



Stormont Community Engagement Project


Safeguarding Policy

June 2018

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The Policy for safeguarding children and young people outlined in this document were presented to and adopted by the committee for the Stormont Community Engagement Project at their meeting on 20th June 2018. This document and the policies and procedures outlined now supersede any previous policies or procedures.

Any queries about anything outlined in this document should be sent to the Chairperson via email: Stormontcommunity@gmail.com

PURPOSE OF THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This policy will cover a range of issues designed to help you work effectively and safely with children and young people within the Stormont Community Engagement Projects. This next section of our child protection policy will deal with what we expect from our staff, volunteers, and committee members responses to certain situations, roles of the safeguarding team and how to deal with a disclosure. Please remember that all the information provided is a guideline and will not fit all situations.

INTRODUCTION

In keeping with the aims of the Stormont Community Engagement Project the Committee has a pastoral responsibility towards the children and young people attending and volunteering, and will take steps to ensure their welfare and safety are protected and promoted.

This policy will cover a range of issues designed to help you work effectively and safely with children and young people within the Stormont Community Engagement Projects.

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

The Stormont Community Engagement Project has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies including:

- Discipline Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling Policy
- Additional Needs Policy
- Volunteer policy

These policies are available to parents/carers on the Stormont Community Engagement Project website at www.stormontcommunity.com

THE PRINCIPLES CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection” (DENI Circular 99/10) and the Area Child Protection committees’ Regional Policy and Procedures (2005).

- A. The child’s welfare must always be paramount.
- B. A balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/carers and families. Where there is a conflict the child’s interest must remain paramount.
- C. Children have a right to be heard and listened to and to be taken seriously.
- D. The process of protecting the child from harm should be carried out with the parent/ carer involvement wherever possible.
- E. Information exchanged between the child, the parents/carers and all professional disciplines is of utmost importance.
- F. Actions taken to protect a child should not in themselves be abusive or distressing.
- G. At all times, the emphasis must be on a multi-disciplinary and a multiagency approach.
- H. Decisions should take into account the wishes of the child and the parents/carers.
- I. Where it is necessary to protect the child from further harm, alternatives which do not involve relocating the child and which minimise disruption of a family should be explored.

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The following are members of the Stormont Community Engagement Programme Safeguarding Team:

Designated committee member for safeguarding: ???

Deputy Designated committee member for safeguarding: ???

Chairperson: Mr Donald Henry

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF SAFEGUARDING TEAM

THE DESIGNATED COMMITTEE MEMBER AND DEPUTY DESIGNATED COMMITTEE MEMBER

The designated committee member and deputy designated committee member must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role
- Organise training for all volunteers and staff
- Lead in the development of the Safeguarding Policy
- Act as a point of contact for staff, volunteers and parents/carers
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Safeguarding policy where appropriate
- Maintain records of all child protection concerns
- Keep the Chairperson informed
- Oversee the administration of Access NI checks and compliance with this policy

THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson must ensure that:

- The safeguarding policy is implemented within all programmes
- That a designated committee member and deputy are appointed
- That all staff and volunteers receive child protection training
- That all necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- That Child Protection activities feature on the agenda of the Committee meetings
- That the Stormont Community Engagement Programme safeguarding policy is reviewed annually and that parents/carers receive a copy of this policy at least once every 2 years

- That confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the committee on a need to know basis.
- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within all programmes
- Ensure that the Project has a Child Protection Policy in place and that staff and volunteers implement the policy
- Ensure that the Committee undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment and selection training
- Assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint/allegation against the Project staff

STORMONT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Staff/volunteers sees children over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse.

The member of staff must:

- Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Committee member for Safeguarding
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- Act promptly
- Make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (Appendix 1)
- Avail of relevant training regarding safeguarding children
- Not give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
- Not investigate
- Not ask leading questions
- Keep the Designated Committee Member informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour, discussions with parents/carers about concerns relating to their child, concerns about peer abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

STORMONT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee members must ensure that

- The Project has a Safeguarding Policy in place and that staff and volunteers implement the policy
- Relevant Safeguarding training is kept up to date by at least one Committee member and a record of the same is kept

- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to an entire Committee on a need to know basis.

PARENTS / GUARDIANS

Parents/Carers should play their part in Safeguarding by:

- Informing the Project whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school
- Letting the Stormont Community Engagement Project know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home
- Familiarising themselves with the Stormont Community Engagement Project Child Protection and other relevant policies
- Reporting to the office when they visit the Project premises
- Raising concerns they have in relation to their child with the Leader in charge / Designated Committee member

DEFINITION OF 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.

Abuse may take a number of forms:

PHYSICAL ABUSE is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful 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.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause adverse effects on the child's emotional development e.g. feeling of being worthless, unloved, inadequate, feeling frightened, exploited or in danger. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child.

NEGLECT is persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and or psychological needs likely to result in significant harm e.g. failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing.

SEXUAL ABUSE involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. This can take the form of:

- viewing of 'adult' and explicit videos or pornography
- exhibitionism
- intimate fondling or/and sexual stimulation
- sexual intercourse – oral, vaginal or anal. Under-age pregnancy is the result of sexual abuse and therefore all reports of pregnancies or even suspected pregnancies must be reported to the designated person.

SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

The majority of abused children will display some or all of the following characteristics:

- impaired ability for enjoyment
- behaviour related to emotional disturbances
- poor self-esteem
- poor self-presentation

Some abused children will display some or all of the following characteristics:

- withdrawn and fearful behaviour
- aggressive or passive behaviour
- over vigilance eg excessive worry about school work
- compulsive and obsessive behaviour
- overly mature behaviour
- school learning problems
- outwardly physical manifestations

The Stormont Community Engagement Project Staff Member/volunteer's Role – First Contact Responding to Child Disclosure (see Appendix 1)

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

This next section of our child protection policy will deal with what we expect from our staff, volunteers, and committee members responses to certain situations, roles of the safeguarding team and how to deal with a disclosure. Please remember that all the information provided is a guideline and will not fit all situations.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Stormont Community Engagement Project recognise that it is not practical to provide definitive instructions that would apply to all situations whereby staff come into contact with children or young people and to guarantee the protection of children, young people and staff.

However, below are the standards of behaviour required of staff volunteers and committee members in order to fulfil their roles within the Stormont Community Engagement Projects programme. This code should assist in the protection of both children, young people and members of staff and volunteers.

Staff and volunteers must:

- Implement the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures at all times

Staff and volunteers must never:

- engage in rough, physical games including horseplay with children or young people.
- 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 a 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. The restraint must also be in accordance with the 'Use of reasonable force' policy.

- make sexually suggestive comments to or within earshot of a child

Staff and volunteers 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 or volunteer must travel in the vehicle. It is also essential that there is adequate insurance for the vehicle to cover transporting children/young people as part of the requirements of your work.
- If you need to transport a child or young person, please speak with designated person for clarification of ratios.
- In extreme circumstances (for medical purposes) where it is required to transport a child/young person on their own, it is essential that the leader in charge 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. If this situation arises the Leader in Charge must be informed and the reasons for this explained.

IMPLICATIONS FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Staff, volunteers and committee members who breach any of the above may be subject to disciplinary procedure, and or immediate suspension. If an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer has occurred, then the procedure for dealing with allegations (found in the later part of this document) will be put in place.

The Designated person will be required to liaise with the other Designated Officers for Safeguarding and relevant Key Workers to clarify if they have any relevant records or any other child protection information in relation to the individual.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, then they may be required to cease any activity where they would come into contact with the child/young person or their family to ensure the safety of the staff member or volunteer as well as the child/young person and their family. This will be at the discretion of the Designated person.

In this situation members of the Safeguarding Team will be appointed to deal with the internal investigation. They will be appointed at the discretion of the designated person and there will be at least three. Traditionally allegations made against staff and volunteers will be investigated by the designated person.

This team are there to support the person whom the allegation has been made against as well as to investigate the allegation.

RATIOS

In order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people Stormont Community Engagement Project has adopted the following adult to child ratios for all its Youth and Children's activities.

Indoor Activities

Ages	Adult : Child
1 – 4Years	1:3
5 – 7 Years	1:5
8 – 11 Years	1:8
11 – 18 Years	1:10

Outdoor Activities*

Ages	Adult : Child
1 – 4Years	1:3*
5 – 7 Years	1:5*
8 – 11 Years	1:8*
11 – 18 Years	1:10*

It is recommended for large or multi site indoor events that there will be 1 supervising leader who is not included in the allocation.

*There must also be 1 supervising leader with no allocation. At all times there should at least 2 leaders and both genders must always be represented in the case of mixed groups. Although these ratios are not law and are therefore guidelines, the Safeguarding team have accepted these as our official ratios and therefore they must be adhered to. Failure to adhere to these issues could result in disciplinary procedures.

MEDICAL ATTENTION

If at any stage a child or young person is involved in an accident or incident which means they will require medical attention, then the leader in charge will strive to ensure that a leader will accompany them to hospital. However, if sending a leader to accompany a child or young person would place those still attending the activity at risk by not leaving adequate supervision, then the child or young person will be sent to the hospital unaccompanied. In such

circumstances, a parent/guardian will be contacted in the first instance before any further action is taken.

TOILETING

Throughout your work it may be necessary to assist a child who has been involved in a toileting accident. In this circumstance a staff member / volunteer must assist the child to change themselves if necessary. In this situation a staff member / volunteer endeavour to get another volunteer or member of staff to assist them, however if this is not possible then the volunteer / member of staff may help the child on their own. If this situation arises the staff member / volunteer involved must fill out an incident report after helping the child to change.

The following guidelines must be followed.

- Staff must not make fun of, belittle the child or discuss the incident with other staff / volunteers.
- The staff member / volunteer should wear disposable gloves whilst helping the child to change.
- The child should be allowed to change themselves were this is possible,
- Staff / volunteers must not do anything for a child that they can do themselves.
- Any soiled clothes must be double bagged and labelled, these must then be returned to the parent.
- Staff / volunteers must reassure and comfort the child were necessary.
- Staff / Volunteers must ensure the child's privacy is respected at all times and that they are not alone for longer than necessary.

This policy is only to be applied when parents / carers are not in the same premises. Please note that it is the policy of the Stormont Community Engagement Project that our staff and volunteers will not take children who are potty training to the toilet or change nappies.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

A risk assessment must be completed by the Designated Committee member for an activity for all events which will be taking place and a yearly risk assessment must be completed for weekly activities. These risk assessments must be completed on the Stormont Community Engagement Project form and kept for inspection.

GUIDELINES FOR RESIDENTIALS

The following are basic arrangements for residential.

- Leaders and Children / Young People are not permitted to share rooms
- There must be adequate leader supervision at all times
- In the case of mixed groups there must be a mixture of leaders.
- Incidents involving male young people should be dealt with by male leaders and the same for females.
- A full list of children / young people's details must be left with a committee member who is not attending, as well as travel arrangements, leader's details, two contact numbers and a full itinerary for the trip.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

As part of our commitment to the safety and well-being of our children and young people, Stormont Community Engagement Project will continually review and evaluate our Safeguarding policies and procedures.

We will also carry out consultations with staff and volunteers who come into contact with our children or young people at the discretion of the key workers or designated person as a means of on-the-ground evaluation.

A member of the Safeguarding team usually a designated person will also carry out regular spot checks on Stormont Community Engagement Project as a form of quality assurance.

The Stormont Community Engagement Project is committed to reviewing this document and updating it as appropriate including any legal or policy changes which may occur, this will be done as and when necessary but will be carried out at least once every two years. This policy is due to be reviewed in May 2020.

SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Stormont Community Engagement Project values the contribution that its volunteers and workers make to the success of its programmes. We will therefore strive to support all our staff and volunteers who come into contact with our children and young people.

We aim to do this by providing informal support and supervision for all volunteers and more formalised sessions for staff who come into contact with any of our young people. We will at all times strive to help all our staff and volunteers to develop both personally and professionally within our youth schemes and to support them through any issues which have arisen during

their work with us. These sessions will be organised and conducted primarily by the Designated Committee member, or another appointed person.

The frequency of these sessions will be decided by the Designated Committee Member, however we recommend one formal session every 6 months and regular “How are things going” conversations.

APPROPRIATE HOURS

As with risk assessments the Leader in charge of an activity when carrying out planning must ensure that activities and programmes begin and end at appropriate times. For example, having a youth activity on a Wednesday that starts at 4pm and ends at 12am is not appropriate as young people will be coming straight from school at an unreasonable hour to go home and begin homework etc before getting up for school again the next day.

As well as this, residential programmes should be tailored that children and young people can leave the programme to go to bed at a reasonable hour ready for the next day.

The Designated Person will discuss this further with Leaders in Charge of Programmes as to what is a reasonable hour for a child of 16 will not be reasonable for a 12 or 7 year-old.

PHOTOGRAPHIC POLICY

Each Stormont Community Engagement Project event will have a designated photographer and they are the only person authorised to photograph children and young people from our organisation for our organisation. Anyone else who wishes to photograph our children and young people must inform the Leader in charge and also give all copies of the photographs to them. If you notice anyone acting strangely at Stormont Community Engagement Project events, you as a volunteer or member of staff must report it immediately. Anyone with unauthorised images / video footage of children and young people will be asked to remove the images immediately, in certain situations we are authorised to remove photographic equipment.

GUIDELINES FOR MOBILE PHONES

All our staff must use the phone provided by the scheme which is used purely for Stormont Community Engagement Project contact. In the terms of other volunteers giving out mobile numbers to children / young people / or parents this is not encouraged.

GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL NETWORKING

Stormont Community Engagement Project does not have any specific rules or regulations about Social Networking. However, if a volunteer has a child or young person on their social networking site they must inform their Designated person who can monitor the usage and deal with any situations which may arise. Volunteers and staff must also give the Safeguarding team their Facebook, Instagram, MySpace, MSN, Twitter or any other social networking site address if requested.

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

If a situation arises that requires physical intervention from staff or volunteers, then the staff must ensure that the level of force that is used is appropriate for the situation.

Guidelines for this and more information on examples of situations that may require the use of appropriate force are detailed below.

In a situation where other behaviour strategies have failed to resolve the problem, or are inappropriate (eg in an emergency), there is a wide variety of circumstances in which appropriate force might be appropriate, or necessary, to restrain or control a child or young person.

They will fall into three broad categories:

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property
3. Where a child is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline

Examples of situations that fall into one of the first two categories are

- a child or young person attacks a member of staff, volunteers, or another child
- Children or Young People are fighting
- a Child or Young Person is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- a Child or Young Person is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him-or herself or others
- a Child absconds from an activity or tries to leave the premises ***(NB this will only apply to children under the age of 11 or if a young person could be at risk if not kept at the activity or on the premises).***

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- a child or young person persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a room;
- a child or young person is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting the activity.

However, some practical considerations also need to be taken into account;

Before intervening physically, a member of staff /volunteer should seek to deploy other behaviour strategies in line with the Behaviour policy.

Where these have failed, the member of staff / volunteer should, wherever practicable, tell the child / young person who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he / she does not. The member of staff /volunteer should continue attempting to communicate with the child / young person throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff and volunteers should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the child.

Sometimes a member of staff/volunteer should not intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency), for example, when dealing with an older young person, or a physically large young person, or more than one child / young person or if the staff / volunteer believes he/she may be at risk of injury. In those circumstances the member of staff / volunteer should remove other children / young people who might be at risk and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or where necessary telephone the Police. The member of staff/volunteer should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating. The Designated Committee Member must also be informed immediately.

Situations where a child / young person refuses to obey an order to leave a room need to be handled carefully as they can be a prelude to a major confrontation,(especially if appropriate force is used to eject older young people). Where a child / young person persistently refuses to leave a room or activity and the staff member / volunteer believes that the use of appropriate force will endanger themselves or other children / young people, the Programme should have an emergency response procedure whereby assistance can be summoned quickly, for example a red 'emergency' triangle is sent or a telephone or radio is used.

If you are aware that a child / young person is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of appropriate force, a plan should be devised stating how to respond if the situation arises.

This plan should be discussed and agreed with the Designated Committee Member.

This plan should address the following points:

- managing the child / young person (eg reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
- involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the Project might need to take

- briefing other members of staff or volunteers to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate.

What might be regarded as constituting appropriate force?

- Physical intervention can take a number of forms. It might involve staff:
- physically interposing between children / young people.
- blocking a child/young person's path
- holding
- pushing
- pulling
- leading a child / young person by the arm
- shepherding a child / young person away by placing a hand in the centre of the back or
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff/volunteer may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of "appropriate force", for example, to prevent a child / young person running off a pavement onto a busy road, or to prevent a child / young person hitting someone, or throwing something.

However, **staff and volunteers should never act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury**, for example by:

- holding a child / young person round the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict their ability to breathe
- slapping, punching, kicking or using any implement on a child / young person
- throwing any object at a child / young person
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- tripping up a child / young person
- holding or pulling a child / young person by the hair or ear
- holding a child / young person face down on the ground.

Staff and volunteers should also avoid touching or holding a child / young person in any way that might be considered indecent.

DISCLOSURE

Disclosure is when a child or young person discloses information to a leader which raises concerns for the young person's safety and/or raises concerns of abuse.

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A DISCLOSURE

In the event of a disclosure being made to a volunteer/staff member they must immediately inform the Designated person or if the disclosure involves the Designated person then the Chairperson about the issue. If it is not possible to make immediate contact, then contact with the Gateway team must be made.

In this instance, the designated person will work with the volunteer to gather the facts of the disclosure (see sample form at the back of this document), the Designated person is then responsible for investigating the disclosure. For further information please see the 'Do's and Don'ts' below and the reporting procedures later on in this document.

The following are guidelines for use by staff/volunteers should concerns of a child protection nature be raised.

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to what the child says.• Assure the child they are not at fault.• Explain to the child that you cannot keep it secret.• Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words.• Remember not to promise the child confidentially.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask leading questions.• Put words into the child's mouth.• Ignore the Child's behavior.• Remove any clothing/• Panic.• Promise to keep secrets.• Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily.

Remember: how you react may mean the child/young person telling or not telling his/ her story. It may be the beginning of the healing journey for the child/young person.

Please note it is illegal to withhold a disclosure or information in relation to a disclosure. Anyone found to do this can be criminally prosecuted.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF AND COMMITTEE

Role of Designated Person

Stormont Community Engagement Project has Designated Person for Safeguarding who has overall responsibility in referring incidents to Social Services. They will act as the first point of contact and support. They will also assist with gathering the relevant information from the staff concerned regarding incidents of alleged abuse. The Designated person will be instrumental in the decision to refer the alleged incident to Social Services. Once a decision has been made, the information will be passed to the Social Services. Copies of all reports of incidents will be filed accordingly and in keeping with GDPR guidelines.

Duties of Designated Person

1. To record a disclosure of abuse made by a child/young person to a member of staff/volunteer. The alleged abuse could involve either an external person or Stormont Community Engagement Project Staff/volunteers.
2. To record Stormont Community Engagement Project staff/volunteers suspicions of a child being abused.
3. In 1. or 2. above, to record the suspicions and to seek advice from the relevant agencies and report, if appropriate. If the disclosure/suspicions relate to Stormont Community Engagement Project staff, to advise and liaise with the Chairperson, if appropriate. If a member of Stormont Community Engagement Project staff has concerns about a colleague not fulfilling the Stormont Community Engagement Project Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding, such concerns are to be taken to the Designated person. Where the incident relates to a Volunteer/Staff Member not fulfilling the Stormont Community Engagement Project's Policy and Procedures for safeguarding, such concerns are to be taken to the Designated Person. Possible involvement of a member of Stormont Community Engagement Project staff must also be notified to the Chairperson.
4. To record all action taken and where appropriate, advise the relevant line management. Detail of information provided will be based on the 'need to know' principle.
5. To ensure all written records in relation to Child Protection issues are securely and confidentially filed in accordance with GDPR guidelines.
6. To establish contact with Child Protection Teams within the relevant Health and Social Services Trust if: a) allegations of child abuse have been made against a member of staff or, b) a member of staff has been made aware of alleged child abuse by an external person.
7. To liaise with the staff/volunteers to ensure the ongoing implementation and review of the Stormont Community Engagement Project's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

8. To fulfil any other relevant duties which may become apparent as the role of Designated Person develops.

Duties of Leader in Charge

1. To act as the first point of contact and support.

2. To record a disclosure of alleged abuse made by a child to a volunteer/staff member. The alleged abuse could involve either an external person or Stormont Community Engagement Project Staff.

3. To record Stormont Community Engagement Project staff/volunteer's suspicions of a child allegedly being abused.

4. To discuss future action with the member of staff/volunteer who made the report. Where appropriate, another member of staff/volunteer may be included where he/she has observed possible signs of abuse or heard a child disclosing details of potential abuse.

5. To record all action taken and advise the Designated person immediately. Where the Designated Person is unavailable and a decision has been made to refer the incident to Social Services, the Leader in Charge must seek advice from the relevant agencies and report directly to Social Services.

If the disclosure/suspicions relate to Stormont Community Engagement Project Staff/ volunteers, to advise and liaise with the Designated Person, The possible involvement of a member of Stormont Community Engagement Project staff must also be notified to the Chairperson.

6. To record all action taken. Details of information provided will be based on the 'need to know' principle.

7. To ensure all written records in relation to Safeguarding issues are securely and confidentially filed in accordance with GDPR guidelines.

8. In the absence of the Designated Person, to establish contact with Child Protection Teams within the relevant Health and Social Services Trust if:- a) allegations of child abuse have been made against a member of staff/volunteer or, b) a member of staff/ volunteer has been made aware of alleged child abuse by an external person

9. To keep up to date with relevant Safeguarding legislation, good practice and developments.

10. To liaise with the Designated Person to ensure the ongoing implementation and review of the Stormont Community Engagement Project's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

11. To deliver training, as appropriate, within the Stormont Community Engagement Project.
12. To fulfil any other relevant duties which may become apparent as the role of Leader in Charge develops.

SHARING INFORMATION

It is essential that practitioners working with children and young people share information, as in many cases it is only when information is shared that a child or young person can be deemed in need or at risk.

Personal information about children, young people and their families held by an organisation and its workers is subject to a duty of confidence, and therefore this should not be disclosed without the consent of the individual.

However, the law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child/young person. Failure to share such information could lead to criticism of the individual.

A decision whether to disclose information may be particularly difficult if you think it may damage the relationship between yourself and a young person or their family. In such situations, you should discuss your concerns the Designated Person.

REMEMBER: THE INTERESTS AND NEEDS OF THE CHILD ARE PARAMOUNT

The “Need to Know” Basis

In order to decide whether it is appropriate to share confidential information one should consider the following Relevant Factors:

- What is the purpose of the disclosure?
- What are the nature and the extent of the information to be disclosed?
- To whom is the disclosure to be made (and is the recipient under a duty to treat the material as confidential)?
- Is the proposed disclosure a proportionate response to the need to safeguard the well-being of a child to whom the confidential information relates?

RECRUITMENT AND CLEARANCE PROCEDURES FOR STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

The following are the steps that we will take when recruiting volunteers and staff.

Post Advertised (if necessary)

- Applicant is asked to fill in volunteer or staff application form and Access NI form
- Applicant returns Access NI form, ID and Application form to Committee member responsible for Access NI.
- Committee member completes all recruitment paperwork and forwards to Access NI.
- Designated person may also carry out reference checks

Clear Access NI Form

- a) Person will be appointed to the position.
- b) Leader in charge will provide volunteer with a welcome meeting.
- c) Volunteer will be invited to attend Safeguarding Training
- d) After 3 year's the applicant will need to complete a new Access NI form.

Access NI Form with Disclosures

- a) Designated person will discuss the disclosure with the Applicant.
- b) Depending on the category of the disclosure the applicant will be invited to attend an interview and the interview panel will be made aware of their disclosure. (This usually only happens when a disclosure falls under the sexual offences category or dangerous offence.)
- c) Designated person will take up references
- d) Applicant's involvement will be discussed with Safeguarding team and Designated person.
- e) designated person will make a decision and either appoint or reject the applicant.
- f) If appointed the steps above will be followed.

MISCELLANEOUS

If you suspect abuse has occurred or there is potential for it to occur, it is not your duty to try and prevent or stop abuse happening. Instead it is your duty to **OBSERVE** the fact, **RECORD** your suspicions and **REPORT** them to the Designated person.

Under no circumstances must you try to prevent a child or young person leaving with someone whom you suspect could subject them to any form of abuse. It is not your duty to investigate any concerns you may have or concerns that may have been raised by another person. If a child makes a disclosure you must not challenge the accused person.

Any worker who does not follow the procedures set out by this policy or through their actions brings the Project into disrepute will be suspended from ALL duties and their future with Stormont Community Engagement Project activities reconsidered. They will also be subject to Disciplinary Procedures.

OBSERVE

Observe the incident or allegation, ensure you are aware of all or as many of the facts about the case as possible.

RECORD

Record the facts that you have witnessed or been told. **DO NOT** record any personal opinions, speculation or other people's views and opinions. Only record what you have seen or what has been disclosed.

REPORT

Report all your concerns immediately to the Key worker or designated officer no matter what time it is. If you are unable to contact them and you do not feel there is any immediate danger then record how and when you tried to contact them and try again later. However, if you feel the matter is urgent then follow the procedures set out in this policy.

Stormont Community Engagement Project is committed to the safety and wellbeing of its staff and volunteers as well as its children and young people.

Therefore, if a staff member or volunteer is involved in any child protection case or if a disclosure is made to them then the Leader in Charge and at times, other allocated Stormont Community Engagement Project Committee members will be put in place to support them for as long as support is required.

Should you have any concerns about anything outlined in this policy, if you feel that you have been treated unfairly, or if you feel that the procedures in this document have not been followed and you do not feel you can raise them with the Designated person, then you can contact the Chairperson who will investigate and pass on your concerns.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION HELD ON VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

All information on staff and volunteers will be held securely by the Stormont Community Engagement Project.

These records will be held for the duration of the volunteer / staff member's involvement with the Stormont Community Engagement Programme and will be destroyed five years after they cease volunteering / working with us. However, their Name and Address will be stored electronically along with basic details about their involvement indefinitely.

The only people who can Access this information are selected members of the Committee. A staff member / volunteer can view the file we hold on them at any time by making a request in writing to the Designated person.

STORING OF CHILDREN'S DETAILS AND ACCIDENT FORMS

All permission slips and annual registration forms for children and Young People are stored by the relevant department for seven years.

At any time a young person over 12 or their parent or guardian can request to view the information we have on file for them. Over 18's can view this information by making a request in writing.

Accident forms which hold details involving those over 18 will be held for 5 years after the accident. Accident forms detailing accidents involving those under 18 will be kept for 5 years after the young person is 18.

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'. In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. Where abuse is suspected, we have a legal duty to refer to the Statutory Agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with staff will be on a 'need to know' basis.

When new staff or volunteers start at any Stormont Community Engagement Project programmes they are briefed on the Summer scheme's Safeguarding policy and Code of Conduct and given copies of these policies.

APPENDIX

Important contact numbers

- Gateway Team Belfast - 028 9050 7000
- PSNI Care Unit Belfast – 028 9065 0222
- CRUISE – 028 9023 2695
- NI Childline – 028 9032 7773
- 0800 212888 (freeline)
- Child Care NI – 028 9023 4499
- NSPCC – 0800 800500 (freeline)
- Social Services Board Belfast – South & East
- – 028 9056 5555

DISCLAIMER

All staff, volunteers, Committee members and those involved with the work of Stormont Community Engagement Project are expected to work in accordance with this policy at all times.

If there is a particular issue you wish to discuss then please contact the Committee Chairperson via the groups email.