

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER AT FIGHTING WORDS



In association with:

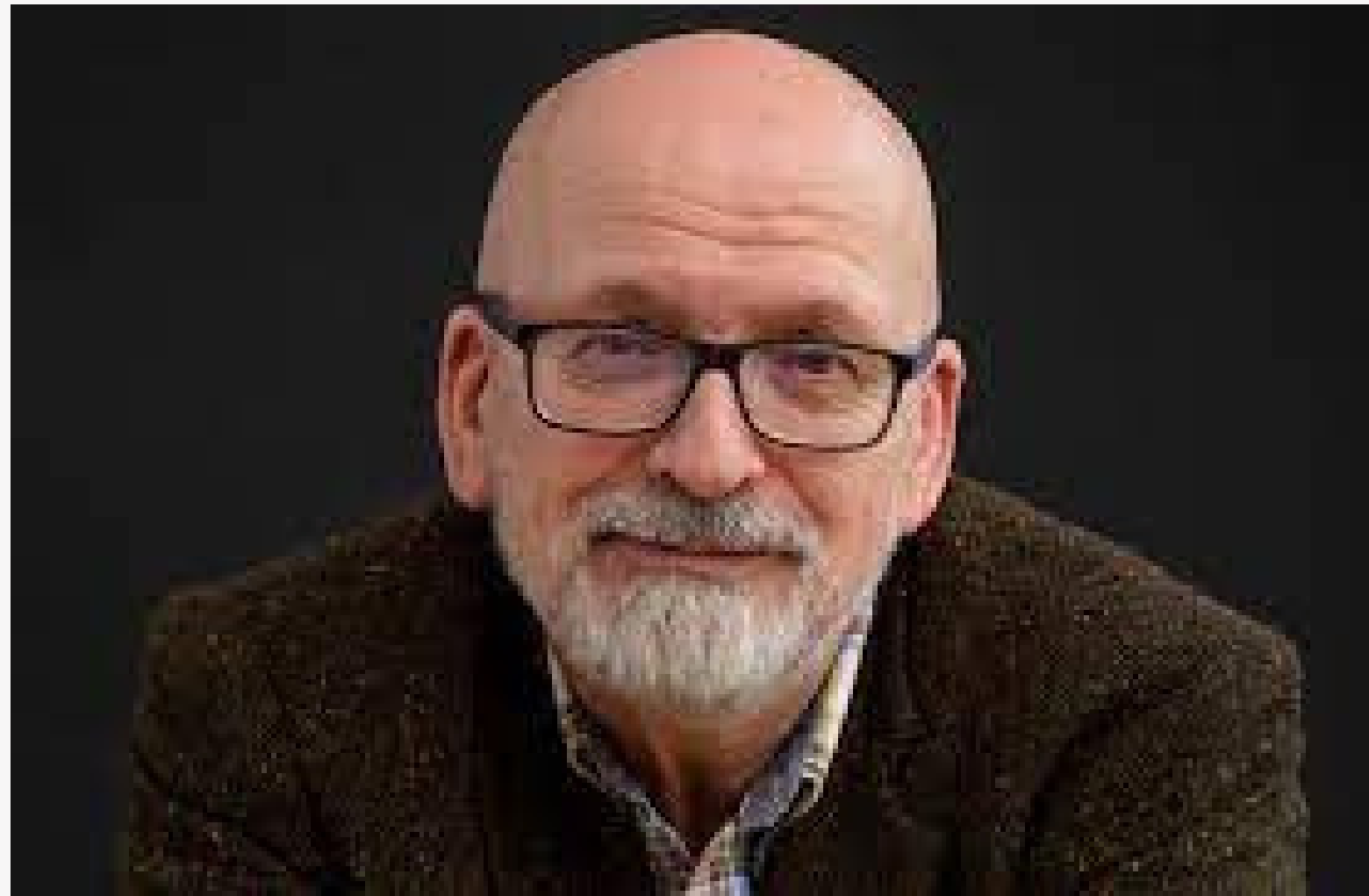


IRELAND'S **AUTISM** CHARITY

Introducing Fighting Words

Fighting Words is an organisation that provides free workshops in creative writing to children, young people and adults with additional needs. We help people to tell their stories in their own words and at their own pace.

Fighting Words was established in Dublin in 2009 and co-founded by the author Roddy Doyle. Roddy has written many books for children and adults.



Roddy Doyle

Introducing Fighting Words, continued

All Fighting Words workshops are run by teams of volunteer writing mentors. These people come from all kinds of backgrounds. Sometimes they are called “volunteers” or “mentors” for short. All volunteers are over 18 years, except for Transition Year students on placement.

All mentors help the workshop participants to tell their stories. Some mentors draw illustrations for the stories.



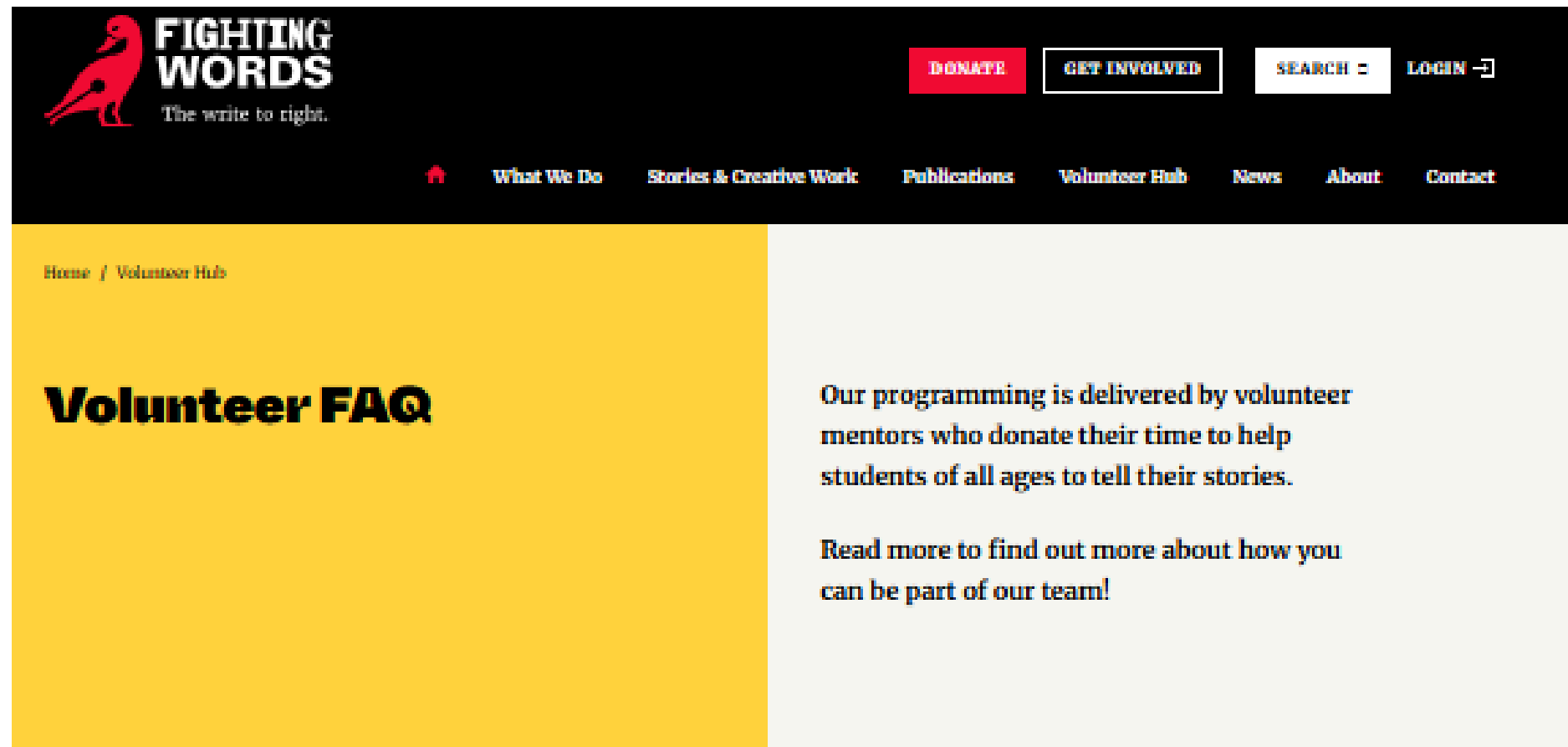
Volunteers preparing the workshop space in Cork



Volunteer illustrator in Donegal



Volunteer helping in Dublin



To find out more about volunteering, you can visit the Fighting Words website:
<https://www.fightingwords.ie/volunteer-hub/volunteer-faq>

There is more information available in the Volunteer Hub on the website.



Tell Me More Form

If you would like to find out more about volunteering, you can complete the “Tell Me More” form:

<https://www.fightingwords.ie/volunteer-hub/volunteer-faq>

(the form is located half way down this page of the website)

Volunteering at Fighting Words – Tell Me More!

Ag obair go deonach le Fighting Words – Inis Tuilleadh Dom!

Please complete the form below and a member of the Fighting Words team will contact you with all the information and the forms that you need to get started as a volunteer mentor at any of our locations.

Please note that volunteer recruitment runs from September to late May.

First and last name / Ainm agus sloinne *

Email / Seoladh ríomhphoist *

Tell Me More Form, continued

The Tell Me More form will ask you for your name, email address, telephone number and your preferred Fighting Words location.

It will also ask you to tell us a bit about yourself. You decide what to write here.

First and last name / Ainm agus sloinne *

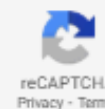
Email / Seoladh ríomhphoist *

Telephone / Uimhir ghutháin *

Why would you like to volunteer at Fighting Words (there are no wrong answers!) / Cén fáth gur mhaith leat obair dheonach a dhéanamh le Fighting Words? (Níl aon fhreagraí míchearta ann!)

Please indicate your preferred Fighting Words location. Registered Fighting Words volunteer tutors are eligible to help out at any of our locations around Ireland!* / Roghnaigh an láthair Fighting Words is fearr a d'fheilfeadh duit. Is féidir le hoibrithe deonacha atá cláraithe le Fighting Words cúnamh a thabhairt i gceann ar bith dár láithreacha ar fud na tíre! *

☐ I'm not a robot



SUBMIT

Response from Fighting Words Coordinator

The local coordinator in your Fighting Words location will receive the Tell Me More form. You will then receive an email from the local coordinator with further details and the application form. A sample email from Dublin looks like this:

Dear x,

Thanks so much for your interest in volunteering with us!

Our mentors and illustrators help out at our daily story-writing and creative writing workshops for primary and secondary school groups. If you enjoy spending time with children and are a good listener, then you are qualified to volunteer. No previous experience is necessary.

There is more information on the [Get Involved](#) section of our website as well.

During the school year, volunteering is completely flexible: volunteers sign up for workshops on the days and times that suit them using our online calendar – there's no minimum commitment.

We offer volunteer options both in online and in-person formats and both are high-quality, interactive, structured and fun for all participants.

The first step is to complete our [volunteer application form](#). Once I receive your form, I'll be in touch about next steps.

Please note that we also check references for all our volunteers and that all volunteers are subject to Garda vetting. Training is conducted monthly during the school year.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards,
Sara

Volunteer Application Form

You can complete the Volunteer Application Form by clicking on the link in the email.

The first part of the form looks like this. It is in English and in Irish.

You can complete it in either language.

Volunteer Application/**Foirm Iarratais do Dhaoine Deonacha**

Personal Details/Sonraí Pearsanta *

Name/Ainm *

Address/Seoladh *

Telephone/Guthán *

Email/Ríomhphost *

Emergency Contact (Name & telephone)/Teagmháil i gcás éigeandála (Ainm & guthán) *

(Note to overseas applicants: Please provide contact details of someone living locally)/(Nóta d'iarrathóirí thar lear: Tabhair sonraí teagmhála do dhuine éigin áitiúil)

Volunteer Application Form

In the Volunteer Application Form, you will be asked to provide the names, email addresses and telephone numbers of two references.

There is also information about Garda vetting.

Your references should be people who know you well but are not relatives. They can be teachers, employers, or friends.

References/Tagairtí

Please provide the names of two people who can provide a character reference for you. They can be employers, colleagues, teachers or friends who have known you for more than 12 months. Please do not list relatives.

Please note that we will ask referees to complete an online form. They will only be contacted by telephone or text message in the event of a lack of response – sometimes our emails go to spam!

Tabhair ainmneacha beirt mholtóirí dúinn le do thoil a d'fhéadfadh tagairt phearsanta a thabhairt duit. D'fhéadfadh siad a bheith ina bhfostóirí, ina gcomhghleacaithe, ina múinteoirí, nó ina gcairde a bhfuil aithne acu ort le breis 'is bliain. Ná luaigh baill teaghlaigh, más é do thoil é.

Coinnigh i gcuimhne go n-iarrfaimid ar na moltóirí foirm ar líne a líonadh. Déanfaimid teagmháil leo ar an bhfón nó trí théacs amháin má bhíonn moill ar a bhfreagra – uaireanta téann ár ríomhphoist i dturscar!

Reference / MOLTÓIR 1

Name/Ainm *

Reference / MOLTÓIR 2

Name/Ainm *

Organisation (if applicable)/
Eagraíocht (má bhaineann)

Organisation (if applicable)/
Eagraíocht (má bhaineann)

Email/ Ríomhphost *

Email / Ríomhphost *

Telephone / Guthán

Telephone / Guthán

Garda Vetting/Grinnfhiosrúchán na nGardaí

All Fighting Words volunteers are also legally required to be Garda vetted. We will provide you with the relevant forms.

Caithfidh gach duine deonach le Fighting Words grinnfhiosrúchán na nGardaí a chomhlíonadh de réir dlí. Cuirfidh muide na foirmeacha cuí ar fáil duit.

Fighting Words Locations

Once you complete and send the form, the local Fighting Words coordinator will contact you by telephone or email to talk to you about volunteering.

You may be invited to observe a workshop or for an informal chat.

The local coordinator will explain the workshop schedule, volunteer roles and Garda vetting. Some of the centres are pictured below.



Fighting Words, Behan Square, Russell Street, Dublin 1



Fighting Words Cork at Graffiti Theatre, Cork city



Fighting Words Chonamara – Ionad Cultúrtha an Phiarsaigh, Ros Muc, Co. Gaillimh

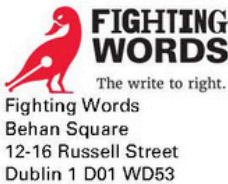
Garda Vetting

All volunteer mentors over the age of 16 are legally required to be Garda vetted, even if you have been vetted in the past by another organisation.

Your local coordinator will provide you with a form to complete, called Form NVB1 and advise how to complete it.

This is STEP ONE in the vetting process.

The form looks like this:



FIGHTING WORDS
The write to right.
Fighting Words
Behan Square
12-16 Russell Street
Dublin 1 D01 WD53



Form NVB 1

Your Ref:

Vetting Invitation

Section 1 – Personal Information

Under Sec 26(b) of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016, it is an offence to make a false statement for the purpose of obtaining a vetting disclosure.

Forename(s):

Middle Name(s):

Surname:

Date Of Birth:

/

/

Email Address:

Contact Number:

Role Being Vetted For:

VOLUNTEER WRITING MENTOR WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Current Address:

Line 1:

Line 2:

Line 3:

Line 4:

Line 5:

Eircode/Postcode:

Section 2 – Additional Information

Name Of Organisation:

I have provided documentation to validate my identity as required and I consent to the making of this application and to the disclosure of information by the National Vetting Bureau to the Liaison Person pursuant to Section 13(4)(e) National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016.

☐ Please tick box, to confirm I have read above declaration.

Applicant's Signature:

Date:

/

/

Garda Vetting, continued

You will be required to provide two forms of identification. One or both forms must have your photograph.

One form must provide proof of address. You will receive a list of current forms of identification that are suitable for vetting purposes.

The form looks like this:



GARDA VETTING ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION

In order to complete the vetting process, Fighting Words must validate the identity of all volunteers and staff. Each new volunteer or staff member must provide two forms of identity, one of which must confirm the volunteer/staff member’s current address.

Fighting Words will hold copies of these documents on file with the Garda Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1). These documents will be held securely in line with Fighting Words Data Protection Act obligations for as long as the vetting subject is an active volunteer/staff member.

IMPORTANT: Public Services Cards are NOT an acceptable form of identification.

Photo Identification
Irish driving licence or learner permit (credit card format)
Passport (from country of citizenship)
Irish certificate of naturalisation
National identity card (EU/EEA/Swiss nationals)
Proof of Address
Utility bill e.g. gas, electricity, television, broadband – NOT mobile phone bills (must be less than 6 months old. Printed online bills are acceptable)
Bank/Building Society/Credit Union statement
Correspondence - From a government department - From a local authority
Children under 18 years
Passport
If vetting subject does not have a passport, ONE of the following:
Birth certificate
Written statement by the Principal confirming attendance at educational institution on letterhead of that institution

Garda Vetting, continued

After you complete the form, the Garda Vetting Coordinator in Dublin will submit your details for vetting.

In about five (5) business days, you should receive an email from the National Vetting Bureau with a link to an online form. This is STEP TWO in the process.

You will be asked to provide some additional information within 30 days:

What do I need to do to complete my Vetting Application?

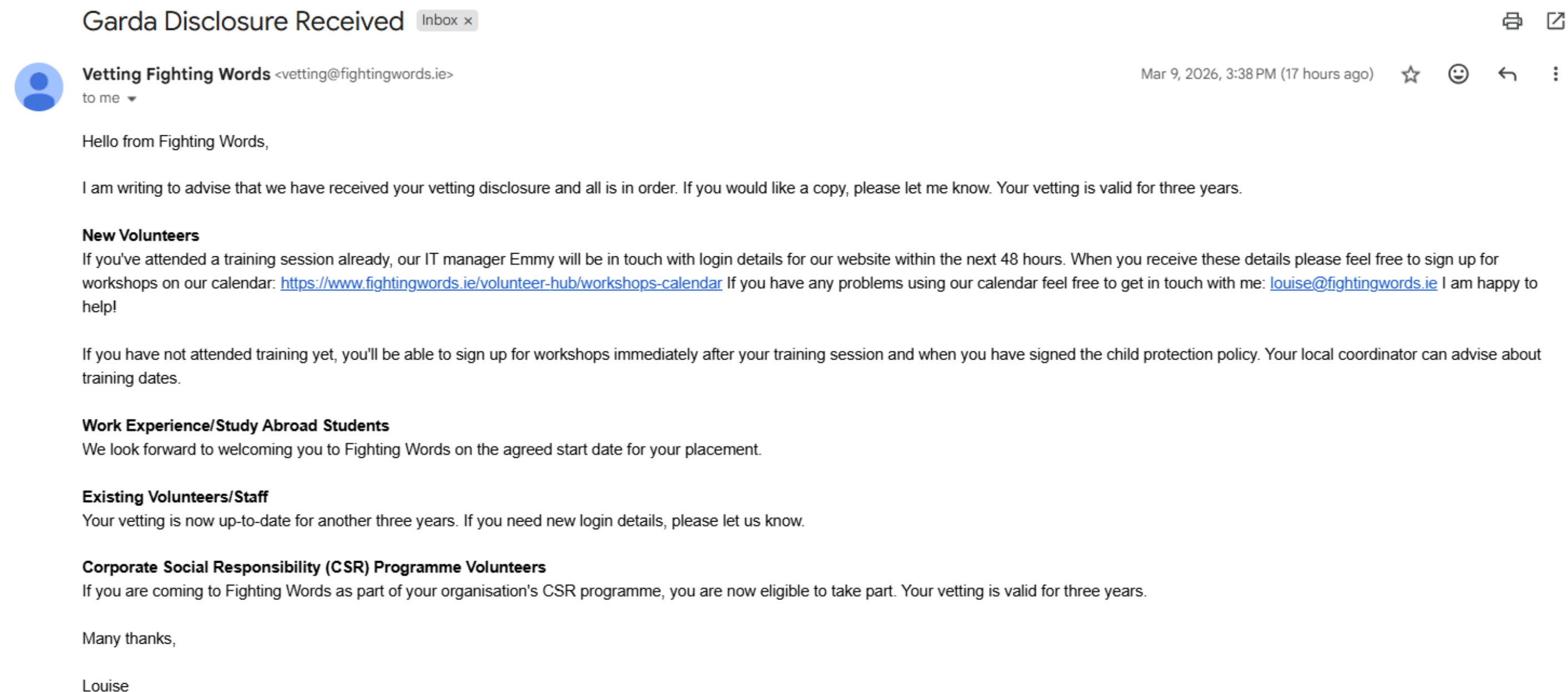


-   Passport Number
-   All Addresses from birth to present
-   Any Criminal Record in Ireland or elsewhere

Garda Vetting, continued

After you submit the online form, you will receive a tracking number by email.

The vetting disclosure will go to Fighting Words. You will receive an email from Fighting Words when vetting is complete. A sample email is below:



Training

The next step is training. Your local coordinator will contact you about attending a Fighting Words volunteer tutor training session.

Sessions last for two hours and can be online or in person. At training, you will learn about the primary and secondary school workshop formats.

You will also learn more about our volunteer programme and our child protection policy and procedures.



FIGHTING WORDS

Volunteer Mentor Training

Training, continued

You will be asked to sign both to indicate you understand the responsibilities and best practice for all Fighting Words volunteers.

You will have the opportunity to ask questions at any time.



Volunteering with Fighting Words

Policy for Volunteers and Interns



Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

**Policy and Procedures for
Staff and Volunteers**

Training, continued

You will also receive two other leaflets, which you can read in your own time:

- Tutoring Handbook, which has many useful tips for helping students.
- Role Descriptions at the Primary School Workshops.



Primary School Workshops - Mentor Roles During Story Writing Sessions

During our daily primary school sessions, mentors work in a team to deliver two-hour workshops in story writing to students ranging in age from first class to sixth class (ages seven to twelve years).

At Fighting Words, **everyone is a mentor and every mentor has a specific role.** The roles for each mentor during the workshop are described below.

PART 1 – GROUP WORK

Storyteller

This is the person who leads the workshop. They guide the students through their story, solicit ideas and characters and translate them to the typist. The storyteller should be inventive on their feet to process student suggestions in a way that fits them into the story. They should be able to guide the students in a good storytelling direction, be responsive to all student suggestions, but keep the students focussed on their story.

Sometimes this job is split between two people. For example, one person could lead from the welcome to the introduction of Editor McConkey. The other person can take over for the story writing.

List Maker – optional

If using a flipchart or whiteboard to keep track of ideas for the main character, best friend, greatest wish and greatest fear, the List Maker will write up the ideas on the flip chart to help the Storyteller.

Story Illustrator

The illustrator creates 2-3 drawings, i.e. the cover and 1-2 other illustrations, during the course of the session. The illustrator can add to

Thirteenth Edition



Handbook for Volunteer Mentors

Welcome! We're delighted that you've joined us at Fighting Words. No one is more qualified to mentor students than you are, even if the thought terrifies you.

There's no need to be nervous. Even if you have never done this before, you're about to become an instant expert. This handbook will walk you through the way we work, introduce our basic principles and offer some tips for tackling the issues that come up regularly. Afterwards, if you have any questions, we are happy to answer them. In the meantime, reading this handbook is all you need to start what we hope is a long Fighting Words mentoring career.

We hope that you will enjoy it. Our mentors are lovely, dedicated, handsome and helpful people but most of them are not here because they are selfless. They are also here because they enjoy it. We hope that you will, too.

So let's get started.

Head Office Contact Details

Behan Square, 12-16 Russell Street, Dublin 1 D01 WD53

Telephone: 01 894 4576

Email: info@fightingwords.ie

www.fightingwords.ie

Volunteer Calendar

Within five working days, you will be registered in the Fighting Words database. You will receive an email from Fighting Words with your username and password.

If your vetting is complete, you can sign up for workshops using the [online calendar](#).

February 2026

« Previous Next »

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Tue, 02/03/2026 - 10:00	4 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Wed, 02/04/2026 - 10:00 Write Club Wed, 02/04/2026 - 14:00 Word Warriors: Behan Square Wed, 02/04/2026 - 15:00	5 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Thu, 02/05/2026 - 10:00 Playwriting Workshop: MAIN SPACE Thu, 02/05/2026 - 13:00	6 Song Writing Workshop (1): MAIN SPACE Fri, 02/06/2026 - 10:00	7 Brendan Behan Plaque Unveiling & Celebration Sat, 02/07/2026 - 11:00	8
9 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Mon, 02/09/2026 - 10:00 Prose Workshop: MAIN SPACE Mon, 02/09/2026 - 13:00	10 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Tue, 02/10/2026 - 10:00	11 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Wed, 02/11/2026 - 10:00 Write Club Wed, 02/11/2026 - 14:00 Word Warriors: Behan Square Wed, 02/11/2026 - 15:00	12 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Thu, 02/12/2026 - 10:00	13	14 Write Club Sat, 02/14/2026 - 11:00	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Mon, 02/23/2026 - 10:00	24 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Tue, 02/24/2026 - 10:00	25 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Wed, 02/25/2026 - 10:00 Write Club Wed, 02/25/2026 - 14:00 Word Warriors: Behan Square Wed, 02/25/2026 - 15:00	26 Primary School Workshop: MAIN SPACE Thu, 02/26/2026 - 10:00 Playwriting Workshop: MAIN SPACE Thu, 02/26/2026 - 13:00	27	28 Write Club Sat, 02/28/2026 - 11:00	1



**PLEASE CONTACT
US IF YOU HAVE
ANY QUESTIONS!**

Email: info@fightingwords.ie



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