

CLC CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Children's Law Centre is founded upon the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and recognises the rights of all children to safety and protection from abuse and neglect. Child safeguarding is at the heart and ethos of the Children's Law Centre. The Children's Law Centre views the abuse and neglect of children as a violation of their right to lead full and fulfilled lives free from harm and suffering.

This policy has been designed to reflect the importance Children's Law Centre places upon child safeguarding in all areas of its work and has been developed through utilising the skills and knowledge and expertise of workers within the Centre. It has been designed to specifically address the issue of child safeguarding in relation to the work of the Centre and the many ways in which this work may involve children and young people.

The policy recognises the dilemmas created between the welfare principle contained in existing law, children's rights, competency issues and the need to listen to children. It aims to provide specific guidance to all workers in relation to situations of child safeguarding, which may be relevant to their work.

The Children's Law Centre recognises that child safeguarding is not just about reaction i.e. the process of identification, reporting and monitoring of abuse but that it is also about prevention. This policy outlines the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment for children and young people.

1.1 Scope of Policy

This Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy applies to all staff working within the Children's Law Centre whether paid or unpaid. It also applies to the Management Committee and its various sub-groups.

Solicitors employed by Children's Law Centre are bound by rules of professional/client confidentiality for the legal work of the Centre. A separate confidentiality policy exists outlining such responsibilities in relation to legal work of the Children's Law Centre. This Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy should be read in conjunction with this separate paper.

This policy is consistent with the Guidance "Cooperating to Safeguard Children" and "Our Duty to Care".

1.2 Responsibility

The Director, as Designated Child Safeguarding Officer, has overall responsibility for CLC's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and the annual review of the policy.

1.3 Definition of a child

For the purpose of this policy a child is any child or young person under the age of 18.

1.4 Guiding principles

1. Children have the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse.
2. The child's rights are the paramount consideration. Any actions or decisions taken will reflect their best interests.
3. Children have a right to be listened to and taken seriously. Children should be consulted throughout the decision making process and this process should take into account the principles established in the Gillick case regarding competency of older children.
4. Children and young people who use the Children's Law Centre have the right to know about the existence of a Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Confidentiality Policy. Training will be provided to youth@clc in relation to this policy and specific materials produced for children and young people will be made available.
5. While the rights of children are of the paramount consideration, those who have parental responsibility for children should be consulted, where possible with the consent of the child or young person. Consideration must also be given to the rights and responsibilities of parents, family and staff.
6. Actions taken to safeguard a child (including investigation) should not in themselves be abusive by causing a child unnecessary distress or adding to any damage already suffered. All staff must be aware of their boundaries around investigation and the need for qualified support around this.
7. The Children's Law Centre is committed to the promotion of equality. No child shall experience discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, disability, ethnic origin, age, stage of development, religion, culture and sexual orientation.
8. Co-operation with other agencies that have legal responsibility for child safeguarding is essential in cases where there is a risk of serious harm to children. All agencies must work together on an interagency basis to ensure the best interests of the child.

It is the Children's Law Centre's policy to safeguard and promote these principles and to work with the Management Committee and other agencies in doing so.

2. DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

For the purpose of this policy, definitions of abuse are those contained in ***Cooperating to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, May 2003)***.

Children may be abused by a parent, professional, carer, sibling or other relative, acquaintance or stranger. The abuser may be an adult or another young person. The abuse may be a result of a deliberate act (commission) or a failure on the part of a parent/carer to act or provide adequate care (omission) or both.

2.1 Physical 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.

2.2 Neglect

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 foods, shelter and clothing, failure 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.

2.3 Emotional abuse

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. 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.

2.4 Sexual abuse

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 a child in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

N.B. These are general definitions. Any member of staff who has suspicions of abuse under any of these categories should invoke the procedures outlined in this policy. Staff may also come across circumstances where family support is required. In such circumstances appropriate procedures should be followed.

3. CONTEXT OF CHILD SAFEGUARDING ISSUES IN RELATION TO CHILDREN'S LAW CENTRE

The Children's Law Centre works with children of various ages and from a variety of backgrounds. This work occurs in different ways and through different mediums and may include:

- Children and young people coming into the Centre seeking information/support.
- Children and young people contacting the CHALKY line and accessing other legal services, including REE Rights Responder and REE Live Chat
- Through the work of youth@clc, both Centre based and residential based.
- Working with groups of young people in schools or in the community.

Abuse may be directly referred to the Children's Law Centre or it may be indirectly implied or come to staff's attention in some other format. Information may refer to a particular child known to the Centre or to other children in a household or in the wider community.

4. PROCEDURES WHEN ABUSE IS SUSPECTED

Children may disclose or indicate abuse in a whole range of settings and situations. A child may disclose abuse directly to a member of staff; this may range from vague hints of abuse to direct disclosure with details of events.

The Children's Law Centre recognises that dealing with abuse is a very difficult issue for staff to deal with and recognise the need to provide specific training and support in relation to this.

4.1 Positive responses and good practice when dealing with disclosure;

- Where abuse is disclosed it is important that the child is listened to and reassured.
- Staff must not interview children beyond initial disclosure. This requires the expertise of other agencies.
- Staff cannot promise a child absolute confidentiality. They must be open and honest with children about this from the start.

- Staff should deal sensitively with the child's upset while ensuring that they provide a clear explanation of the next part of the process.
- Notes of any disclosure should be written up as soon as possible (see checklist and recording form at Appendix 1 to this policy) and held securely by the Director of the Children's Law Centre as Designated Child Safeguarding Officer in case they are needed for future reference.
- All efforts should be made to keep the young person informed at all stages of the process.

4.2 Procedures for referral when abuse is suspected or disclosed;

1. All information relating to the possible or likely abuse of a child must be referred immediately, by a member of staff to their line manager.
2. The line manager will then refer the matter to the Director of the Children's Law Centre, as Designated Child Safeguarding Officer.
3. In the absence of the Director, it will be referred to the designated representative of the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding (See Appendix 2 to this policy).
4. Where there is evidence that a child is at risk of harm, the Director, sometimes in consultation with the designated child safeguarding representative of the Management Sub-committee on Personnel and Safeguarding will make a decision about referral to a relevant statutory agency, if this has not already occurred.
5. The Director will refer the case to the local Gateway Teams of Social Services/Child Abuse Investigations Units within the Police Public Protection Unit in whose location the child's parents/carer is domiciled. Where a child's parents live in separate Health and Social Care Trust areas the case will be referred to the Trust area/Child Abuse Investigations Units within the Police Public Protection Unit where the child is primarily domiciled.
6. The Children's Law Centre retain the right to have an informal discussion with social services where issues are explored or advice obtained but where a child's name is not actually given.
7. The Director will ensure that a verbal referral is followed up in writing and that all documentation relating to the referral is securely and safely stored.

N.B These procedures will not apply where the Children's Law Centre have been informed and have verified and recorded that other statutory agencies including the Police, Social Services, NSPCC etc are in receipt of allegations of abuse. Neither will they apply where the Children's Law Centre have given clear recorded advice for parents/carers about using the Pastoral Care in Schools procedures for allegations of abuse.

4.3 Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding

A Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding has been established with the following safeguarding aims:

- To support the Director and staff in relation to child and vulnerable adults safeguarding issues.
- To provide advice and guidance to the Director and staff in relation to the development and implementation of best practice in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within Children's Law Centre.
- To act as a reference point for the Director in situations involving a possible referral, complaints against a member of staff, complicated ethical or procedural issues. The Director may convene the sub-committee in an emergency or seek support by telephone.
- To receive regular reports from the Director regarding child and vulnerable adults safeguarding issues arising within the work of the Children's Law Centre and how these have been handled.
- To review the Children's Law Centre policies on safeguarding children and the safeguarding vulnerable adults at regular intervals.
- To report and recommend to the Management Committee when relevant in respect of this issue.

Status

The Personnel and Safeguarding Committee is a sub-committee of the Management Committee and will report to the Management Committee.

Membership

The sub-committee will have not less than two members from the Management Committee. The Director will normally attend in an ex-officio capacity without voting rights. Other Management Committee members and staff may attend by invitation in a non-voting capacity. Secretariat will be provided by the Administration staff.

Meetings

The sub-committee will meet bi-monthly and in any event not less than five times a year. Other meetings may be held if agreed by the sub-committee.

A note of each meeting will be produced and circulated to all members of the Personnel and Safeguarding Sub-Committee as detailed above and presented to the next Management Committee.

This group will act as a reference point for the Director. In the situation of a possible referral, complicated ethical or procedural issue, the Director may convene this group in an emergency or seek support by telephone. In the first instance it may be

appropriate for the Director to contact one of the named members of the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding listed in Appendix 2.

When a breach of legal confidentiality is involved, a legally qualified member of the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding should be involved in the decision making process.

The Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding will also meet once a year to consider child safeguarding issues within the Children's Law Centre and how good practice can be developed and promoted in all areas of work.

All members of this sub-committee will engage in staff training around child safeguarding to ensure consistent compliance with this policy.

4.4 Emergency situations

It is difficult to predict when child safeguarding matters may arise. Often an emergency situation may arise where the above process of consultation is not possible. Where there are genuine concerns for the safety of a child by a member of staff and the Director is not present in the Centre that member of staff will follow the procedures below:

1. Every attempt will be made to seek advice from the Director by contacting them wherever they are or by contacting their mobile.
2. If the Director cannot be contacted, the member of staff will try to contact the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding, who is also the Designated Child Safeguarding representative of the Management Committee (see Appendix 2 for contact details)
3. If the Designated Child Safeguarding representative cannot be contacted, the member of staff will try to contact other members of the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding. Names and contact details for members are provided at Appendix 2 to this policy.
4. If neither the Director or members of the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding are available and the member of staff believes there is a genuine emergency and a child or children may suffer abuse if immediate action is not taken, the member of staff may instigate the process outlined above and refer the matter to the relevant statutory agencies. On the advice of social services, the staff member will if necessary make an external referral as outlined at Appendix 2. The member of staff should continue to try to contact the individuals outlined above to inform them of the events.

4.5 General principles for referral

- Staff shall be kept informed and updated about names and contact details of representatives on the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding. (See Appendix 2)
- Should a member of this sub-committee move on, staff will be informed of their replacement and the policy will be updated accordingly.

- Emergency telephone numbers will be prominently displayed.
- Incident reporting forms will be made available to staff and staff will be instructed on their completion and storage (see Appendix 1 to this policy).

4.6 Procedures where an incident also meets serious adverse incident criteria

If during the investigation of a child safeguarding incident it becomes apparent that the incident also meets the criteria for a serious adverse incident; the incident is required to be referred immediately to the HSCB as an SAI. In these circumstances, safeguarding investigations will run parallel and separate to the SAI notifications, reporting and investigation procedures (see CLC's SAI Policy).

5. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF

It is vital to safeguard against abuse by a member of staff, either paid or unpaid. For all staff that have access to children, recruitment procedures should include both checking with Access NI and consultation with referees requesting specific information regarding a candidate's suitability for working with children.

Any complaint involving a matter of child safeguarding made against a member of staff should be referred immediately to the Director of the Children's Law Centre. The Director, in consultation with members of the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding will consider what action is necessary.

Depending on the nature of the allegation, the member of staff may be suspended by the Director whilst further investigations are carried out.

If appropriate, depending on the nature of the allegation, the disciplinary procedure may be invoked. The member of staff will then be advised of the grievance procedure.

Where there is a complaint made involving the Director of the Children's Law Centre, the procedures will remain as above except that the Chair of the Management Committee will act as the Director. In such a case the Vice Chairperson will take on the normal responsibilities of the Chair in relation to the disciplinary and grievance procedures.

5.1 Staff support

Staff working within the Children's Law Centre may feel vulnerable to accusations of child abuse. It is important that such concerns are treated seriously and that supervision is used to address such concerns. To avoid allegations, it is vital that all staff pay attention to the Code of Behaviour included with this policy (see appendix 3).

Staff will also be advised that if an allegation of abuse against them meet the criteria for an SAI (as defined in CLC's Policy at 1.1) it will also be subject to HSCB reporting and investigation procedures.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, it is important that the member of staff is encouraged to:

- Stay calm.
- Cooperate with the investigation.
- Seek advice and support from the Management Committee (if appropriate), an external agency, Trade Union, family or friends.
- Consideration may also be given to the provision of independent support throughout the course of an investigation.
- Ensure that clear records are kept of any meetings attended, discussions or correspondence about the allegation.
- Avoid discussing the allegation with the person who made it.

(Adapted, Safer Organisations for Children)

6. PROTECTING CHILDREN AND WORKERS, CREATING A CULTURE OF SAFETY

The Children's Law Centre realises that best child safeguarding practice will offer not only protection to children but also to staff with responsibility for them.

The Children's Law Centre is committed to ensuring that all staff are aware of child safeguarding issues and procedures for dealing with suspicions and disclosure. The organisation avails of all opportunities to maximise safety and minimise risk.

Minimising likely situations for child abuse and/or allegations of child abuse is essential. Procedures outlined in this policy have been designed to protect both staff and children in the following ways:

Policy communicated to all
Recruitment and selection
Ongoing staff support and supervision
Training and development
Environment to promote safety
Code of behaviour
Transfer of policy into practice

6.1 Policy communicated to all

The Children's Law Centre will ensure that this Safeguarding Children and Young People policy is communicated to all staff both paid and voluntary, the Management Committee and children and young people who the Centre may work with. Each member of staff will receive a copy of the policy as part of their induction process and training will be provided as an integral element of the induction process. Opportunities will be provided to discuss the implications of the policy for specific workers. All staff will be kept informed of any changes to the policy or membership of the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)

Regulated activity relating to children and young people

The full legal definition of regulated activity is set out in Schedule 2 to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007, as amended, in particular by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

Regulated activity still excludes family arrangements and personal non-commercial arrangements.

The amended definition of regulated activity relating to children and young people includes the following:

- i) Unsupervised activities: teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervision of children, or providing advice/guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children;
- ii) Work for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places') with opportunity for contact with children and young people eg schools, children's homes, child care premises, a children's hospital but not work by supervised volunteers in those 'specified places';
Work under i) or ii) above is regulated activity only if done regularly.
- iii) Relevant personal care eg washing or dressing; or healthcare by, or supervised by, a professional;
- iv) Registered childminding and foster care.

The above information in respect of the amended definition of regulated activity relating to children and young people has been sourced from a leaflet entitled 'Changes to disclosure and barring: what you need to know' published by the Northern Ireland Executive in May 2012.

The Children's Law Centre will comply with the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protections of Freedoms Act 2012), which requires the Centre to:

- Ensure that all new and existing employees and volunteers whose role meets the definition of 'regulated activity' (SVG (NI) Order 2007, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012), are subject to enhanced disclosure checks via Access NI.
- Ensure that all new and existing employees and volunteers are referred to Access NI for the appropriate checks.
- CLC will not engage any employees or volunteers who are on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) barred list, in regulated activity with children and young people.
- CLC will comply with the legal duty to make referrals to the DBS in the following circumstances:
 - a) where a staff member or volunteer in regulated activity has been removed from their position or dismissed by CLC from regulated activity with children due

to behaviour that caused harm to a child or put them at risk of suffering harm and where the behaviour meets the DBS definitions of 'relevant conduct' or b) where a staff member or volunteer in regulated activity has resigned before disciplinary investigation has been completed but would have been removed or dismissed from regulated activity relating to children had they not resigned from post.

- Where a staff member or volunteer who is not in regulated activity has been removed from their position due to behaviour that caused harm to a child or put them at risk of suffering harm, CLC will inform the DBS of the relevant details
- In all cases CLC will seek guidance from relevant agencies before making a referral to the DBS.

All relevant CLC staff will receive training on the Centre's legal obligations under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protections of Freedoms Act 2012). CLC staff received updated training on the Disclosure and Barring Service from Volunteer Now in April 2013.

Designated Officer

The Children's Law Centre is committed to the protection of vulnerable adults and children and as such has identified a Designated Child Safeguarding Officer. Within the Children's Law Centre the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer is the Director. The Deputy Designated Officer is the Chairperson of the Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding. Their role is to:

- provide guidance on policy issues in relation to safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children;
- ensure appropriate staff training;
- monitor all relevant incidents;
- make referrals of suspected or disclosed abuse, relating to a child or vulnerable adult to the relevant authorities in appropriate circumstances, and in keeping with the Children's Law Centre policy;
- make legally required referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service regarding the conduct of staff or volunteers in appropriate circumstances as outlined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012).
- ensure that records of any concerns/disclosures and referrals are stored securely by the Director as Designated Child Safeguarding Officer.

6.2 Recruitment and selection

The Children's Law Centre will undertake rigorous pre-employment screening of employees and volunteers, in compliance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) and 'Our Duty to Care – Principles for Good Practice in the Protection of Children and Young People' (Volunteer Now 2011). This includes:

- Carrying out pre-employment checks on employees and volunteers as follows:

a) An Enhanced Disclosure Check to include a Barred List check will be carried out in respect of staff and volunteers whose role meets the definition of regulated activity for working with children and young people.

b) A Standard Disclosure Check will be carried out for staff and volunteers whose role is outside the scope of regulated activity but whose role involves ongoing contact with children and young people and falls within the definition of an “excepted” position under the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (NI) Order 1979.

- Taking up references with specific emphasis on the individual’s suitability for working with children and young people.
- All applicants will be required to declare any past cautions, criminal convictions and cases pending against them under the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (NI) Order 1979 as amended. This information will be dealt with confidentially and will not be used to discriminate against any applicant.
- CLC will use discretion with considering all conviction and non-conviction information received from Access NI when making decisions about the suitability of any individual for paid or unpaid work within the organisation.
- Qualifications and proof of identification will be verified as soon as possible.
- If there are any doubts about an applicant’s suitability, written references will be followed up by a personal call to referees.
- When interviewing staff and volunteers, questions exploring the importance of effective child safeguarding practice and attitudes in relation to acceptable and unacceptable behaviour with children will be asked.

6.3 Ongoing staff supervision and support

The Children’s Law Centre realises the importance of effective supervision for staff development and promotion of good practice. Supervision is particularly important when working with issues of child safeguarding. Supervision can provide a safe arena to discuss concerns regarding policy and procedures and to raise awareness on best practice when dealing with child safeguarding issues.

Child safeguarding is a very sensitive area and staff who have been involved in a child safeguarding case will need a great deal of support to enable them to cope with their feelings around this. The Children’s Law Centre has in place an effective system of supervision and line management for all staff and volunteers.

6.4 Training and development

CLC appreciates the importance of staff training for personal and professional development. Training in child safeguarding will be made available to all staff working within the Children’s Law Centre and the Management Committee, as when required. Training will be provided at least once per year for staff and members of the Management Committee. This will ensure that everyone is aware of CLC’s Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and any changes in legislation which may impact on policy, procedure and practice. Sharing training with the Management Committee will also promote good working relationships.

Training on child safeguarding and in relation to this policy, will be provided to all staff as part of their induction process.

All youth@clc members will receive training on CLC's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, including codes of behaviour for staff and youth@clc members. Age appropriate training on relevant aspects of safeguarding, including safe internet use and CLC's Social Media Policy will be provided to youth@clc members as and when required.

6.5 Environment to promote safety and support

An environment can be created that will promote safety and support for children, young people and staff. All staff need to be conscious that in the application of this policy, child safeguarding is at the heart and ethos of CLC and will aim for best practice at all times.

The Children's Law Centre strongly rejects all forms of intimidation, violence and abusive behaviour. Staff will model healthy relationships in how they interact with other members of staff giving attention to issues such as, communication, respect and trust.

Positive messages about the right to safety will be displayed throughout the Centre with particular emphasis on areas used by children and young people. Information on agencies that can help will be made widely available to staff, children and young people. This may take the form of posters, leaflets etc. Areas used by young people will be made welcoming and comfortable. Emergency contacts and information will be displayed throughout the Centre and are regularly updated and provided to all staff.

All staff will contribute to the development of an environment:

- Which feels safe for children.
- Where staff and children can voice their concerns about child safeguarding.
- Which promotes confidentiality but not secrecy.
- Which upholds and safeguards the rights of children and young people to safety and support.

All staff will minimise opportunities for children to suffer harm. Teams will plan their work and activities giving attention to the need to safeguard children. Practical considerations will include the number of participants in activities, health and safety issues, the ratio of children to adults, the physical environment and the special needs of individual children.

All staff will be encouraged to challenge potentially abusive behaviour and/or language used by children or by other members of staff.

6.6 Code of Behaviour

The Children's Law Centre is committed to the development of an environment where children, young people and staff feel safe and comfortable. In ensuring this, the Centre has developed a Code of Behaviour for staff whose work may involve working with children and young people. This Code of Behaviour (see Appendix 3 to this policy)

aims to protect children and young people whom the Centre works with and also provide protection for staff and volunteers. It provides consistency of approach, which in turn provides security for children and young people.

6.7 Transfer of policy into practice

This policy has been developed to promote best practice in child safeguarding in all areas of work within the Children's Law Centre. It has been designed to provide workers with practical guidelines in order to work effectively with young people. This is twinned with a supportive element to ensure that neither the young person nor worker feels at risk.

Every attempt is made by the Children's Law Centre to ensure that this policy is integrated into the heart of practice of every member of staff. Prevention is parallel to protection and all staff are encouraged through training and support to maximise safe practice and to promote the welfare of children and young people.

All staff will be encouraged to feel confident in working with this policy to be certain about their decisions and to be aware of the supportive mechanisms that are in place. Staff will be encouraged to challenge the contents of this policy at any stage. Any concerns should be raised with the staff member's line manager.

This policy will be reviewed annually in relation to its effectiveness in practice. CLC staff and members of the Management Committee will be encouraged to be involved in this review process.

APPENDIX 1

Recording allegations or suspicions of abuse

In cases where an allegation has been made, or someone is concerned, a record should be made. A recording form should be used for this purpose (see overpage).

It is good practice to have a checklist of details, which should be noted. This checklist could include:

- Name of child
- Age of child
- Parent's/carer's name
- Contact details
- Date and time disclosure was made and by whom
- Who disclosure was made to
- Details disclosed
- Concerns held by member of staff
- Details of physical or behavioural signs of abuse
- Any other observations
- Actions taken including any referrals made

All records should be signed, dated and stored securely and confidentially by the Director as Designated Child Safeguarding Officer for future reference. Duplicate records may be retained on file notes if it relates to legal casework or CHALKY enquiries, including young people who contact CLC following a referral in from REE Rights Responder and/or REE Live Chat.

Child Safeguarding Incident Report Form
Record of allegations or suspicions of abuse

1	Name of child:
2	Age of child:
3	Parent's/carer's name:
4	Contact details:
5	Date and time disclosure was made and by whom. Please record their contact details if different from above:
6	Who disclosure was made to:
7	Details of disclosure:
8	Concerns by CLC staff member:
9	Details of any physical or behavioural signs of abuse:

10	Any other observations:
11	Actions taken including any referrals made:

Original provided to Director as Designated Child Safeguarding Officer: YES / NO

Duplicate record stored on case file or CHALKY records: YES / NO

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

**APPENDIX 2
REPORTING CHILD SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS**

**CHILDREN'S LAW CENTRE
CONTACT DETAILS (TO BE COMPLETED AND UPDATED REGULARLY)**

1ST CONTACT

Name	Paddy Kelly
Title	Director, Children's Law Centre, Designated Child Safeguarding Officer
Mobile number	07810 502 701

2ND CONTACT

Name	Paula Rogers
Title	Child Safeguarding representative of CLC Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding
Tel Number	028 9181 1429

3RD CONTACT – IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ONLY

Name	David Simpson
Title	Child Safeguarding representative of CLC Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding
Tel Number	028 90 623813

4TH CONTACT – IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ONLY

Name	Alicia Toal
Title	Child Safeguarding representative of CLC Management Sub-Committee on Personnel and Safeguarding
Tel Number	028 90 244888

External referral

(Only to be used by members of staff in an emergency where it has not been possible to contact any individuals above and where it is felt a child is at risk)

TRUST AREA	INITIAL REFERRAL NUMBER (Gateway)	OUT OF HOURS – Regional emergency social work service	ONGOING LIAISON (Gateway)
Belfast	02890507000	02895049999	
South Eastern	03001000300	02895049999 or 028 90 565444	02895049999 or 028 90 565444
Southern	08007837745 or 02837415285	02895049999	Craigavon: 02838343011 Newry: 02830825000 Armagh: 02887713506
Northern	03001234333	02895049999	Central: 02879651020 South East: 02893340165 North: 02870325462
Western	02871314090	02895049999	

Local Police Station	Lisburn Road Police Station
Address	266 Lisburn Road BT9 6GG
Non-Emergency Tel number	101
Emergency number	999
Non-Emergency Online	www.psnipolice.uk/contact-us/

APPENDIX 3

CHILDREN'S LAW CENTRE

Code of Behaviour when working with children and young people

INTRODUCTION

This Code of Behaviour has been designed to compliment CLC's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. The primary aim of this Code of Behaviour is to enable and encourage staff working with children and young people to create a safe environment where the rights of both workers and children to safety and support will be promoted.

This Code of Behaviour will therefore help to protect children, young people and workers by providing specific guidelines and clearly outlining boundaries for staff when engaging in work with children and young people. It has been designed to ensure consistency of approach and compliance with best practice in child safeguarding.

This Code of Behaviour has been developed concurrently with CLC's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and should be used in conjunction with this policy. It is underpinned by the ethos and values of the Children's Law Centre and aims to uphold the rights of children.

This Code of Behaviour is applicable to all work carried out by the agency. Prevention is perceived to be parallel to protection and all staff are encouraged to follow these guidelines in order to maximise safe practice and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Staff within the Children's Law Centre are encouraged to challenge this document or add to it to maintain a high standard and ensure that child safeguarding is at the core of their work. Any changes should be channelled through the line manager of the project in question. Changes cannot be made without confirmation from the Director as Designated Child Safeguarding Officer.

This Code of Behaviour outlines suggested practice and appropriate behaviour in the following areas:

- 1. *Planning and management of activities***
- 2. *Supervision of young people***
- 3. *Tasks of a personal nature***
- 4. *Maintaining professional boundaries***
- 5. *Managing challenging behaviour***

1. PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

1.1 Working on site

- ✓ All youth meetings should be booked in advance and the line manager should be made aware of dates and times
- ✓ Health and safety issues should be understood and become integral to the workplace.
- ✓ A register of names should be collated as young people arrive.
- ✓ Smoking is only allowed outside the building. It is not necessary that young people be accompanied on these breaks. If there is a delay in the young person returning staff should phone the young person on their mobile.

1.2 Working away

- ✓ **All** young people **must** submit a consent form with relevant details. No young person will be allowed to attend a residential without a consent form regardless of his/her age.
- ✓ All workers should be aware of any medical requirements/conditions any of the young people have which may have implications for their performance in certain activities.
- ✓ At least one worker should accompany young people when on arranged transport.
- ✓ A representative from the residential venue should meet with the group on arrival to go through a health and safety drill for that venue.
- ✓ No worker should share a room with young people. Separate accommodation for workers, both male and female should be pre arranged with the external provider.
- ✓ A worker should never go into a young person's bedroom alone, in cases of emergency e.g. sickness, it is advisable that the worker is accompanied by another worker or, if not possible another young person.
- ✓ When working away e.g. at a residential, a gender breakdown of staff with a ratio of 1 worker to 8 young people should be facilitated.
- ✓ At all times, health and safety should remain integral and a head count should be carried out systematically throughout the duration.
- ✓ The Children's Law Centre operates a no alcohol policy for all its youth activities. This policy extends to **both** workers and young people.
- ✓ It is important to remember that Children's Law Centre is responsible for young people during the residential and the time stipulated on the form.

1.3 Digital Safeguarding - Engaging with Young People Online (one to one or in groups)

All CLC staff should carry out a safeguarding risk assessment before engaging with young people online (one to one or in groups through any digital Comms platform e.g. e.g. what's app, zoom, MS Teams, Google hangout etc) for any purpose, when considering what is in the best interests of the young person(s) from a safeguarding

perspective. The following checklist should be used to assist with the risk assessment and developing a mitigation plan before each online engagement with a young person:

- Is the young person (s) in a safe and comfortable space to engage online?
- Is this a vulnerable young person (s)
- Is there a trusted adult or friend nearby who can support the young person if they need it both before, during and/or after your online communication.
- Does the digital platform meet the access requirements of the young person (s) (e.g. age and disability appropriate and translation needs met if required)
- Are young people in a private or shared space at home?
- Can you adjust the privacy settings on the software or platform? (Max privacy is preferable)
- If using a platform of software, do the legal terms and conditions allow for the age group to use them?
- If there is any recording, live-streaming, or sharing of media, ensure all young people
- and their parents / guardians are informed why and agree to this before participating.
- Are young people able to control their environment (switch off cameras and mics if necessary)?
- Can you or should you mix different age groups online?

BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

- Avoid handing out personal contact details, use an organisational log-in or contact.
- Do keep a register of participation, including those who arrived early or late.
- Always use a secure, encrypted connection.
- Have 2 staff online where possible and avoid one-to one messaging
- Avoid lone working

USEFUL LINKS

For further guidance on carrying out risk assessments for digital working see link below to Catalyst's online step-by-step digital safeguarding guide below for charities designing new services or taking existing ones online.

<https://digisafe.thecatalyst.org.uk/>

2. SUPERVISION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

- ✓ There should be a ratio of workers to young people of 1:8, however to ensure best practice it is desirable that there are at least two workers present at every meeting.
- ✓ Young people should never be left on their own.
- ✓ The Children's Law Centre is responsible for young people whilst they remain within Children's Law Centre building. If they choose to leave, we must respect this decision, as it is a voluntary participative project.
- ✓ Workers should remain with young people when they are waiting for transport outside the building.
- ✓ Guidance on Supervision ratios for online working

3. TASKS OF A PERSONAL NATURE AND PHYSICAL TOUCH

- ✓ Workers should avoid accompanying young people to the toilet or sharing shower facilities. In cases of emergency e.g. sickness, it is advisable that two workers are present. If this is not possible, the worker should ensure that they are accompanied by at least one other young person.
- ✓ Workers and young people should not change their clothing in a communal area.
- ✓ Workers should be aware of their body contact with young people and try to keep this to a minimum. Workers should not engage in or encourage inappropriate touching.
- ✓ Workers should not engage in, or countenance rough, physical or sexually provocative games or horseplay.
- ✓ Workers should never do things of a personal nature for children and young people that they can do for themselves.

4. MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

- ✓ Workers and young people should respect each other's cultural traditions at all times. A contract is a useful ways for addressing this with young people.
- ✓ No young person or worker should be placed in a difficult, uncomfortable or dangerous situation that places him/her at risk.
- ✓ Children, young people and workers should never be subjected to any forms of abuse.
- ✓ Workers should never give a young person a lift home in their car. If a young person requires a lift, another worker should be present. Children's Law Centre has an account with a local taxi service which can be used if a young person requires a lift.
- ✓ A worker should not engage in a romantic or sexual relationship with a young person regardless if they are over 18 years of age.
- ✓ A worker should never invite a young person to their home. A worker should not visit the home of a young person alone.
- ✓ Workers should make their group aware of the Children's Law Centre's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Code of Behaviour. This will ensure that the young people are aware of limitations and boundaries that are in place.

- ✓ Workers should refrain from giving their personal numbers to young people. A staff mobile is available for the Youth Participation and Advocacy Worker which should minimise situations where this is deemed necessary. All staff within the Children's Law Centre must be aware of this.
- ✓ It is not acceptable for a worker to stay behind after a social activity and accompany young people to a bar or engage in alcohol consumption. The Children's Law Centre operates a no alcohol policy for all its youth activities. This policy applies to both workers and young people.

5. MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

- ✓ Workers will endeavour to create an environment that promotes healthy relationships and respect.
- ✓ Workers will practice healthy relationships at all times giving attention to basic practice skills such as respect, listening and empathy.
- ✓ Workers will challenge inappropriate behaviour and language in the group immediately.
- ✓ Young people will also be encouraged to challenge inappropriate behaviour and language.

