

## Branch Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template

**Craobh:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contae:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** This is a sample template provided as a guide only to Comhaltas units and Centres.

**1. Name of service being provided:**

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann – Branch : \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm (brief outline of what our service is, what we do and our commitment to safeguard children):**

Comhaltas is a voluntary based organisation : Its aims and objectives and are stated in its Bunreacht. The organisation is understood to be a key contributor to the informal music education sector, organising community based classes in traditional Irish music, song, dance, and other cultural activity and organising various public events and activities that promote cultural activity amongst children and adults.

**Principles of good practice for safeguarding.**

All Branches of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann will adhere to the following principals of Good Practice for working with children, youth and Adults at Risk;

Comhaltas strive to promote the general welfare, health and personal development of individuals and protect them from harm of all kinds.

Comhaltas recognise that children, young people and Adults at Risk have rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect.

Comhaltas shall raise awareness about what children, young people and Adults at Risk are entitled to be protected from.

Comhaltas will adopt and consistently apply a rigorous and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting volunteers.

Comhaltas shall plan an appropriate response procedure in relation to concerns, allegations, incidents and disclosures of alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.

Comhaltas shall establish links with parents/guardians and other relevant organisations.

Comhaltas shall stay abreast of emerging technologies and web based programmes to ensure that all members, especially those considered as children, young people and Adults at Risk

can enjoy all Comhaltas has to offer in a safe and secure environment.

Comhaltas shall ensure best practice with regards to photography and videography.

The Comhaltas Safeguarding policy should be reviewed every 3 years in advance of the Annual Congress of Comhaltas, i.e. on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of May.

### **Other safeguarding actions:**

Our branch will appointed two Designated Liaison Persons (DLP's) for matters in relation to Safeguarding Guidelines and Procedures in respect of Branch Involvement with Children/Young persons and Adults at Risk.

All Comhaltas personnel with regular access to children and/or Adults at Risk are required by the organisation to apply for the relevant Vetting for their region.

All such personnel are asked to submit their notice of confirmed Vetting, including their vetting number, to any unit of Comhaltas for which they operate any activity that involves regular access to children/ Adults at Risk.

In circumstances where the regular adult – e.g. volunteer teacher/tutor/ organiser/ activity leader is not available at short notice, the unit will endeavour to ensure that any replacement adult working with the children is in the company of a Comhaltas vetted adult.

Parents and guardians of children attending classes and activities are at all times notified of appropriate schedules, locations etc of activities.

Parents and guardians are informed of the local Comhaltas unit's policy and practices as relating to activities organised for children and pupils – e.g. if regular attendance at a class is necessary to ensure consideration for a branch activity.

Comhaltas officers/mentors are volunteers who need to use the most efficient means of communicating details of activities relevant to their pupils, young members and participants. Parents/guardians are asked to provide their mobile numbers/ email addresses in this regard. Comhaltas adults do not knowingly communicate with a pupil / minor using any means of digital or other communication including / social media.

Any photographs or audio/visual recordings of any minor taken by a Comhaltas officer/member, are taken in the presence of the parent/guardian and with the understood consent of the parent/guardian. It should be noted that recordings of artists, whatever age, are very much part of the intergenerational transmission of Irish traditional music.

As applies in any activity involving young persons, it is regarded as part of the parents'/guardians' duty to ensure that the child is accompanied safely to the appointed

location where the activity is taking place and given into to the temporary care of the designated adult.

In many Comhaltas settings children/minors participate in a number of classes/activities which do not run consecutively. Some units are in a position to provide a waiting area with designated supervisors. Supervision arrangements in such cases will be communicated to parents/guardians. The class register/attendance sheet is an important element of Child Protection Policy implementation.

Branch teachers and mentors are fully aware of their role and responsibilities in respect of appropriate supervision of children while in their care and the general supervision practices of the branch.

Parents/guardians are informed of the Branch Policy in terms of the use of mobile phones/digital recording devices. In addition parents/guardians should be aware that any use of social media by their child, including sharing of digital files, is not the responsibility of the Comhaltas unit.

From a Health & Safety and Safeguarding perspective, the unit has given careful consideration to the lay-out of the building(s) it uses, and the facilities within that are accessed by children and adults, during any planned Comhaltas.

Comhaltas activities are understood to be group activities. If a branch finds itself with a 1:1 adult-child tuition/activity situation, the door of the room must remain open and the adult must give prior notification that a 1 - 1 situation has arisen.

All Comhaltas units are requested to ensure that Safeguarding is an item of each meeting of the unit, to ensure continued awareness and to allow for continued updating and review. This inclusion of the topic on the minutes allows for local review on local provision.

### 3. Sample Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child, young person or vulnerable adult while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk Identified	Procedure to manage identified risk
1	Challenges/specific issues relating to the building(s)/ facilities used for Comhaltas classes / events to ensure adequate safety and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults	Use a Branch Class/Activity Memo for supervisors, teachers, mentors, & designated adults, which details supervision, appropriate access and exit, class register etc. and is communicated to adults/parents. Ensure that there are no hazards in the facilities being used and ensure that all fire escape routes are free of obstructions.
2	A 'substitute' teacher/mentor who needs to be engaged due to need but who does not have been vetted.	The Branch has a policy in relation to same – If such a teacher/mentor is considered to teach a class / co-ordinate a branch activity on a once-off basis, a vetted adult remains in the classroom area at all times.
3	Clarifying responsibility in terms of the care of branch junior members at Comhaltas and non Comhaltas public and participative events.	Ensuring that parents/guardians, relevant adult are aware of the remit of the branch/teachers/mentors in relation to the branch participation in public events and of parental/guardian duties in terms of accompanying their children and/or making provisions for the adequate care and supervision of their child/minor.
4	Inappropriate use of electronic devices including mobile phones/ smart phones/iPads by pupils during Comhaltas activities	Unit has a policy/guideline document in place in relation to the use of electronic devices during Comhaltas classes/activities. Parents/guardians are informed of this policy.
5	Use of images in Comhaltas publicity material	Branches of Comhaltas have a policy of requesting appropriate consent regarding the use of images of minors/Adults at Risk used in promotional- publicity material/communications.

#### 4. Procedures

Your Risk Assessment should be developed in line with the following policies and procedures:

- (1) The relevant Comhaltas Safeguarding Policy, Guidelines & Procedures for your region in respect of branch involvement with children/young persons and Adults at Risk
- (2) Appointment of two Branch DLP's
- (3) Obligatory Vetting for all Comhaltas personnel with regular access to children and Adults at Risk.
- (4) Carrying out a physical risk assessment based on the local provisions and setting.
- (5) Completing the Branch **Safeguarding Statement and Policy adoption** form which is considered and adopted by the branch committee.

Procedure for the reporting of safeguarding or welfare concerns to the relevant authorities is outlined in the Comhaltas Safeguarding Policy and during training seminars facilitated by Tomás Ó Maoldomhnaigh, Comhaltas National Child Protection Liaison and Dún Uladh.

Attendance at the training seminars presented by Tomás Ó Maoldomhnaigh, National Comhaltas Child Protection Liaison also provides ongoing guidance to Comhaltas units and personnel.

#### 5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our service is committed to the implementation of the Comhaltas Safeguarding Policy and the procedures that support our intention to keep children and vulnerable adults safe from harm while availing of our service.

This Branch Safeguarding Risk Assessment will be reviewed on \_\_\_\_\_, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Branch: \_\_\_\_\_  
CATHAOIRLEACH Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

For queries, please contact Branch DLP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## COMHALTAS Branch Safeguarding Statement Sample Template

**Section 2: Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm:** Describe the nature of your services and specify the principles that you will observe to keep children safe from harm while they are availing of your service.

**Section 5: Implementation:** At a minimum, reviews must be carried out by the Branch **every 24 months**. The Branch Committee is responsible for conducting these reviews.

**Designated Liaison Persons:** You should include the name and contact details of the Designated Liaison Persons, who are the first point of contact regarding your Branch Safeguarding Statement.