



CHILD PROTECTION

The Waterford Sustainable Living Initiative (hereafter 'SLi') accepts that it has a duty of care with regard to the young people and children with whom we work. In accordance with that belief, SLi has adopted the following guidelines for staff and volunteers based on the 2002 *Our Duty to Care* and the 2011 *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*. We require that all Centre staff, Management Committee and volunteers read and agree to the following policy:

- Our duty of care acknowledges that the welfare and well-being of young people and children is our first duty when working with young people.
- All SLi staff and volunteers must undergo Garda vetting procedures as carried out by the Garda Central Vetting Unit. References of all applicants will be duly checked with regard to child protection issues.
- SLi will appoint one member of staff to serve as the designated Children First person. The current designee is Jennifer Harris.
- If a member of staff or a volunteer suspects abuse, s/he will report it immediately to the Children First designee. If the staff member/volunteer feels that the child is in imminent danger, s/he will report it immediately to Garda.
- The Children First designee will follow reporting procedures as described in *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*.
- Teachers and group leaders must be present at all times during workshops given by SLi staff and volunteers. SLi staff and volunteers are at no time to be alone with the young people we serve.
- Young people and children are not allowed in staff or volunteer vehicles.
- There should be no physical contact between staff/volunteers and the children with whom we work.
- Dealing with discipline/behavioural issues should be deferred to the teacher/group leader.

This policy was approved by SLi's Management Committee, March 2019.