



# PROTECTION OF CHILDREN POLICY

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# Child Protection Policy

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Antrim Borough Council is committed to providing a safe, friendly and enjoyable environment for children and vulnerable young adults using its facilities.

The Council accepts its duty of care towards children and vulnerable adults and is committed to providing information and training opportunities to ensure that those working on behalf of the Council adopt best practise as regards Child Protection guidelines, thus ensuring the safety and welfare of children using our facilities or included in Council sponsored activities.

All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately via the appropriate Designated Child Protection Officer.

## 2. AIMS OF THE POLICY

The aim of this policy is designed to ensure that Council employees are equipped with the appropriate knowledge and training to assist them in protecting children and dealing with situations that may cause them concern.

The policy also aims to ensure that those who hire/use Council services are familiar with our Child Protection Policies and Procedures.

This Policy applies also to all organisations who receive Grant Aid from Council.

We aim to provide an environment where children can participate in a safe and enjoyable manner and where they are accepted as valued customers and users of Council services.

### 2.1 Approach

Council will aim to promote an open, child-centred environment in which everyone feels comfortable and free to share information and concerns. Council will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for employees / volunteers.
- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for hirers & coaches.
- Planning the work of individual service areas so as to aim to eliminate situations in which abuse can occur.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with employees and volunteers through appropriate levels of training and dissemination of information.
- Sharing information about concerns with appropriate agencies who need to know, and by involving parents and children.
- Adhering to strict procedures for recruiting, selecting and vetting Council employees and volunteers.

- Providing effective management for employees and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Taking appropriate action to respond to issues of child protection that occur on our premises or involve our workforce.
- Appointing Designated Officers to implement our Child Protection Policy and to whom all allegations, concerns etc, will be reported.

### 3. SCOPE

This Child Protection policy is intended to cover all functions of the Council where employees may work with children directly, or have contact indirectly, through the course of their duties.

The Policy covers a wide range of Council service areas, where contact with children may be involved - these include:

- **Development & Leisure Services**  
Leisure activities and facilities  
Sports Development activities  
Play facilities  
Community centre activities and facilities  
Arts & Drama facilities
- **Environmental Services**  
Technical Services  
Grounds Maintenance  
Environmental Health
- **Corporate Services**  
Human Resources  
Registration  
Customer Services Team  
Tourist Information Centre
- Any Council-organised or Council funded events that involve children

The Council's Child Protection Policy is applicable to all who work for the Council including full-time, part-time, seasonal and 'on call' employees, student placements and volunteers. All of the above designations will be subject to relevant Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adult (POCVA) checks and child protection training. Within this document, the term "employee" or "staff" includes all those listed above.

This policy applies to all Contractors, visitors, external clubs, external organisations, external coaches, and anyone else whilst on any of Council premises.

The Council also acknowledges that adults, parents and carers also have a responsibility as regarding children using Council facilities.

#### 4. ETHOS

Local Councils provide a range of functions and services in Northern Ireland that directly and indirectly involve children. Staff employed by councils may become involved in child protection cases either because of suspicions / allegations in respect of their own conduct with children or because during their duties they may become aware of the possibility of abuse having been perpetrated by others.

It is essential therefore that Antrim Borough Council should have clear policies and procedures for dealing with such circumstances.

##### 4.1 Legislative Background

The Children (NI) Order 1995 came into force in Northern Ireland on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1996. It significantly affects the moral and legal responsibilities of all those, both in the statutory and voluntary sectors, who work with children and young people up to the age of 18 years. The Order was influenced by principles in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified by the British Government on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1991. The Convention sets minimum standards for children and young people's civil, political, social, cultural and economic rights within three main categories – participation, protection and provision.

The Order embodies five key principles:

- **Paramount** – in childcare law and practice, the welfare of the child is the overriding consideration in any decisions about him or her.
- **Parental responsibility** – parents have responsibilities to their children, rather than rights over them. In some situations “significant” adults share this responsibility with one or both parents.
- **Prevention** – this principle means preventing the separation of children from their families.
- **Partnership** – the basis of this principle is that the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met is by working in partnership with other professionals and especially with parents.
- **Protection** – children should be safe from abuse and should be protected by intervention if they are in danger.

4.2 In practical terms this means Council have a responsibility to provide a safe place for children and young people, in which their welfare is of paramount importance. It also means parents and carers need to be informed of their responsibilities and consulted about any decision affecting their child. Parents also have a responsibility to ensure that their children grow and develop in a safe environment.

#### 5.0 AWARENESS OF ABUSE

“Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely by a stranger”.

*-“Working together to Safeguard Children (1999)”*

There are different categories of abuse, and a child may be subjected to more than one type. Definitions of Abuse taken from Regional Area Child Protection Committee:

**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** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic 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** 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** 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.

**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 (eg hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (eg racist or sectarian remarks threats, name-calling) and emotional (eg 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).

## **6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **6.1 Employers Duties**

#### **6.1.1 Implementation of the Policy**

- The Chief Executive and the Directors have responsibility for general implementation of this Policy across Council.
- Managers have responsibility for daily implementation and monitoring of application of the policy within their Sections.

### **6.1.2 General Duties**

- To investigate complaints as detailed per this policy.
- To inform, consult and train employees on this policy.  
The Council accepts and recognises its responsibilities with regards to developing awareness of child protection issues amongst its employees and volunteers.

## **6.2 Employees Duties**

**6.2.1** To comply with this policy

**6.2.2** To comply with the Code of Conduct (full details are at Appendix 2).

**6.2.3** To report any concerns of suspicious or inappropriate behaviour

All staff have a duty to report the following types of inappropriate behaviour:

- Petting or fondling
- Inappropriate physical contact between an adult and child
- Sexually explicit behaviour in games etc
- Adults behaving 'suspiciously' e.g. watching children in changing areas/ cubicles / toilets.
- Those who spend an inordinate amount of time in changing areas / cubicles / toilets.
- Adults who have 'strayed' into areas restricted to children only
- Those who have been seen peering under / over cubicles
- Adults whose behaviour is causing distress to children e.g. rough play, horseplay.
- Use of inappropriate language in the presence of children.
- Inappropriate or suspicious photography of children

**Staff witnessing behaviour of this description should report their observations immediately to the Senior Officer of the facility.**

## **6.3 Customers, visitors and contractors**

All customers, visitors and contractors will be expected to adhere to this Policy.

## **6.4 External Clubs, Organisations and Coaches using Antrim Borough Council Facilities/Services (or receiving grants)**

**6.4.1** All Organisations, Clubs or Governing bodies working with Under 18's, using Antrim Borough Council facilities / services (or applying for grants), should have a Child Protection Policy in place.

**6.4.2** For those Clubs/Organisations who may not have a Child Protection Policy at present, they must accept and be bound to apply the standards of care as outlined in the Council's Child Protection Policy.

(A summary copy of the Policy will be distributed to Hirers along with the ' Conditions of Hire' information).

**6.4.3** When primary responsibility for the welfare of children visiting/using Council facilities does not lie with Council staff the relevant organisation/group leader must be aware of the Council's Child Protection Policy and their obligation as regards 'Duty of Care'.

The guidelines are attached at Appendix 3. (Other useful and relevant guidance is attached at Appendices 11, 12 & 13).

**6.4.4** The following arrangements have been made for communicating this policy

- Antrim Forum Staff – All external clubs, organisations and coaches will be provided with a copy of the Council Policy.
- Property Services will provide all contractors with a copy of the Council Policy, prior to their attendance on site. Contractors will have to issue Council with a copy of their own Policy or agree to abide with the Council's Policy.
- Community Centres – all grant aided activities, external clubs, organisations and coaches will be provided with a copy of the Council Policy.
- Clotworthy Arts Centre - All external clubs, organisations and coaches will be provided with a copy of the Council Policy.
- Allen Park - All external clubs, organisations and coaches will be provided with a copy of the Council Policy.
- Civic Centre - All external clubs, organisations and coaches will be provided with a copy of the Council Policy.

## **7.0 COUNCIL'S DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER**

### **7.1 Responsibility**

The designated officer is responsible for acting as a source of advice on child protection matters, for co-ordinating action within the organisation and for liaising with Health and Social Services Trusts and other agencies about suspected or actual cases of child abuse.

The Council has appointed employees as Designated Child Protection Officers. They have been trained in child protection issues, and they are committed to the principle of confidentiality.

The Council's Designated Officers are:

- Jackie Fulton – Assistant Recreation Manager (Antrim Forum),
- Roberta Murray - Recreation Manager (Antrim Forum),
- Diane Irwin – (Health, Safety & Well-being Advisor) and

### **7.2 Role of the Designated Child Protection Officer is to:**

- Establish contact with the senior member of Social Services' staff responsible for child protection in the organisation's catchment area;
- Provide information and advice on child protection within the Council;

- Ensure that the Council's Child protection policy and procedures are followed, and to ensure that Social Services (within the appropriate Trust) are notified of any relevant concerns about individual children.
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover.
- Liaise with Social Services and other agencies, as appropriate;
- Keep relevant people within the Council, (particularly the Chief Executive), informed about any action taken and any further action required, while also ensuring confidentiality at all times.
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained, including the action taken by the organisation, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome.
- Advise the Council, in conjunction with Human Resources, of child protection training needs, updates and Policy review schedules.

## **8.0 RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE + INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR**

### **8.1 Potential signs and indicators of abuse**

There are different categories of abuse, and a child may be subjected to more than one type. These can be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. Bullying is also recognised.

A list of physical signs and behavioural indicators are attached at Appendix 1.

### **8.2 How to React and What to do**

If a child reports something to a Council employee, or they observe something happening that gives them cause for concern, there are key points that should guide any actions. There are no simple rules to follow when faced with these situations – if in doubt report matter to a Designated officer.

### **8.3 Responding to an allegation by a child**

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell and they are not to blame
- Take what the child says seriously, be patient with them and ensure that you do not lead them in answering or probe their replies, unduly.
- Keep any questioning to an absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.

- Re-assure the child, but do not make promises of confidentiality, which may subsequently not be possible.
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard or seen – as soon as possible.

## 8.4 What to do and Not do

<b>DO</b>	<b>DO NOT</b>
<p>✓ <b>Stay Calm</b> Ensure the child is safe and remains safe.</p>	<p>✗ <b>Panic</b> or rush into inappropriate actions.</p>
<p>✓ <b>Listen and hear.</b> Give the person time to say what they want to say.</p>	<p>✗ <b>Ask leading questions</b> (questions that influence the person to give a particular answer).</p>
<p>✓ <b>Reassure</b> them that they have done the right thing in telling you.</p>	<p>✗ <b>Promise</b> to keep secrets, or make any promise you cannot keep.</p>
<p>✓ <b>Record</b> in writing what was said as soon as possible.</p>	<p>✗ <b>Ask</b> for details of the abuse.</p>
<p>✓ <b>Report</b> the matter to a Designated Officer.</p>	<p>✗ <b>Make the child repeat</b> the story unnecessarily.</p>
<p>✓ <b>Record</b> your report accurately with fact.</p>	<p>✗ <b>Take sole responsibility</b>, rather you should consult your line manager.</p>
<p>✓ <b>Remain</b> if possible in sight of another adult, but not in earshot</p>	<p>✗ <b>Allow</b> anyone else (apart from police or social services) to question the child.</p>

## 9.0 REPORTING PROCEDURE

### 9.1 Information to be recorded should include

A clear distinction should be drawn between factual information, opinion and heresay. Reporting the matter to the Police or Social Services should not be delayed by attempts to gain further information. Records should be retained in a secure location and only viewed by appropriate personnel, Social Services or Police.

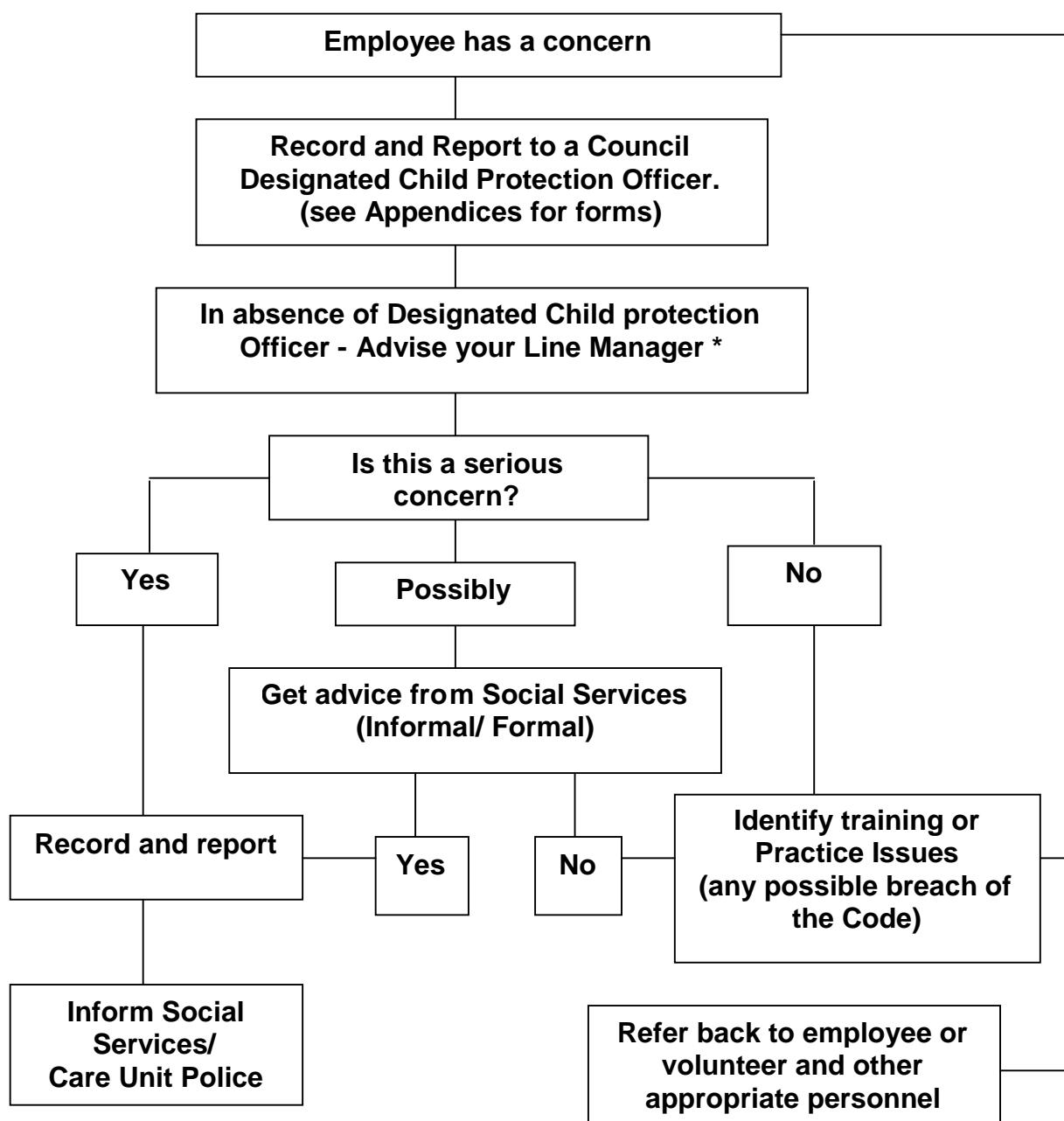
- Nature of the allegation

- Description of any physical injury or bruising
- Child's account of incident (or that of accompanying adult)
- Relevant dates, times, additional information

The correct Incident Report forms should be used – samples of these are shown in Appendices 7 & 8.

## 9.2 Procedure for reporting Child Protection Issues

The following flow chart illustrates the procedure for reporting child protection issues:



- **Line managers must advise the Council Designated Officers as soon as possible of any actions**

## 10.0 INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS

Investigations of child abuse and neglect are governed by strict guidance that has been agreed by all the agencies concerned.

The steps to be taken by the Council designated officer will depend on

### 10.1 Who the alleged abuser is

**10.1.1** If the concern is about the behaviour of a member of staff from Antrim Borough Council.

- The Council will take an immediate decision about whether to suspend (temporarily) the individual concerned pending further Police / Social Services enquiries / investigations.
- The Council will decide (irrespective of any external investigation) whether to reinstate an accused individual – based on available information.
- At all times the welfare and safety of children will be considered to be of paramount importance.

**10.1.2** If concern is about the behaviour of someone external to Antrim Borough Council:

- Report concerns to the Designated Officer
- Designated Officer (or substitute) to contact Social Services or Police
- Social Services / Designated Officer will decide how/when to inform parents / guardian

**10.1.3** In addition to the internal investigation, an allegation of abuse may give rise to:

- **A criminal investigation through PSNI**
- **Child Protection Investigation through Social Services**

The outcome of these investigations may influence any Council disciplinary investigation.

**10.2** Confidentiality must be maintained and information given out on a 'need to know' basis.

**10.3** Employees who breach the Code of Conduct may face the Council's disciplinary procedure and may leave themselves open to allegations being made. (Copy of Code of Conduct is at Appendix 2).

**10.4** If an allegation is made against a Council employee, Antrim Borough Council will investigate the matter internally and in line with our procedure for dealing with child protection concerns. The investigating officer will liaise with other Designated Officers for Child Protection, to see if they have any relevant records or any other relevant information concerning the employee(s) under investigation.

**10.5** Gravity of the concern / information received

**10.6** Where the alleged abuse took place (Outside home environment / Inside home environment).

**10.7 Ability to contact/ liase with relevant external agencies.**

## **11.0 REFERRALS**

Once referred to the relevant external agencies, their protocols will take over.

Referrals to the Police and Social services may not involve all of the steps outlined below – particularly where the abuse occurs outside of the family. In relation to abuse that occurs within a family context, the Children (NI) Order and best practice requires that, where problems can be dealt with through support and practical assistance, that this is the approach that will be adopted by the agencies involved.

## **12.0 SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT**

Council employees and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised, and that they are familiar with the Child Protection Policy.

### **12.1 Vetting of Staff and POCVA checks:**

For staff who will be working directly with young people under the age of 18, Human Resources will request a POCVA check: This list includes:

- All Antrim Forum staff
- All Community Centres staff
- Sports Development
- All Clotworthy staff
- All Environmental Health Staff
- All Allen Park
- Human Resources Staff
- Customer Services Advisors (Events)

## **13.0 EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

All Council employees will be trained regarding this policy.

Information on the Policy will be located at each of the Council's Health and Safety Notice boards.

## **14.0 PERMISSIONS**

### **14.1 Use and Control of Photographs / Video Images / Filming Equipment.**

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs/video footage of young people & vulnerable adults. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied by personal information. The content of a photograph can be used/adapted for inappropriate use and this adapted material can be put on to illicit web sites.

Some sporting activities such as Swimming, Gymnastics and Athletics have greater potential for misuse of images. With these sports the content of photographs should be focussed on the activity and not the individual – avoiding full body shots.

**14.2** In order to minimise the potential misuse of images by unscrupulous photographers guidelines have been devised and must be followed. The guidelines are attached at Appendix 5.

**14.3** Consent form for Photographer – where any event or activity will be photographed or videoed this form must be signed and completed by the Photographer. A copy of the form is attached at Appendix 6.

**14.4** Consent Form for permission for a child/children to be included in any Photograph – this form must be signed by parent or legal guardian whenever a child is being photographed. A copy of the form is attached at Appendix 7.

## **15.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY**

The Council will ensure that its Child Protection Policy is reviewed and updated at regular intervals.

# **APPENDICES**

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## Appendix 1

### Potential Signs and Indicators of Abuse

- Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is unlikely that Council employees will be experts but it is important that they have some awareness of signs of abuse
- It is our responsibility to provide a safe environment for children by employing people who are suitable to work with, or to have contact with, children. We do this by having effective and clear procedures for recruitment and also procedures for Council employees to report any suspicions, through our own procedures, to the relevant external expert bodies (PSNI / relevant Health Trust) who have legal powers and responsibilities.

#### **INDICATIONS THAT A CHILD MAY BE SUFFERING ABUSE INCLUDE:**

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if they are on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child describing what appears to be an abusive act involving himself or herself.
- Someone else – a child or adult – expressing concern about the welfare of the child.
- Unexplained changes in the child's behaviour over time; e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- The child showing inappropriate sexual awareness for their age.
- The child engaging in sexually explicit behaviour in games.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom the child previously had, or would normally be expected to have, a close relationship.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for physical activity.
- The child being prevented from mixing with other children.
- Displaying changes in their eating patterns, including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Loss of weight for no apparent reason.
- Increasingly dirty or unkempt appearance.

This list is not meant to be complete, and the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place.

It is not the responsibility of Council Employees to prove that abuse is taking place. Instead, it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them to the Designated Officer or Line Manager.

Every child is unique so it is difficult to be definitive in predicting how their behaviour will change as a result of their experience of abuse. Listed below are some physical signs and behavioural indicators that are more commonly seen in children and young people who are abused.

These 'signs' may only be indicators of abuse and should not be taken as *confirmation*.

<b>PHYSICAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>Physical Signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body</li> <li>➤ Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)</li> <li>➤ Cigarette burns</li> <li>➤ Bite marks</li> <li>➤ Broken bones</li> <li>➤ Scalds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fear of parents being approached for an explanation</li> <li>➤ Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts</li> <li>➤ Flinching when approached or touched</li> <li>➤ Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather</li> <li>➤ Depression</li> <li>➤ Withdrawn behaviour</li> <li>➤ Running away from home</li> </ul>
<b>EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>Physical signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A failure to thrive or grow</li> <li>➤ Sudden speech disorders</li> <li>➤ Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Neurotic behaviour, e.g. hair twisting, rocking</li> <li>➤ Being unable to play</li> <li>➤ Fear of making mistakes</li> <li>➤ Self harm</li> <li>➤ Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour</li> </ul>

<b>SEXUAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>Physical Signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas</li> <li>➤ Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas</li> <li>➤ Sexually transmitted disease</li> <li>➤ Vaginal discharge or infection</li> <li>➤ Stomach pains</li> <li>➤ Discomfort when walking or sitting down</li> <li>➤ Pregnancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn</li> <li>➤ Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people</li> <li>➤ Having nightmares</li> <li>➤ Running away from home</li> <li>➤ Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or development age</li> <li>➤ Sexual drawings or language</li> <li>➤ Bedwetting</li> <li>➤ Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about</li> <li>➤ Self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts</li> <li>➤ Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia</li> </ul>

<b>NEGLECT</b>	
<b>Physical Signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others</li> <li>➤ Constantly dirty or 'smelly'</li> <li>➤ Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight</li> <li>➤ Inappropriate dress for the conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Complaining of being tired all the time</li> <li>➤ Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments</li> <li>➤ Having few friends</li> <li>➤ Mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised</li> </ul>

The above lists are not exhaustive or definitive but are a suggested guide.

It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these signs and indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more indicators should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death within the family or the birth of a new baby in the family. Relationship problems between parents/carers can also be a potential reason.

It is not the responsibility of Council employees to prove that abuse is taking place. Instead, it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them to their Designated Officer / Line Manager.

### **Vulnerability of those with a Disability**

Safeguards for children 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 in all child protection cases, a multi-disciplinary approach should be used and agreement should be reached with regard to who is responsible for the Child Protection Investigation.

Disabled children have the same needs as other children. They may also have additional needs associated with their disability, however, which may increase their vulnerability to abuse.

- Children with disabilities are often more dependent on adults, eg in intimate care needs and may be cared for by a number of different adults. Such children often spend a lot of time away from home.
- Children with disabilities may be unable to recognise abusive behaviour because they have learning difficulties or a lack of awareness of education or information, and because they may have reduced exposure to the norm of adult/children interactions. For example, a child with disabilities may have difficulty in differentiating between appropriate and inappropriate touching.
- Many children, particularly those with physical disabilities, have a poor and/or incomplete body image and therefore may not recognise inappropriate behaviour.

## Appendix 2

### Code of Conduct for all Council Staff

It is not practical to provide definitive instructions that would apply to every situation where employees are in contact with children, and that would guarantee the protection of children and our employees.

The Code of Conduct should help to protect both children and employees.

- **Antrim Borough Council employees and volunteers must follow our Child Protection Policy and procedures at all times.**
- **Antrim Borough Council employees and volunteers must never:**
  - Engage in rough, inappropriate games including horseplay with children.
  - Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind.
  - *Acceptable touching should be:*
    - *always in response to the child's needs.*
    - *always be appropriate to the child's age and stage of development.*
    - *always be with the child's permission.*
  - Physically restrain a child or young person, unless it is to:
    - *Prevent physical injury to the child, to other children, to visitors or employees, or to yourself.*
    - *Prevent damage to any property.*
    - *Prevent or stop the child or young person committing a criminal offence.*

***In all circumstances, physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable. If not, your action can be defined as assault.***

- Take pictures of a child/ children
- Make sexually suggestive comments to, or within earshot of, a child.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves, or that their parent or the group leader can do for them.
- Allow a child to engage in physical training or activity beyond his/her capability.

- Allow a child to engage in inappropriate behaviour unchallenged.
- Allow a child's allegations to go unrecorded.

**3. Employees must not, except in emergencies:**

- Have children or young people on their own in a vehicle, unless parents have been notified and caution is exercised.
- Take a child to the toilet unless another adult is present,
- Spend time alone with a child on his or her own – if you find yourself in this situation, make sure that you can be clearly seen by others.

## Appendix 3

### **GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS, ORGANISATIONS AND COACHES USING ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL FACILITIES / SERVICES (OR RECEIVING GRANTS).**

All Organisations, Clubs or Governing bodies working with Under 18's, using Antrim Borough Council facilities / services (or applying for grants), should have a Child Protection Policy in place.

For those Clubs/Organisations who may not have a Child Protection Policy at present, they must accept and be bound to apply the standards of care as outlined in the Council's Child Protection Policy.

(A summary copy of the Policy will be distributed to Hirers along with the 'Conditions of Hire' information).

When primary responsibility for the welfare of children visiting/using Council facilities does not lie with Council staff the relevant organisation/group leader must be aware of the Council's Child Protection Policy and their obligation as regards 'Duty of Care'.

#### ❖ **INTRODUCTION**

- We aim to ensure that children are safe whilst visiting any of our properties. In addition to our responsibilities, we ask that hirers, coaches and volunteers exercise their own responsibilities and develop specific guidance on Child Protection. In the absence of such guidance, it will be necessary to comply with Antrim Borough Council's Child Protection Policy.

These responsibilities apply to all hirers, coaches and volunteers using our services and property. The Council expects all of the points below to be complied with in order that responsibility has been fulfilled.

#### ➤ **In particular, you must:**

- Ensure all coaching staff are suitably qualified to take the activity in question and that they have completed a child protection awareness course.
- Make sure you have adequate employee supervision by using the ratios stated in the Council's Child Protection Policy (Appendix 3 - Adult / Child Ratios)
- Ensure that all children within the group are properly supervised at all times. (Pg 17 - Supervision of Children) highlights key points.
- Never abuse a child or young person in any way
- Ensure adequate insurance cover for the group and leaders; and

- Explain to the group what standards of behaviour are expected while using Council's facilities.

***The primary responsibility for the welfare of the children remains with group leaders at all times.***

➤ **Expected standards of behaviour from groups using Council facilities:**

We expect all our visitor and service users to show courtesy and respect for others and for our property, at all times.

You should therefore not allow members of your group to:

- Make any sectarian, sexist, racist or other offensive remarks towards any person in their group or any other groups/individuals.
- Vandalise Council property;
- Leave litter in or around Council property;
- Use bad language
- Smoke;
- Bully (verbally or physically); or
- Use threatening, abusive or violent behaviour.

If any of the above standards are not followed, we have the right to refuse future requests to hire or use our facilities, and we can ask the group to leave.

❖ **REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS –**

If you have a concern about any child attending your club / group or a child in you club / group has disclosed information to you, you must act and report this to a designated child protection Officer. In the absence of a Designated child protection officer, a senior officer in the facility must be notified. (See Flowchart Reporting Procedures at Page 10).

All pertinent information must be recorded on the appropriate reporting form (*Appendix 7 or 8 depending if an incident or a disclosure has taken place*).



## **SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN**

Making arrangements for the proper supervision of children is one of the best ways you can minimise the opportunities for children to suffer any harm while in your care.

Antrim Borough Council recognises that there are two levels of service utilisation:

- (a) that which requires supervision under the control of leaders in a structured environment, (eg summer scheme / Clubs), and
- (b) that requiring general supervision within the confines of a facility in an unstructured environment (eg public swimming).

The Policy provides general information on both levels of service utilisation but concentrates mainly on structured activities. Parents encouraging individual children to attend facilities in an unstructured environment will be provided with information on their responsibilities and duty of care in order that they can assess the level of supervision required, as a parent/guardian.

Our Duty to Care, which is recognised as the standard for good practice in Child Protection in Northern Ireland, suggests that when you organise journeys, visits or trips, you should follow the guidelines below.

### **Planned activities**

- ❖ You are responsible for the children's welfare and safety for the whole time they are left in Council's care.
- ❖ You should not leave young people to their own devices; for example, in a town for the evening or on shopping expeditions.
- ❖ You should ensure that all children are adequately supervised and engaged in suitable activities at all times.
- ❖ When you organise journeys or visits, you should plan and prepare a detailed written activity plan for the children who are involved. In cases where arrangements may be affected by weather, back-up plans should be made.
- ❖ When your planned activities are disrupted, eg because of weather conditions, you should have alternative activities planned.
- ❖ You should get written parental consent for any children to join an organised trip.
- ❖ You should give parents full information about the trip, including details of the programme of events and the planned activities.

## Supervising children

- ❖ If you are a leader in charge, you must be satisfied that the workers and adults who accompany group parties are fully competent to do so.
- ❖ Children must be supervised at all times.
- ❖ Children must not be left unsupervised at any venue, whether it is indoors or outdoors.
- ❖ You and the other workers should know at all times where children are, and what they are doing.
- ❖ Any activity using potentially dangerous equipment should have constant adult supervision.
- ❖ Children will be safer if supervised by two or more adults.
- ❖ Dangerous behaviour by children should not be allowed.
- ❖ If mixed groups are taken away, a male and female employee/ supervisor should always accompany them.
- ❖ If children are being supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that the supervisors work in pairs.



## **ADULT/CHILD RATIOS**

Supervision must be adequate, whether at the organisation's venue or on a journey or visit. As a leader, when you decide how many adults you will need for supervision, you must consider a range of practical matters.

- ❖ The number of participants in the group.
- ❖ The nature of the site or venue.
- ❖ The activities to be undertaken – if an activity is hazardous, eg mountain climbing, there are specific ratios of adults to children that you must follow. You can check these ratios by contacting the relevant sporting bodies, or the Education and Library Board – Youth Service.
- ❖ It is important that each individual supervisor knows his or her responsibilities.
- ❖ We recommend that you should not make a journey or visit without at least two adults in attendance, one of whom must be a worker. You should not count bus drivers as supervisors.
- ❖ It is up to the leader in charge to decide on the level of supervision, taking into account our guidance as stated above.  
  
If a party consists of both girls and boys, you should provide both male and female supervision, unless otherwise agreed.
- ❖ If an activity involves swimming and the children are under eight years of age, the ratio must be one adult to one child.
- ❖ There should always be at least two members of staff supervising any group of children.
- ❖ For specialist sports or activities (eg canoeing) ratios recommended by the appropriate governing body should be followed.

Our standard recommended ratios for activities are:

### **On Site**

0-2 years of age	<b>1</b> staff member to three children
3-4 years of age	<b>1</b> staff member to four children
5-7 years of age	<b>1</b> staff member to eight children
8 years and over	<b>2</b> staff members (preferably one male, one female) for up to 30 children

There should be one additional staff member for every 15 extra children or young people.

## Off Site

0-3 years of age	1 staff member to two children
4-7 years of age	1 staff member to five children
<b>8 years and over</b>	1 staff member to 10 children

- ❖ The ratio of staff and volunteers to children with disabilities depends on the needs of the individual child.





## APPENDIX 4

### Providing Effective Management for Employees and Volunteers Through Supervision, Support and Training

Working with children is both worthwhile and fulfilling, but it is also challenging.

Once we have recruited our employees and volunteers, we need to ensure that they are all well informed, trained, supervised and supported, so that they are less likely to become involved in actions that can cause harm or be misunderstood.

The process should include the following:

#### ❖ **Induction**

Our employees need clear instructions on the tasks and limits that apply to them as newcomers. All new employees will receive appropriate Child Protection training (based on their designation and level of contact with children). On completion of training, staff sign a written record to say that they understand the policy and code of conduct. Copy of code of conduct for staff is at Appendix 2.

They need to be familiar with our Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour, as well as other associated Council policies such as 'health and safety'.

#### ❖ **Probationary or trial period**

We aim to review the development and suitability of new employees and volunteers within six months of their taking up post. For seasonal posts and short-term contracts, this period will be reduced.

#### ❖ **Supervision and support**

This focuses on the work that new employees and volunteers need to do, and how they should do it. Leaders and managers can also comment on any good work that the new recruits have done. Supervision provides an opportunity for new employees and volunteers to share concerns about their working environment.

This supervision and support may be on a one-to-one basis, or in a group setting. It may be a regular formal meeting, or an informal discussion, as the need arises. It should provide an opportunity for both parties to discuss issues of importance and identify training needs.

We recommend that everyone involved retains a note of any agreed action points.

#### ❖ **Training**

We recognise the importance of effective training and development.

It is management's responsibility to identify both the individual and common training needs of our employees and volunteers. (See Appendix 6 – Child Protection training).

Training should be an ongoing process, and relevant to the roles that people play in our organisation. All employees and volunteers who work with children and young people will participate in child protection training, which should include:

- Awareness of abuse
- Organisational policy and procedures
- Skills training
- Health and safety

## **Appendix 5**

### **Guidelines for Use and Control of Photographs / Video Images / Filming Equipment.**

- All media photographers at events should be registered with the Council prior to the event – they should wear and display visual identification at all times.
- When employing the services of photographers – check their credentials.
- Do not allow photographers unsupervised access to children / participants or on a one –to – one basis.
- Parents should be notified that photographers will be present at relevant activity or event – their written consent to photography and ‘image capture’ should be obtained.
- Good practice suggests that the names of children should not be used in published photographs and video footage without the express permission of the parent or guardian.
- Parents and spectators intending to photograph and video an event should be made aware of the guidelines and appropriate expectations and complete an imaging consent form.
- Provide a clear brief to photographers about what is considered appropriate in terms of visual content and general behaviour.

Concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported and recorded in the same manner as any other Child Protection concern.

**Appendix 6**



**CONSENT FORM  
USE OF CAMERAS AND OTHER IMAGE RECORDING DEVICES**

*(To be used following consultation with the customer, where permission is granted for the use of cameras / image recording devices)*

Venue / Area:

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of equipment:

\_\_\_\_\_

Full Name (Of Photographer):

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Event to be photographed: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for taking Photographs and uses that the images are intended to be put to  
e.g Advertising, local press coverage, personal family/ friends collection.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**I declare that the information provided is true and correct and that the images will only be used for the purpose as stated above**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorised By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 7**



**PHOTOGRAPHIC / IMAGING CONSENT FORM**

*(To be used where consent is sought from child to be photographed)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Work Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date Photograph Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Photograph: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Photographer: \_\_\_\_\_

**I consent to having my photograph taken and understand that these photographs may be used by Antrim Borough Council for promotional purposes.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are under 18 years of age you must have the consent of a parent or legal guardian.**

Name of Parent / Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to person photographed: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

**On Behalf of Antrim Borough Council:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 8**

**CHILD PROTECTION  
INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

**Allegations or suspicions of abuse**

***Private and Confidential***

Please answer all the questions fully  
This form **must** be kept in a secure place

**DEPARTMENT:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**WORK LOCATION/CENTRE:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**DATE / TIME INCIDENT REPORTED:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Area where Incident occurred:

\_\_\_\_\_

Time Incident occurred: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Incident occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Child(rens) Full Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Accompanying Adult's Full Name ( if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_



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Action Taken by Senior Officer / Designated Officer:

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Staff attending Incident:

Designation:

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Report Completed By:

Designation:

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**APPENDIX 9**

**CHILD PROTECTION  
DISCLOSURE REPORT FORM**

**Allegations or suspicions of abuse**

*Private and Confidential*

Please answer all the questions fully

This form **must** be kept in a secure place

**DEPARTMENT:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**WORK LOCATION/CENTRE:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**NAME OF CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**AGE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT OR CARER'S FULL NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HOME ADDRESS:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NUMBER:**

\_\_\_\_\_

***Please complete those sections below that are relevant and mark 'not applicable' in those sections that are not relevant***

**1. ALLEGATION**

**When was the allegation made (dates and times)?**

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**What were the immediate circumstances leading to the allegation?**

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**Were there others present at the time of disclosure?**

**YES**

**NO**

**DON'T KNOW**

**If YES, please state who (name and position) and what role they played:**

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**What feelings did the young person express before, during and immediately after the disclosure?**

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## 2. SIGNS

**Describe any signs of physical injury evident on the child or young person:**

**Describe any signs of behavioural changes displayed by the child or young person:**

**Has the child or young person alleged that any particular person is the abuser?**  
(If so, please record the details below)

**Did the child or young person agree to any future course of action?**

**What action has been taken?**

Empty rectangular box for reporting details.

**3. SIGNATURES**

**TO BE SIGNED BY THE PERSON REPORTING / DOCUMENTING THE ALLEGATION**

Signed:

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME: (BLOCK CAPITALS)

POSITION: (BLOCK CAPITALS)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**REFERRED TO**

: \_\_\_\_\_

*LINE MANAGER or DESIGNATED OFFICER (delete as appropriate)*

**SIGNATURE:**

**DATE:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 10

### **ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL – CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING OUTLINE**

#### **DELIVERY**

Training will be co-ordinated and delivered by the Human Resources section of the Corporate Services Department.

#### **AIM**

Different levels of Child Protection Training will be given as appropriate, to Council departments, managers and employees. The aim is to increase awareness of Child Protection issues and procedures as set out in the Antrim Borough Council Child Protection Policy, bearing in mind appropriate responsibility levels and authority.

The training will be delivered at different levels, as follows:

#### **CHILD PROTECTION AWARENESS TRAINING**

***Duration: Approximately 45 minutes***

This training will be for Senior Managers, Councillors and relevant Departmental Managers, and will outline the main issues in the Child Protection Policy.

#### **OPERATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING**

***Duration: Approximately 3 hours***

The training will be for all employees with significant direct contact with children and young people. Participants will include Leisure Centre Attendants, Cleaners, On-Call Staff, Receptionists and Community Centre Caretakers. The training will cover all the relevant Child Protection issues such as awareness of abuse, code of conduct and reporting procedures.

#### **MANAGEMENT/SUPERVISORY TRAINING**

***Duration: Approximately 6 hours***

This training will be for Officers, Managers and Team Leaders with responsibility for managing employees who have direct contact with children and young people. The training will examine closely the Antrim Borough Council Child Protection Policy, focusing on such issues as signs and symptoms of abuse, supervision and support of employees, code of conduct, and reporting procedures.

#### **DESIGNATED OFFICER TRAINING**

***Duration: Approximately ? hours***

This training will be specifically for Council designated child protection Officers, allowing them to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the position effectively.

## **APPENDIX 11**

### **KEY PRINCIPLES ON PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS**

#### **LAW**

Any physical intervention should be consistent with the legal obligations, responsibilities, rights and protection afforded to children under the law.

#### **VALUES**

Physical interventions should only be used in the best interests of all concerned.

Everyone should be treated fairly and with courtesy and respect.

#### **PREVENTION OF CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR**

Challenging behaviours can often be prevented by careful management of setting and conditions.

Prevention procedures should be developed to ensure that problematic episodes are properly managed with non-physical interventions before service users become violent.

#### **PROMOTING THE BEST INTERESTS OF SERVICE USERS**

Physical interventions should only be used in conjunction with other strategies designed to help service users learn alternative non-challenging behaviours.

The use of physical interventions should be subject to regular review.

#### **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

The potential hazards associated with the use of physical interventions should be explored using a risk assessment procedure. Physical interventions must not involve unreasonable risk.

#### **MINIMISING RISK AND PROMOTING THE WELL-BEING OF SERVICE USERS**

Physical interventions should be employed for the minimum duration of time.

Any single intervention should be employed for the minimum duration of time.

Physical interventions should not cause pain.

#### **MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Service Managers are responsible for ensuring that all incidents which involve the use of physical interventions are clearly, comprehensively and promptly recorded.

All service users and their families and representative should have ready access to an effective complaints procedure.

## **EMPLOYERS RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS STAFF**

Employers and managers are responsible for the safety and well-being of staff.

Employees should be encouraged to monitor all physical interventions and to report any incidents which give cause for concern.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

Employees who may be required to use physical interventions should receive regular training in knowledge, skills and values.

Training should be provided by an instructor who has appropriate experience and qualifications.

Staff should only employ physical interventions that they have been trained to use.

Physical interventions must only be used as short-term measures to prevent immediate danger of serious personal injury to the child, another person or (exceptionally) to property, and only if there is no viable alternative. Whenever possible another member of staff should assist or be present. In all incidents where physical intervention is employed, the following rules apply:

- Age, size and gender are appropriate considerations in deciding physical contact.
- Only the least restrictive techniques necessary should be used.
- Physical Contact will only be used and used confidently, in a situation where all other methods of intervention have not been successful in reducing the immediate danger to that person or others.
- Physical Contact must be based on established procedures which have been formally trained to the employees/volunteers concerned.
- Each use of physical restraint must be fully and separately recorded and staff involved given the opportunity to debrief as to its necessity and content.
- In no circumstances whatsoever, should any aversive practice be used, humiliating and pain-inducing procedures must be avoided at all times and every regard paid to the safety and dignity of all participants.

The following physical interventions are unacceptable:

- Face down (prone) restraint.
- Corporal punishment.
- Physical restraint or restriction of bodily movement applied as punishment.
- Seclusion, use of secure room.
- Denial or reduction of food.
- Shouting, raised voices or verbal abuse.



## Appendix 12

### Access NI Part V of the Police Act 1997 Information Sheet

#### **What is it?**

**ACCESS NI** is a new **system** for the disclosure of an individual's criminal history. It is being established by the Northern Ireland Office as a result of the introduction in N. Ireland of Part V of the Police Act 1997 and will replace the current system of pre-employment checking administered by the DHSSPS.

#### **When will it be implemented?**

Organisations should be able to **register** with ACCESS NI from Winter 2007. The checking system is expected to be operational from January 2008.

#### **How will it be implemented?**

Employers will be required to register with ACCESS NI to become a "Registered Body". There will be a fee of approximately £150 per organisation to register. This will include the registration of one counter signatory. This person will undergo the equivalent of an "enhanced" check (see below). An additional fee will be levied for each additional counter signatory who will also undergo an "enhanced" check.

#### **Levels of Disclosure**

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** or **enhanced** disclosure. All **regulated positions** under the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 will be subject to **enhanced disclosure**.

This level of disclosure will provide criminal record information including spent and unspent convictions and cautions. If the post involves work with vulnerable groups, it will also provide UK Disqualification List Information. It will not provide soft intelligence information.

##### **3. Enhanced Disclosure**

This level of disclosure will provide NI and GB criminal record including spent convictions and UK Disqualification List information:

- Disqualification from Working with Children List (NI)
- Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adult List (NI)
- Protection of Children Act List (E/W)
- Protection of Vulnerable Adult List (E/W)
- Disqualification from Working with Children List (Scotland)

- Unsuitable Persons List (UK)

It will also provide UK Soft Intelligence.

All **regulated positions** under the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 will be subject to an **enhanced disclosure**.

## **COSTS**

In cases where disclosures are not free, the cost per disclosure is expected to be around £35, though this has not yet been finalised.

Disclosures for unpaid volunteers working in **eligible** organisations will be free of charge. However, organisations must demonstrate eligibility at the point of registration.

An eligible organisation is one which is not substantially funded by government, i.e. 51%. Volunteers in an organisation that is funded for more than 51% by government will be charged.

Registered umbrella bodies will need to develop a user agreement with their member organisations to ensure that they can pass information down to them, while meeting the guarantees for security required by Access NI.

## **Appendix 13**

### **Physical contact and young people in sport**

#### **Introduction and Background**

There is growing concern being expressed about what is and what is not permissible in the area of physical contact with children and young people in sport. Some misleading and inaccurate information has been promoted within the sports sector and this can undermine the confidence of coaches and others in applying safe and appropriate coaching methods.

There have also been instances where some coaches and other adults who are motivated to harm and abuse children and young people have done so by falsely claiming that their behaviours were legitimate teaching, coaching or caring practices.

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the position of the CPSU in relation to this issue and provide guidance to all those involved in working with young people in sport.

#### **Guidance**

There are a number of principles that should be followed when the activity involves physical contact.

Physical contact during sport should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. The adult should only use physical contact if their aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques
- To treat an injury
- To prevent an injury or accident from occurring
- To meet the requirements of the sport

The adult should seek to explain the nature and reason for the physical contact to the child reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission.

It is good practice for sport clubs, as part of an induction process or pack for new members, to explain to parents/carers and their child or give written guidance about any physical contact that will be required as part of that activity. Children should be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment. Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.

The CPSU is not aware of any sports bodies that have stated that any physical contact is not permissible under any circumstances within the context of coaching or teaching.

In the case of a young person with a disability specific support or assistance may be required. When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, the individual child should be treated with dignity and respect. Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting. It is recommended that those assisting receive appropriate training.

### **Specific Situations**

#### **Physical punishment**

Any form of physical punishment of children is unlawful, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of physical intervention to prevent a young person from;

- Harming themselves
- Harming others
- Damaging property

It is particularly important that adults understand this both to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the organisation in which they are involved.

#### **Contact as part of Coaching**

Some sport or physical activities are more likely to require coaches or teachers to come into physical contact with children and young people from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples include showing a pupil how to use a piece of apparatus or equipment or demonstrating a move or exercise during a coaching or teaching session in order to reduce the risk of injury due to falls or errors when performing. Adults should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.

A number of sport or physical activities may require physical contact between young athletes and those teaching them, for reasons of both teaching and the participant's safety. A number of sports governing bodies have developed guidance to assist coaches in this area. Those teaching these sports should follow this guidance. Even in sports where there is a need to support or touch a child, over-handling should be avoided.

It should be recognised that physical contact between an adult and a child that may occur during legitimate teaching or coaching may be misconstrued or misunderstood by a pupil, parent or observer. Touching young participants, including well intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to the possibility of questions being raised. As a general principle adults in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. It is particularly unwise to attribute frequent touching to their teaching or coaching style or as a way of relating to young participants.

#### **Responding to distress and success**

There may be occasions where a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Physical contact may also be required to prevent an accident or injury and this would be wholly appropriate. A young person or coach may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Adults should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present)

normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. It should also be considered that what, as an adult may, be felt appropriate may not be shared by a young person.



### **Sports Science and Medicine**

There may be some roles within sport or physical activities where physical contact is common place and/or a requirement of the role, particularly sports science or medicine. These tasks should only be undertaken by properly trained or qualified practitioners. This guidance does not seek to replace the specific guidance and codes of practice developed for those professionals and reference should be made to the appropriate body for that discipline.








## Appendix 14

### USEFUL CONTACTS







#### RELEVANT TRUSTS

<p><b>Homefirst Community Trust</b> The Cottage Greenmount Avenue BALLYMENA BT43 6DA</p> <p> 028 2563 3700</p>	<p><b>United Hospitals Trust</b> 45 Bush Road ANTRIM BT41 2RL</p> <p> 028 9442 4000</p>
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#### INFORMATION AND TRAINING

<p><b>Volunteer Development Agency -</b> 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 58, Howard Street BELFAST BT1 6PG</p> <p> 028 9023 6100 <a href="http://www.volunteering-ni.org">www.volunteering-ni.org</a></p>	<p><b>Youth Net</b> The Warehouse 7 James Street South Bedford Street BELFAST BT2 3JH</p> <p> 028 9033 1880</p>
<p><b>Child Care NI</b> 216 Belmont Road BELFAST BT4 2AT</p> <p> 028 9065 2713</p>	<p><b>Mencap</b> Segal House 4 Annadale Avenue BELFAST BT7 3JH</p> <p> 028 9069 1351</p>
<p><b>NIPPA</b> 6c Wildflower Way Apollo Road BELFAST BT12 6TA</p> <p> 028 9066 2825</p>	<p><b>Kidscape</b> 2 Grosvenor Gardens LONDON SW1W 0DH</p> <p> 020 7730 3300 Local Rate: 08457 205 204</p>
<p><b>Sports Council for Northern Ireland</b> House of Sport Upper Malone Road BELFAST BT9 5LA</p> <p> 028 9038 1222</p>	<p><b>Disability Action</b> 189 Airport Road West BELFAST BT3 9ED</p> <p> 028 9029 7880</p>

## **ADVICE AND COUNSELLING**

<p><b>NSPCC</b> Child Protection Helpline 24 hours, Freephone</p> <p> 0808 8005000</p>	<p><b>Childline (NI)</b> PO Box 111 BELFAST BT1 7DA</p> <p> 028 9032 7773 Freephone: 0800 1111</p>
<p><b>Contact Youth</b> 2A Ribble Street BELFAST BT4 1HW</p> <p> Youthline Freephone 0808 8088000</p>	<p><b>Nexus Institute –</b> Awareness of Abuse 119 University Street BELFAST BT7 1HP</p> <p> 028 9032 6803</p>
<p><b>Antrim District Citizens Advice Bureau</b> 10d High Street ANTRIM BT41 1AN</p> <p> 028 9442 8176</p>	<p><b>Child Protection in Sport Unit NSPCC</b> Jennymount Business Park North Derby Street Belfast BT15 3HN</p> <p> 028 90351135 <a href="http://www.theccpsu.org.uk">www.theccpsu.org.uk</a></p>

## **APPENDIX 15**

### **USEFUL PUBLICATIONS**

#### **Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Childrens Sport,**

(Sports Council for Northern Ireland 2003)

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

#### **Protecting Children – A Guide for Sportspeople**

(The National Coaching Foundation and NSPCC 1995)

#### **Child Protection – Policy and Implementation Procedures**

(Guidelines for Governing Bodies of Sport and Local Authorities)

(The National Coaching Foundation 2000)

#### **Child Protection Policy and Implementation Procedures**

(Guidelines for sport and recreation providers)

(Institute of Sport and Recreation Management 2002)