



Child Safeguarding Statement

Prepared under section 11 of the Children First Act 2015
5 September 2026

The service

Little Chess Explorers provides educational chess sessions to children of primary school age, from Junior Infants to 6th Class, in Dublin.

Sessions take place on the premises of schools, after-school services and community centres, by arrangement with those settings. The service does not operate premises of its own and does not transport children.

The service is provided by one person, who plans and teaches every session. There are no other staff, no volunteers and no subcontractors. If that changes, this statement is reviewed before any additional person works with children.

Where sessions take place on another organisation's premises, that organisation's own child protection policy applies to the setting and this service works within it. This statement sits alongside it and does not replace it.

Our commitment

Little Chess Explorers is committed to safeguarding the children who attend its sessions, and to conducting the service so that, as far as practicable, a child availing of it is safe from harm. In carrying out the service we will:

- Recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount.
- Treat every child with respect, and listen to what they tell us.
- Run every session in a way that is open and observable.
- Report any concern about a child's safety or welfare to Tusla, in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and Children First: National Guidance (2017).
- Co-operate fully with the host setting, with Tusla and with An Garda Síochána.

RELEVANT PERSON

Odei Lerendegui is the Relevant Person appointed for the purposes of Part 2 of the Children First Act 2015, and is the first point of contact in respect of this statement.

littlechessexplorers@gmail.com · +353 83 878 5523

Written assessment of risk

Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 requires a written assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of the service. The risks below are the ones that genuinely arise in this service, each with the procedure in place to manage it.

1 One adult alone with a group

RISK Sessions are taught by one person, so a child could be with that person without another adult present.

PROCEDURE Sessions take place in a room agreed with the host setting, with the door open or clear visibility from outside, during the setting's normal staffed hours. A booking is not accepted if it would leave this service as the only adult on the premises. Where a setting requires a member of its own staff to be present, that arrangement is followed.

2 One-to-one contact

RISK A child may need individual help during a game, or be left waiting at the end of a session.

PROCEDURE Individual help is given within the room and in sight of the group, and a child is never taken to a separate room. Where a collection is late, the child waits in a public and visible part of the premises rather than in the session room, the parent or guardian is telephoned, and the host setting is told. A child is not taken anywhere out of sight while waiting.

3 Collection and handover

RISK A child could leave with the wrong person, or be unaccounted for between the session and collection.

PROCEDURE The host setting's own collection procedure applies, and it is agreed in writing before the first session. Where the setting returns children to its own staff, that is what happens. Where a setting instead makes the provider responsible for the child from collection to dismissal, a register is taken at the start and the end of every session, and a child is released only to an adult named in advance by that child's parent or guardian.

4 Toilet breaks and personal care

RISK Younger children may need the toilet during a session.

PROCEDURE A child who needs the toilet is passed to the host setting's staff, following that setting's procedure. Little Chess Explorers provides no personal or intimate care of any kind.

5 Physical contact

RISK Demonstrating a move, or responding to a child who is upset, could involve physical contact.

PROCEDURE Teaching is by demonstration on a board, not by guiding a child's hands. Physical contact is avoided. A distressed child is supported verbally and, if needed, brought to the host setting's staff.

Written assessment of risk *continued*

6 Behaviour between children

RISK Chess produces a winner and a loser every week. Losing badly, being mocked, or repeated defeat can cause real distress at this age.

PROCEDURE Losing is addressed openly as part of the programme rather than avoided, and scores are not published for younger groups. Any behaviour that could constitute bullying is stopped in the session and reported to the host setting the same day.

7 Photographs and images

RISK Images of children could be taken, stored or published without consent.

PROCEDURE Little Chess Explorers does not photograph or film children. No image of a child attending a session is taken, stored or published by this service. Where a host setting takes its own photographs, that is a matter for the setting under its own consent arrangements.

8 Online activity

RISK The programme can include friendly online matches against groups in other countries, which means an internet connection in the room.

PROCEDURE Any online event is arranged between the two adults responsible for each group, on a closed board, with no chat function enabled, no personal information exchanged and no child account created. The host setting is told in advance, its own acceptable-use policy applies, and no such event takes place without the setting's agreement.

9 Contact outside sessions

RISK Communication between the service and a child outside the session.

PROCEDURE All communication is with a parent, guardian or the host setting, by email or telephone. This service does not communicate with a child directly, does not use social media to contact children, and holds no child's phone number.

10 Records and personal data

RISK Registration involves holding a child's name and class and a parent's contact details.

PROCEDURE Only what is needed to run the club is recorded. Records are kept on a password-protected device, are not shared with any third party, and are deleted at the end of the programme unless the family continues. A parent may ask at any time what is held and have it deleted.

11 Transport

RISK None arises. The service does not transport children.

PROCEDURE Little Chess Explorers does not, in any circumstances, transport a child in a vehicle.

Procedures

The procedures required by section 11(3) of the Children First Act 2015, in the order the Act sets them out.

Managing the risks identified

SECTION 11(3)(A)

The procedures set out in the risk assessment above are followed in every session.

Where a host setting has a stricter procedure, the stricter one applies.

Where a person is the subject of an investigation

SECTION 11(3)(B)

The service is provided by one person. Should that person become the subject of any investigation, howsoever described, in respect of any act, omission or circumstance concerning a child availing of the service:

- all sessions are suspended immediately;
- every host setting affected is informed the same day;
- Tusla and, where appropriate, An Garda Síochána are notified;
- no session resumes until the matter is concluded and the host setting is satisfied.

Should any additional person work for the service in future, the same applies to them and they are removed from all contact with children for the duration.

Selection and recruitment

SECTION 11(3)(C)

The service employs nobody at present. Before any person works with children on behalf of Little Chess Explorers they must be Garda vetted through the relevant organisation, with the disclosure received before any contact with children; provide two references, one relating to work with children, both taken up directly; have their qualifications verified; have completed Tusla's Introduction to Children First; and have read this statement and the host setting's child protection policy.

Garda Vetting is arranged through each host setting or relevant organisation, as a vetting disclosure is granted to an organisation and does not transfer between organisations.

Information, instruction and training

SECTION 11(3)(D)

The provider has completed Introduction to Children First with Tusla and will repeat it, and any successor training, as required. Any person working for the service in future must complete it before their first session.

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) is the reference used to identify the occurrence of harm.

Procedures *continued*

Reporting to Tusla

SECTION 11(3)(E)

Any concern about the safety or welfare of a child that reaches the threshold set out in the Children First guidance is reported to Tusla without delay, using the Tusla Child Protection and Welfare Report Form.

Where a concern arises during a session on a host setting's premises, the setting's Designated Liaison Person is informed the same day. Informing the setting does not replace the obligation to report: a report is made to Tusla regardless.

In an emergency, where a child is in immediate danger and Tusla cannot be reached, An Garda Síochána is contacted without delay.

A concern may also be raised directly with the Relevant Person named in this statement, by any child, parent, guardian or member of the public.

List of mandated persons

SECTION 11(3)(F)

A list of persons within the service who are mandated persons within the meaning of Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 is maintained by the Relevant Person, and is reviewed whenever any person begins working for the service.

Reporting a concern to Tusla is not conditional on being a mandated person. This service reports concerns that reach the threshold whether or not a mandated person is involved.

Appointing a relevant person

SECTION 11(3)(G)

The Relevant Person is appointed by the provider and named in this statement. Where that changes, the statement is updated and reissued to every host setting.

Availability and review

This statement is:

- furnished to every person working for the service;
- provided to every host setting before the first session;
- provided on request to any parent or guardian of a child attending, to Tusla, or to any member of the public;
- published on the Little Chess Explorers website, the service having no premises of its own on which to display it.

It will be reviewed no later than **5 September 2028**, and earlier if the service changes, if any person begins working for it, or if an incident or concern indicates that a procedure needs to change.

Odei Lerendegui

Provider and Relevant Person, Little Chess Explorers
littlechessexplorers@gmail.com · +353 83 878 5523

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