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 NHSCT.

Sarah Woods is the Designated Child Protection Officer and attends regular training to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of safeguarding within Kells & Connor Pre-school. Allison Loudon is the Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer and Emma McCormick 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.

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.
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.

1. Unexplained delay in seeking medical treatment, when needed
2. Incompatible explanations
3. Constant minor injuries
4. Unexplained bruising
5. Bruise marks in and around mouth
6. Black eyes, especially if both eyes are black and there are no marks to forehead or nose
7. Grasp marks
8. Bruising of the ears
9. Linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back)
10. Differing age bruising
11. Bite marks, burns or scalds
12. Cigarette burns, general physical disability
13. Unresponsiveness, soiling or wetting
14. Changing behaviour patterns, attention seeking
15. Anti-social behaviour, sexualised drawing and play
16. Poor self-esteem, withdrawal
17. Reluctance to return home after playgroup

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 or neglect 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.
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
Signed by Chairperson

- Emma McCormick  
  6th November 2013

- Emma McCormick  
  19th November 2014
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 – Mrs Elizabeth Harris
02825635110
If unavailable I can speak to the Duty Social Worker

If I am still concerned I can talk to Emma McCormick
Committee Designated Child Protection Officer

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