

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Introduction

Castlereagh Borough Council is committed to a delivery of service that promotes good practice and protects children from harm. Members and staff within the Council accept and recognise the Council's responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that may cause children harm.

Our Child Protection Policy covers a wide range of child-centred service areas, which include:

- Leisure centres
- Summer schemes
- Play and recreation facilities
- Crèche facilities
- Community centre activities
- Sports activities
- Any other Council organised events that involve children

The Child Protection Policy is for all those deemed to be in regulated positions (POCVA), for example those who work with children including full-time, part-time, seasonal, and on-call staff, students placements, volunteers and external service providers. All will be subject to relevant recommended checks and child protection training.

'For the purposes of this policy a child is defined as a person under 18'

Aim of the policy

The policy aims to ensure compliance with the Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995) and that all children participating in activity programmes organised by the Council either on or off its premises do so in as safe a manner as possible.

Objectives of the policy

This policy sets out to

- (a) Clarify the Council's responsibilities in respect of Child Protection.
- (b) Outline why within the context of the Council's facilities and activities Child Protection is important.
- (c) Identify the specific steps the Council is taking in fulfillment of its responsibilities including
 - In terms of employment procedures.
 - Staff training.
 - Guidance for its own staff and other organisations using Council facilities.
 -

Background

The **Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995)** came into force on 4th November 1996 and is based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children. It reforms, consolidates and harmonises most of the public and private law relating to children, in a single coherent statutory framework.

The Order embodies 5 key principles:

- **Paramountcy** - 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, especially with parents
- **Protection** - children should be safe, and should be protected by intervention if they are in danger

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

The Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety guidelines ‘Co-operating to Safeguard Children’ states that:

“Staff employed by councils may become involved in child protection cases either because of suspicions or 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 that councils should have clear policies and procedures for dealing with such circumstances. Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC’s) should encourage them to develop appropriate links within their local Health & Social Services Trusts”.

Policy Statement

Castlereagh Borough Council confirms its commitment to making sure that children are protected and kept safe from harm while staff from this organisation are supervising them. Children have the right to be safe. All staff should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

In fulfillment of the responsibilities placed on it in terms of “Duty of Care” the council specifically undertakes to:

- (a) Identify all those posts where staff are in regulated positions and are directly involved in working with children. The Human Resources department maintains a list of relevant staff.
- (b) Ensure that prior to commencing employment with the Council, individuals appointed to the above posts are subject to appropriate pre-employment checks. The Human Resources department ensures that pre-employment checks are completed prior to commencement of employment. The Council does not undertake responsibility for individuals not directly employed by them.
- (c) Ensure that an induction booklet including a Code of Conduct (See Appendix 1) is prepared for all staff as part of their induction, setting out the priority the Council attaches to ensuring the safety of children making use of its services and facilities. This booklet is prepared and updated by the Human Resources department.
- (d) Create a culture of safety by raising staff awareness about the issue of child protection and developing guidance on 'whistle blowing'. The Council has an established Child Protection Working Group where this is promoted.
- (e) Ensure that within three months of commencing employment all staff receives training in respect of Child Protection issues.
- (f) Adopt the Code of Conduct set out in Appendix 1 as a guide to all staff in regulated positions working with young people. This will be communicated to staff through child protection training, circulation of information leaflets and the Child Protection Working Group.
- (g) Advise staff of CBC Disciplinary Procedures at induction, should they breach the Code of Conduct. (Please contact the Human Resource section (90 494500) if you wish to obtain a copy of the disciplinary policy, or visit the Council intranet site.)
- (h) Ensure the Council has Codes of behaviour in place for those who hire the council facilities and that those who hire our facilities have their own codes of behaviour to adhere to.
- (i) Establishment of reporting procedures for concerns about a member of staff (Appendix 8) and concerns external to Castlereagh Borough Council (Appendix 9).
- (j) Establish procedures for recording child protection concerns (Appendix 8).
- (k) Has procedures relating specifically to bullying and peer abuse (Appendix 3), transport and use of photography (Appendices 5, 6 & 7).
- (l) Ensure that all children are treated equally
- (m) Regularly review and monitor Child Protection procedures by the management committee

- (n) Appoint a Designated Officer(s) to whom staff can refer any concerns about suspected child abuse or related issues. This Officer is to liaise with relevant authorities if an investigation is required
- (o) Ensure Castlereagh Borough Council Terms and Conditions of Hire for Facilities draw to the attention of organisations/clubs hiring such facilities, the importance the Council places on the safety of young people (Appendix 10).
- (p) Prepare a booklet outlining Good Practice in relation to children's safety when organising activities for young children. This booklet to be made available in all Council facilities. It should be distributed to all those who hire council facilities.

The Council provides facilities and services for children either directly through, for example, summer schemes, or indirectly, by the hiring of facilities to voluntary clubs and associations. In doing so, the Council recognises the clear responsibilities placed on it under the Children's Northern Ireland Order (1995) in terms of fulfilling its "Duty of Care" in respect of those young people participating in such activities. The Order 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 welfare of children and young people is paramount to Castlereagh Borough Council. It is the Council's intention through this policy to protect as far as possible children involved in any activities it directly or indirectly organises, from all types of abuse. The Council will endeavour to provide an environment which values and protects children, in all aspects and at every level regardless of:

- perceived ability
- cultural identity
- religious beliefs
- gender.

It is generally recognised that recreational activity including sport can contribute positively to the development of individuals not just physically but personally, socially and emotionally. This can only happen if those young people participating in activities do so safely, under the auspices of an informed forward thinking and enlightened employee or volunteer operating in an accepted ethical framework. Children participating in activities should be ensured of a fun, enjoyable and safe place to do so. They cannot feel happy or content if there are actions preventing this from occurring, therefore measures should be taken to prevent all causes of child abuse before they occur.

Some Council staff will find themselves in positions of considerable influence – particularly when supervising young people. Staff therefore have a profound responsibility through their daily duties to demonstrate and set high moral and ethical standards. In addition, in an age of increasing litigation and with a growing awareness of the incidence of all kinds of abuse, it is essential that staff stop to consider their own practise to ensure that children's welfare is paramount and that their behaviour cannot be misconstrued or deemed to contravene accepted good practice. Good practice protects everybody including:

- the child
- the employee
- the Borough Council

Equality Statement

Castlereagh Borough Council is committed to a policy of equal treatment of all members and requires all members of whatever level of authority to abide and adhere to this general principle and the requirements of the codes of practice issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission and Commission for Racial Equality.

The Council is committed to the duties imposed by Section 75 (1) and (2) in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. It will have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity;

- Between person's of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Between men and women generally;
- Between person's with a disability and persons without; and
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

The Council is also committed to having regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion or racial group. The Equality Scheme sets out this commitment, detailing the procedures and steps it will take to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

The Scheme has been approved by the Equality Commission and a copy of the full Equality scheme is available on request from;

Mr Adrian Donaldson
Chief Executive
Castlereagh Borough Council
Civic & Administrative Offices
Bradford Court
Upper Galwally
Castlereagh
BT8 6RB

All Children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability should be involved in Sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate to their full potential alongside other children (Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport 2000)

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

The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (POCVA) became law in February 2003 and was commenced (with the exception of Article 46) on 1st April 2005.

POCVA aims to improve existing safeguards for children and vulnerable adults by preventing unsuitable people working with them in paid or voluntary positions. It introduced two new services:

- The Protection of Children (NI) Service [POC (NI)]; and
- The Protection of Vulnerable Adults (NI) Service [POVA (NI)]

POCVA requires the DHSSPS to maintain a list of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work (in a paid or unpaid capacity) with children in a “regulated position”. The List is known as the Disqualification from Working with Children List [DWC (NI) List].

POCVA also requires the DHSSPS to maintain a list of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work (in a paid or unpaid capacity) with vulnerable adults. This list is known as the Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adults List [DWVA (NI) List].

This new legislation is designed to significantly enhance the protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. POCVA complements, rather than replaces, existing child protection measures. It is no substitute for a robust recruitment and selection process.

Confidentiality Statement

Castlereagh Borough Council employees will never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a ‘need to know’ basis, with the welfare of the child paramount.

Considerations of confidentiality will not be allowed to override the rights of children or young people to be protected from harm (See Appendix 2)

A summary of the Child Protection Policy is displayed at all Castlereagh Borough Council facilities and a copy of the full policy can be requested from the Human Resources Department.

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is the term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults but also by other children and often by those they know and trust. Abuse of a child often takes place in the home, in school or in their sporting/leisure/community environment. Child abuse is a very emotive and difficult subject, especially if you think your child or a child you know is being harmed. It refers to the damage done to a child’s physical or mental health.

It is essential that every adult involved in children’s activities follow agreed Codes of Conduct and engage in Best Practice so that the environment in which the children play and

take part is as safe and enjoyable as possible. Promoting this principle of good practice and campaigning to publicise the best advice to all coaches, administrators, officials, teachers and parents/guardians needs the support of all organisations and their members.

The Children (NI) Order 1995 formally recognises four types of abuse:

Physical Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the willful 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 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 neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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.

Peer Abuse and Bullying

Though bullying is not formally a form of abuse "Co-operating to Safeguard Children" (DHSS) places a responsibility on all institutions to;

"protect children from bullying and to have policies and procedures in place to do so"

The risk of bullying and harassment by adults and by children must be addressed by taking active steps to prevent it occurring and to intervene promptly and decisively when it comes to light. Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression by an individual or group against others e.g. teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting or extortion.

There are different types of bullying and these can occur between:

- ❑ Child to child
- ❑ Adult to child,
- ❑ Child to adult.

Bullying may be prevented by:

- Raising awareness of bullying as an unacceptable behaviour
- Encouraging children to report bullying
- Comprehensive supervision
- Providing a supportive environment for victims of bullying

(Please refer to Appendix 3 - Anti-bullying and Peer Abuse Statement)

In defining peer abuse or the more commonly acknowledged abuse of children by adults the similarities are far more noteworthy than the differences. There is a strong correlation between peer abuse and other forms of abuse in terms of the types of behaviours exhibited, their impact, and outcomes and to some extent prevalence and in this regard it can be clearly demonstrated that peer abuse should be considered a form of child abuse.

Adults often do not interpret bullying behaviours as 'abusive' but as 'conflict'. However, 'conflict' constitutes mutually aggressive interactions between peers, not the abuse of one individual at the hands of another, more powerful individual. The severity or seriousness of a bullying or peer abuse situation cannot be determined in terms of actions or frequency. Whilst policy and guidelines play an important role in addressing bullying and peer abuse, cases should be treated individually and dealt with depending on the effect and circumstances surrounding them.

Actions can be changed, but feelings are a personal issue. Those dealing with bullying or peer abuse disclosures or incidents should avoid judging the effect of the situation by their own feelings and take into account the feelings of the victim.

Castlereagh Borough Council believes that bullying is a behaviour, which can be described as a form of 'peer abuse', and that it can be an inherent part of childhood behaviour. Despite this, it will always remain an unacceptable aspect of behaviour due to the severe and distressing effects it can have.

Central to this policy is the well-being of the bullied or abused child. Prevention and reaction strategies should aim to protect the victims and potential victims from further abuse. Punishments and sanctions, as essential as they may appear, are secondary to the safety and well-being of a victim of peer abuse. On disclosure of suspected peer abuse or bullying, staff should take measures to address the situation and protect the victim from further abuse. Castlereagh Borough Council does not accept that anything should stand in the way of a procedure to ensure the protection of a child or young person.

Our first concern is the safety of and well being of the victim, not the punishment of the perpetrator. We acknowledge that at times sanctions and interventions may be necessary but that the ultimate aim is to stop the bullying or peer abuse and protect the victim from further abuse. Children and young people who abuse also require support to understand the effects on others and to develop more social and communication skills to change their behaviour, and this should be made available through the appropriate agencies.

All staff should have a clear understanding of procedures in responding to bullying or peer abuse disclosures and the Council’s Child Protection reporting procedures should be followed.

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 our staff will be experts and we should also stress that under the Children (NI) Order 1995, the relevant Health and Social Services Trust has a statutory duty to ensure the welfare of a child.

The following is a list of some indicators of abuse, but it is not exhaustive:

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas • Repeated injuries • Black eyes • Injuries to the mouth • Torn or bloodstained clothing • Burns or scalds • Bites • Fractures • Marks from implements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained changes in behaviour – becoming withdrawn or aggressive • Difficulty in making friends • Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults • Sudden drop in performance • Changes in attendance pattern • Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language • Reluctance to remove clothing

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. We stress, however, that it is not the responsibility of managers to prove that abuse is taking place. Instead, it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them to the Designated Officer.

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 our staff to report any suspicions, through our own procedures, to the relevant Health and Social Services Trust.

Possible indicators of inappropriate behaviour

People who pose a threat to children can be very skilled at avoiding detection. Continued vigilance is important and there are some behaviours that may alert you to the possibility of abuse. You should be particularly vigilant if someone:

- Pays an unusual amount of attention to children and provides them with presents, money or 'favours';
- Seeks out vulnerable children;
- Seeks opportunities to spend significant amounts of time alone with a single child or a small group of children on a regular basis;
- Encourages secretiveness about their activities and time spent with children;
- Takes a child or children to his/her own home;
- Is vague about previous employment;
- Has an unusual amount of physical contact with a child or children;
- Touches child in an inappropriate manner;
- Talks to children in an inappropriate manner;
- Avoids close supervision and management of work.

Guidelines for responding to a disclosure

There is not one simple set of rules to follow when you respond to these situations. However, the following key points should guide the actions of staff and volunteers who are told of abuse.

DO

- Stay calm
- Listen & hear. Give the person time to say what they want
- Reassure them that they are safe and they have done the right thing in telling
- Tell the person what will happen next and it will be dealt with appropriately.
- Explain that you must tell, but you will maintain confidentiality
- Record in writing what was said as soon as possible (See appendix 7)
- Report to someone else in the organisation – “the designated person” immediately (Appendix 8, 9 & 11)
- Record your report

DON'T

- Panic
- Promise to keep secrets
- Question unless for clarification

- Enquire into the details of the abuse
- Make a child repeat the story unnecessarily
- Rush into actions
- Make/pass judgment on alleged abuser
- Take sole responsibility

Note – It is essential that you record the exact information (word for word if possible) rather than recording your interpretation of the Child’s statements.

Dealing with concerns about a child

A member of staff or volunteer may have concerns about a child’s behaviour or something the child has told them. These may only be vague concerns and not evidence that child abuse has occurred. It is important that these are taken seriously.

It is essential that:

- A written record is made of concerns that result from observations made or information received. That record may be made jointly with the organisation’s Designated Officer after discussion (See Appendix 7);
- The Designated Officer may need to seek further advice from an appropriate organisation (i.e. NSPCC, Social Services, PSNI etc. See Appendix 11)
- Castlereagh Borough Council’s child protection procedures should be followed (See Appendices 7, 8 & 9).

If a member of staff / volunteer feels that concerns are not being taken seriously, this should again be discussed with the Designated Officer or a more senior colleague. If necessary contact (for further contacts See Appendix 11):

- The local Social Services Office on 028 90545600
- NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000
- The local Police station. 028 90650222

What NOT to do

If there are concerns that a child is perhaps being abused: -

- Never do nothing and assume someone else will do something
- Never question or push the child for more information or explanation. This could affect any subsequent criminal investigation;

- Never discuss the concerns with the suspected abuser. This could have implications for criminal proceedings. In addition, there is always the possibility that the suspected abuser might threaten the child to make them deny anything has happened.

Guidelines for reporting allegations / incidents

1. If a member of staff has a concern about a child protection issue they should first contact a Key Worker within the facility or department they are working in (a list of Key Workers is detailed in Appendix 13).
2. The Key Worker will then contact the Designated Officer(s) and follow the current reporting procedure already in place
3. If a Key Worker cannot be contacted then the member of staff should contact the Designated Officer
4. If the Key Worker or Designated Officer cannot be contacted then the Duty Director should be contacted. Members of staff should contact Security at the Civic Building (028 90 494699) who will be able to identify who the Duty Director is.
5. Record all incidents reported or observed on an Incident Form (See appendix 7) and 1 copy of Incident Report Form given to the Designated Officer within 24 hours
6. Ensure confidentiality – only “need to know basis” (See Appendix 3) and all reports will be stored in a safe and secure environment

Dealing with concerns about a colleague

The vast majority of people who work with children are well motivated and would never harm a child. Unfortunately a few do and it is essential that the Council creates a culture that makes staff willing and comfortable to voice their concerns, particularly those about someone with whom they work or whom they know. Again, the organisation’s child protection procedures should be followed (See Appendices 8 to 10).

Inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour or communication, favouritism or negligence are examples of what may constitute a concern about the conduct of a member of staff. An allegation about a staff member occurs when a child, parent or other staff member reports specific unacceptable behaviour where a child has been harmed or abused in some way. Allegations against staff must be referred to a Designated Officer. In the case of allegations against one of the Designated Officers this should be reported to a more senior colleague, another designated officer or directly to a statutory agency.

During an investigation, support should be given both to the individual who voices concerns and to the suspected abuser. Once the investigation is completed, the organisation must decide what action, if any is necessary to prevent a similar situation arising again.

Staff need to know:

- What constitutes a “concern”, “disclosure” and, “allegation”
- Who to report to and their contact details
- How to access the pro formas used for reporting concerns, disclosures and allegations
- Contact details for PSNI and Social Services in the event that a Designated Officer is not available in an emergency
- Castlereagh Borough Council will support them through the reporting procedure
- Their primary concern as the first person that suspects or is told of possible abuse is to report it to the designated person and ensure the concern is taken seriously

Under no circumstances should any staff member attempt to deal with the problem of abuse alone.

False Allegations

Staff working with children may feel vulnerable to accusations of child abuse. There have been occasions when false allegations have been made against staff. This may be because of a misunderstanding of what has happened or a genuine mistake. If allegations are made, it is important to:

- Stay calm;
- Co-operate with the investigation;
- Seek advice and support from a manager or, if appropriate, a professional organisation, union, family or friends;
- Ensure that clear records are kept of any meetings attended, discussions or correspondence about the allegations;
- Avoid discussing the allegations with the person who made them.

Role and Responsibility of Designated Child Protection Officer

The Designated Person within Castlereagh Borough Council is:

NAME: SPORTS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (ANGELA PLATT)

Telephone: 028 90 494568

Or Mobile: 079 5858 4013

The named person shall be made known to all members of staff as the designated person to whom all concerns will be addressed. If the concern is about the designated person please

report to the most senior member of staff. Each Leisure and Community facility will also have a Key Worker to deal with Child Protection issues on site.

The designated officer's role is to:

- ✓ Promote the implementation of Castlereagh Borough Council's Child Protection Policy and Procedures among staff.
- ✓ Be able to communicate effectively with staff to ensure the widespread dissemination of the Castlereagh Borough Council Code of Conduct
- ✓ Have an understanding of Our Duty to Care to ensure they can act as an information service to other staff members.
- ✓ Advise Castlereagh Borough Council of the child protection training needs for staff members.
- ✓ Keep only relevant people within the organisation informed about any action taken and any further action required.
- ✓ Monitor and review child protection policy and procedures on a regular basis, including advice on recruitment and selection.
- ✓ Ensure the maintenance of individual case records; what action is taken; other agencies informed, ensuring confidentiality is maintained.
- ✓ Establish a contact with a senior member of social services staff responsible for child protection in the organisation's catchment area.
- ✓ Ensure that appropriate information is available to social services / police at the time of a referral
- ✓ Ensure the safe keeping of any case material/reports in a confidential and secure manner

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

The majority of people who want to work with children are well motivated and without them organisations could not operate. Unfortunately some individuals will try to use 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 an organisation.

Good recruitment and selection procedures benefit everyone. Staff will have a clearly defined role. This will enhance their self-confidence, which will have a positive impact on children they are working with.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Castlereagh Borough Council to safeguard the well-being of all individuals who use our services or facilities. The Council strives to ensure that at all times employees show respect and understanding towards the rights, safety and welfare of these individuals and conduct themselves in a way which reflects these principles. We recognise however

that children are particularly vulnerable and least able to protect themselves from abuse or seek help if they have been ill-treated. We therefore have a specific responsibility to the children who use our services or facilities.

To ensure we meet this responsibility we must not only recruit employees who have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience, but also screen out those whose behaviour could be a threat to the safety and well being of children.

We will therefore carry out Pre-Employment checks through the POCVA team at the DHSS in respect of all employees who have access to children by requiring completion of the form at appendix 12. Subsequently, the Council will complete and send separate pre-employment check requests to both the POCVA team and the PSNI (appendix 13). In all correspondence with applicants and during pre employment checks, the document “Choosing to Protect - a Guide to Using the Protection of Children, Northern Ireland [POC (NI)] Service” will be adhered to.

REQUESTING CHECKS ON PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES

The commencement of POCVA provided a legislative basis for referral of those in regulated positions and for screening prospective employees. It brought significant changes to existing arrangements and introduced new terminology and definitions. This section sets out the main provisions and provides a definition of terms.

The main provisions are:-

- The introduction of the Disqualification from Working with Children (DWC (NI)) List. The DHSS is required to maintain a list of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work (in a paid or unpaid capacity) with children in a childcare position.
- The requirement for the Council to **refer** to the DHSS, for consideration of inclusion on the DWC (NI) List on the grounds of misconduct, those individuals who have **harmed a child, or placed a child at risk of harm**.
- Individuals whose names are placed on the DWC (NI) List have the right of appeal to an independent tribunal;
- The requirement for the Council **to carry out checks** against the DWC (NI) List when proposing to appoint someone to a child care position.
- Introduction of offences where individuals disqualified from working with children apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work, either paid or unpaid, in a child care position.
- Introduction of **offences** where organisations knowingly offer, employ, or procure work for a disqualified person in a child care position or where they fail to remove a disqualified person from such positions;
- Provision for a voluntary system of **accreditation**, for organisations and groups who work with children who do not fall within the definition of a child care organisation.

- Provision for a whistle-blowing facility aimed at addressing situations where organisations fail to comply with the duties to refer and to check.

POCVA makes it a legal requirement for the Council to carry out checks against the DWC (NI) List and the Department of Education List when proposing to employ an individual in a 'regulated' position. If an individual's name is included on either of these Lists the Council **must not** offer the individual employment.

LEGAL REQUIREMENT TO CHECK - NEW OFFENCES

POCVA introduced the following new offences:

- Anyone who is disqualified from working with children will commit a criminal offence if they apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work either paid or unpaid in a child care position.
- An individual who knowingly employs a disqualified individual to work in a child care position; offers work to or procures work for a disqualified individual; or fails to remove a disqualified person from a child care position will be guilty of a criminal offence.

Individuals found guilty of any of these offences are punishable by imprisonment or fines or both.

Although POCVA does not extend to all voluntary and community organisations the legislation suggests an **implicit** responsibility on anyone appointing staff or volunteers to regulated positions to undertake appropriate checks. The Council will therefore carry out these checks as deemed appropriate for posts of this nature.

NATURE OF CHECKS PROVIDED

The POC (NI) Service provides information from the following sources:-

- **DWC (NI) List** – This list contains the names of people who have been referred to the Department by their employers because their misconduct (whether or not in the course of employment at work or elsewhere), harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm, **and** following a review of all the information, including submissions by the individual, the DHSS is satisfied that the individual would not be suitable to work with children.
- Department of Education list of those unsuitable to work with children
- **Lists held by government departments in England and Wales (POCA List) and Scotland (Disqualification from Working with Children List). These lists are only checked when an individual gives a previous address in these jurisdictions.**
- **Criminal Records Check** - The service will also request a criminal records check from the police and this will provide details of all convictions, cautions and bind over

orders which occurred within the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Whenever possible criminal records will also be obtained from abroad and work is continuing to improve arrangements with other police forces and authorities in this regard.

Staff Training

All staff will receive induction, particular skills and child protection training appropriate to their role. Training will be updated and reviewed regularly for new staff and in line with changing legislation. All staff in regulated positions (including designated officers and management committees) should have child protection training that includes a basic awareness and understanding of child protection issues and Castlereagh Borough Council's child protection policies, procedures and guidelines.

1. Basic Level (2½ hours)

Staff who have regular contact with the public that may on occasion require physical contact e.g. reception staff

Content

- Awareness of what abuse is
- Signs & symptoms
- Code of Behaviour
- Familiarisation of policy

2. Intermediate Level (4 hours)

Staff who work directly with children and will potentially be in a position of unsupervised access e.g. recreation assistants. Content will include:

- Same as basic with more in-depth exploration of signs & symptoms and code of behaviour

3. Full Level (6 hours)

Staff who work directly with children and will potentially be in a position of unsupervised access. Also staff who will be involved in recruitment and selection of non-Council staff and/or volunteers e.g. Coaches, Leisure/Community Services staff and Human Resources staff.

Content

- Same as intermediate but including information on policy development

Additional training will be required for Key Workers and Designated Officers to ensure they are aware of how to respond to Child Protection concerns or incidents.

Adult/Child Ratios

Supervision must be adequate, whether at the organisation's venue or on a journey or visit. It is for leaders in charge to exercise their professional judgement in deciding the level of supervision depending upon the age and ability level of the participants taking part.

Supervision levels for all Council organised activities will be identified prior to each event/activity organised by each department/facility. Supervision levels for each event should be finalised by carrying out a risk assessment prior to the event and the Designated Officer or the Council Insurance Company should make final approval. The following may provide some guidance:

On Site

0-2 years of age	1 staff member to 3 children
2-3 years of age	1 staff member to 4 children
3-7 years of age	1 staff member to 8 children
8 years and over	2 staff members (preferably one male, one female) for up to 20 children There should be one additional staff member for every 10 extra children

Off Site

0-3 years of age	1 staff member to 2 children
3-7 years of age	1 staff member to 5 children
8 years and over	1 staff member to 10 children

The ratio of staff and volunteers to children with disabilities is dependent on the needs of the individual child. Ratios may need to be reviewed depending on the risk assessment of a particular activity.

This policy has been developed following guidance from:

Our Duty to Care	-	Volunteer Development Agency
Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport	-	Sports Council NI
Safer Organisations Safer Children	-	DHSS&PS
Co-operating to Safeguard Children	-	DHSS&PS
Children (NI) Order 1995		
Coaching Northern Ireland		
Child Protection in Sport Unit		

Appendix 1:

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR COUNCIL STAFF

Castlereagh Borough Council is committed to providing a safe environment for all children using its facilities. To assist with this the Council has developed a Code of Behaviour for employees when working with children. The Code of Behaviour is designed to safeguard standards of behaviour, protect children and builds upon its Child Protection Policy and training.

These guidelines have been produced to help protect children and anyone working with young people on behalf of Castlereagh Borough Council and should be followed at all times. If you have any queries regarding these please contact the designated person in charge of Child Protection.

We recognise that it is not practical to provide definitive instructions that would apply to every situation when staff come into contact with children, and that would guarantee the protection of children and staff. However, below are the standards of behaviour required of staff in order to fulfill their roles within the Council. This code should assist in the protection of both children and members of staff.

1. Staff should:

- Follow our Child Protection Policy and Procedures at all times
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child
- Record and report any concerns you may have about a child's well-being or any allegations made by a child, either to your line manager, a key worker or the Designated Child Protection Officer.

2. Staff must never:

- Shout at children in an aggressive manner or use abusive language
- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay with children
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind.
The main principles of touch are:
 - touch should always be in response to the child's need
 - touch should always be appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child
 - touch should always be with the child's permission
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or that their parent can do for them
- Physically restrain a child/young person unless the restraint is to prevent physical injury of the child/other children/visitors or staff/yourself
In all circumstances physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable, otherwise the action can be defined as assault.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to or within earshot of a child
- Allow allegations by a child to go unnoticed

3. Staff must not:

- Have children/young people on their own in a vehicle. Where circumstances require the transportation of children/young people in their vehicle another member of staff/volunteer must travel in the vehicle. Also it is essential that there is adequate insurance for the vehicle to cover transporting children/young people as part of the business of your work.
- In extreme emergencies (for medical purposes) where it is required to transport a child/young person on their own, it is essential that another leader and the parent is notified immediately
- Take a child to the toilet unless another adult is present or has been made aware (this may include a parent, group leader)
- Spend time alone with a child on his/her own. If you find you are in a situation where you are alone with a child, make sure that you can be clearly observed by others

Please note these bullet points are not exhaustive. It is not practical to provide instructions that would apply to all situations at all times. If you are in any doubt please contact your line manager or the Designated Officer for advice.

4. Implications for Staff

Members of staff who breach any of the above may be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

If an allegation is made against a member of our staff, we will investigate the matter in line with our procedure for dealing with allegations against staff. The investigating officer will liaise with one of our Designated Officers for Child Protection, to see if she or he has any relevant records or any other child protection information concerning the staff member under investigation.

Castlereagh Borough Council has the right to:

- Expect all staff to comply with its code of conduct
- Take appropriate action if members breach the Code of Conduct or Child Protection Policy
- Expect all members to undertake appropriate training when advised to
- Expect all members to report any faulty equipment to a senior official
- Expect staff will not abuse facility users physically, emotionally or sexually
- Take appropriate action in the event of accusations
- Acquire pre-employment checks on all staff in 'regulated positions'

Appendix 2

Confidentiality, who needs to know what?

Castlereagh Borough Council has a clear statement about confidentiality and how this is to be respected. This statement covers much broader issues than Child Protection. We insist that families and children in contact with our organisation are sure, for example, that personal and sensitive details which they have confided about their lives or family situations will not be talked about or passed on to others without their consent.

However, the legal principle that ‘the welfare of the child is paramount’ means that considerations of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Everyone in our organisation, including children, must be aware that they can never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a ‘need to know’ basis.

In any situation where there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse, it is important that the rights of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who need to know are given the relevant information.

This will mean, at the very least, informing:

- The designated person responsible for child protection
- Where relevant, a statutory child protection organisation;
- The parent of the child;
- The alleged perpetrator;

Informing the parents of a child about whom you are concerned will need to be handled in a sensitive way and should only be undertaken in consultation with a statutory agency.

Any individual under suspicion whether or not he or she is a staff member or volunteer has a right to be notified of the cause of the concern. This is another matter that will need careful consideration and should only be undertaken in consultation with a statutory agency.

Depending on the outcome of our initial enquiries, staff and other agencies that have contact with either the child concerned or the alleged perpetrator may need to be given brief details of the incident and subsequent action. The statutory agency will keep you right about who should be told, when they should be told, and the kind of information that is appropriate to share.

All information of a personal nature will be stored in a safe and secure setting.

Appendix 3:

PEER ABUSE & ANTI – BULLYING STATEMENT

Castlereagh Borough Council expect all staff to:

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available
- Respect for every individual's feelings and views
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see

Bullying & Peer Abuse

- Bullying and peer abuse will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of bullying and peer abuse will be addressed.

Bullying and peer abuse can include:

- physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc
 - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals
 - sectarian/racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
 - sexual comments and /or suggestions
 - unwanted physical contact
 - inappropriate behaviour
- Children from ethnic minorities, disabled children, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.
 - Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying and peer abuse – the Castlereagh Borough Council staff member, the child, the parent, the coach, the youth worker, the sport's official
 - Commitment to the early identification of bullying and peer abuse and prompt, collective action to deal with it
 - Children should be encouraged to take a role in stopping bullying and peer abuse in their club
 - Policy and practice should be reviewed regularly in the light of changing needs and changes adopted by other agencies (e.g. schools)
 - Staff will have access to training on how to deal with bullying and peer abuse
 - Staff will have access to appropriately trained personnel for support when dealing with bullying and peer abuse

Support to the Child

- Children should know who will listen to and support them
- Any advice and assistance should be given by an experienced staff member or designated officer
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers
- Children should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why
- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying and peer abuse or any other issue that affects them. Barriers to talking need to be broken down to enable children to approach adults
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying or peer abuse will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether the child is the victim or the child is the perpetrator
- Any reported incident of bullying or peer abuse will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved
- Children being bullied or abused will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development
- Those who bully or abuse will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying
- Sanctions involving long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, should be avoided

Support to the Parents

- Parents should be advised on Castlereagh Borough Council's policy and practice about bullying and peer abuse
- Any incident of bullying or peer abuse will be discussed with the child's parent(s)
- Parental advice on action will be sought and agreements made as to what action should be taken
- Information and advice on coping with bullying and peer abuse will be given
- Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines

Appendix 4

Guidelines on transporting a child or young person

The issue of transporting children has become very sensitive for staff, coaches, sports leaders and parents. Many argue that clubs, organisations or community groups could not operate without the goodwill of volunteers and parents ensuring that children are returned home or transported to events in a private car. Guidance from the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and Sports Council for Northern Ireland encourages staff, coaches and volunteers not to take children on journeys alone in their car.

This view has been taken as our knowledge has grown of how those who want to harm children has developed. The vast majority of staff, coaches and volunteers will help out through their genuine desire to see children develop. Unfortunately we must face the reality that a minority of others will join an organisation to gain access to children and create an air of acceptability about their role, justifying their close contact with children.

Best practice is clearly to avoid transporting a child alone, but we recognise that in some circumstances it is an essential part of a child's participation in activities. If all alternatives have been exhausted and an adult has to transport a child there are a number of safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- Parents should be informed of the person who will be transporting their child, the reasons why and how long the journey will take.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans
- The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others, particularly if they are in a paid position or claiming expenses.
- The driver should attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- When leaving children off after an activity or event staff, coaches or volunteers should alternate which child is dropped off last. Ideally two children would be left off at an agreed point i.e. one of their family homes.
- The person who leaves children home should be alternated; this would reduce the risk of any one individual from always being alone with the child.
- The driver should have a point of contact and mobile phone should they break down.
- Ensure that children are aware of their rights and they have someone to turn to or report any concerns they may have. If a culture of safety is created within your organisation then the child is more likely to talk to another person if they are feeling uncomfortable about a situation.
- Children should wear seatbelts at all times, where they are fitted. The driver is legally responsible to ensure that a child under 14 wears a seatbelt (i.e. the adult would have to pay any fine) but morally responsible to ensure all passengers wear seatbelts.

Like all advice these procedures will only reduce the risk and still the best advice is to avoid transporting children alone in a car.

Appendix 5

Guidelines for away trips

Travelling to away fixtures and events is a regular event for many organisations, clubs, community groups or summer schemes. Trips may vary from short journeys across town to play another local team or involve more complicated arrangements involving overnight stays. But even what may appear as the most straightforward of trips will require some level of planning. The following will outline a number of issues that need to be considered when travelling with children.

Communication with;

- ❑ **Children** – they should be aware of the travel plans, venue and time for collection, time of return and any costs. Children should also have a clear understanding of what standard of behaviour is expected of them. Children must know what clothing or equipment they need to bring with them.
- ❑ **Parents** – should be made aware of the above and must have completed a consent form detailing any medical issues that the co-ordinator should be aware of. Parents should also have the name and contact details of the co-ordinator in the event of an emergency.
- ❑ **Staff, coaches & volunteers** – need to be made aware of what their responsibilities are in advance of the trip. If the trip is a long journey, it is important that all staff, coaches & volunteers have an itinerary.

Transport

A more detailed transport policy is available in Appendix 4, but the following are some basic points.

- ⇒ Ensure the driver has an appropriate and valid driving license
- ⇒ Allow an appropriate length of time to complete the journey
- ⇒ Consider the impact of traffic and weather conditions
- ⇒ If using a mini-bus ensure that all seats are forward facing and they all have seat belts fitted for carrying children. Is the driver experienced in driving a mini-bus?
- ⇒ Ensure staff and children wear seat belts where they are fitted
- ⇒ Check there is appropriate insurance for the journey
- ⇒ Clarify supervision requirements with other staff. The driver should not be considered as a supervisor during the journey
- ⇒ Ensure the vehicle is road worthy.

Ratio

Dependent on the event or activity the ratio of adult to child may vary but whatever is considered appropriate would generally need to be increased when travelling away from home, away trips etc.

Insurance

In addition to the mini-bus / car insurance, the co-ordinator needs to ensure that the general insurance covers travel to away events.

Emergencies

Ensure that the vehicle has breakdown and recovery cover. At least one member of staff should be trained in first aid procedures and a first aid kit should be available. There should be access to a mobile phone and contact details for all children.

The above are only basic points of advice and are not comprehensive guidelines.

Appendix 6

Photography and Videoing guidance

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on sports web sites and other publications. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information, for example, - this is X who is a member of the Melksham Sport's club and who likes Westlife. This information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to "groom" that child for abuse. Secondly the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use. There is evidence of this adapted material finding its way onto child pornography sites.

Organisations, clubs and community groups need to develop a policy in relation to the use of images of children and young people on their web sites and in other publications. The organisation will need to make decisions about the type of images they consider suitable and that appropriately represent that group, without putting children at increased risk. You should ensure that parents support this policy. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of a child, the most important factor is the potential for inappropriate use of images of children.

If organisations are made aware of the potential risks and take appropriate steps the potential for misuse of images can be reduced.

The Child Protection in Sport Unit would advise organisations to:

- Consider using models or illustrations if you are promoting an activity.
- Avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

Easy rules to remember are:

- If the child is named, avoid using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the child.
- Ask for the child's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the activity, event or sport. A Child's Permission Form is one way of achieving this.
- Ask for parental permission to use an image of a young person. This ensures that parents are aware of the way the image of their child is representing the activity, event or sport. A Parental Permission Form is one way of achieving this.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. With regard to the actual content it is difficult to specify exactly what is appropriate given the wide diversity of sports. However there are clearly some sports activities - swimming, gymnastics and athletics for example when the risk of potential misuse is much greater than for other sports. With these sports the content of the photograph should focus on the

activity not on a particular child and should avoid full face and body shots. So for example shots of children in a pool would be appropriate or if poolside, waist or shoulder up.

- Create a recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to children. Follow Castlereagh Borough Council child protection procedures, ensuring your child protection officer and the Social Services and/or Police are informed.

First steps and things to think about...

- Establish the type of images that appropriately represent the organisation, group activity or event for the Web and other media.
- Think about the level of consideration you give to the use of images of children in other publications, for example, the processes involved in choosing appropriate images for the newsletter or magazine. Apply an increased level of consideration to the images of children and young people used in the web site.

Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment at Sporting Events

Castlereagh Borough Council will:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Issue the photographer with identification, which must be worn at all times.
- Inform children and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Do not allow unsupervised access to children or one to one photo sessions at events.
- Do not approve/allow the designated photographer to take photo sessions outside the organised events or at a child's home.
- If parents or other spectators are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of your expectations.
- Spectators should be asked to register at an event if they wish to use photographic equipment.
- Children and parents should be informed that if they have concerns they can report these to the organiser.
- Concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported to the event organiser or official and recorded in the same manner as any other child protection concern.

Appendix 7

CHILD PROTECTION 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: _____

Phone number: _____

Home Address: _____

Child Protection Report Form

Disclosure

Please complete those sections below if a child has disclosed to you about the alleged abuse. If the child has not provided any information please state **NOT APPLICABLE**

When was the disclosure made? (dates and times)

Where was the disclosure made?

What were the immediate circumstances leading to the disclosure?

Were there others present at the time of the disclosure?
YES NO DON'T KNOW

If YES, please state who (name and position) and what role did they play?

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

Child Protection Report Form

Signs

Describe any signs of physical injury evident on the child:

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)

Were there others present that observed the signs and symptoms?

YES NO DON'T KNOW

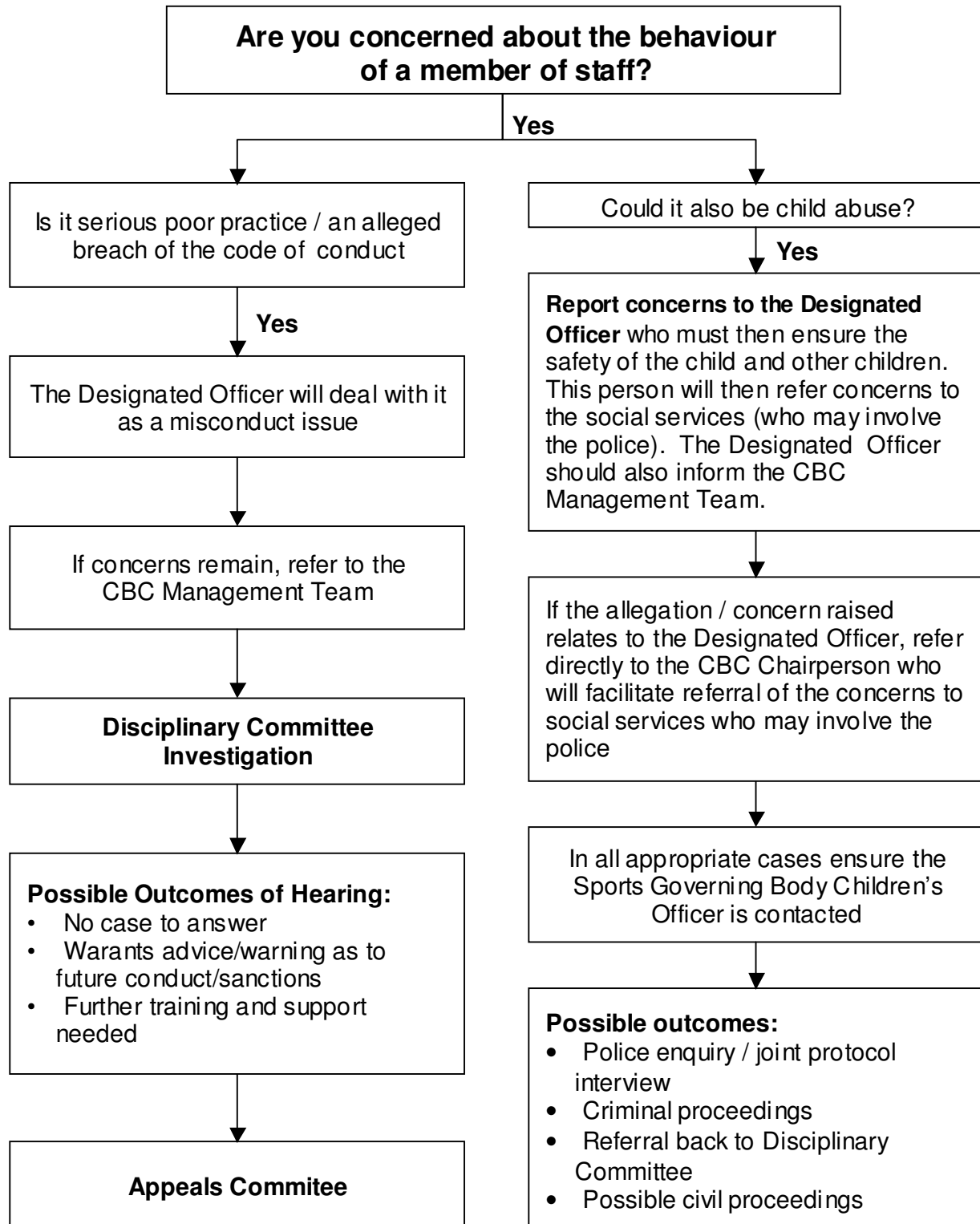
If YES, please state who (name and position) and what role did they play?

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Referred to Designated Officer: _____

Date: _____

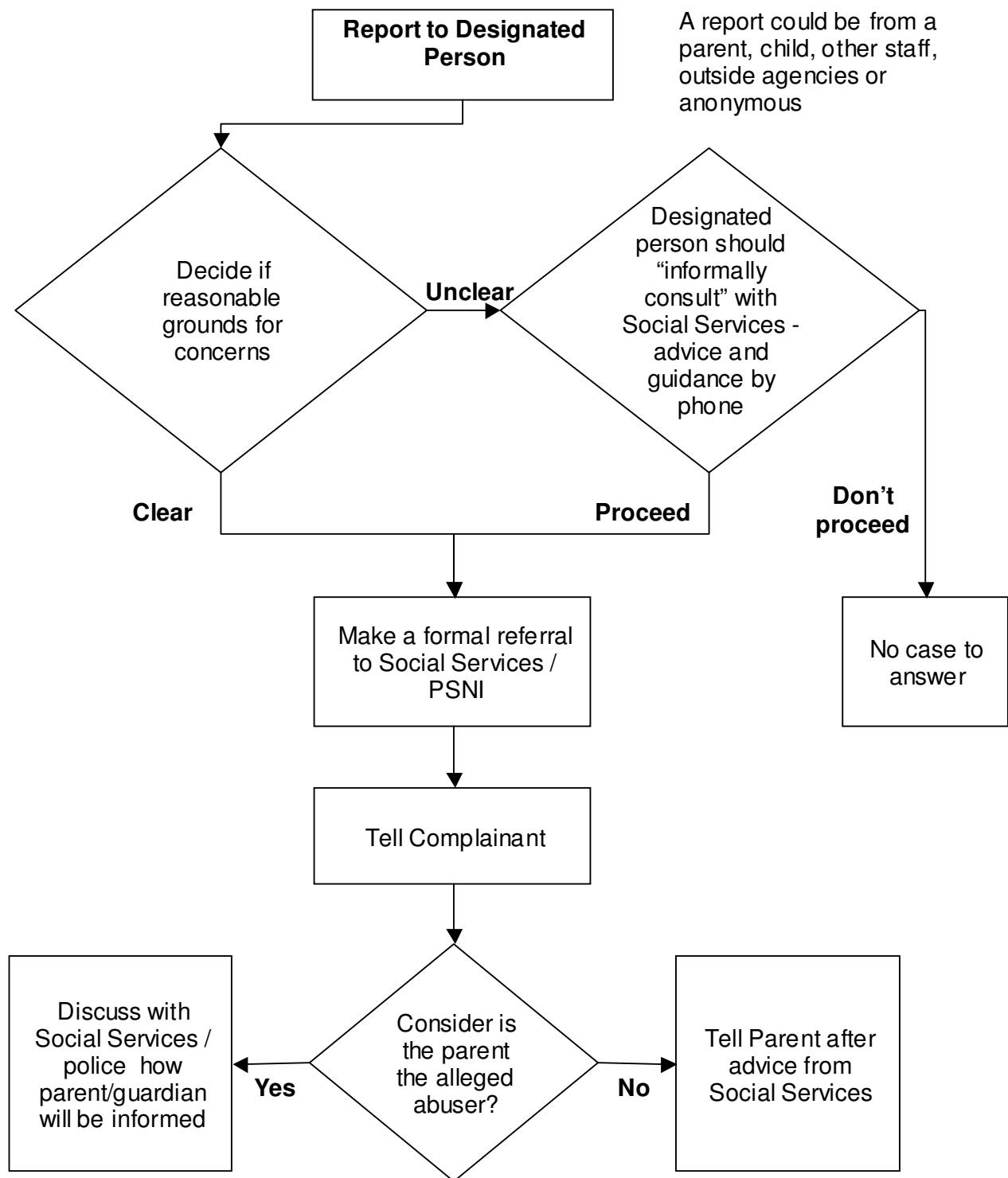
Appendix 8



Appendix 9

WHAT STEPS NEED TO BE TAKEN WHEN REPORTING CONCERNS

When the concern is about an incident or information external to Castlereagh Borough Council



Appendix 10

Child Protection Guidance for hirers, coaches and volunteers

Introduction

We aim to ensure that children are safe while visiting any of our Council facilities. In addition to our responsibilities we ask that hirers, coaches and volunteers exercise their own responsibilities and follow our Child Protection Policy.

These guidance notes apply to all hirers, coaches and volunteers using our services and facilities.

In particular, you must:

- Make sure you have adequate staff supervision by using appropriate ratios. Guidelines are stated earlier in this Child Protection Policy;
- Ensure that you supervise the children and young people at all times;
- Never abuse a child or young person in any way;
- Ensure adequate insurance cover for the group and leaders; and
- Explain to your group what standards of behaviour you expect from the group while using the Council's facilities.

You have the primary responsibility for the welfare of the children 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 group;
- 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.

Appendix 11

Useful Contacts

- **Castlereagh Borough Council** ☎ **028 90494500**
- **NSPCC 24 hrs Helpline** ☎ **0808 800 5000**
- **PSNI C.A.R.E Units** ☎ **028 9065 0222**
- **Social Services (out of hours)** ☎ **028 90 668246**
- **Childline** Freephone ☎ **0800 1111**
- **Child Protection in Sport Unit** ☎ **028 90351135**

Relevant Trusts

South and East Belfast Health and Social Services Trust

Knockbracken Healthcare Park
Saintfield Road
Belfast
BT8 8BH
☎ 028 90 565555

North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust

Glendinning House
Murray Street
Belfast
BT1 6DP
☎ 028 90 327156

Information and Training

Volunteer Development Agency –

Our Duty to Care

58 Howard Street
Belfast
BT1 6PG
☎ 028 90 236100

Youth Net

The Warehouse
7 James Street South
Belfast
BT2 3JH
☎ 028 90 331880

Child Care NI

216 Belmont Road
Belfast
BT4 2AT
☎ 028 90 652713

Sports Council NI

House of Sport
Upper Malone Road
Belfast
BT9 5LA
☎ 028 90 381222

Appendix 12

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONFIDENTIAL

INFORMATION ABOUT AND CONSENT TO THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN (NI) SERVICE CHECK BY APPLICANTS FOR POSTS INVOLVING WORK WITH CHILDREN

You have applied for a childcare post, which is a regulated position. Before appointing anyone to such a post, it is our policy to ask for a Protection of Children (NI) Service (POC (NI)) check to be carried out by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). This check is to make sure that individuals who might be a risk to children are not appointed.

The check will tell us if you have a criminal record, or if your name is included on the DHSSPS Disqualification from Working with Children List or included on the DE List. Any information received will be treated confidentially, and we will talk to you about it before a final decision is reached. After the decision is made the information will be destroyed. (Employment/Nursing Agencies and Employment Businesses will retain this information for 12 months).

A check will only be carried out if you are considered to be the preferred candidate and are being offered an appointment. You **must** tell us now if you have ever been convicted of a criminal offence, or cautioned by the police, or bound over. You **must** tell us about **all** offences, even minor ones such as motoring offences, and 'spent' convictions, that is, things which happened a long time ago. If you leave anything out it may affect your application. Please complete the section below and return it with your application. The form also asks you to give your written consent to the check. If you do not consent we will not accept your application.

CONSENT TO POC (NI) CHECK

Do you have any prosecutions pending **YES/NO**
(if yes give please give details)

Have you ever been convicted at a court or cautioned by the police for any offence? **YES/NO**
If yes, please list below details of **all** convictions, cautions, or bind-over orders. Give as much information as you can, including, if possible, the offence, the approximate date of the court hearing and the court, which dealt with the matter.

Have you ever been involved in or been the subject of any adult or child abuse investigation?
YES/NO

If yes, please give dates, details and outcomes of all incidents.

I understand that a POC (NI) Service check must be carried out before an offer of appointment can be confirmed. This has been explained to me and I am aware that spent convictions may be disclosed. I declare that the information I have given is accurate and I consent to the check being made.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Name (Please Print): _____

Any Surname previously known by: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Previous addresses held within last 5 years: _____

Have you **ever** lived elsewhere in the UK or Republic of Ireland?

YES/NO

If yes, please give full address details below:

Date of Birth: _____

National Insurance Number: _____

**REQUEST FOR A CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK
COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS**

POCVA (NI) 1

IN CONFIDENCE

REF NO: ST 1014

To: The Chief Constable Criminal Records Office (CRO) PSNI Brooklyn Knock Road BELFAST BT5 6LE	From: <u>Castlereagh Borough Council</u> <u>Bradford Court</u> <u>Upper Galwally, Belfast</u> Postcode: <u>BT8 6RB</u> Tel No: <u>028 904945000</u> Date: _____
--	--

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms(enter as appropriate)_____	Date of Birth: _____
Surname: _____	Full Forenames: _____
National Insurance No: _____	Please list overleaf all previous addresses within the last 5 years , including all addresses in N. Ireland and other countries.
Previous Surname(s): _____	
Address: _____	Before 5 years ago did you ever live in any other part of the U.K. or Republic of Ireland.
Postcode: _____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes – Please give details overleaf.
Have any/all Convictions/Cautions been declared?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the applicant declared any involvement in or been the subject of any adult or child abuse investigation?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, Please give dates, details and outcome of all incidents. _____	

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary)	

Employer to mark "X" in one box only. This request is to be checked against the Disqualification List/s pertaining to Protection of :-

Children <input type="checkbox"/>	Vulnerable Adults <input type="checkbox"/>	Children & Vulnerable Adults <input type="checkbox"/>
-----------------------------------	--	---

- I am satisfied that the particulars given above are accurate and that the above-named person has given written permission for the check to be made and is aware that any spent convictions will also be disclosed.
- I further declare that any information given will be treated in strict confidence and used only in accordance with the Department's guidance.
- **I confirm that this check is for a post which is a care position as defined in paragraph 2.2 of Choosing to Protect, and/or a regulated position under Article 31 of The Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003.**

SIGNED: _____ NAME IN CAPITALS: _____ DATE: _____
(Original signature of nominated/deputy nominated officer)

TO BE COMPLETED BY POLICE

No trace on the details e subject may be the individual to whom the attached information refers

SIGNED: _____ RANK: _____ DATE: _____