

Edenderry Nursery School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



A Handbook for Staff, Governors, Volunteers and all members of our school community

Edenderry Nursery School
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Designated teacher; Ms N Magrath
Deputy Designated teacher; Mrs G Drain

Vision

That all children in the nursery are cared for as individuals, that their well being is at all times paramount in our work. Nursery staff believe that children have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse, and we are committed to the teaching of a preventative curriculum and protecting all the children in our care from harm.

Mission

The Nursery has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society. It is the belief of Staff in the school that all children have the right to protection from violence and harmful treatment. Children cannot learn effectively unless they feel secure. The welfare of the pupil is paramount and reasonable steps should be taken to ensure their welfare is guarded and safety preserved.

This document lays out the procedures, roles and responsibilities relevant to addressing allegations of child abuse.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers and participants working in the Nursery facilities whether directly employed or permitted by the Nursery. The purpose of the procedures set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect children by ensuring that every person who operates in the Nursery has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected or disclosed. The issue of abuse will not be ignored by anyone who operates on behalf of the Nursery, and we know that some forms of child and vulnerable adult abuse are also a criminal offence.

There are four main elements to our policy:

1. Establishing a safe environment in which children and adults can be together, learn and develop through good practice and procedures.
2. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
3. Ensuring that the Nursery practices safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, trainees and volunteers to work with children.
4. Raising awareness of child protection and safeguarding issues.

Various Definitions

What is a Child?

A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children (NI) Order 1995.

What is a Regulated Position?

Those who in the course of their normal duties, care for, train, advise, counsel or supervise or are in sole charge of children as well as the supervisors/managers of individuals who are in a regulated position. People who are in the Nursery or who use the School facilities in an unsupervised capacity, who work/engage with under 18s will need to have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate through Access NI and be verified. This will be valid for 1 year and then a further verification process will need to be carried out.

It is illegal for the Nursery to allow anyone who is on the Disqualification from Working with Children or Vulnerable Adults (NI) list from working with either group at any time.

A regulated position requires regular contact; thus a one-off situation, activity or event with children or vulnerable adults will not require Access NI verification. However careful safeguards should be put in place by the event organisers who have the responsibility to minimise any possibility of harm.

What is the Access (NI) Service?

Access (NI) is a new system for the disclosure of an individual's criminal history. It replaces the POCVA (NI) service that was provided by DHSSPSNI before October 2009. Registered organisations can use this service to check relevant information concerning their preferred applicant such as their criminal record or whether they are listed on the *Disqualification from Working with Children (DWC NI) List* or *Disqualified from Working with Vulnerable Adults (DWVA NI) List*. From June 2010, the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has the responsibility to maintain all barred lists in the UK.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child Abuse occurs when 'a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger.' (ACPC, 2005)

TYPES OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse – is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful 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. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

- Unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Chronic runaway
- Fear of going home

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 a child that he is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as he meets the needs of another person. It may involve causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse. (ACPC, 2005).

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

- Bullying of others

- Change in personality from outgoing to withdrawn
- Difficulty in forming / maintaining relationships with others
- Depression
- Signs of mutilation
- Attention seeking
- Chronic runaway
- Wetting and soiling
- Sudden speech disorders
- Low self-esteem

Sexual Abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children to look at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

- Bruised or sore genitals
- Genital infection
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Inappropriate sexualised language or behaviour
- Low self-esteem
- Chronic depression
- Substance abuse
- Personality changes
- Fear of going home

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 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. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of neglect include:

- Poor hygiene
- Constant hunger/cramming food
- Inadequate / inappropriate clothing
- Constant tiredness
- Exposed to danger / lack of adequate supervision
- Untreated illness
- Lack of peer relationships
- Compulsive stealing / begging

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.

All staff should be aware of the signs of possible abuse and alert to these and aware of the procedures to be followed.

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

transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

Possible signs or symptoms of exploitation include:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late
- skipping school or being disruptive in class
- appearing with unexplained gifts or possessions that can't be accounted for
- experiencing health problems that may indicate a [sexually transmitted infection](#)
- having mood swings and changes in temperament
- using drugs and/or alcohol
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour, such as over-familiarity with strangers, dressing in a sexualised manner or sending sexualised images by mobile phone ("sexting")
- they may also show signs of unexplained physical harm, such as bruising and cigarette burns

Female Genital Mutilation

FGM is child abuse and is against the law. Families who practice this do not regard it as abuse. Professionals need to give families advice and information that is sensitive to their culture and beliefs but they need to make clear that it is illegal.

If a child has already undergone FGM she should be offered medical help and counselling. Professionals should also take action to protect any other children in the family and to investigate possible risk to others in the community.

Signs, indicators and effects

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But she might talk about or you may become aware of:

- A long holiday abroad or going home to 'visit' family.
- A relative or 'cutter' visiting from abroad
- A special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage.
- A female relative being cut- a sister, cousin or other female relative.

Indicators FGM may have taken place

- A girl or woman who had had FGM may;
 - Have difficulty standing, walking or sitting.
 - Spend longer in the bathroom or toilet.
 - Appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed.
 - Have unusual behaviour after an absence from school.
 - Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical procedures.
 - Ask for help but may not be explicit due to embarrassment or fear.

The physical effects of FGM

- FGM can be extremely painful and dangerous. It can cause-
 - Severe pain
 - Shock
 - Bleeding
 - Infection such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
 - Organ damage
 - Blood loss and infections that in some cases can cause death.

If a child is suspected to be at risk or has experienced FGM, staff must report immediately. There is an FGM helpline on 08000283550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk.

Procedures

Procedures For Reporting Suspected (Or Disclosed) Child Abuse

The designated person for child protection (DP) is Ms N Magrath

The deputy designated person for child protection is Mrs G Drain

If a child makes a disclosure to a person that gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a person has concerns about a child, **the person must act promptly.**

Any allegation by a child that they are suffering should immediately trigger the reporting procedures and be treated with utmost seriousness

- Preliminary enquires should be made sensitively and carefully.
- Where staff see signs that cause them concern, they should as a first step seek some clarification from the child with tact and understanding. Where a Nursery Assistant or other member of the school team see such signs they should immediately bring them to the attention of the class teacher and the designated teacher. It may be appropriate for the necessary clarification to be carried out by the teacher.
- Care must be taken in asking and interpreting children's responses to questions about indications of abuse. Staff should be aware that the way in which they talk to a child might have an effect on the evidence that is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings.
- Children should not be asked leading questions or questions that encourage the child to change their version of events in any way which might impose the adult's own assumptions. Staff should say 'Tell me what happened' rather than 'Did they do X to you?'
- The chief task at the initial stage is to listen to the child and not to interrupt if they are freely recalling significant events. And to make note of the discussion to pass on to the designated teacher.
- This note should record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, or sketched.
- Any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent or carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, preferably quoting the words used.
- Children's needs should be monitored and reviewed regularly.
- No promise of confidentiality should ever be given where abuse is alleged although they can and should reassure that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know.
- Staff should be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings.
- Staff should not take action beyond that which is recommended in the procedures established by EA.
- Child protection arrangements should also seek to maintain the necessary balance between protecting children and respecting the rights of Parents, Carers and members of Staff.

He/she should not investigate – this is a matter for social services and/or PSNI – but should report these concerns immediately to the DP, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DP.

The DP will discuss the matter with the EA Child Protection team as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that written records of decisions are made.

The DP, in consultation with the EA Child Protection Team will decide whether, in the best interests of the child the matter needs to be referred to social services. **If there are concerns that the child/vulnerable adult may be at risk of significant harm, the nursery is obliged to make a referral to Social Services.** Unless there are concerns that a parent/guardian may be the possible abuser, the parents/guardians will be informed immediately.

No decisions to refer a child to social services will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse of a child, the DP will inform:

- Social Services - using the regional UNOCINI template (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland)*
- If it concerns a school pupil, the Designated Teacher for Child Protection at the school where the child is a registered pupil, and the EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection where appropriate.
- *The UNOCINI referral will be made in respect of concerns about **children** within 24 hours of the initial telephone referral to social services (unless agreed with Gateway to be longer eg- over a weekend). **This will be done in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL - CHILD PROTECTION.**

If any person feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, he/she should talk with the DP.

These must be followed in any instances where the school is alerted to possible abuse.

Roles and Responsibility of staff

1. The principal and staff of a school are in a position to take all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment for the pupils either on the premises or on educational outings and residential.
2. Staff will endeavour to create an atmosphere in which pupils can feel confident and able to discuss matters relating to abuse.
3. A brief note regarding any matter of child safety will be kept in the back of the class register in the event of a substitute teacher being in charge of a class.
4. In all cases where abuse is suspected, or where an allegation has been made about a pupil or a third party that abuse has taken place, or where serious concerns about the welfare of a child, teachers and other members of staff should report the information to the designated teacher. Staff should act quickly and responsibly in any instance that comes to attention. (See Appendix 1)
5. All staff working with a child of whom abuse is suspected should be alerted to suspicions, particularly if they appear in combination or are regularly repeated. Open communication and the sharing of information between members of staff is vital.
6. Confidentiality should be clearly understood by all staff. The dignity and right to privacy of all individuals must be respected. However, information regarding possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'. In the interest of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. **Only those who need to know will be informed.**
7. Staff recognise the duty that they must safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in their charge. Implicit in this is the assumption that the conduct of school staff towards pupils must be beyond reproach.
8. Staff should regularly reflect upon every aspect of their contact with children that might give rise to perceptions or allegations of abuse.
9. **All staff should know;**
 - How to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse.
 - What the relevant child protection procedures are, including the school's own internal procedures, where they are held in the school and how they can be referred to if necessary and what the reporting procedures are.
 - How to talk to the children and how to record information.
 - Who the designated teacher is and who will carry out her duties if she is unavailable. That is Chair of Governors/ EA Safeguarding team/ Gateway
 - What constitutes 'appropriate physical contact' with pupils.
9. School can play a part in the prevention of child abuse through the

curriculum. Staff are to be aware of this and where appropriate, use this influence. Included in the curriculum each year is work on 'Stranger, Danger' with a visit from the community police. We also teach the children to forcefully say 'Stop I don't like that' and inform an adult when they are not happy.

10. Staff are aware of the 'Code of Conduct' document and copies are available. (Appendix 2)

Referral and the role of the designated teacher

1. A child who is not being abused or at risk of abuse may nevertheless be in need of help from social services and such cases should be made known to them.
2. Where the designated teacher is suspected to have abused a child, or such an allegation is made, the member of staff who is made aware of the possible offence should inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer of the EA and under their direction, the social services.
3. Where an allegation is made against a member of staff, the principal should inform the Chair of the Board of Governors and the member of staff is either removed from direct contact with children or suspended pending investigation. (See Appendix 3)
4. When making a referral of a case of suspected or alleged abuse, the designated teacher should make sure that they are informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between the statutory agencies which will decide whether and how to investigate.
5. The designated teacher should endeavour to develop a good working relationship with colleagues from other agencies, especially the social services and the police

Records and Reports

1. Where child abuse is suspected, it is the responsibility to ensure that the appropriate reporting and recording procedures are set in train as quickly as possible. These should be;
 - ⊗ Objective and based on evidence.
 - ⊗ Containing only fact, observations and reasons for concern.
2. All incidences of concern, no matter how small should be recorded in the child protection record of complaint book. This is kept in a locked cupboard in the school.
3. When a child who is on the Child Protection Register changes School, all records pertaining to this child held in school must be destroyed and the new school informed that the child is on the register. We also share our own notes with the new school.

CODE OF CONDUCT TO PROMOTE SAFE CARING

This code of conduct applies to all people involved in any aspect of our nursery who engage with children. It reflects our safeguarding ethos.

It is our duty in Edenderry Nursery School to inform children that they have the right:-

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| ▪ To be safe. | To make decisions. |
| ▪ To protect their own bodies. | To have responsibility. |
| ▪ To say no. | To get help. |
| ▪ To tell. | To be believed. |
| ▪ Not to keep secrets. | To be listened to. |
| ▪ To be trusted and respected. | To have useful information. |
| ▪ To be treated equally. | |

In order to protect children, Edenderry Nursery School Staff, Trainees and volunteers should be aware that, as a general rule they should never:-

- Take children to their home;
- Engage in sexually provocative games;
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- Discourage kissing
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;

- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child even in fun;
- Let allegations that a child or young person makes go unchallenged or unrecorded;

All staff will be made aware of the Nursery's child safeguarding procedures and will have appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring. To this end:-

- We will inform the community, parents, children, young people, vulnerable adults and workers about the Nursery, what we do and what can be expected from us.
- We will look for ways to encourage parents, children, young people and the community to voice their concerns or complain if there is anything they are not happy about.
- Every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when members of staff, students or volunteers are left alone with a child. If staff/trainees/volunteers are alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff/volunteer should be informed.
- Staff and volunteers should never be alone with a child. If a journey is necessary, 2 children or 2 staff should go along, never 1 adult and 1 child.
- Accidents must be recorded according to school procedures.
- Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.
- Staff should avoid being alone with a child, particularly in confined spaces such as a toilet cubicle. Store area and so on.
- Staff and volunteers must ensure they do not spend excessive amounts of time with any one child away from others. They must not carry or cuddle children on a subjective level. Conduct must be caring but professional at all times.
- Students should remain out of the toilet area.
- Parents are required to provide written consent for their child to be changed if necessary.
- In the instance of a child being changed, the member of staff changing the pupil should inform another member of staff so they can be aware this is happening and be witness as much as possible. This should be recorded on a post it note for the child's folder detailing the members of staff involved. The parent should also be informed that changing has occurred.
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, students or volunteer, this will be recorded fully in the 'Incident Record Book'. When a child is affectionate or distressed, staff should be aware of their physical contact with the child remaining at all times public and appropriate.
- Staff should be aware of appropriate physical contact regarding hugs and kisses. If a child tries to kiss you, it should never be on the mouth. Professional conduct is crucial.
- Staff will not carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves. Where this is essential, staff will help a child whilst being accompanied by a colleague.
- It will at times be necessary for the Nursery staff to do things of a personal nature for children, including children with a disability.
- All allegations made by a child, parent or other adult against a member of staff will be fully recorded, including any actions taken, in the Incident Record Book. In the event of there being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.
- Ensure you take the opportunity to discuss your own feelings and worries with staff, for example at the team meeting or speak directly to the Designated teacher.

Physical Contact with Pupils

Teachers and Nursery Assistants will come into physical contact with pupils when toileting, and often in washing them and changing clothes.

- Sometimes children may find physical contact uncomfortable or distressing.
- Staff should be sensitive to a child's reaction and act appropriately.
- Staff should not touch pupils however casually on parts of the body or in circumstances that might be considered indecent.
- Physical restraint should be avoided at all costs. Staff/members must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to him/herself or another person.

STAFF SUPPORT AND TRAINING

Edenderry Nursery School is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection through the provision of support and training to staff. Therefore, the nursery will ensure that:

- All staff, trainees and volunteers are carefully recruited, have verified references and have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate through Access NI which is valid for one year.
- All staff, trainees and volunteers are given a copy of the Child-Protection Policy during their registration/induction.
- All staff, trainees and volunteers receive regular training and supervision in safeguarding and child protection issues and are provided with any relevant information and guidance.
- All staff will be provided with supervision and management support commensurate with their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection, and their requirement to maintain caring and safe relationships with children.
- All staff will be made aware of the main indicators of abuse.
- All staff will be made aware of their statutory requirements in respect of the disclosure or discovery of abuse and the procedure for doing so. All staff are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the DP. The DP will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any preliminary clarification into allegations of abuse, consistent with their duties to protect the safety of children and uphold fair processes for staff, members and volunteers.
- Any person under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, will be subject to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Policy, or the suspension of employment.

Parental Co-operation and Responsibility

1. It is important that parents know it is the aim of the school always to act in the best interests of the children and encourage the fullest possible involvement of and consultation with parents.
2. All parent helpers and volunteers are vetted if they will be involved with the children in an unsupervised capacity.
3. The School endeavours to help parents to understand it's charge.
4. Due to various activities, the Nursery will require forms to be signed by a person with parental responsibility. These forms could be for the purpose of activities such as :-
Registration, permission for specific activities or classes, permission to take and use photographs or video images and so on.

It is important that the appropriate adult signs the form, therefore it is necessary that the signatory legally has Parental Responsibility as outlined in the Children (NI) Order 1995, which defines those who have parental responsibility as follows:

- Birth mother (who always has Parental Responsibility)
 - Birth father who only gains Parental Responsibility:
 - If married to the mother at time of birth or subsequently.
 - Through an agreement witnessed by a Solicitor.
 - Through a Parental Responsibility Order by a court.
 - If jointly registered the child's birth (post April 2002)
 - A Health and Social Services Trust where it holds a Care Order in respect of the child
 - Any adult who holds a Residency Order in respect of a child
 - Any adult who has adopted a child
5. Failure to supply the necessary signed permission sheets will mean that participation in certain groups, events or activities will not be permitted by the Nursery.
 6. Where staff have concerns for a pupil, the parent (if not the alleged abuser) will be informed.
 7. Parents are reminded of the importance of notifying the school when someone other than a parent or regular carer is collecting the child. (See Appendix 4)
 8. A summary of arrangements for parents to make known any concerns they may have about a child is included in the school prospectus. These are displayed throughout the school.

9. Parents and volunteers involved in school life are reminded about the importance of confidentiality.
10. Parents are provided with 'Tips for Helpers' guidance when involved in visits outside school.

Board of Governors

1. Governors are kept informed of child abuse issues arising in the school through the principals Report.
2. Governors are vetted.
3. The School's 'Record of Child Abuse Complaint' is made available to Governors at least once a year.

The Child Protection Register

1. Where pupils names are on this register, they will be entered in the Special Educational Needs Register held by the school.
2. Appropriate staff will be informed and kept up to date on developments in this regard.
3. Appropriate staff will be released from teaching duties to attend case conferences.
4. Records of all relevant contact with social services and so on will be kept.
5. Staff will monitor pupils whose names are on the Child Protection plan. This plan is incorporated in the SEN Register.
6. A copy of any notes made by the school in the child protection register, are forwarded to the next school the child goes to.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Procedure where the school has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff
Appendix 2	A Code of Conduct for Employees within the Education sector
Appendix 3	Procedure where a complaint has been made about Possible abuse by a member of the school's staff
Appendix 4	Procedure where a complaint has been made about a possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff
Appendix 5	How a parent can make a complaint (raise a concern about a child's safety/wellbeing)—
Appendix 6	Information leaflet for temporary staff

Other policies directly relevant include our Pastoral Care, Safe Handling, Intimate Care, Use of images and Use of Mobile Phones, Domestic Violence, Female Genital Mutilation, Drugs, On Line Safety, Positive Behaviour and our Policy regarding Bullying.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

School Principal	Ms Magrath 07970120886
Gateway	90507000 (9-5pm)
Gateway out of hours	90565444
Local Care and Protection team for age 18+	90565707
PSNI	02890259299 or 101 ext. 30299
Child Safeguarding Team EABR	02890564107 8.30-4.45pm daily