

## Governors of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium: Armagh Observatory Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures

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### 39.1 Introduction

The Armagh Observatory receives occasional visits from children and young persons, in some cases accompanied by parents or other adults as part of organized tours of the buildings and grounds or visiting as part of an educational programme, for example, work experience or some other student scheme. The Observatory wishes to ensure that as well as enjoying their visit they are safe and protected from harm. This policy describes the procedures in place at the Observatory in order to achieve this aim. **For the purposes of this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures the terms ‘child’ or ‘children’ include both young people under 18 years of age and vulnerable adults.**

This policy applies to all Armagh Observatory staff which for the purposes of this policy includes staff employed by the organization, students, volunteers, and visiting academic staff and students whose work at the Observatory is likely to involve working with children.

Appended is guidance on the legislative context and best practice for the protection of children: “Guidance on Safeguarding Children” issued by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure 2009 June 1 and standards of practice for the protection of children and young people “Getting it Right” issued by the Volunteer Development Agency August 2009.

### 39.2 Policy

The Armagh Observatory recognizes that the welfare of a child shall be the paramount consideration in any decision made about them and that all children without exception have the right to protection from abuse and bullying regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality or beliefs. In order to achieve this the Observatory will:

1. ensure that staff are aware of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures;
2. provide a code of behaviour for staff on their conduct towards children;
3. provide clear step-by-step guidance on what to do should an allegation of abuse be made and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Designated Officers and staff for recording and reporting any such allegation;
4. provide training on safeguarding children within 3 months of appointment and to all staff every two years;
5. ensure that safe recruitment, selection and vetting procedures are in place;
6. provide parents, group leaders and any other interested parties with information on the Armagh Observatory’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedures when visiting the premises and/or when undertaking guided tours of the Observatory Grounds and Astropark;
7. make the Armagh Observatory Redress and Complaints Policy and procedures (see Section 28, p.129) available on the web-site; and
8. review the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures every two years or more frequently as required to ensure that it remains effective and modify the provisions where necessary.

### 39.3 Definition of Abuse and Bullying

Abuse has been defined as:

1. physical abuse — deliberate physical injury to a child or neglected failure to prevent physical injury or suffering;
2. emotional abuse — persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development;
3. sexual abuse — forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities;
4. neglect — persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs likely to result in significant harm.

Bullying has been defined by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum as 'the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others'. According to the Volunteer Development Agency, bullying can take many forms including:

1. emotional — e.g. excluding, being unkind;
2. physical — e.g. hitting, kicking, theft;
3. racist — e.g. racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
4. sexual — e.g. unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
5. homophobic — e.g. focusing on the issue of sexuality;
6. verbal — e.g. name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
7. cyber — e.g. text messages, picture/video and phone calls, e-mail, web-sites.

### 39.4 Reporting Procedures

Suspected or alleged child abuse is a serious matter which should always be followed up with immediate action. The sooner action is taken, the more likely it is that the abuse will stop and the child will recover from his or her experiences.

An incident book containing the reporting procedures and forms, advice on how to deal with a report of abuse and relevant contact details for statutory services, police, health and helplines is kept in the Administration Office.

#### 39.4.1 Initial Actions

**Staff have a primary responsibility to report any suspected abuse to either of the two Designated Officers, the Director and the Administrator, namely Mark E. Bailey and Lawrence F. Young respectively.** Try to have the following important information recorded on the incident book form:

1. the name and address of any child you are concerned about;
2. the nature of any abuse;
3. the need for medical attention (if any);
4. the reason for suspicion of abuse;
5. what has already been done;
6. any practical information you may have, such as the name of the child's doctor or General Practitioner, school etc; and
7. information as to whether or not the person against whom a suspicion, complaint or allegation exists, has any children of his or her own.

### 39.4.2 Direct Disclosure

If a direct disclosure is made, staff should always

1. stay calm;
2. record what has been said in the incident book as soon as possible;
3. remain sensitive and calm;
4. reassure the child that they are safe, right to tell, are not to blame, and are being taken seriously;
5. let the child talk — this is not an interview — this will be carried out by specially trained persons;
6. listen and give the person time to say what they want;
7. ensure a positive experience;
8. explain that the disclosure must be reported to the Designated Officer but confidentiality will be maintained;
9. tell the child what will happen next in a supportive manner; and
10. involve and report to the Designated Officers as soon as possible.

Staff should never

1. question unless for clarification;
2. make promises you cannot keep;
3. rush into actions that may be inappropriate;
4. make/pass a judgement on the person disclosing or on the alleged abuser; and
5. take sole responsibility for action - you must leave this to the Designated Officers.

### 39.4.3 Designated Officers

The Designated Officers are the Director and the Administrator. Their main duties are to:

1. record a disclosure of abuse made by a child to a member of staff or the suspicions a member of staff has about a child being abused;
2. seek advice from and report incidents to the relevant statutory agencies and the Management Committee as appropriate;
3. record all actions taken;
4. ensure that all written records in relation to safeguarding children issues are securely and confidentially filed;
5. keep up to date with relevant legislation and best practice; and
6. coordinate training and awareness of staff in safeguarding issues.

### 39.4.4 Confidentiality

Staff must ensure that every effort is made to keep any information received confidential and to communicate information only on a need-to-know basis. Staff should:

1. not make promises to keep secrets to anyone passing on information, the general legal principle being that the welfare of the child is paramount and that considerations of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm;
2. pass any information to the Designated Officers, and leave it to them to take any further action;
3. not discuss the information reported with other members of staff who are not directly involved; and
4. not make direct contact with the family of a child whom the relevant statutory agencies have deemed to have been abused.

### 39.5 Code of Behaviour

It is impossible to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all circumstances in which staff interrelate with children or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur. In all circumstances, the professional judgement of staff has to be exercised.

From time to time it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their working styles, relationships with children and their manner and approach to individual children to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of their colleagues, children, parents or educational supervisors.

Where an allegation against a member of staff over his or her conduct has occurred, an investigation will be carried out in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Governors of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium (see Section 10, p.35). The organization's whistle-blowing policy is currently included in the Code of Conduct (see Section 10.3.1, p.36). If the investigation finds that the member of staff has acted inappropriately, or not acted in the best interests of the child, the disciplinary procedure (see Section 19, p.93) will be invoked.

In summary, all actions concerning children must uphold the best interest of the child as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards children in their charge must be above reproach. The Code of Behaviour and advice to staff in this Policy are not intended to detract from the enriching experiences that children gain from a positive interaction with staff, but rather to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and providing guidance on prudent conduct.

**Physical Contact with Children** Staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children. The child, parent or other casual observer may misconstrue such physical contact. It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch children only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this. The following general principles should be considered.

1. Physical contact or touch should always be in response to the child's need.
2. Touch should always be appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.
3. Staff should not physically restrain a child unless in exceptional circumstances, and in all such cases any physical constraint must be appropriate and reasonable, otherwise your action could be defined as assault. Examples where physical constraint is appropriate would include:
  - the prevention of physical injury to the child, other children, visitors or staff;
  - the prevention of damage to any property; and
  - the prevention or stopping of the commission of an offence.
4. Staff who administer first-aid to a child should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.
5. Staff should not engage in rough, physical games including horseplay with children, make sexually suggestive comments to or within earshot of a child, or do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or that their parent or group leader can do for them.

**Relationships and Attitudes** Staff should ensure that their relationships with children are appropriate to the age, maturity and gender of the children, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

**Time Alone with Children** Staff should seek to avoid the following situations:

1. Spending time alone with children unless he or she can be clearly seen by others.
2. Having children on their own in a vehicle unless in an emergency. In such circumstances you should ensure that another member of staff or other adult is aware of the circumstances and knows where you are going.
3. Going into a toilet with children unless another adult is present or gives permission.

**Work Experience and Other Educational Programmes** In certain circumstances children between 15 and 18 years of age attend the Observatory to engage in work experience and other educational programmes, and as a result some staff will be required to work on a one-to-one basis with the children. In the light of the fact that the welfare of the child must be paramount, staff should ensure that:

1. the child is given the appropriate level of supervision and does not undertake activities that are contrary to the Observatory Young Persons Health and Safety Risk Assessment;
2. parents and the child's school are aware of the activities being undertaken and have given their permission;
3. application forms are completed by the child and a copy of the Armagh Observatory Policy on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults is sent to the child's parents; and
4. wherever possible, the child works in an open area freely accessible and in the view of others.

Rooms in the Observatory House are reserved for adult students and visitors. Children and young people under the age of 18 are not allowed to stay in the Observatory House unless accompanied by a responsible person (i.e. a parent or guardian, or someone approved by the young person's parent or guardian), and then only if the arrangements have been approved by the Observatory Director. Staff should ensure that they are accompanied by another member of staff if any such student has to be visited in the Observatory House at any time.

### 39.6 Selection, Training and Supervision

**Selection** The Armagh Observatory has clearly defined recruitment and selection procedures for staff and students employed by the organization (see Section 4, p.11). The procedures contain the following main elements:

1. the role, duties, key skills and experience of any new staff member are clearly defined and set out in job information sheets supplied with application forms;
2. posts are advertised as widely as possible;
3. Application forms have to be completed by all applicants for posts. The application form is designed to allow applicants to provide all relevant details including personal information, education, work experience, suitability for the post and referees.
4. a selection committee, comprising of at least three members and selected from different community backgrounds and genders, wherever practicable, is appointed to short-list and interview candidates for posts. Short-listing and interview criteria are drawn up and candidates ranked accordingly;
5. reference forms have to be completed by referees for short-listed candidates. This is followed up orally if necessary;
6. forms of identification are obtained;
7. all new staff undergo the induction process, which includes initial training in Safeguarding and receiving a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures;
8. all successful candidates for 'regulated' posts will initially have to undergo an enhanced vetting check through AccessNI as a condition of their employment. These arrangements will be replaced during 2010 with the requirement to register with the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

Regulated posts for the purposes of this policy are the post of Director, Research Astronomer, Research Fellow, Outreach PDRA, Librarian and the staff responsible for administering the vetting arrangements, namely the Administrator and the Director's PA and Observatory Secretary.

**Training** The Armagh Observatory will provide a copy of this policy to all members of staff when they first join the organization and new staff will undergo training on Safeguarding issues during induction.

Training to enable effective implementation of the policy and to ensure awareness of the issues will be provided to staff every two years.

**Supervision** The Director is responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of and adhere to the provisions of this policy and that sufficient supervision is provided for children.

### 39.7 Lost and Found Children

This is primarily relevant to younger children and adults with a learning disability who may visit the Observatory or its grounds as part of an organized tour. Whether such a person is lost or found, a complete written record of the event must be made, including the actions taken, and submitted as soon as possible to the Designated Officers.

#### Lost

1. Obtain as full details as possible of the child's name, age, name of parent or person responsible for the child, name and address of school, contact telephone and physical description of the child.
2. On receipt of this information ask another member of staff to conduct a search of the premises and grounds. If necessary, contact the Planetarium staff to help with the search and announce over the Planetarium's public address system that a child or vulnerable adult appears to be missing.
3. Reassure the person who reported the missing child that action is being taken to locate the child.
4. Where the search does not locate the child inform the person who reported the matter and contact the local police at 084-5600-8000.

#### Found

1. Reassure the child.
2. If anyone else is with the child ask them to remain with you or ask another member of staff to stay with you. If this is not practicable ensure that you are in a public area where you can be seen or heard.
3. Obtain all relevant details of the child.
4. Ask another member of staff to conduct a search of the premises and grounds for the parents or other adult in charge. If necessary, contact the Planetarium staff to help with the search and announce over the Planetarium's public address system that a missing person has been found.
5. If you cannot contact the parents or person in charge, telephone the home or school or other contact address.
6. In the event that the parent or person in charge of the child cannot be contacted telephone the local police at 084-5600-8000.

### 39.8 Health and Safety

As part of the overall duty to protect children from all harm, staff must be fully aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency evacuation, outbreak of fire or an accident. These procedures are included in the Armagh Observatory Health and Safety Policy (see Section 36, p.189).

In addition, the following particular arrangements are in place to ensure the health and safety of young people working in the Observatory:

**Arrival** The supervisor will ensure that, on arrival, a copy of the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures is provided and the young person will meet with the Health and Safety Officer. As well as demonstrating the main health and safety procedures, the Health and Safety Officer will draw particular attention to the obligations of staff towards health and safety in the workplace.

**Supervision** The supervisor will ensure that the appropriate level of supervision is provided, taking into account the young person's lack of experience in the working environment. Wherever possible, young persons will be located in the communal area set aside at the lobby entrance. If in an office, the door will be left open and another member of staff will be aware of the arrangement.

**General** Children must only undertake activities that involve negligible risk of harm to the individual or where adequate safety supervision is in place to ensure that the child is not exposed to an unacceptable risk. In some cases the activity must not occur at all, for example any children in the Observatory are not permitted under any circumstances to operate power tools or to assist in electrical work requiring technical knowledge and experience.

## 39.9 Policy Dissemination

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be placed on the Observatory web-site. In the case of children visiting the Observatory as part of educational programmes, the policy will be sent to parents along with information on the nature of the work undertaken. In the case of visitors or volunteers to the Observatory, the host member of staff is required to exercise judgement in drawing the Safeguarding Policy to the attention of the visitor or volunteer. If in doubt whether this is necessary, the member of staff should seek advice in advance of the visit from either of the two Designated Officers.

A copy of the policy will be retained in the Administration Office for inspection if required.

### 39.9.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be reviewed every 2 years or more frequently as required to ensure that it remains effective. Feedback will be obtained from staff following training sessions and periodic e-mail requests to remind staff continually to reappraise their working styles and relationships with children. Actions taken in response to this feedback will be recorded.

## 39.10 Safeguarding: Some Useful Initial Contact Points

| Contact Points  | Telephone Number |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Armagh Observatory Designated Officers</b>   |                  |
| Professor Mark E. Baily, Director   | 028-3752-2928    |
| Mr Lawrence F. Young, Administrator   | 028-3752-2928    |
| <b>Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Teams</b>   |                  |
| Belfast HSC Trust Gateway Team  | 028-9050-7000    |
| Northern HSC Trust Gateway Team   | 030-0123-4333    |
| South-Eastern Trust Gateway Team  | 030-0100-0300    |
| Southern HSC Trust Gateway Team   | 080-0783-7745    |
| Western HSC Trust Gateway Team  | 028-7131-4090    |
| <b>Out of Hours Contact</b>   |                  |
| There will be a recorded message at each of the above numbers which will provide Emergency Out of Hours numbers |                  |
| <b>Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)</b>  |                  |
| Emergency   | 999              |
| Non-Emergency and General Enquiries   | 084-5600-8000    |

Table 39.1: Useful contacts and initial contact points for Safeguarding Issues.

## **GUIDANCE ON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

This guidance has been prepared by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. It is intended to inform DCAL sponsored Arms Length Bodies (ALB) and staff of their responsibilities under child protection legislation and point them to further sources of information and advice should they need it. The guidance outlines the principles of child protection and provides advice about what to do if child abuse or neglect is suspected. ALBs will want to develop supplementary and additional situational specific guidance using this document as a basis

For further information please contact:-

Director of Corporate Services  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure  
Causeway Exchange  
1 – 7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT1 7FB

Telephone: 028 90 515173

**Date Issued: 1 June 2009**

# Foreword

In Northern Ireland many thousands of children enjoy taking part in culture arts and leisure activities every week.

We are aware that parents appreciate how important such participation is for a child's health and personal development. These positive effects can only take place if the activities are in the right hands – in the hands of those who place the welfare of all young people first and adopt practices to support, protect and empower them. We want to ensure that all children have the best possible experience. That's why it's important that our activities take place in an environment where children are safe from the possibility of any form of ill-treatment.

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is committed to developing and implementing policies and procedures which ensure that everyone knows and accepts their responsibility in relation to their 'Duty of Care' for young people. We are committed to ensuring that there are correct and comprehensive reporting procedures that promote good practice and sound recruitment procedures for all individuals working within this sector.

We hope this guidance will help us to work with you, our partners, to establish and implement agreed, consistent, minimum safeguarding standards. We wish to maximise and extend our influence to those individuals or organisations that are funded or commissioned to provide any services for children and young people in the culture, arts and leisure sector to effectively address safeguarding requirements.

This guidance sets out a framework to fulfil DCAL's commitment to the Safeguarding and Protection of Children and Young People.

I hope that you find the guidance useful.

**Deborah Brown**  
**DCAL Champion for Children and Young People**

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## Section 1

### Statement of Intent

**The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people engaging in culture, arts and leisure activities. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. The aim of this guidance is to ensure that the Department and our sponsored bodies have robust systems in place to safeguard the welfare of children and young people and to ensure our staff are adequately supported.**

### Introduction

Every child and young person deserves to be happy and secure in their activities. Their carers or parents need to feel sure that the people in charge of these activities are trustworthy, responsible and will do everything they can to keep the child safe from harm.

Unfortunately, sometimes people who work or volunteer with such organisations may pose a risk to children, either through a deliberate wish to harm them, or from not being aware of best practice standards. It is therefore the duty of every organisation working in this sector to put in place safeguards to protect the children with whom they work.

In addition, ALBs (Arms length bodies) will want to consider how to avoid putting your workers/ volunteers in positions where abuse might be alleged, and to ensure that all workers know exactly what to do should abuse be suspected.

For all organisations working directly with children or funding those organisations to do so, it is essential to carefully consider safeguarding both children and the staff/volunteers. Such organisations should draw up a safeguarding policy and a set of procedures to ensure it is implemented in practice.

It is the responsibility of all such organisations to continually review and monitor your safeguarding policy and procedures, gaining further advice and information wherever possible. All workers/ volunteers/ members should be aware of the policy and procedures in order to understand their individual responsibilities and help promote best practice.

## **Aims and limitations of this document**

This document aims to work toward the safeguarding of children and young people who are involved in culture, arts and leisure activities. It has been compiled to support organisations and individuals by raising awareness of issues and developments. It is not a comprehensive manual to protecting children or young people. For further guidance organisations should access the Children’s NI Order 1995<sup>1</sup> and the policy for child protection contained in the Co-operating to Safeguard Children,<sup>2</sup> DHSSPS May 2003 and the Standards for Child Protection Services 2008.<sup>3</sup>

Although rarely operating as a provider of direct services to children and young people, some DCAL functions, and those of many of its partners, nevertheless involve contact with children and young people. DCAL, through its funding, commissioning or other relationships with partners, is in a unique position to positively influence other organisations to adopt policies and practices that safeguard children.

It is not appropriate or feasible for DCAL to produce a sample policy that only requires formal approval by our ALBs. The policy and procedures need to be understood, agreed and owned by each agency based on both this document and the principles contained in government guidance such as Co-operating to Safeguard Children, DHSSPS May 2003.

**It is the responsibility of DCAL’s ALBs and sponsored bodies to review and update their policies and procedures in light of developments in your own practice and in legislation relating to protection issues.**

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<sup>1</sup> The Children Order can be accessed at:  
[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1995/UKsi\\_19950755\\_en\\_1.htm#tcon](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1995/UKsi_19950755_en_1.htm#tcon)

<sup>2</sup> “Co-operating to Safeguard Children”, DHSSPS (2003), can be accessed at:  
[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/show\\_publications?txtid=14022](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/show_publications?txtid=14022)

<sup>3</sup> Standards for Child Protection Services can be accessed at:  
[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/standards\\_for\\_child\\_protection\\_services.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/standards_for_child_protection_services.pdf)

## Section 2

### Legislative and Strategic Context

#### Legal Context

A number of statutes set out the child protection framework and what responsibilities are on the state. These are supplemented by policies and procedures which government have produced to support the implementation of safeguarding procedures.

#### UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (UNCRC)

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was adopted in 1989 and ratified by the UK in 1991 and in the ROI in 1992. It contains over 40 articles that state some basic values about the treatment of children. Of particular significance are:

- Article 2 – relates to the equality of all children
- Article 3 – to the best interests principle
- Article 6 – the child's right to survival and development
- Article 12 – requires that children have a right to express their views and for those views to be respected
- Article 19 - right to protection

This underpins all the legislation in relation to children since then including the Children (NI) Order 1995.

This should translate into practice as:

- volunteers, children & parents knowing that your organisation is familiar with & promotes the rights of children;
- UNCRC principles form the basis of your policies and procedures;
- within your organisation children are:
  - listened to and heard
  - valued & respected
  - encouraged & praised
  - involved in decision making

## **Children (NI) Order 1995**

This law had wide ranging impact on private law – the relationship of children to their families, and public law – the relationship of children to the state in terms of services and child protection.

The order redefined previous parental rights over children as parental responsibility. The order has widened the scope of being able to acquire parental responsibility to other carers such as grandparents, aunts, or local social services. The order sets the legal context for the state to intervene to protect children from significant harm.

### **These are the 5 cornerstone principles of good practice under the Children (NI) Order:**

**Paramountcy** - The welfare of the child shall be the paramount consideration in any decision made.

**Parental Responsibility** - Parents have responsibilities towards their children rather than rights over them. A wider range of people can now have parental responsibility.

**Prevention** - Preventing children from being abused and supporting them to promote their health and welfare.

**Partnership** - The best way of meeting children's needs is to work with parents and carers, and for agencies to work together.

**Protection** - Duty to investigate where a child is at risk of significant harm because of a lack of care or actual abuse.

## **The Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967**

Section 5 of the Act outlines the responsibility of any citizen to report to the police an arrestable offence. This includes reporting of child abuse.

## **Co-Operating to Safeguard Children (2003)**

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety document, is intended to provide child protection guidelines and outline the roles and responsibilities of agencies that deal with children.

## **Sexual Offences Act 2003**

Part 2 of the Act applies to Northern Ireland and as amended sets out notification requirements for sex offenders. These are augmented by new public protection arrangements as set out in Secretary of State's guidance under article 50 of the Criminal Justice Order. Public Protection Arrangements (NI) were established on 1st October 2008 and put in place structures to deal with sex offenders and other violent offenders. These arrangements are also supplemented by guidance published by the DHSSPS under HSC Circular 3/96 (revised) Sharing to Safeguard.

## **The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 (POCVA)**

The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (POCVA) was commenced in April 2005. POCVA has strengthened substantially safeguards for children and vulnerable adults by preventing unsuitable people working with them in a paid or voluntary capacity. Organisations are required to refer individuals to DHSSPS who harm or have placed a child or vulnerable adult at risk of harm for consideration of inclusion on the DHSSPS disqualification lists. Listed individuals are disqualified from working with children and/or vulnerable adults. Disqualified individuals will commit an offence if they apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work, either paid or unpaid, in a childcare position or care position with vulnerable adults. Anyone who knowingly offers, employs, or procures work for a disqualified person in such caring positions or fails to remove them from such positions will also be committing an offence. Disqualified individuals have the right of appeal to the independent Care Tribunal.

### **(Appendix F contains guidance on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults)**

Within POCVA, the positions for those wishing to work with children which require vetting checks broadly refer to staff in a range of establishments such as children's homes, children's hospitals, schools, further education centres etc. This also includes, for example, sports clubs, faith organisations etc. that employ individuals to care for, train, advise, counsel, supervise or are in sole charge of children as well as the supervisors/managers of such individuals. Within POCVA, a vulnerable adult is defined as an adult to whom accommodation and nursing or personal care are provided in a residential care home/nursing home or where personal care is provided in the adult's own home. Those employing individuals to work with children and/or vulnerable adults are required to ascertain whether they are included in the DHSSPS disqualification lists. Requests to vet also included a PSNI criminal records check. POCVA complements each agency's own child protection measures and all agencies entrusted with the care of children need to have robust recruitment and staff selection procedures, which are

enhanced after appointment by appropriate training, supervision and appraisal processes. (Annex A).

## **Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2005)**

All voluntary and community sector organisations working with children and families must have clear Child Protection Policy and Procedures in place and staff should receive training in their use.

Any staff member, voluntary worker or committee member of a Voluntary Agency, church or Community Organisation who has concerns that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm should report concerns to statutory authorities.

## **Getting It Right (2005) (Under review 2009)**

This document builds on the guidance for Our Duty to Care and is intended to help organisations to meet recognised and agreed minimum standards for child protection and will guide organisations towards improving their practice where necessary. The standards are:

1. Recruitment
2. Effective Management of Staff and Volunteers
3. Reporting Concerns;
4. Code of Behaviour;
5. Sharing Information;
6. General Safety and Management of Activities;

## **Our Duty to Care 2007 - Guidance for Voluntary Organisations**

Child protection is everyone's business and the establishment of good practice continually minimises the potential for abuse and maximises the levels of safety for children in the community. The original 'Our Duty to Care', DHSSPS guidelines were produced in 1995. They have been well-received by a wide range of voluntary and community organisations and have assisted them in developing their own child protection policies, procedures and good practice.

This revised edition was in response to changes in legislation and to developments in good practice up to 2007. It provides information and more detailed guidelines to ensure that those

organisations working with children and young people continue to meet three very important objectives:

- Ensuring that children's safety is paramount;
- Creating the right atmosphere for rewarding and enjoyable experiences;
- Increasing the peace of mind for all concerned.

All children have a right to a safe, secure and nurturing environment.

Investment in children is investment in the future health of the community.

The 'Our Duty to Care' guidelines make a significant contribution to that investment.

## **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2008 - (SVG Order)**

A new vetting and barring scheme (VBS) will be established under the SVG Order and equivalent legislation in England and Wales (The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006). The aim of the VBS, which will commence in October 2009, is to reduce the risk of unsuitable individuals getting access to children (or vulnerable adults) either via employment or as a volunteer. (See appendix A for more details).

## **Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008**

The Sexual Offences Order which comes into effect in January 2009 creates a number of new offences and increased tariffs for those who harm children.

## **Strategic Context**

### **The 10 Year Strategy for Children and Young People**

OFMDFM's Children and Young People's Unit published the cross-departmental 10 year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 'Our Children and Young People – Our Pledge', in June 2006. The Children and Young People's Strategy aims to ensure that all children and young people are "fulfilling their potential" by 2016 and that "...all children and young people living in Northern Ireland will thrive and look forward with confidence to the future"

## **Children's Strategy Outcomes Framework**

The progress of the Children's Strategy will be measured over a 10 year period against six high level outcomes designed to indicate whether children are:

- **Healthy;**
- **Enjoying, learning and achieving;**
- **Living in safety and with stability;**
- **Experiencing economic & environmental well being;**
- **Contributing positively to community and society; and**
- **Living in a society which respects their rights.**

These outcomes, supported by a number of underpinning values, include the right to live in a peaceful environment, and the need to ensure mechanisms for involving children in decisions that affect their lives. They are themselves prefaced on the provisions in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC) to which the UK is a signatory.

DCAL is committed to fulfil its responsibilities in working towards a culture which respects and progresses the rights of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

## **Implementation**

Implementation mechanisms will be developed by the Executive to ensure the impacts of the Strategy and its aims and goals are being fulfilled. DCAL has identified its Champion for Children and Young People as the senior person responsible within the department for progressing the department's contribution to the 10 year strategy.

## **Section 3**

### **Promoting Good Practice**

#### **Introduction**

All ALBs need to have in place a Safeguarding policy that includes a policy statement and procedures and that staff and volunteers receive training in their use. This policy statement is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children and young people involved with culture, arts and leisure activities from harm.

The essential inclusions for a safeguarding policy are outlined below:

- the welfare of the child is paramount;
- all children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality or beliefs;
- the policy is approved and endorsed by the senior management team and the Board;
- there is clear guidance on who the policy applies to (i.e. all members, trustees, staff and volunteers);
- children and parents are informed of the policy and procedures as appropriate;
- all concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by management, staff and volunteers and responded to appropriately - this may require a referral to Children's Services and in emergencies, the Police;
- a commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting;
- principles, legislation and guidance that underpin the policy;
- arrangements for policy and procedures to be reviewed;
- all associated policies and procedures which promote safeguarding.

#### **A Code of Behaviour**

Every ALB and organisation in receipt of public funds who work with children should have a written Code of Behaviour, outlining:

- The values and principles of the organisation;
- What practice should be avoided and what is unacceptable when working with children or young people;
- What action they take to prevent bullying and how to deal with it should it occur; and

- How they as an organisation actively promote the participation of young people with a disability.

Your organisation will also need to consider and formulate guidelines relating to specific areas you are involved in such as creative arts, drama and sports activities, day trips and residential.

A Code of Behaviour will give staff/volunteers the confidence to carry out their roles and develop positive working relationships with children and young people. It is an essential framework for staff/ volunteer interactions with children with regard to support and supervision, training needs and disciplinary actions.

## Section 4

### Safeguarding Reporting Procedures

Reporting procedures can provide clear step-by-step guidance on what to do in different circumstances and they clarify roles and responsibilities. ALBs need to introduce systems for recording information and dealing with complaints as part of their implementation process and compliance.

The reporting procedures ALB's develop should include:

- A named person (and deputy) with a clearly defined role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, appropriate to the level at which s/he operates;
- Clarification on what child abuse is, and the procedures for how to respond to it where there are concerns about a child or concerns about the actions of a staff member or volunteer representing the organisation;
- Relevant contact details for statutory services, police, health and NSPCC helplines should be available;
- A process for recording incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely in compliance with data protection legislation;
- Guidance on confidentiality and information sharing, legislation compliant, and which clearly states that the protection of the vulnerable individual is the most important consideration;
- The consequences of breaching the code of behaviour which are clear and linked to disciplinary and grievance procedures;
- An open and well published complaints procedure in which adults and children can voice concerns about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour;
- A process for dealing with allegations against a staff member or volunteer;
- How to respond to historical cases;
- A process to ensure that where there have been reports of abuse the Children's Champion is also advised for monitoring purposes and accountability purposes.

It should be decided on who within your organisation, will deal with allegations, suspicions of abuse or poor practice and ensure they get proper safeguarding training. Everyone should be clear about who this person is. They should be the first person staff, volunteers, or members of the public approach with concerns. This person will appropriately record an allegation or reported incident. They will be responsible for contacting the statutory agency such as the Local Health and Social Care Trust or the PSNI if necessary. This person will also be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are implemented.

It is important that each sponsored body's safeguarding policy and procedures are tailored to the type of contact that the organisation has with children and it also needs to take into account any particular vulnerabilities of the children with whom the body has contact; for example children with a disability who are at increased risk of abuse; babies and toddlers who are vulnerable due to their age and dependence on adults.

## **Responding to Disclosure of Abuse**

Direct disclosures to staff or volunteers are not common but when they do occur it is important that the recipient of the disclosure responds appropriately. They should;

### **Always**

- Record what has been said immediately or as soon as possible;
- Remain sensitive and calm;
- Reassure child that they
  - are safe
  - were right to tell
  - are not to blame
  - are being taken seriously;
- Let the child talk - it is very important that you don't interview the child or ask intrusive questions. That is a matter for the specially trained police and social services staff;
- Listen & hear, give the person time to say what they want;
- Ensure a positive experience;
- Explain that you must report, but will maintain confidentiality;
- Tell child what will happen next, in a supportive manner;
- Involve and formally report to appropriate individuals immediately;
- Stay calm; and
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling and that it will be dealt with appropriately.

### **Never**

- Question unless for clarification;
- Make promises you cannot keep;
- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate;
- Make/pass a judgment on the person disclosing or on the alleged abuser; and

- Take sole responsibility, consult the designated officer so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

## **Section 5**

### **Recruitment, Employment and Deployment of Staff and Volunteers**

#### **Safe Recruitment Procedures.**

ALBs will need to ensure good recruitment procedures within organisations they support by advising them to:

- Provide job descriptions for posts giving details of the role to be undertaken, and the experience, qualifications and other requirements of the post;
- Ensure that any person applying for a post working with children or vulnerable adults completes an application form;
- Obtain 2 references in writing;
- From April 2008, obtain an Access NI check on all new recruits working or volunteering in regulated positions/care positions. From October 2009 new recruits will be required to register with a new Independent Safeguarding Authority under new vetting and barring arrangements being put in place across England, Wales and Northern Ireland (see appendix A for more details).
- Obtaining forms of identification;
- Set a probationary period (usually 6 months);
- Interview the individual either formally or informally by two Executive Committee members for the purpose of assessing the individual's experience of working with children and knowledge of safeguarding issues, their commitment to promoting good practice and their ability to communicate with others;
- Verify qualifications, experience and any gaps in employment;
- Ensure all appointments are made by the Executive Committee and not by any individual member/s of the organisation; and
- Ensure all new recruits go through an induction process as soon as possible so that they are familiar with the clubs policies and procedures and the responsibilities of the post.

**For further information on Safe recruitment process and vetting checks see appendix A**

## **Section 6**

### **Effective management of staff/volunteers**

#### **Induction**

- Ensure all new recruits are familiar with and sign up to the Organisation's Constitution and Rules and any of its guidelines, codes of conduct, regulations and policies and in particular the policies on Child Protection and Safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure all new recruits have either recently undertaken adequate training in safeguarding or now do so as soon as possible and no later than six months after taking up their post.

#### **Support**

- Support and supervision will enable staff/volunteers to become more effective by identifying child protection/safeguarding training needs and dealing quickly with difficulties.
- Create systems to ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children are monitored and supervised and that they have opportunities to learn about and be upgraded on safeguarding issues in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.

## Section 7

### Implementation and Monitoring Procedures

#### Funding Arrangements

Each organisation working with under 18s which receive funding from a DCAL sponsored body is expected to develop a Safeguarding Policy. Organisations that already have a policy in place will be asked to review and update their Safeguarding Policy as part of the additional information they send in support of their application. Organisations that do not have a Safeguarding Policy will be expected to develop one within an agreed timescale and no awards should be made until this happens.

Organisations receiving funding will be required to put in place policies and procedures which seek to ensure that inappropriate persons do not gain access to children, that staff are trained and supported in ensuring an individual's safety and that good practice is established and monitored. These procedures should include reviewing the organisations'/individual's experience, training and qualifications in relation to the specific project for which they are being employed. **Enhanced Disclosure checks should be carried out on all individuals working in 'regulated activity' as defined by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) with children or vulnerable adults in projects funded by DCAL and its ALBs. Enhanced disclosure checks can be obtained from AccessNI. A simple confirmation that safeguarding procedures are in place is insufficient. For further details on the new vetting and barring arrangements that will be put in place from October 2009, see Annex A.**

**DCAL require organisations funded by ALBs to ensure that they have robust and effective policies and procedures in place which safeguard children. ALBs must embed the establishment of such policies and procedures within the terms and conditions of any distribution of public funds.**

A DCAL sponsored body will have the right to review a funded organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures at any time upon request. It is the responsibility of organisations to review and update their policies and procedures in light of developments in their own practice and in legislation relating to protection issues.

## **Governance, Monitoring and Reporting**

The process of checking, known as 'monitoring', is an important aspect of ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures work effectively. The monitoring information will help you decide whether you can improve or revise your policies so that your organisation remains as safe an organisation as possible.

DCAL will ensure the safeguarding agenda is afforded the priority it deserves by developing a clear accountability structure within DCAL and its ALBs. Safeguarding will be an agenda item at ALB Accountability meetings and will include the completion of an audit checklist (Appendix B) on an annual basis that will assess the organisation's performance against generic standards. Evidence may be requested to support the audit checklist.

Safeguarding will form part of the Departments risk management process and Head of Branches will confirm the appropriate checks have taken place through completion of the Statement of Internal Control (SIC).

DCAL may call upon the services of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) to evaluate the safeguarding arrangements within our sponsored bodies.

## **Implementation**

Safeguarding children is not just a matter of checking potential recruits off against the disqualification lists or criminal records. In addition to pre-employment vetting checks, it is important to promote and facilitate **good practice** in the area of safeguarding by reviewing all aspects of the organisation's policies and procedures including service delivery and health and safety.

Making organisations funded or supported by DCAL and its ALBs aware of the safeguarding arrangements will be essential to the success of this initiative. In order to raise awareness about safeguarding DCAL intends to:

- Develop a promotion strategy for safeguarding children involved in DCAL sponsored activities;
- Hold information sessions to facilitate ALBs understanding of their responsibilities; and
- Finalise safeguarding documentation and make information relating to safeguarding, including the self diagnosis checklist, available through DCAL website.

# Appendices

## Appendix A - Guidance on vetting systems

### AccessNI

#### Background

The Pre-Employment Consultancy Service (PECS) had been operated by the DHSSPS since 1982 to assist agencies in screening out unsuitable people when recruiting to positions with substantial access to children and to adults with learning disabilities. The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 (POCVA) enhanced these arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable members of society. From April 2005 the system for vetting those who work with children was known as the Protection of Children (NI) Service (POC (NI)). From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 the system for providing organisations with criminal history information about anyone seeking paid or unpaid work in certain defined areas has been administered by AccessNI.

AccessNI was established by a joint programme between the Northern Ireland Office, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Education and the Police Service of Northern Ireland. It provides a disclosure service and an individual checking a number of sources of information and lists. These include UK criminal record information and current disqualifications lists in NI and GB.

AccessNI should be used to complement each agency's own safeguarding measures and all agencies entrusted with the care or training of children need to have robust recruitment and staff/volunteer selection procedures, which are enhanced after appointment by appropriate training, supervision and appraisal processes.

AccessNI should only be used as part of an overall recruitment policy. It provides organisations registered with them with a central means of checking the suitability of an individual seeking work with children. The use of AccessNI by organisations has a deterrent effect but should **never** be relied upon to screen out all abusers. It is not a foolproof guarantee of suitability. AccessNI provides a means for accessing any information which might have a bearing on an individual's suitability.

#### Levels Of Disclosure From AccessNI

There will be **3** different levels of disclosure. Individuals will be able to access a Basic Disclosure. Standard and enhanced disclosures can only be accessed by registered employers.

### 1. **BASIC DISCLOSURE**

An individual may apply for their own criminal record certificate which will disclose any unspent convictions recorded on police systems.

### 2. **STANDARD DISCLOSURES**

An employer seeking to employ a person in the occupations listed in the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978, is eligible for a **standard** disclosure which contains details of both spent and unspent convictions.

### 3. **ENHANCED DISCLOSURE**

All **regulated positions** under the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 will be subject to an **enhanced disclosure**. An enhanced disclosure provides the full criminal history and any relevant non-conviction information. *(N.B. All positions of those working or managing those working with children or vulnerable adults should be required to undertake an Enhanced check)*

## **What Is Actually Checked**

AccessNI searches the following databases for every application.

- The Criminal Record Viewer – which contains the NI criminal record, and
- The Police National Computer – which contains the GB criminal record. In respect of a basic check the “spent” element of the criminal record is removed. For Standard and Enhanced checks, the full record is disclosed

For Standard and Enhanced Disclosures, the following sources will also be searched if E4 and E5 on the Disclosure Certificate Application Form are ticked, meaning the position applied for involves working with children or vulnerable adults:

- Disqualification from Working with Children (DWC (NI) List)
- Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adults (DWVA (NI))
- List 99 held by DCSF
- DoH PoCA and PoVA lists
- Unsuitable Persons List held by DE
- Relevant Scottish Lists

For Enhanced Disclosures only, AccessNI will ask relevant Police Forces throughout the UK for any additional non-conviction material, including cases pending, which the Police consider relevant for Disclosure.

## **Cost**

There is a charge for every AccessNI disclosure, but **qualifying volunteers will be given disclosures free of charge**. Access Northern Ireland will provide free disclosure services to

non statutory volunteers. For the purposes of AccessNI's services, and subject to the exclusions set out below, they have defined a volunteer as follows: Anyone who gives their time in a position in a non-profit organisation, free of charge, doing something for the good of the community or a voluntary group (for which they may get travelling and other out-of-pocket expenses) and which is not for their own benefit or for the benefit of a close relative.

**Exclusions to this policy i.e. volunteers who must be paid for:**

- (i) where the person is volunteering directly for a Statutory organisation; or
- (ii) where the person is volunteering for a non-profit organisation in a position which delivers statutory services under contract or in a specific project, for which that organisation has received funding from the government which includes provision covering the costs of disclosures for volunteers.

For further clarification or assistance please contact AccessNI on 028 90259100, or visit their web site at [www.accessni.gov.uk](http://www.accessni.gov.uk)

## **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007**

### **Background to Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups**

Following the murders of Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells by Ian Huntley (a school caretaker) in 2002, the Bichard Inquiry was commissioned to examine the reasons why this happened and the lessons to be learned. One of the key issues this Inquiry looked at was the way in which organisations recruit and select people to work with children and vulnerable adults. The inquiry asked whether the way organisations check the background of applicants is reliable enough and also whether organisations should be responsible for deciding whether a job applicant can be safely employed.

One of the Inquiry's recommendations was the need for a single agency to determine if individuals who want to work or volunteer with children, young people and vulnerable adults are suitable to do so. As a result, the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#) was introduced to establish an Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The ISA was created to fulfil this role across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and is central to a new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS). Scotland is developing a parallel scheme, which will work closely with the VBS. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 mirrors those provisions of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which do not extend to NI.

### **How Will the Vetting and Barring Scheme Work?**

Every person who wants to work or volunteer with children, young people or vulnerable adults must be registered with the ISA. In Northern Ireland, applications for ISA registration will be processed by AccessNI.

An individual, who is registered with the ISA will be continually monitored and may be subsequently placed on a barred list by the ISA if he in engages in relevant conduct subsequent to registration. Individuals convicted of specified offences can also be automatically barred from work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

The ISA will hold a list of all those who are barred from working with children and young people and a separate list of those barred from working with vulnerable adults. These are called the Barred Lists and will replace the existing Disqualification from Working with Children (DWC) List, the Unsuitable Persons List (UP List) and the Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adults (DWVA) List, as well as the current system of Disqualification Orders established under POCVA.

Individuals on existing barred lists [as described above] will be considered for transfer to the new barred lists through a process of migration undertaken by the ISA. If ISA registration is withdrawn as a result of barring, any employer/organisation that has registered an interest in the individual will be informed immediately. Organisations will also able to carry out free on-line checks of ISA registration on those they are intending to employ/involve in volunteering.

### **Cost**

The cost for registering with the ISA Scheme will be £58 per person (this includes the cost of enhanced disclosure). Non statutory **volunteers can register for free.**

The fee will cover the following administrative and operational costs:

- the application and registration processes;
- the online checking system; and
- continuous monitoring and updating of individuals' status.

### **Implications for organisations funded by DCAL**

From 26 July 2010 (VBS go live date), when someone new is recruited to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, the individual must be registered with the ISA. The organisation must check that the person is registered with the ISA before allowing them to commence employment. This will determine whether or not the organisation can allow them to take up a regulated activity, and may affect what activities they can undertake.

**Over the next five years all of the existing children and vulnerable workforce will be required to register with the ISA. Details of how this phasing will work has yet to be decided.**

Instructing, teaching or coaching children, young people or vulnerable adults on a frequent or intensive basis will be viewed as a “**Regulated Activity**”. Only an ISA-registered person can undertake **regulated** activity – it is illegal to employ (paid or in a volunteer capacity) an unregistered person and this can result in a fine of up to £5000. It is also illegal to employ a barred individual, which can result in either a fine, imprisonment or both.

**For more information visit:** [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/svg.htm/](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/svg.htm/)

## **What is a ‘regulated activity’?**

- Any activity of a specified nature that involves contact with children or vulnerable adults frequently, intensively and/or overnight. (Such activities include teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment and transportation.)
- Any activity allowing contact with children or vulnerable adults that is in a specified place frequently or intensively. (Such places include schools and care homes.)
- Fostering and childcare.
- Any activity that involves people in certain defined positions of responsibility. (Such positions include school governor, director of social services and trustee of certain charities.) ‘Regulated activity’ is when the activity is frequent (once a month or more) or ‘intensive’ (takes place on three or more days in a 30-day period).

## **How does ‘regulated activity’ work?**

- Anyone providing a regulated activity must be registered with the ISA.
- It will be a criminal offence, punishable by up to five years in prison, for a barred individual to take part in a regulated activity for any length of time.
- It will be a criminal offence for an employer to take on an individual in regulated activity if they fail to check that person’s status.

- It will be a criminal offence for an employer to allow a barred individual, or an individual who is not yet registered with the ISA, to work for any length of time in any regulated activity.

### **What does this mean for domestic employees, e.g. private tutors and care workers?**

- It will be an offence for a barred individual to take part in any regulated activity in domestic circumstances.
- Domestic employers do not have to check an individual they wish to employ – such as a home tutor, nanny or carer – but the new scheme will give them the opportunity to check the status of an individual (with his/her consent) if they wish to do so.

### **What is a 'controlled activity'?**

- Frequent or intensive support work in general health settings, the NHS and further education. (Such work includes cleaners, caretakers, shop workers, catering staff, car park attendants and receptionists.)
- Individuals working for specified organisations (e.g. a local authority) who have frequent access to sensitive records about children and vulnerable adults.
- Support work in adult social care settings. (Such jobs include day centre cleaners and those with access to social care records.)

'Controlled activity' is when this type of activity is 'frequent' (once a month or more) or 'intensive' (takes place on three or more days in a 30-day period).

### **How does 'controlled activity' work?**

- It will be a criminal offence for an employer to take on an individual in a controlled activity if they fail to check that individual's status.
- An employer can permit a barred individual to work in a controlled activity **only if sufficient safeguards are put in place.**

**Appendix B**  
**Safeguarding Checklist**  
**NDPB**

| <b>Question</b>   | <b>Types of evidence</b>   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Comments</b> |
|---|--|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| <b>Does your organisation have a safeguarding statement agreed by senior management.</b>                                    | Copy of statement<br>Statement promoted to stakeholders<br>Promoted on web site  |            |           |                 |
| <b>Does your organisation have written procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers?</b>                | Written job description<br>Written application form to include request for references and self declaration.<br>Record of interview<br>Follow-up on written references  |            |           |                 |
| <b>Are all staff and volunteer appointments subject to safeguarding checks and these are properly recorded?</b>             | Access NI reference check recorded<br>Written list of roles that are "regulated" within the organisation<br>Proof of ID request  |            |           |                 |
| <b>Does your organisation provide Safeguarding training for Designated Officer, staff and volunteers?</b>                   | Written list of information provided to staff on induction.<br>Copy of letters/memos/certificate outlining safeguarding training provided to staff.<br>Data-base of those trained<br>Learning outcomes from safeguarding training. |            |           |                 |
| <b>Does your organisation regularly re-evaluate and update your safeguarding training and education?</b>                    | Copy of letters/memos/certificate outlining Safeguarding training provided to staff.   |            |           |                 |
| <b>Does your organisation have written procedures for reporting child protection concerns, disclosures and allegations?</b> | Written procedures for reporting concerns to Designated Officer and statutory services<br>Pro formas/written guidance  |            |           |                 |
| <b>Are the procedures for reporting concerns communicated to staff and volunteers?</b>                                      | Confirmation from staff (especially recently recruited) that they have received safeguarding training and written reporting procedures   |            |           |                 |

|  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Does your organisation have an open complaints process that includes guidelines on a disciplinary process?</b>                      | Copy of complaints, disciplinary and appeals process.<br>Evidence of how this is communicated to stakeholders<br>Whistle blowing policy   |  |  |  |
| <b>Does your organisation have written procedures for Designated Officers?</b>   | Written documents stating the name and up to date contact details of Designated Officers.   |  |  |  |
| <b>Are the contact details of Designated Officers communicated to staff/volunteers?</b>  | Written evidence to support that staff, members and volunteers are aware of who to contact and how.<br>Confirmation from staff/volunteers |  |  |  |
| <b>Do you have a written Code of Behaviour?</b>  | Written Code of Behaviour<br>Evidence this is communicated to all stakeholders  |  |  |  |
| <b>Do you have a written Safeguarding policy, endorsed and approved by Management Board?</b>   | Written Policy Statement  |  |  |  |
| <b>Do you communicate your Safeguarding policy statement to staff/volunteers/children/young people/ vulnerable adults and parents?</b> | Confirmation from staff/ volunteers/ children/ vulnerable adults and parents that they received a copy or know where to access the policy |  |  |  |

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Useful Contacts

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>ACE (Advisory Centre for Education)</b><br>Advice on bullying  | <a href="http://www.ace-ed.org.uk">www.ace-ed.org.uk</a><br><b>Helpline</b> 0808 800 5793  |
| <b>Anti-bullying Alliance</b>   | <a href="http://www.antibullyingalliance.org">www.antibullyingalliance.org</a>   |
| <b>Behaviour Management</b>   | <a href="http://www.parenting-ed.org">www.parenting-ed.org</a>   |
| <b>Bullying</b><br>Good advice for children on bullying is outlined here - how to recognise it, and what to do if you are the victim or know of someone who is. For those unwilling to tell anybody, help is available on the site via email.                 | <a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>   |
| <b>Child Exploitation Online Protection</b>   | <a href="http://www.ceop.gov.uk">www.ceop.gov.uk</a>   |
| <b>Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)</b><br>Newsletter email "subscribe" to cpsu@nspcc.org.uk   | <a href="mailto:pstephenson@nspcc.org.uk">pstephenson@nspcc.org.uk</a><br><a href="http://www.thecpsu.org.uk">www.thecpsu.org.uk</a><br>028 90351135                               |
| <b>Childline Northern Ireland</b><br>Got a problem? Childline has helped hundreds of thousands of children in trouble or danger. If you feel you can't face ringing them, check out their website. There are fact sheets on many subjects including bullying. | <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a><br><b>Helpline</b> 0800 11 11<br><br>1st Floor, Queens House , 14 Queen Street, Belfast BT1 6ED. Tel: 0870 336 2945 |
| <b>Children's Law Centre</b>  | <a href="http://www.childrenslawacentre.org">www.childrenslawacentre.org</a><br>Philips House, York St, Belfast, BT15 1AB<br><b>CHALKY Helpline</b> 0808 808 5678                  |
| <b>Counselling for young people</b>   | <a href="http://www.contactyouth.org">www.contactyouth.org</a>   |
| <b>Department Of Culture Arts and Leisure</b>   | <a href="http://www.dcalni.gov.uk">www.dcalni.gov.uk</a>   |
| <b>Domestic Violence</b>  | <a href="http://www.womensaid.org.uk">www.womensaid.org.uk</a>   |
| <b>Drugs and alcohol</b>  | <a href="http://www.contactyouth.org">www.contactyouth.org</a>   |
| <b>Health</b>   | <a href="http://www.kidsallergies.co.uk">www.kidsallergies.co.uk</a>   |
| <b>Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Teams</b><br>Belfast HSC Trust Gateway Team<br>Northern HSC Trust Gateway Team<br>South-Eastern HSC Trust Gateway Team<br>Southern HSC Trust Gateway Team<br>Western HSC Trust Gateway Team                           | 028 90507000<br>0300 1234333<br>0300 1000300<br>08007837745<br>028 71314090  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Out of Hours Contact</b></p> <p>There will be a recorded message at each of the above numbers which will provide Emergency Out of Hours numbers.</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Internet Safety</b></p>  | <p><a href="http://www.iwf.org.uk">www.iwf.org.uk</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Kidscape</b></p> <p>Open Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm. Nearly everyone is bullied at some time in their lives according to this charity. It offers information and support to young people and their parents.</p> | <p><a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a></p> <p>020 7730 3300</p>  |
| <p><b>National Children’s Bureau</b></p>   | <p><a href="http://www.ncb.org.uk">www.ncb.org.uk</a></p>   |
| <p><b>NI Anti-Bullying Forum</b></p>   | <p><a href="http://www.niabf.org.uk">www.niabf.org.uk</a></p>   |
| <p><b>NI Commissioner for Children &amp; Young People</b></p>  | <p><a href="http://www.niccy.org">www.niccy.org</a></p>   |
| <p><b>NSPCC Child Protection Helpline</b></p>  | <p><a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Helpline</b> 0808 800 5000</p>  |
| <p><b>Parentline Plus</b></p> <p>Advice for parents on supporting a child who is being bullied.</p>  | <p><a href="http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk">www.parentlineplus.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Freephone</b> 0808 800 2222</p>   |
| <p><b>Parents Advice Centre</b></p> <p>Parenting Education Project, Parenting Forum NI and The Men's Project -</p>   | <p><a href="http://www.parentsadvicecentre.org">www.parentsadvicecentre.org</a></p> <p><b>Freephone</b> 0808 8010 722</p>   |
| <p><b>Parents Centre</b></p>   | <p><a href="http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk">www.parentscentre.gov.uk</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Special Education Needs</b></p>  | <p><a href="http://www.throughtheroof.org">www.throughtheroof.org</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Sport Northern Ireland</b></p>   | <p><a href="http://www.sportni.net">www.sportni.net</a></p> <p>Tel: 028 90381222</p>  |
| <p><b>Suicide and self-harm</b></p>  | <p><a href="http://www.pipsproject.com">www.pipsproject.com</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a></p>   |
| <p><b>There4Me</b></p> <p>NSPCC On line advice service for 11- 16 year olds</p>  | <p><a href="http://www.there4me.org.uk">www.there4me.org.uk</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Volunteer Development Agency</b></p> <p>028 90236100</p>   | <p>For further information on developing Safeguarding policy and procedures are provided in the documents <b>Our Duty to Care</b> and <b>Getting it Right</b> available at <a href="http://www.volunteering-ni.org">www.volunteering-ni.org</a></p> |

# Appendix D

## Glossary

### Safeguarding

Until recently, the most commonly used phrase to describe this area of work was 'child protection'. However there has been a shift in the last few years to the term 'safeguarding'. Whereas child protection literally means protecting children from abuse and neglect, safeguarding widens practice around their needs so that it is about creating an environment where the welfare of children and young people is actively promoted. Promoting welfare is about helping children and young people achieve their potential and ensuring they are safe and adequately cared for.

### Access NI

Organisation responsible for the administration of vetting checks in NI. (See appendix 1 for more details).

### The Vetting and Barring Scheme (SVG)

New scheme to be introduced in Oct 2009 to reduce the risk of unsuitable individuals getting access to children (or vulnerable adults) either via employment or as a volunteer. (See appendix 1 for more details).

### Child

A child is defined as any person under the age of 18 by the Children (NI) Order 1995

### Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) & Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC)

Work is underway to establish a regional Safeguarding Board in Northern Ireland during 2009. The Board will replace the current Area Child Protection Committees. Creation of the SBNI will help to strengthen inter-agency co-operation on safeguarding children and improve cooperation between relevant agencies and departments tasked with providing children's services. The SBNI will have an independent chair and clear accountability lines to Ministers.

**ALB's**

Arms Length Bodies. DCAL work in partnership with a wide range of statutory bodies at 'arms length' from the Department including the Armagh Planetarium and Observatory, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Sport NI, The National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Screen, The Northern Ireland Museums Council, Libraries NI, Waterways Ireland and the North/South Language Body.

# Appendix E

## Recognition of Abuse and Poor Practice

### What is Abuse?

Child Abuse is defined by Chapter 2 of the DHSSPS Co-operating to Safeguard Children as falling into the following four categories:

- Physical:** Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.
- Neglect:** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate foods, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive (faltering growth).
- Sexual:** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Emotional:** Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Smothering a child's development through over-protection can also be a form of abuse. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

The ACPC procedures also recognised the particular impact of bullying and the vulnerability of those with a disability.

**Bullying:**

Has been recognised and defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or sectarian remarks, threats, name-calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of his peer group). The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm). Chapter 9.48

**Those with a Disability:**

Safeguards for those with disability should be the same as those for other children. Special input may be required if the child has severe or multiple disabilities as children who are disabled are at a higher risk of abuse.

Not every child with a disability is vulnerable in every situation. However it can be said that certain factors may mean that children with a disability are more vulnerable and could therefore be more open to abuse. The following list examines some of the reasons why children with a disability may be more vulnerable:

- Historically, children with a disability have been encouraged to comply with other people's wishes, for example, in residential homes and hospitals; this has meant they are more vulnerable to be bribed and manipulated.
  
- Limited life experiences and social contacts may mean that many young person with a disability have not had the same opportunities to acquire the social skills that non-disabled peers have had to assess the behaviour and attitudes of other people. This could also lead to them being unable to understand what is appropriate or inappropriate adult or peer behaviour.
  
- Individuals with dependency and support needs may have found that it is easier to be pleasing and compliant than challenge those caring for them because of the consequences. Any challenge or complaint could lead to more abusive practice or retribution.
  
- Continuing dependency on others may make some people feel powerless.

- Communication difficulties may make it hard to complain or be understood. This could be that the individual is unable to speak to tell anyone or does not have the vocabulary to describe what has happened to them.
- Individuals requiring intimate care could be in an increased vulnerable situation, especially if they have to rely on a number of different carers to support their needs.
- The general thought that a young person with a disability are not abused may make it difficult for them to be believed if they report an incident.
- Intrusion into body space for physical and medical care can lead to young people with a disability never developing ownership of their own bodies.
- Some disabilities may mean that an adult's emotional and developmental age is less than their chronological age.

### **Young People who display Sexually harmful Behaviour**

It is estimated that children and young people are responsible for about 1/3 of all sexual abuse against children (Grubin 1998, The Research Team 1990), this may be an under estimate due to low rates of reporting and even lower prosecution rates. Any effort to prevent child sexual abuse must address the problem of young people who display sexually harmful behaviour (SHB).

### **Poor Practice**

Poor practice can be viewed as the behaviour that can place a child or young person in a risky situation or leave a leader vulnerable to allegations that they were acting inappropriately. The following are a list of some incidents of poor practice but is not exhaustive;

- working in a private or unobserved situations and encouraging an environment of secrets,
- not treating young people with respect and dignity,
- not following agreed guidelines if physical support is needed, or seeking the parents'/ carers' views,
- not being up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance for the activity,
- banning parents or carers, or
- constantly giving negative criticism.

## Appendix F

# **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults**

## **Guidance for Staff**

‘Any adult at risk of abuse, exploitation or neglect should be able to access support to enable them to live a life free from violence and abuse.’

(Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults: Regional Policy and Procedural Guidance, 2006)

## **Introduction**

The aim of this guidance is to outline the practice and procedures, for paid and voluntary staff in any of the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure's (DCAL) sponsored Arms Length Bodies (ALBs), to contribute to the prevention of abuse of vulnerable adults through raising awareness and providing a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected.

In the course of our duties staff may become aware of situations where a vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse or is being abused. It is important that staff are alert to signs of abuse and take appropriate action to safeguard vulnerable adults.

## **Who is a vulnerable adult?**

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may be because he or she has a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, is old and frail, or has some form of illness.

Because of his or her vulnerability the individual may be in receipt of a care service in his or her own home, in the community or be resident in a residential care home, nursing home or other institutional setting.

## **Why do we need to protect Vulnerable Adults?**

Vulnerable adults are entitled to have their civil and human rights upheld and to live a life free from abuse. They need to be treated with respect and dignity, be able to choose how to live their lives independently. They should be afforded the opportunity to participate in their local community as active citizens.

They should also be able to fulfil personal aspirations and realize potential in all aspects of their daily lives. This includes being able to get support services and someone to speak for them, and having their voice heard in decisions that affect their lives.

If abuse does occur, vulnerable adults also need to be assured that they will be protected by the law and have their civil and human rights upheld in the course of any investigation that takes place.

## **What makes an adult vulnerable?**

The definition of vulnerable adult is linked to the range of services targeted at people who by virtue of the need to access those services is more likely to render them vulnerable. This includes the services of a residential care home, a nursing home, domiciliary and health care services, prison and probation services, welfare services under the supporting people programme, direct payment services and services offered to adults who have particular needs generated by age, a disability or health impairment.

## **What is meant by work with a vulnerable adult?**

Under the new Vetting and Barring Scheme legislation, work with vulnerable adults is expressed in terms of 'regulated activity' or 'controlled activity'. Regulated activity includes activities like teaching, training, instructing, caring, supervising, offering advice and guidance and transport. It also includes any work which provides the opportunity for contact with a child or vulnerable adult in places like schools, children's hospitals, childcare facilities, young offenders' centres, children's homes, nursing homes or residential care homes. Certain positions of responsibility are also considered to be regulated activity, like the Commissioner for Children and Young People or a school governor.

Controlled activity includes ancillary support work in the health, further education and adult social care sectors. Controlled activity also includes those who have access to health, personal social services, educational and family proceedings records who work in places like a Health and Social Care Trust or an Education and Library Board.

From 12 November 2010 when someone new is recruited to work with vulnerable adults the individual must be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The organization must check that the person is registered before allowing them to commence employment. This will determine whether or not the organization can allow them to take up regulated activity.

For further information on safe recruitment process and vetting checks see appendix A.

## What is adult abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.  
Abuse can take many forms:

### What are the forms of abuse?

#### Physical abuse

Including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint or disciplining a person in an inappropriate way.

#### Psychological abuse

Including emotional abuse, verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying, or the use of threats.

#### Financial or material abuse

Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

#### Sexual abuse

Direct or indirect sexual activity where the vulnerable adult cannot or does not give his or her consent.

#### Neglect or acts of omission

Withdrawing or not giving the help that a vulnerable adult needs, so causing them to suffer.

#### Discriminatory abuse

Abusing a person because of their ethnic origin, religion, language, age, sexuality, gender or disability.

#### Institutional abuse

Abuse or mistreatment by a regime or by any individual within any building where care is provided.

### What are the signs?

**Physical** – fractures, bruising, burns, pain, marks, not wanting to be touched.

**Psychological** – withdrawn, too eager to do every thing they are asked, compulsive behaviour, not being able to do things they used, not being able to concentrate or focus.

**Financial** – having unusual difficulty with finances, over protection of money and things they own, not paying bills, and lack of normal home comforts.

**Sexual** – genital irritation, sexually transmitted diseases, offensive language, recoiling contact, persistent sexually inappropriate behaviour.

**Neglect** – having pain or discomfort, overly hungry, thirsty or untidy, deterioration in health, changes in behaviour.

**Discriminatory** – the person is not receiving the care services they require, carer overly critical or makes insulting remarks about the person, person made to dress differently from how they wish.

**Institutional** – lack of personal clothing / possessions, no care plan, frequent hospital admissions, instances of unsatisfactory professional practice, ill treatment or gross misconduct.

**The above list is meant as a guide and is not intended to be exhaustive.**

## **Who might the abuser be?**

### **It can be anyone:**

- ⇒ A partner, child, relative or friend.
- ⇒ A paid or volunteer carer.
- ⇒ A health, social care or other worker.
- ⇒ A person claiming to be an employer of one of the above
- ⇒ A stranger.

## **Where might the abuse occur?**

### **Abuse can happen anywhere:**

- ⇒ In someone's own home.
- ⇒ At a carer's home.
- ⇒ Within nursing care, residential care or day care.
- ⇒ At work or in educational settings.
- ⇒ In rented accommodation or commercial settings.
- ⇒ In public places.

## **How can you be alert to signs of abuse?**

- ⇒ You may see or hear something happen.
- ⇒ A vulnerable adult may disclose an allegation to you.
- ⇒ A colleague, family member or somebody else may tell you something that causes you concern.
- ⇒ You may notice injuries or physical signs that cause you concern.
- ⇒ You may notice either the victim or perpetrator behaving in a certain way that alerts you something may be wrong.

## What should you do if you suspect abuse?

Remember your role is primarily supportive rather than investigative.

| <b>DO</b>   | <b>DO NOT</b>   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ Be open and honest about your concerns</li><li>⇒ Stay calm.</li><li>⇒ Listen very carefully.</li><li>⇒ Ensure that no one is in immediate danger.</li><li>⇒ Call for emergency services if urgent medical / police help required.</li><li>⇒ Be aware that medical and forensic evidence might be needed.</li><li>⇒ Encourage the person not to wash or bathe as this could disturb medical/forensic evidence.</li><li>⇒ Tell the person that they did the right thing in telling you.</li><li>⇒ Express concern and sympathy about what has happened.</li><li>⇒ Reassure that the information will be taken seriously and give information about what will happen next.</li><li>⇒ Let the person know that they will be kept involved at every stage; that they will be told the outcome and who will do this.</li><li>⇒ Give the person contact details so that they can report any further issues or ask any questions that may arise.</li><li>⇒ Explain that you must tell your line manager or designated officer.</li><li>⇒ Inform your line manger or designated officer immediately.</li><li>⇒ Explain what you have heard or seen that has given rise to your concerns.</li><li>⇒ Give as much information as possible.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ Stop someone disclosing to you.</li><li>⇒ Be afraid to act on your concerns.</li><li>⇒ Press the person for more details.</li><li>⇒ Promise to keep secrets or make promises you cannot keep.</li><li>⇒ Gossip about the disclosure or pass on the information to anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know.</li><li>⇒ Contact the alleged abuser.</li><li>⇒ Attempt to investigate yourself.</li><li>⇒ Tidy up, as this may disturb forensic evidence.</li><li>⇒ Be judgmental.</li><li>⇒ Leave details of your concerns on a voicemail or by e-mail.</li></ul> |

## **Who do I contact if I suspect abuse?**

It is important to remember that if a vulnerable adult is in **immediate danger** you should contact the emergency services immediately by dialling **999**.

If you have any concerns discuss them with your line manager whose responsibility it will be to refer these concerns to the appropriate Health and Social Care Trust Adult Protection Co-ordinator. All the telephone numbers you will need can be found at the end of this leaflet.

If you have raised your concerns in the above way but either the vulnerable person or your line manager is reluctant to proceed with the referral, you should make a record and contact your HSC Trust's Adult Protection Co-ordinator or a Designated Officer with responsibility for Adult Protection.

If all mechanisms for reporting allegations of abuse have been exhausted without your concern being taken seriously, it should be noted that the Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 provides for the active safeguarding and protection of what are commonly known as 'whistle-blowers'.

### **Remember:**

**We are all responsible for the protection of vulnerable adults.**

## **Contact Numbers**

### **Northern Health and Social Care Trust**

9am to 5pm – 028 2563 5558  
Out of hours – 028 9446 8833

### **South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust**

9am to 5pm – 028 9266 5181 extension 4544  
Out of hours – 028 9056 5444

### **Southern Health and Social Care Trust**

9am to 5pm – 028 3083 2650  
Out of hours – 028 3083 5000

### **Belfast Health and Social Care Trust**

9am to 5pm – 028 9056 5707  
Out of hours – 028 9056 5444

### **Western Health and Social Care Trust**

9am to 5pm – 028 7131 4090  
Out of hours – 028 7134 5171

### **Police Service of Northern Ireland**

Emergency 999  
Non-emergency and general enquiries  
0845 0600 8000

### **Helpline numbers**

24-hour Domestic Violence helpline – 0800 917 1414  
Action on Elder Abuse helpline – 0808 808 8141

### **Other sources of advice**

The Older People's Advocate – 028 9031 6383



# Getting It Right

Standards of practice for  
the protection of children  
and young people



Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**  
[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

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AN ROINN  
Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí

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MÁNYSTRÉ O  
Poustie, Resydënter Heisin  
an Fowk Siccar

## Volunteer Development Agency

The Volunteer Development Agency is the centre of expertise for the promotion and development of volunteering in Northern Ireland. We value the contribution of volunteers and believe that this contribution needs to be supported in order to maximise its effectiveness.

We actively promote volunteering through campaigns that challenge the image of volunteering, illustrate the diversity of volunteering opportunities and add volunteering to the mindset of everyone in our community.

The Agency provides training, information and support to volunteer-involving organisations across all sectors on issues of good practice and policy regarding volunteering, volunteer management, child protection and voluntary management committees/governance.

Our Duty to Care (ODTC) is a project of the Agency which promotes the principles of practice for the protection of children and young people, as outlined in Our Duty to Care guidelines. The project responds to the needs of organisations to meet and maintain minimum standards of good practice in safeguarding children and young people.

Third Edition August 2009



Reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure information in this document is accurate. However, it is not intended to be legally comprehensive; it is designed to provide guidance in good faith without accepting liability. If relevant, we therefore recommend you take appropriate professional advice before taking any action on the matters covered herein.

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## Foreword

Children and Young People are our most precious commodity. They represent the future of our community and our society, and that will only be safeguarded if they are loved, nurtured and cared for throughout their formative years. In the very early years, most of this is provided in the family context, but as they grow and spread their wings, the community as a whole plays a much greater part in their nurturing and development. Their growth is enriched by relationships with peers outside the family circle and by participation in a variety of community activities – sports clubs, art and drama groups, youth clubs and many more exciting experiences.

However, those experiences will only be enriching if they are provided in a safe environment and delivered by suitable people. It is therefore our responsibility to ensure that standards and guidance are in place for all organisations working with children and young people and that all organisations providing activities are aware of and implement those standards.

Getting it Right are the minimum standards of good practice for safeguarding children, recognised and endorsed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. Most organisations are adhering to these standards and many are exceeding them. However, we live in a fast

changing world where safe practice today may not be relevant tomorrow, as we have all experienced with the developments of new technology and the 'virtual world' that many young people inhabit. It is therefore essential that all organisations continually update and refresh their knowledge and for standards to be continually reviewed to reflect these changes.

I am therefore delighted to endorse this revised edition of Getting it Right that brings standards up to date and provides a tool for organisations to measure their practice against those standards. There is no guarantee that we can safeguard children and young people from all possible risk of harm but the application of good practice will ensure that risk is minimised while they enjoy a full and rich childhood.



**Sean Holland**

Chief Social Services Officer  
Department of Health, Social Services and  
Public Safety



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| <b>Developing a Child Protection Policy</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Standard 1</b> There is a written policy on the organisation's commitment to safeguarding children   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Standard 2</b> The organisation consistently applies a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers                              | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Standard 3</b> There are procedures in place for the effective management, support, supervision and training of staff and volunteers                                     | <b>8</b>  |
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| <b>Standard 5</b> There is a written code of behaviour that outlines the behaviour expected of workers towards children   | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Standard 6</b> The organisation has guidelines that outline how relevant information is shared appropriately with parents, children, workers and other relevant agencies | <b>15</b> |
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## Introduction

As an organisation working with children/young people you will want to provide the best care for them, support your staff and volunteers through appropriate procedures and guidelines and reassure parents that your organisation is child centred.

Organisations who work with children have a legal and moral duty to ensure their safety. The most effective way to do this is to have well thought out policies and procedures in place. It is vital that all organisations, irrespective of size and sector (community, voluntary and statutory), develop child protection policies, procedures and guidelines to inform and promote good practice in their work with children.

Policies, procedures and guidelines increase peace of mind for everyone:

### Children/young people

Ensuring that the welfare of children is treated as a priority, all children are treated equally and that their views are heard.

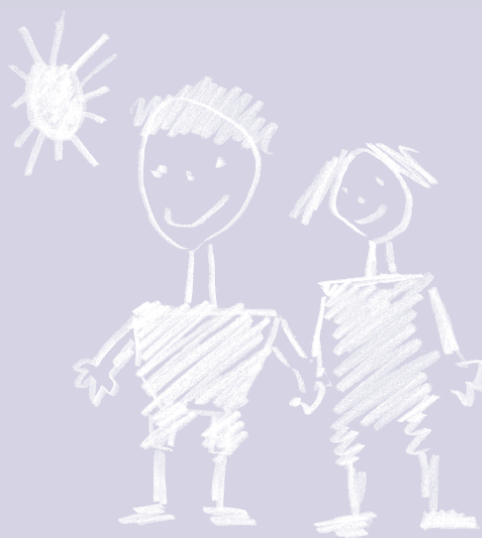
### Parents

Reassuring parents that the organisation with which their child is involved views the child's welfare as paramount and welcomes parental participation.

### Staff/volunteers

Giving staff and volunteers clear direction to give them confidence in what they do and to help protect them as well as the children in their care. The potential for abuse will be minimised and a positive atmosphere will be created, facilitating a rewarding and enjoyable experience for all concerned.

Each organisation's child protection policy must be relevant to the organisation and tailored to reflect the ethos, activities and structure of the organisation. To that end it is useful to consult within the organisation and involve as many people as possible in the development/review of the child protection policy.



## How to Use This Guide

Getting it Right has been designed to meet the needs of organisations working with children and young people to develop appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard the children and young people in their care.

This booklet outlines the recognised minimum standards of practice expected of all organisations that provide supervised activities for children and young people. It is intended to help you to meet those standards and guide you towards improving your practice where necessary.

The format for each section of this booklet is as follows:

### The standard

There are 7 minimum standards of practice.

### The checklist

Key information on how to achieve that standard and the issues relevant to the standard which a child protection policy should address.

### Supporting information

Further information to explain standard requirements.

### Signposting

Reference to additional information to support the development of the standard of practice, including:

Our Duty To Care (ODTC) - [www.volunteering-ni.org](http://www.volunteering-ni.org)

As Good As They Give - [www.volunteering-ni.org](http://www.volunteering-ni.org)

AccessNI - [www.accessni.gov.uk](http://www.accessni.gov.uk)

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety - [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

Independent Safeguarding Authority - [www.isa-gov.org](http://www.isa-gov.org)

DIY Committee Guide - [www.diycommitteeguide.org](http://www.diycommitteeguide.org)

Educational Visits Document - [www.seelb.org.uk](http://www.seelb.org.uk)

Getting it Right should be read in conjunction with Our Duty to Care – Principles of Good Practice for the protection of children and young people. Our Duty to Care will support your organisation in building upon the minimum standards to produce the highest possible quality of care. These two documents are complementary in design and content to

allow you to move easily between them. Each section of Our Duty to Care mirrors a section in Getting it Right, supplementing the minimum standard with further details on good practice and safeguarding. Safeguarding is another term that is widely used to describe child protection practice.

### Glossary of terms used in this document:

**Child** – throughout the document, when reference is made to child/children/young people, all children up to the age of 18 are included.

**Parent** – where reference is made to parent, carers are also included. It is assumed this is the person with parental responsibility for the child.

**Parental responsibility** – natural mother always has parental responsibility, natural father gains parental responsibility:

- If married to mother at time of birth or subsequently
- Through an agreement witnessed by a solicitor or a Parental Responsibility Order
- Post 15 April 2002 if they jointly register the baby's birth

## Developing a Child Protection Policy

### What is a policy?

A policy is a governing principle of an organisation that requires all those connected with the organisation to provide a consistent response to a given situation.

A child protection policy should include your organisation's commitment to practice that protects children from harm.

It applies to everyone associated with your organisation and everyone should have a copy of it.

### What is a procedure?

A procedure is a way of performing a task or conducting activities. Procedures are related to the implementation of a policy.

### Procedures in this booklet relate to:

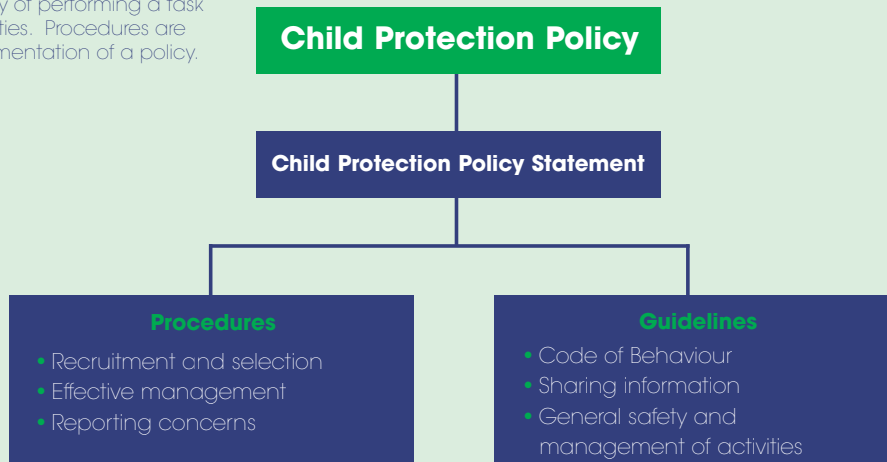
Standard 2 – Recruitment and selection  
Standard 3 – Effective Management  
Standard 4 – Reporting concerns

### What are guidelines?

Guidelines are advice on how something should be done. Your organisation's child protection policy will contain guidelines on how the policy objectives should be upheld.

### Guidelines in this booklet relate to:

Standard 5 – Code of Behaviour  
Standard 6 – Sharing information  
Standard 7 – General safety and management of activities



### Standard 1 - There is a written policy on the organisation's commitment to safeguarding children

|   | Checklist   | Supporting Evidence | Met? | If not met - what action needed?<br>When? What? Where? | Attained Date |
|---|---|---------------------|------|--|---------------|
| 1 | There is a statement of your intention to keep children safe from harm  |                     |      |  |               |
| 2 | You refer to a (minimum 3 year) review of your policy   |                     |      |  |               |
| 3 | There is an outline of the procedures you will take to meet this commitment in line with the minimum standard                             |                     |      |  |               |
| 4 | The person(s) with responsibility for approval of the policy are named  |                     |      |  |               |
| 5 | The person(s) with responsibility for implementing and reviewing the policy are named   |                     |      |  |               |
| 6 | All involved in the organisation are informed about the policy<br>- children<br>- parents<br>- staff/volunteers<br>- management committee |                     |      |  |               |

## Supporting Information

### What should a policy statement contain?

In a policy statement, an organisation explains why it has a duty and responsibility to protect children and ensure that their welfare is paramount.

It then outlines how this will be done on a day-to-day basis (i.e. the practical steps that will be taken by adhering to the relevant procedures and guidelines).

### How can it be used?

A policy statement applies to everyone involved with an organisation, including management committee members, managers and leaders, staff and volunteers, user groups, children and parents.

It should be prominently displayed – remember that it is a summary of the organisation's commitment to child protection.

Everyone involved with an organisation should receive or have access to a copy of the policy statement.

### Useful hints for developing a policy statement

- A policy statement summarises the actions you will take to safeguard children – keep it concise!
- Child protection procedures should be linked to each Getting it Right standard and suggestions for reviewing and updating the policy should be welcomed.
- Include the date when the policy was reviewed, who approved it and the proposed date for the next review. A child protection policy and related procedures should be reviewed at regular intervals, at least once every three years. It may also be reviewed before the proposed date in response to a change in, for example, legislation or organisational activities.
- Everyone in the organisation needs to have ownership of the policy and it must be tailored to the specifics of the organisation.

## Signposting

**ODTC Section 1** – Promote the general welfare, health and full development of children and protect them from harm of all kinds.

**ODTC Appendix 5** – Sample Child Protection Policy Statement.

**Standard 2 - The organisation consistently applies a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers**

|    | <b>Checklist</b>   | <b>Supporting Evidence</b> | <b>Met?</b> | <b>If not met - what action needed?<br/>When? What? Where?</b> | <b>Attained Date</b> |
|----|--|----------------------------|-------------|--|----------------------|
| 1  | There is a clear job description for staff and role description for volunteers, and person specification outlining key skills and abilities required |                            |             |  |                      |
| 2  | There is an open recruitment process   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 3  | There is an application form that covers past work/volunteering  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 4  | There is a declaration form requesting information on previous convictions   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 5  | There is an interview process suitable to the role and task  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 6  | Written references are sought (and followed up orally, when necessary)   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 7  | There is reference to regulated position/regulated activity  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 8  | Consent is sought for AccessNI checks where appropriate  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 9  | ISA registration has been checked (from July 2010) where required  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 10 | The post has been approved by management   |                            |             |  |                      |

## Supporting Information

Whether you are recruiting staff or volunteers, it is important to have good recruitment and selection procedures to minimise the opportunity for unsuitable people to work or volunteer with children and young people. The majority of people who want to work with children are well motivated and without them voluntary and community organisations could not operate. Unfortunately some individuals will try to use voluntary and community organisations to gain inappropriate contact with children.

Good recruitment and selection procedures will help screen out and discourage those who are not suitable from joining your organisation.

You cannot assume that anyone is exempt from a recruitment and selection procedure.

Good recruitment and selection procedures benefit everyone. Staff and volunteers will have a clearly defined role. This will enhance their self-confidence, which will have a positive impact on children. Parents will be assured that all possible measures are being taken to ensure only suitable people will be recruited to work with children and children will be safer and protected.

Recruitment and selection procedures should be set out in writing in the child protection policy and include the following steps:



Your organisation's management/executive committee should approve all recommendations for appointment. The decision to appoint staff or volunteers is the responsibility of an organisation, not any one individual within it.

### Appropriate Checks

Appropriate checks should be carried out on staff and volunteers working in regulated

activity with a child or vulnerable adult. This includes an Enhanced Disclosure Check, which can be applied for through Access NI. From July 2010, registration with the Independent Safeguarding Authority will also be introduced.

## Signposting

**ODTC Section 2** – Develop Procedures to Consistently Apply a Thorough and Clearly Defined Method of Recruiting Staff and Volunteers

**ODTC Appendix 6** – Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007

**ODTC Appendix 7** – Access NI

**ODTC Appendix 9** – Sample Volunteer Reference Form

**ODTC Appendix 10** – Asking About Disability on Application Forms

**ODTC Appendix 11** – Volunteers and Paid Staff - Definitions

**ODTC Appendix 13** – Recruitment and Management of Workers

**As Good As They Give (2)** – Sample Volunteer Role Description

**Access NI check** – [www.accessni.gov.uk](http://www.accessni.gov.uk)

**Choosing To Protect** – [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

**Independent Safeguarding Authority** – [www.isa.gov.org](http://www.isa.gov.org)

**Standard 3** - There are procedures in place for the effective management, support, supervision and training of staff and volunteers

|   | <b>Checklist</b>   | <b>Supporting Evidence</b> | <b>Met?</b> | <b>If not met - what action needed?<br/>When? What? Where?</b> | <b>Attained Date</b> |
|---|--|----------------------------|-------------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | There is an induction process into:<br>- organisational policies<br>- their role   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 2 | There is a probationary period for staff and trial period for volunteers:<br>- agreed timeframe<br>- post is confirmed in writing              |                            |             |  |                      |
| 3 | There is training provided on:<br>- particular skills (as appropriate)<br>- child protection for all staff and volunteers (minimum of 4 hours) |                            |             |  |                      |
| 4 | There is a procedure for supervision and support appropriate to the role   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 5 | There is an annual appraisal for staff and review for volunteers   |                            |             |  |                      |

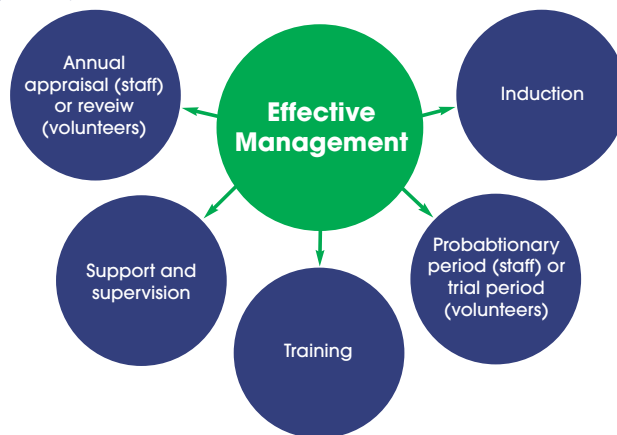
## Supporting Information

Good management of staff and volunteers will contribute to safer activities for children and young people. It will also create an atmosphere where staff and volunteers feel valued, are listened to and where issues can be dealt with quickly by systems already in place.

Once staff and volunteers are recruited they should be informed about your organisation's policies, procedures and guidelines and be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision. This will minimise unintentional harm of children through lack of knowledge or skills and should pick up on possible intentional harm of children.

All staff and volunteers working directly with

children and/or young people should have child protection training that includes a basic awareness and understanding of child protection issues and the organisation's child protection policies, procedures and guidelines. Training must be carefully selected to ensure it is sufficient. For instance, a one hour training session is unlikely to be very useful. A minimum of four hours is required for basic awareness raising. Designated Officers and Management Committee members should access training appropriate to their role. You should develop and tailor procedures in line with your organisation's structure, ethos and activities. Effective management for staff and volunteers should include:



## Signposting

**ODTC Section 3** – Develop procedures for the effective management of staff and volunteers

**ODTC Appendix 13** – Recruitment and Management of Workers

**As Good As They Give (3)** – Sample Volunteer Induction

**As Good As They Give (3)** – Sample Support and Supervision Planner

**As Good As They Give (4)** – Sample Training Needs Analysis Form

**DIY Committee Guide** – [www.diycommitteeguide.org](http://www.diycommitteeguide.org)

**Standard 4 - The organisation has simple and clearly defined procedures for dealing with actual or suspected incidents of abuse**

|   | <b>Checklist</b>  | <b>Supporting Evidence</b> | <b>Met?</b> | <b>If not met - what action needed? When? What? Where?</b> | <b>Attained Date</b> |
|---|---|----------------------------|-------------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | There is a named Designated Officer(s) with a clearly defined role and responsibilities                         |                            |             |  |                      |
| 2 | All staff and volunteers are informed of the name and contact details of the Designated Officer(s)              |                            |             |  |                      |
| 3 | The policy outlines the systems for recording child protection:<br>- concerns<br>- disclosures<br>- allegations |                            |             |  |                      |
| 4 | The policy outlines how to report child protection:<br>- concerns<br>- disclosures<br>- allegations             |                            |             |  |                      |
| 5 | There is a procedure for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers                                  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 6 | There is an outline of what is meant by confidentiality and its limitations                                     |                            |             |  |                      |
| 7 | There is an outline of the procedure for referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority                     |                            |             |  |                      |
| 8 | There is a system to communicate the reporting procedure to staff/volunteers                                    |                            |             |  |                      |

## Supporting Information

### What do you need to do?

Reporting procedures inform staff and volunteers about what to do if they have to deal with a child protection concern or disclosure.

It is important to have appropriate procedures in place to facilitate staff and volunteers in reporting child protection concerns or disclosures should the need arise.

It is **not** your organisation's responsibility to identify and investigate possible instances of abuse of children. The agencies who have a statutory responsibility to deal with our concerns are Health and Social Care Trusts, PSNI and NSPCC. **It is** an organisation's responsibility to report any child protection concerns.

It is important that your organisation has procedures in place for dealing with child protection concerns, disclosures and allegations in order to support staff and volunteers, children and parents through the process of reporting. **Under no circumstances should any staff or volunteer attempt to deal with the problem of abuse alone.**

An allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation therefore you should not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation.

A procedure for reporting concerns should include guidance on:

### • Role of Designated Officer

Every organisation should appoint a Designated Officer. It is the role of the Designated Officer to deal with issues of a child protection nature, offer advice to staff and volunteers and ensure procedures are being followed. Your organisation should appoint a Designated Officer who has completed child protection training and appointing a deputy is good practice if resources allow for it.

### • Recording and reporting systems

All concerns, disclosures and allegations should be recorded on pro formas provided by your organisation and passed to the Designated Officer without delay. The following are examples only:

A concern may relate to the possibility of a child suffering harm.

A disclosure may be if a child tells a member of staff or volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused in some way.

An allegation may be a concern about the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer.

The Designated Officer considers whether there is a child protection issue and deals with it appropriately, which may involve contacting and/or reporting to statutory agencies. Gateway Teams have been established to facilitate the referral process to Social Services.

### • Confidentiality

Information should be shared with the appropriate person, on a need to know basis. In an emergency, staff and volunteers should contact statutory agencies if the Designated Officer is not available.

### • Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

If a member of staff/volunteer has harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm, your organisation's internal disciplinary procedures should be followed and a referral made to the ISA.

## Signposting

**ODTC Section 4** – Develop Procedures for Responding to Alleged or Suspected Incidents of Abuse

**ODTC Appendix 16** – Roles and responsibility of a Designated Officer/Person within a Voluntary or Community Organisation

**ODTC Appendix 17** – Reporting Procedures

**ODTC Appendix 18** – Sharing Significant Information

**ODTC Appendix 19** – Recording Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

**ODTC Appendix 20** – Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

**ODTC Appendix 21** – Allegations of Abuse against Staff and Volunteers

**ODTC Appendix 26** – Incident Record Form

**ODTC Appendix 31** – Useful Contacts

**UNOCINI form** – [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)



**Standard 5 - There is a written code of behaviour that outlines the behaviour expected of workers towards children and appropriate standards of behaviour expected of children and young people**

|   | <b>Checklist</b>   | <b>Supporting Evidence</b> | <b>Met?</b> | <b>If not met - what action needed?<br/>When? What? Where?</b> | <b>Attained Date</b> |
|---|--|----------------------------|-------------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | The code of behaviour contains positive statements about how workers are expected to behave towards children |                            |             |  |                      |
| 2 | The code of behaviour outlines behaviours to be avoided  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 3 | The code of behaviour outlines unacceptable behaviours   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 4 | The code of behaviour includes anti bullying guidelines  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 5 | The code of behaviour contains guidelines relating to physical contact                                       |                            |             |  |                      |
| 6 | The code of behaviour contains guidelines relating to diversity and additional needs                         |                            |             |  |                      |
| 7 | The code of behaviour outlines sanctions for breach of the code of behaviour for staff/volunteers            |                            |             |  |                      |
| 8 | The code of behaviour is tailored to your activities   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 9 | There are guidelines on new technology and photography   |                            |             |  |                      |

## Supporting Information

A Code of Behaviour informs staff and volunteers in your organisation about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It should provide information about what sanctions will be applied for non-compliance with the Code. A written Code of Behaviour should be prominently displayed, communicated to everyone associated with your organisation, and applied consistently.

### Why do you need a Code of Behaviour?

A Code of Behaviour minimises the opportunity for children to suffer harm and seeks to protect staff and volunteers from false allegations. It will inform parents of the child-centred ethos of your organisation. It will ensure consistency of practice and promote the safety, protection, enjoyment and comfort of children.

When developing the Code of Behaviour, you should involve everyone (staff, volunteers and children, and parents where relevant) so that they all have an input into an agreed Code and take ownership of it.

A Code of Behaviour will give staff and volunteers the confidence to carry out their roles and develop positive relationships with children. It is an essential framework for interactions with children with regard to support and supervision, training needs and disciplinary actions.

### What will it look like?

A Code of Behaviour should include positive examples of behaviours which will promote the safety and wellbeing of children as well as those behaviours that are unacceptable.

There are key areas that your organisation should consider as part of its Code of Behaviour, for which you will need to develop recommended practice. The list is not definitive and there may be other areas specific to your organisation that you need to include e.g. guidelines for creative arts, sport, day trips, young leaders and residential.

## Signposting

**ODTC Section 5** – Develop a Code of Behaviour to ensure the activities of the organisation promote the safety and wellbeing of children

**ODTC Appendix 4** – Self-protection – Kidscape

**ODTC Appendix 12** – Code of Behaviour – Some Guidelines

**ODTC Appendix 22** – Developing an Anti-bullying Policy

**ODTC Appendix 23** – Using Mobile Phones and Emails – Guidelines for Leaders

**ODTC Appendix 24** – Guidelines on Taking Photographs

**ODTC Appendix 29** – Including Disabled Children

**Standard 6** - The organisation has guidelines that outline how relevant information is shared appropriately with parents, children, workers and other relevant agencies

|   | <b>Checklist</b>   | <b>Supporting Evidence</b> | <b>Met?</b> | <b>If not met - what action needed?<br/>When? What? Where?</b> | <b>Attained Date</b> |
|---|--|----------------------------|-------------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | Appropriate records of children attending activities are kept confidentially                                     |                            |             |  |                      |
| 2 | Consent forms are sought for all activities from those with parental responsibility                              |                            |             |  |                      |
| 3 | There are appropriate procedures in place for children/parents to share concerns                                 |                            |             |  |                      |
| 4 | Complaints procedures are communicated appropriately to children, parents and volunteers                         |                            |             |  |                      |
| 5 | The policy outlines how information is shared with:<br>- children<br>- parents                                   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 6 | The policy informs staff/volunteers what and how written records should be kept                                  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 7 | There is a clear policy on confidentiality outlining what and how records are kept and how information is shared |                            |             |  |                      |
| 8 | The policy informs staff of the grievance procedure  |                            |             |  |                      |

## Supporting Information

Good information sharing is essential in safeguarding children and young people. To ensure that children who use your organisation are safeguarded, a good communication system needs to be in place. Organisations should develop an ethos of working in partnership to engender feelings of mutual trust between parents, staff and volunteers.

Make sure that your organisation's written policy and procedures are available to all concerned and that they are clear about your complaints procedure and who any concerns should be shared with. Organisations should make every effort to communicate to all involved, taking account of language and communication needs.

Sharing information should include the following:

- **Written information sought from parents/guardians**

Basic details about children and young people should be sought, such as name, address, contact details for parents and any health or disability issues. Consent forms for all activities should also be sought from parents. It is essential to gain information in relation to consent for children to take part in activities that take place as part of normal routine as well as one off activities.

Information should also be obtained with regard to medical, dietary, additional needs and behavioural conditions as appropriate.

Ensure that you inform parents/guardians that consent can only be provided by a person (a parent or carer) who has parental responsibility.

- **Confidentiality**

Your organisation needs to have a written policy about confidentiality, which states clearly why information is being shared and with whom.

Ensure that your confidentiality policy reflects the ethos of your organisation and makes reference to storage of and access to information, the length of time information is to be kept and sharing of information.

Let parents know that any information held about them will be held in accordance with data protection principles but that confidentiality has limitations.

- **Record keeping**

It is important that all staff and volunteers know and follow a written procedure for record keeping.

- **Complaints and grievances**

Everyone has a right to complain. Staff should do this through the grievance procedure and everyone else (including volunteers, parents and children) should use the complaints procedure.

Consideration needs to be given to how your organisation might help children express themselves when they are discontent. Written procedures should be in place and should encourage the swift dealing of complaints. Your organisation should also consider how to deal with appeals about decisions made in relation to complaints or grievances.

## Signposting

**ODTC Section 6** – Develop guidelines to ensure that relevant information is shared appropriately with parents, children, workers and other relevant agencies

**ODTC Appendix 25** – Developing a complaints procedure

**Standard 7** - The organisation has guidelines to ensure the general safety of activities, and to ensure the effective management of activities

|   | <b>Checklist</b>   | <b>Supporting Evidence</b> | <b>Met?</b> | <b>If not met - what action needed?<br/>When? What? Where?</b> | <b>Attained Date</b> |
|---|--|----------------------------|-------------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | All workers have, or have access to, a named or appointed first aid person for each activity |                            |             |  |                      |
| 2 | There are procedures for recording:<br>- accidents<br>- incidents                            |                            |             |  |                      |
| 3 | Transport is roadworthy and adequate for purpose   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 4 | There is adequate, appropriate and up to date insurance                                      |                            |             |  |                      |
| 5 | There are written procedures for dealing with emergencies                                    |                            |             |  |                      |
| 6 | There are regular fire drills and these are recorded   |                            |             |  |                      |
| 7 | There is an up to date list of emergency telephone numbers clearly displayed                 |                            |             |  |                      |
| 8 | All workers are qualified and competent in their role  |                            |             |  |                      |
| 9 | There is a system for ensuring the safety of equipment                                       |                            |             |  |                      |

|    |  |  |  |  |  |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|
| 10 | There are clear ratios for supervision of children at various activities                   |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Risk assessments are carried out for all activities including day trips and/or residential |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Agreement on which organisation's procedures will be followed on a residential activity    |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | There are clear guidelines for sleeping arrangements for residential                       |  |  |  |  |

## Supporting Information

### General safety

To ensure the safety of children is paramount, your organisation should have written guidelines for the following:

- **First aid** - having or having access to a named/qualified first aider; stating the location of the first aid box.
- **Accidents and incidents** - these should be recorded on pro formas and guidelines developed for passing on information relating to accidents or incidents.
- **Transport** - any vehicles used should be roadworthy and adequate for the purpose. Drivers should be aware of the organisation's transport policy.
- **Insurance** - should be up to date and cover transport, activities and public liability.

- **Emergencies** - e.g. fire drills; up to date list of emergency telephone numbers.

- **Premises** - should meet health and safety guidelines e.g. heating and ventilation.

### Management of activities

It is important to plan activities to ensure they are safely managed and take into account the nature of the activity and the age range and ability of participants. Your organisation should have written guidelines relating to:

- **Competency and qualification of leaders** - qualifications should be up to date and verifiable and leaders should only be supervising activities they are competent and/or trained to do so.

- **Safety of equipment** - equipment should be safe and used for the purpose for which it is intended.

- **Supervision ratios** - ratios should take into account the age, gender, nature of activity and the impact on supervision ratios of leaders being diverted away from group activities to deal with special needs that may arise.

- **Residential and day trips** - residential and day trips will encompass different activities than usually experienced in your organisation and it is important to prepare for this.

## Signposting

**ODTC Section 7** – Develop Guidelines to Ensure the General Safety and Management of Activities

**ODTC Appendix 26** – Incident Record Form

**ODTC Appendix 27** – Supervision of Children on Day Trips

**ODTC Appendix 28** – Sample Health and Safety Checklist

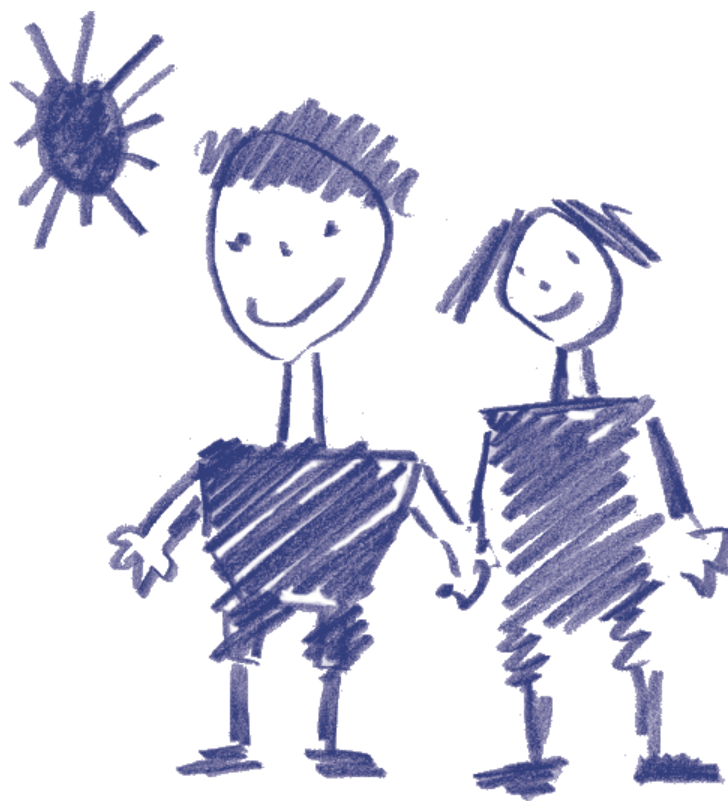
**ODTC Appendix 29** – Including Disabled Children

**ODTC Appendix 30** – Day Trip/Residential Planning Checklist

**As Good As They Give (5)** – Policy and insurance

**As Good As They Give (5)** – Assessing and Managing Risk

**Educational Visits Document** - [www.seelb.org.uk](http://www.seelb.org.uk)





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