



## Child Protection

Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Mrs AM McHugh/ Miss A Killough  
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Miss B Donnelly

### **Duty to Protect**

The children (NI) Order Regulations and Guidance Volume 6, Co-operating to Protect Children places upon society a 'Duty to Protect', stating:

"Children because of their dependency and immaturity are vulnerable to various forms of abuse. Those with disabilities can be particularly vulnerable due to communication difficulties or their dependence on others for personal care. ...The Community also has a responsibility for the well being of children and their protection. Everyone should be alert to the possibility of abuse. When they know or suspect that a child is being abused, they should report their concerns to the appropriate agencies. Relatives, friends, neighbours, teachers and youth leaders are particularly well placed to help, but they must know what to do if they are concerned."

This 'Duty to Protect' is a responsibility of all organisations, groups, schools, services and agencies within the 'Community' that come into contact with children and young people directly and/or indirectly, independent of whether or not a child or his/her family pay for use of the service. Children and young people are considered to be a vulnerable grouping and therefore society has responsibilities, legally and morally, to make every reasonable effort to prevent and protect them from suffering harm, ie. Ill treatment or the impairment of health or development.

A parent, a sibling or other relative, a carer, an acquaintance or a stranger, who may be an adult or a young person, can abuse children. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or a failure on the part of the responsible adult to act or to provide proper care, or both.

The following definitions of abuse have been taken from the 'Children (NI) Order 1995 Vol.6 Part 2.3'.

Neglect: The actual or likely persistent or significant neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Physical Injury: Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or willful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

Sexual Abuse: Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child, the involvement of children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

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

### **Child Protection Procedures**

Nursery staff have a right to make a referral if they have concerns about a child. If their attempts to deal with a situation are not satisfactory they have a legal responsibility to inform social services or the police. (Nursery staff have had a legal duty to protect children since 1995.)

In the event of an incident/concern/disclosure, staff will

1. Take details - day, time, place and make observations and record behavioural indicators and statements.
2. Record details of anyone else involved eg.witnesses
3. Refer to the Designated Person in the nursery.
4. Seek Advice
5. Make a decision to refer or not to refer, and why, and record any other action, including type of feedback to all those involved.

In the event of a parent being concerned about the possible abuse of a child we recommend the following procedure.

## **Child Protection Procedure**

1. I have a concern about my / a child's safety.
2. I can talk to the nursery teacher.
3. If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mrs Mc Hugh, or the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Miss Donnelly.
4. If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr Sean Doherty.
5. At any time I can contact:

Social Services Gateway Team - 02893 340165

or

Larne Police Station - 02828 272266