



Team Members' Information Leaflet

This Information Leaflet is for children and young people (10-17 years) who are interested in joining our team, and their parents or guardians

1. About the Museum of Childhood Ireland (MoCI)

Children have lived and learnt, played and worked, been adored and abused in Ireland since prehistoric times and throughout our history. Yet the reality of their lives is usually ignored in the stories that have come down to us from that long history.

Children are not apprentice adults; they are equal human beings with their own experiences, feelings, and contributions. So the **Museum of Childhood Ireland** will put children and childhood where they should be – at the centre of life in Ireland.

While we search for a suitable building to become our physical hub, the Museum of Childhood Ireland currently exists as a virtual and pop-up museum. Find out more at: <https://museumofchildhood.ie/>

A NOTE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Your child should read this leaflet before they sign the consent form and make a commitment to join our Children's Advisory Team. It may seem a bit long, but it is important that children and young people understand all this information before they decide. Some may prefer to read it on their own, but ideally you should read and discuss it together, to make sure your child understands everything and is keen to get involved.

Also, your child cannot join our team without *your* informed consent as their parent or legal guardian. Therefore, it is also important for you to read this leaflet carefully and sign the parent's part of the consent form. If you want more information about the project, there are links and contact details at the end of this leaflet.

Many thanks, MoCI Children's Advisory Team facilitation group.

2. The role of the MoCI Children's Advisory Team

We have set up the **MoCI Children's Advisory Team** to make sure that the views, ideas and interests of children and young people have top priority in the development, programming and organisation of our museum.

The **Children's Advisory Team**:

- Upholds children's right to express views on all matters that affect them, and makes sure decision-makers take these views into account in policy and practice (*UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12*).
- Advises the Museum's Board of Management to make sure children's views, ideas and interests are heard and acted on in every area of the museum's development, which includes policy, programming, management, organisation and more.
- By listening to children, and taking their views on board in this way, we are ensuring a more targeted, effective, relevant and impactful museum service for all the children of Ireland.

The Children's Advisory Team has been meeting approximately monthly since November 2023. It currently consists of 15 children and young people aged from 10-17 who act as advisers to the museum's board of management.

See more at: <https://museumofchildhood.ie/childrens-advisory-team/>

3. Who can join the MoCI Children's Advisory Team?

We are looking for children and young people aged 10-17 (up to your 18th birthday) who are interested in being part of our team, who feel enthusiastic about getting involved, and who are able to commit to monthly on-line meetings, which are usually held on Wednesdays after school at 5.00 pm.

Apart from that:

- **You can be anywhere on the island of Ireland.** We aim to represent all parts of Ireland in our Children's Advisory Team (we occasionally hold face-to-face meetings, but we always cover travel and other expenses).
- **The team works in English,** so you need to speak and understand English fairly well. (If you want to join our team, but are not confident in English, contact us anyway and let's discuss how we can help. We don't want anyone to be excluded).
- **Parental consent:** All members will have to give informed consent, and also have the informed consent of a parent or guardian. This will normally be done by both you and your parent signing a consent form which we will send you (see section 12 below).
- **Internet connection:** As most of our activities will be on-line, you'll need to have internet access and a suitable device to connect (computer, tablet or smartphone). However, we don't want to see anyone excluded if they don't have their own device, so if this could be a problem for you, contact us anyway, and we will help to arrange the internet access you need.
- **Diversity:** To encourage diversity and challenge discrimination, we will do everything we can to tackle barriers that may get in the way of an interested child or young person being able to join the team.

4. What will it involve if you decide to join?

- The Children's Advisory Team meets once a month, on-line via Zoom. Meetings last no more than one hour.
- The team members decide themselves which day of the week and what time of day works best for them. Currently the team meets on Wednesdays after school at 5.00 pm.
- The facilitation team is made up of experienced professionals trained in children and young people's participation. There are never less than two responsible adult facilitators present. All members of the facilitation team are fully Garda-vetted.
- All aspects of the museum are up for discussion. So far the Children's Advisory Team has advised the museum's management on:
 - What makes a museum boring and what makes it fun and not-boring?
 - How we want our own team to work.
 - Our hopes for the future of MoCI.
 - Design and content of the MoCI website.
 - Ideas about activities for the museum in the short/medium term (when we still don't have our own building).
 - How we imagine MoCI in five years' time.
- As well as our on-line meetings, we aim to hold two face-to-face meetings per year. These are currently hosted at the *Office of the Children's Ombudsman* in Dublin (www.oco.ie), but we will move to our own museum site when it is ready. The museum covers travel, refreshments and out-of-pocket expenses of participation (though this is kept under review as it depends on the resources available).

5. Can you change your mind and leave the team?

Yes, you can. There will be no penalty and you do not even have to give a reason if you do not want to.

However, most members find it worthwhile and enjoyable, and choose to stay involved.

6. How will your ideas be used?

The ideas and suggestions put forward by the Children's Advisory Team go to the museum's managers who always consider the team's inputs and use them at every stage of planning and running the museum. This can work two ways:

- Sometimes the managers may have specific questions where they want to know what the young people think, and will listen to their answers.
- Sometimes the young people may have their own ideas or concerns they want to put to management and have the managers respond to them.

7. How will you find out about what happens?

Every time the team provides ideas and suggestions to the managers, the managers reply, in child-friendly language, saying how they plan to use the information, or maybe suggesting further discussion. Also, the Children's Advisory Team gets regular child-friendly progress reports, explaining how their ideas have been put into practice.

8. How will your privacy be protected?

Any information we have about you, like your name and contact details, will be kept confidential and not shared with anybody.

The Children's Advisory Team has its own section on the museum's web-site:

<https://museumofchildhood.ie/childrens-advisory-team/>

Current team members have decided to have photographs of the team at work included on these web pages, and informed consent has been obtained from all team members and parents/guardians to enable this. New members joining the team can decide if they want to join in this practice or opt out.

(Not also that if we were ever faced with a child protection issue, we would be legally required to pass the details to Tusla).

9. What are the benefits of joining the MoCI Children's Advisory Team?

Being a member of the MoCI Children's Advisory Team is not a paid job. It is a voluntary commitment. (Please note that the adult facilitators are not getting paid either, so this is a fair arrangement).

However, there are all kinds of benefits if you decide to join:

- You will have a good experience of working with others on an important project, and learn new skills, including teamwork, communication and online collaboration.
- You will meet new people and might make new friends – it is a good mixture of work and fun.
- You will learn about childhood in Ireland past and present, and about how to run a museum.
- You will know that you have made a real contribution to creating a museum of the future for all the children and families of Ireland.
- This would be an achievement you (and your family) could feel proud of.
- All this could boost your confidence for new projects in the future.
- We will give you a Certificate of Achievement, outlining what you have done. This could be useful for your CV when you leave school.
- When the physical museum opens to the public, you will get free access, and a discount for your family.

There should be no cost in participating in on-line sessions. When we hold face-to-face sessions, the museum covers refreshments and travel costs. We also do all we can to provide any additional support needed, so everyone participates equally.

10. What are the risks of joining the Children's Advisory Team?

So far, no risks have been identified for our team members, and it is hard to think of any serious risks in joining the team. Possible risks could be somebody finding out about your involvement and trying to harm you, or you being upset by something that is discussed, or a falling-out with another participant leading to unpleasantness, but we think these are extremely unlikely. In any case, the adults running the sessions are experienced and sensitive, and know how to support anyone who is having difficulties.

The work of the Children's Advisory Team is fully in compliance with MoCI's child safeguarding statement.¹

11. Contact details for further information

You can find out more about the Museum of Childhood Ireland on our website: www.museumofchildhood.ie

If you have any questions or concerns about joining the MoCI Children's Advisory Team, please contact the team coordinator Harry Shier via email: hshier@museumofchildhood.ie

If you would like to talk on the phone, ask your parent or guardian to contact us first by email to arrange this.

12. How to join the team

1. If you have read through this leaflet and are sure you want to join our team, ask a parent or guardian to email Harry Shier (hshier@museumofchildhood.ie), giving your name and age, and request a Children's Advisory Team sign-up consent form.
2. We will email you the form. There is one part for the child/young person to complete and sign (parent can help if needed), and one part for the parent or guardian to complete and sign.
3. Take a photo of (or scan) the signed forms and return them by email.
4. Once we have your signed forms, we will send more information to welcome you to the team, and invite you to the next meeting.

HS Updated June 2024

¹ <https://museumofchildhood.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/MCI-Child-Safeguarding-Statement-2.0.docx-1.pdf>