



Safeguarding Children /Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Kells & Connor Pre-school has a duty to be aware that child abuse does occur in our society. Our first responsibility is the welfare and wellbeing of all the children in our care. It is our duty to act quickly and responsibly to any incidence which may come to our attention. We have a duty to report any suspicions around child abuse to The Gateway Team and The Early Years Team at NHSC.

Sarah Woods is the Designated Child Protection Officer and attends regular training to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of safeguarding within the group.

Allison Loudon is the Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer and Katrina Agnew is the Designated Child Protection Officer on the Management Committee.

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) state that provision of services and protection from abuse are basic rights and must be offered to all children regardless of race, culture, language, gender, disability and religion.

Curricular 2017/04 - DE Website

We are aware of the referral system of UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland). Our Single Point of Entry team and our Registered Social Worker will keep us informed of changes and training available.

The group follows a careful recruitment and selection procedure which ensures that all permanent staff and voluntary helpers make health declarations and have police record checks made, to ascertain their suitability for working with children. Students and volunteers are not left unsupervised or allowed to toilet the children.

Categories of abuse

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 food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or significant neglect of a child, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive (faltering growth).

Physical injury is the actual or likely deliberate injury to a child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

Sexual abuse is the actual or likely exploitation of a child. The involvement of children in sexual activities which they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

Emotional abuse is the actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This is where it is the main or only form of abuse.

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision' and 'initiation'. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life.

Domestic Violence and Abuse: threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.'

Signs and Symptoms

This is intended as a guide. Please remember that the presence of one or more factors does not necessarily prove that child abuse has occurred. It may however indicate that an investigation should take place.

- Unexplained delay in seeking medical treatment, when needed
- Incompatible explanations
- Constant minor injuries
- Unexplained bruising
- Bruise marks in and around mouth
- Black eyes, especially if both eyes are black and there are no marks to forehead or nose
- Grasp marks
- Bruising of the ears
- Linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back)
- Differing age bruising
- Bite marks, burns or scalds
- Cigarette burns, general physical disability
- Unresponsiveness, soiling or wetting
- Changing behaviour patterns, attention seeking
- Anti-social behaviour, sexualised drawing and play
- Poor self-esteem, withdrawal
- Reluctance to return home after pre-school



Procedures

If a child or any person makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff or if we suspect that a child in pre-school is subject to either physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or exploitation the following procedures will be adhered to:-

1. If a member of staff has any concerns about any of the children in pre-school, they should discuss these with the Leader/Deputy Leader.
2. All relevant information regarding these concerns will be recorded in writing by the member of staff concerned. The written record will include:
 - the name of the child concerned
 - address of the child concerned
 - age of the child concerned
 - the time and date of observations of concern describing objectively the behaviour of the child concerned
 - the appearance of the child concerned
 - where possible, the exact words spoken by the child
 - **no comment or interpretation by a member of staff will be included**
 - the date, name and signature of member of staff recording the incident will also be included

The child will continue to be monitored while in pre-school. Marks and bruises on the child's body will be recorded on the body chart and colouring of marks will be detailed.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact.
 - If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where guidance does not allow this.
 - This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officer will inform parents.
3. The Leader/Deputy Leader will report the incident to the Single Point of Entry Team and also go on their advice for discussion with the parents/guardians.
 4. The Leader/Deputy will inform the Early Years Social Worker responsible for the pre-school registration.
 5. Pre-school staff will attend any child protection case conference to which invited.
 6. The Leader will inform the Designated Child Protection Officer of the Management Committee that a referral has been made to Gateway regarding a suspected child protection issue. **No details of the child or family involved will be given to the**

management committee.

If a concern/complaint/allegation is raised about a member of staff, in relation to a child protection issue, a full investigation will be carried out by the Leader.

The following procedures will be adhered to: -

1. The Leader/Deputy will make a full written record of the concern/complaint/allegation.
2. The Leader/Deputy will inform the Single Point of Entry Team of the concern/complaint/ allegation.
3. The Leader/Deputy will inform the Early Years Social Worker responsible for the Pre-school registration.
4. The Leader/Deputy will inform the Chairperson and the Designated Child Protection Officer of the Management Committee
5. The Leader/Deputy will go on the advice of the Gateway Team as to whether the staff member will be allowed to remain at pre-school while the investigation is carried out.

If a concern is made about the Leader, in relation to a child protection issue, the person becoming aware of this must inform the Registered Person who will then be responsible for the preceding procedures.

Guidelines in protecting staff and volunteers

In order to avoid false accusations of child abuse, all staff members will adhere to the following:

NEVER Spend time alone with children away from other staff members

- **NEVER** Take children alone in a car journey
- **NEVER** Engage in rough play: physical games
- **NEVER** Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- **NEVER** Engage in sexually provocative games
- **NEVER** Make sexually suggestive comments about a child or to a child even in fun
- Always inform another member of staff about a toileting accident and ensure visibility from another member of staff whilst carrying out this task
- **NEVER** use your mobile phone to take a photo of any child at pre-school
- **NEVER** mention pre-school or individual children while on an internet site - e.g. face book



Child Protection Reporting Procedures

I have a concern about my child's safety



I can talk to the Pre-school Leader Sarah Woods
Designated Child protection Officer



If unavailable I can talk to the Deputy Leader Allison Loudon
Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer



If I am still concerned I can talk to the
The Single Point of Entry Team
03001234333 / 02894424459

Early Years social worker attached to the Pre-school
02825635111

If unavailable I can speak to the Duty Social Worker



If I am still concerned I can talk to Katrina Agnew
Committee Designated Child Protection Officer
07732656573



At any time I can talk to the PSNI Central Referral Unit at 028 9025 9299

However if your concern is about a member of staff, speak directly to the Designated Committee Member