

## Child Safeguarding Statement

**Name of Service: Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM), 36-38, Westland Row, Dublin 2, D02 WY89. Tel: (01) 632 5300**

**Email: [info@riam.ie](mailto:info@riam.ie).**

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Governors of The Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out below.

1. RIAM is an educational institution providing music education to students from Junior level through to third-level.
  - (i) Junior RIAM caters for approximately 1500 music students under the age of 18 who take a mixture of classes in one-to-one lessons and in groups. These students are in RIAM for approximately two hours each week. The RIAM Senior Conservatoire teaches approximately 150 full-time music students, studying on foundation, Bachelor, Master and Doctorate Programmes accredited by Trinity College, the University of Dublin. In addition, approximately 30,000 exam candidates of all ages take RIAM exams in music and drama.
  - (ii) RIAM has 140 faculty and administrative staff on site in Westland Row, with 100 examiners around the country.
  - (iii) Music lessons are conducted at RIAM on Westland Row. In addition, RIAM students may participate in organised concerts off site in Ireland and abroad on occasions.
  - (iv) Music and Drama examinations are conducted in Westland Row and in 1700 centres in every county of Ireland.
  
2. The Board of Governors recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of RIAM life and must be reflected in all of RIAM's policies, procedures, practices and activities. Within these, RIAM will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:
  - (i) recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
  - (ii) fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
  - (iii) fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
  - (iv) adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
  - (v) develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
  - (vi) fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

RIAM will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability and sets out a commitment that all children will be equally protected from harm regardless of race, ability, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

3. In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Audit and Risk Committee has carried out a risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending RIAM or participating in RIAM activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and RIAM's procedures for managing those risks has also been completed and is attached at [Appendix 1](#).
4. The Board of Governors has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement.

The following procedures/measures are in place:

- (i) In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending RIAM, RIAM adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for staff which are published on the DES website.
  - (ii) In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, RIAM adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the DES and available on the DES website. The policy adopted by RIAM in relation to its compliance with these requirements is set out at [Appendix 2](#).
  - (iii) In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) RIAM:
    - has provided each member of staff with a copy of RIAM's Child Safeguarding Statement;
    - ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of RIAM's Child Safeguarding Statement;
    - encourages staff to avail of relevant training;
    - encourages members of the Senior Management Team and Audit and Risk Committee to avail of relevant training;
    - the HR office maintains records of all staff and committee member training.
  - (iv) In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all RIAM personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
5. In RIAM:
- (i) RIAM has a procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons and a procedure for appointing a relevant person.
  - (ii) The Director has appointed the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the Child Safeguarding Statement.

(iii) All registered teachers employed by RIAM are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

6. This Statement and the associated risk assessment has been published on RIAM's website and has been provided to all members of RIAM staff. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested. All relevant documents, this statement and details of procedures in place to mitigate risks are readily available upon request from the Secretariat office. This statement is also on prominent display in the reception area of the RIAM.

## Appendix 1

### Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirement of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

As defined in the Children First Act, 2015, "harm" means, in relation to a child

(a) assault, ill-treatment, or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development, or welfare, or

(b) sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances, or otherwise.

This definition is understood as the harm caused to children by physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. In the context of safeguarding, it may also relate to the bullying of children, child trafficking and or sexual exploitation, or the harm caused to children through the misuse of digital technology or on internet platforms.

<b>RIAM Activity</b>	<b>Risk Identified</b>	<b>Policies and/or Procedures in place to manage Risk</b>
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Risk of child being harmed by another child, risk of child being harmed by another adult, risk of harm not being recognised by school staff  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Child Safeguarding Statement circulated to staff, Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools 2017 made available, adherence to Garda Vetting Legislation, First Aid procedures, Health & Safety Statement, Code of Conduct Staff/Students; Dignity and Respect Policy incorporating Anti-Bullying procedure
Recreation breaks for students	Risk of child being harmed by another child, risk of child being harmed by another adult, risk of harm not being recognised by school staff  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Child Safeguarding Statement circulated to staff, Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools 2017 made available, adherence to Garda Vetting Legislation; First Aid procedures, Health & Safety Statement, Code of Conduct Staff/Students, Dignity and

		Respect Policy incorporating Anti-Bullying procedure
Teaching including one to one, classroom and coaching	Risk of child being harmed by school staff or another student  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Child Safeguarding Statement circulated, Glass viewing panels or CCTV in all doors/rooms, Teachers Regulations, Disciplinary procedures adhered to, Dignity and Respect Policy incorporating Anti-Bullying Procedure
RIAM Trips involving overnight stays and/or foreign travel	Risk of child being harmed by another child, or another adult  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Child Safeguarding Statement, Health & Safety Policy, Travel Risk Assessment completed for all foreign trips, reputable vendors only used, Dignity and Respect Policy incorporating Anti-Bullying Procedure
Use of toilet areas	Inappropriate behaviour, risk of child being harmed by another child or adult  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Supervision throughout the building by porter staff on duty, Dignity and Respect Policy (incorporating anti-bullying & harassment procedure), Health and Safety Statement in place.
Administration of First Aid	Risk of child being harmed by another adult or child	Health and Safety Statement and appropriate Emergency Procedures in place. First Aid Personnel trained. Accident log book available at reception.
ICT and Data Protection	Risk of harm due to member of staff accessing or circulating by text/social media inappropriate material, communicating with a student in an inappropriate manner, personal information being accessed  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Code of Conduct Staff/Students Policy in place, Dignity and Respect Policy incorporating anti-bullying and harassment procedure, ICT Data Protection Policy and Social Media Policy in place.
Prevention of and dealing with bullying among pupils or staff	Risk of harm to child by adult or another child  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Dignity and Respect Policy (incorporating anti-bullying & harassment procedure), in place, Complaints Procedure, Teachers Regulations and Student Regulations
Training of RIAM staff in child protection matters	Risk of child being harmed by another child, risk of child being harmed by another adult, risk of harm not being recognised by school staff	Child Safeguarding Statement circulated to staff, Codes of Conduct for teaching and non-teaching staff, RIAM encourages relevant training in these areas

Care of pupils with vulnerabilities and/or special needs	Risk of harm to child by an adult or another child  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Dignity and Respect Policy (incorporating anti-bullying & harassment procedure), Disability Support Policy and Procedure, Equality Policy, Teachers Regulations.
Use of external personnel and visitors to RIAM	Risk of harm to a child by an adult  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Child Safeguarding Statement made available and Garda Vetting Procedures adhered to, Health and Safety Statement applied, Dignity and Respect Policy (incorporating anti-bullying & harassment procedure)
Recruitment of RIAM Personnel	Risk of harm to a child by an adult	Child Safeguarding Statement given to all new staff along with RIAM Handbook containing all relevant policies Garda Vetting guidelines adhered to, appropriate training offered where necessary
Use of video or photography on RIAM premises	Harm to child or risk of bullying by adult or inappropriate circulation on line	ICT and Social Media Policy in Place, Dignity and Respect Policy (incorporating anti-bullying & harassment procedure),
RIAM Activities taking place off-site (e.g. concerts, local centre exams)	Risk of a child being harmed by another adult or child, risk of harm not being recognised  Risk of Bullying of a child by an adult or another child	Code of Conduct in place for Local Centre Examiners undertaking duties on behalf of the RIAM off site, Health and Safety Policy in place. Dignity and Respect Policy (incorporating anti-bullying & harassment procedure),

## **Appendix 2** **Garda Vetting Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

This policy exists in order to ensure that RIAM complies with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016, which makes it mandatory for people working with children or vulnerable adults to be vetted by the Garda Síochána National Vetting Bureau.

### **2. Scope**

The policy applies to anyone who is employed and/or engaged by or acts on behalf of RIAM who will have access to children or vulnerable adults in the course of their employment.

A child is defined as a person under 18 years of age. A vulnerable adult is defined as a person, other than a child, who is suffering from an intellectual disability or physical impairment or disability that restricts the person in their ability to guard themselves against harm by another person.

Any vetting disclosure received by RIAM will be available to the person concerned as soon as practicable and the information contained in the documentation will not be used for any other purpose other than assessing suitability of the person for the relevant work/activities for which they are being considered. All vetting disclosure documentation will be held securely by the relevant office in RIAM.

### 3. Procedure

Where a person is required to complete a vetting document they must contact the relevant office and request a copy of the form. Vetting documents can be obtained for completion by contacting Ruth Meehan, [ruthmeehan@riam.ie](mailto:ruthmeehan@riam.ie). Once the form has been completed it must be returned to RIAM for the attention of Ruth Meehan, with two forms of ID. Original forms only can be accepted, no photocopies. If you are unable to attend the office in person for a particular reason, please ensure your ID documentation is copied and certified as 'original seen' in your local Garda Station before posting to the office.

***Since the Covid 19 pandemic it became acceptable to send pdf copies of vetting forms and ID by email.***

RIAM currently engage with 3rd party organisation 'Create – National Development Agency for Collaborative Arts', to process vetting applications in accordance with data protection and vetting law. Where the vetting disclosure contains criminal record information or 'specified information' within the meaning of the Act, RIAM shall as soon as is practicable make available a copy of the vetting disclosure to the applicant. RIAM shall take such action or invoke such policies as it considers necessary in respect of the vetting disclosure. Where a vetting disclosure contains convictions or information that is inconsistent with that provided by the applicant, then it shall be considered by the Board of Governors and the necessary action taken.

### 4. Vetting of Existing Staff

RIAM is required to ask all staff members who are already engaged/employed to undergo vetting. Retrospective vetting will be carried out in accordance with this policy.

RIAM reserves the right to request any member of staff who has access during the course of their employment to children and/or vulnerable persons to undergo vetting at any time but no less than every five years or shorter periods as may be prescribed under the act. RIAM shall take such action and invoke such internal policies as deemed necessary in respect of any person's failure or refusal to engage in the vetting process or in respect of any vetting disclosures made.

### 5. Disclosure of Criminal Convictions

RIAM will consider any disclosures of previous convictions of criminal offences on a case by case basis.

### Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing 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 February 2026 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.**

For queries please contact Brendan Breslin (Head of Junior RIAM, Adult Division and Lifelong Learning), relevant person under the Children First Act 2015 [brendanbreslin@riam.ie](mailto:brendanbreslin@riam.ie) tel: (01) 632 5300.

### **Designated Liaison Person**

Begum Nebol Ozdamar Phone number: (01) 632 5300

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### **Deputy Designated Liaison Person**

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### Document Control

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Governors on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

Approved: 24th January 2019.

Revision 1 approved 24th January 2019.

Revision 3 approved by Trinity Academic Council 13th May 2020.

Revision 4 approved by Trinity Academic Council June 2021

Revision 5: 15th February 2024

Revision 6: 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Next review Academic Year 2026