to be washed
* Wash kitchen towels and cloths from kitchen and rooms

Every Friday:

* Clean oven, microwave and fridge

**Appendix 4 Listing of particular Health & Safety Policies / Procedures in place in Centre / Unit**

1. Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy
2. Hygiene Policy
3. Supervision of Children
4. Safety and Fire Prevention and Evacuation
5. Sun Protection
6. Accident and Incidents
7. Recruitment
8. Induction and Training
9. Dignity and Respect at Work
10. Child Protection and Safeguarding
11. Illness prevention and Infectious Disease Control
12. Administration of Medication
13. Safe Sleep
14. Outdoor Play
15. Use of Internet, Photographic and Recording Devices
16. Anti-Bullying
17. Collection and Drop Off
18. Toileting and Nappy Changing
19. Data Protection
20. Risk Management