



# **Clann Eireann Youth Club**

**Lurgan.**

***Child Protection Policy***

# Child Protection

## *Policy Statement*

Clann Eireann Youth Centre/G.A.C is fully committed to ensure the care, welfare and safety of the young people who come to our Centre. We will seek to carry out this responsibility in a caring, supportive and safe environment. We will value young people as individuals, with unique gifts and talents, and we aim to “foster the personal, social and spiritual development of each young person” in our care. We therefore dedicate ourselves to take all necessary and reasonable measures to protect the young people in our care from the risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

We will endeavour to safeguard the young people in our care by –

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Ensuring safety procedures are adhered to.

Our policy and practice will be reviewed at regular intervals.

## ***Principles Underlying our Policy and Procedures***

Clann Eireann Youth Centre/G.A.C is committed to the personal, social and spiritual development of young people. The following principles will underpin our Child Protection Policy.

- The child's welfare must always be paramount; this overrides all other consideration.
- A proper balance must be maintained between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict, the child's interests must remain paramount.
- Children must be listened to. It is important that when children speak we listen, especially in relation to disclosure of abuse. Youth workers should always ensure that the young person has opportunities to express their concern about what has happened to them. Children have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they must be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect, and must be consulted and involved in, matters which concern their family.
- Actions taken to protect a child must not in themselves be abusive by causing the child unnecessary distress or adding to any damage already suffered.
- Intervention must not deal with the child in isolation: the child must be seen in a family setting.
- The criminal dimension of any action cannot be ignored.
- Actions taken by agencies must be considered and well informed so that they are sensitive to, and take account of, the needs of the child's gender, age, stage of development, religion, culture and race.
- All agencies concerned with the protection of children must work together on an interagency basis in the best interests of children and their families.

## ***Procedure for Helping to Prevent Abuse***

- The management committee of Clann Eireann Youth Centre/G.A.C will appoint two designated persons. The persons presently holding these positions are the **Secretary** and the **Youth Worker in Charge**. The designated officer's have specific responsibility for co-ordinating action within the youth centre and for liaising with HSS Trusts and other agencies about suspected or actual cases of child abuse. This designated officer's role is to ensure that locally established procedures are followed. The designated persons will ensure training is provided in child protection issues, and this training will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- The management committee will ensure that the worker-in-charge is fully conversant with the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and ensure that he/she receives regular and updated training in this area.
- The worker-in-charge will ensure that all staff and volunteers are fully conversant with the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and receive relevant and updated training in child protection issues. Sharing information about child protection.

### **1. Recruitment and Selection**

- The management committee will ensure that procedures for recruitment and selection of staff are fully implemented. This procedure will ensure:
  - All vacancies are openly available to interested applicants and are advertised as appropriate.
  - All applicants will supply information regarding personal details, past and current work/volunteering experience and any qualifications or skills relevant to the post.
  - A declaration of any, or none, past criminal record.
  - At least two written references for both professional qualifications and character witness.
  - Anyone taking up a post in this youth centre, paid or voluntary will complete an application form and be subject to interview.
  - **Where posts are eligible for PECS, either paid or voluntary, a person will not be allowed to take up position in this Youth Centre until PECS's clearance has been received.**

- The management committee will ratify all recommendations for appointment.
- The management committee will do its utmost to ensure that ongoing training and supervision is provided for, and taken up by, those in a position of trust with young people in its youth centre.
- Once recruited, all staff and volunteers will undertake training and supervision so that they are less likely to become involved in actions which can lead to harm, or can be misunderstood. This training and supervision will include:
  - Induction – This will familiarise staff and volunteers with the youth centre’s Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour, as well as other policies such as Health and Safety.
  - Probation period – The probationary period will normally be of six months duration, during which the development and suitability of the staff or volunteers will be reviewed.
  - Supervision and Support – A member of the management committee or other mutually agreed person would act as line manager/supervisor for the worker-in-charge. The worker-in-charge or again, another mutually agreed person, will fulfil this role for other staff and volunteers.
  - Training – Training will begin at induction and will be a continual process. It will include awareness in child protection, health and safety, and particular skills training.

## **2. Management of Staff and Volunteers**

### ***Induction:***

- All newly appointed staff and volunteers will be provided with the Centre’s set of policies and procedures.
- Staff and volunteers will be provided with a job description and be made aware of the boundaries within which they must operate.
- Staff and volunteers will be asked to acknowledge that they have been introduced to the Centre’s policies, procedures and guidelines, and that they understand them and agree to abide to them.

### ***Training:***

- All newly appointed staff and volunteers would be required to participate in child protection training that includes a basic awareness and understanding of child protection issues.

### ***Support and Supervision:***

- Staff and volunteers will be required to meet with either the Youth Worker in Charge or the Project Worker on a regular basis for the purpose of supervision.

- All staff and volunteers are required to attend staff meetings/training sessions held throughout the year.

### **3. Reporting Concerns or Disclosures**

When a young person discloses to a youth worker that they have been abused, or the youth worker suspects an incident of abuse, the worker must **not** initiate an investigation. Investigations of cases of abuse must be left to social services.

#### ***What might constitute a concern about a child/young person?***

*A concern relates to the possibility of a child suffering harm. Indicators of this might include:*

- *Sudden, unexplained or worrying changes in behaviour.*
- *Physical signs or symptoms that may be indicative of abuse (emotional, sexual, physical or neglect).*
- *Worrying remarks made by a child.*
- *A situation where a child is exposed to potential risk of harm.*

#### ***What is a disclosure?***

*A disclosure is when a child tells a staff member/volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused in some way. This may be physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect or bullying.*

An incident book will be kept for recording matters of concern, or when a disclosure has been made. A worker will verbally inform the Youth Worker-in-Charge of this. The Youth Worker-in-charge will immediately notify the designated officer on the management committee and will record such concern. A strict written record will be kept in all cases. (See Form for Recording Allegations/Suspensions of Abuse). This written record will be kept by a designated officer and will not be available to any other worker or member of the management committee. Information from records must only be given on request to those who have statutory responsibility (HSS Trust, the police or the NSPCC) for the protection of children.

The designated officer will contact Social Services and follow their instructions.

Where the management committee suspect a member of staff or volunteer of abuse they must, through the designated officer, inform Social Services, who will instigate child protection procedures. The management committee will also consider the instigation of disciplinary procedures.

# GUIDELINES

## A. Guidelines for Good Practice in Listening to Children Disclosing Abuse

- Listen to the child rather than question them directly. Offer them reassurance without making promises, and take what the child says seriously.
- Children may be frightened by the threat of violence to themselves or other members of their family, or of being taken away from, or of breaking up their family. Youth workers should reassure young people who disclose in these situations that by doing so they are protecting themselves and possibly other children/young people from further abuse.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events. Do not overreact. Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell. Do not question or interrogate the child.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, even if it is information you do not understand fully, or like writing down. **This is of vital importance.**
- Contact the designated person within the management committee. The designated person may then discuss the concern/suspicion with Social Services, and, if appropriate, make a direct contact.
- Make direct contact with Social Services if the designated person is not available, or it is inappropriate to approach them.
- Record any discussions or actions **within 24 hours.**

## **B. Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers**

- Staff and volunteers should always respect the rights and dignity of all children in your care and treat them with equality and fairness.
- Staff and volunteers will not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children and young people, away from others. Meetings with children and young people will take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed, the door will be left open and other staff or volunteers will be informed of the meeting.
- Staff and volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. However, there may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable, such as providing comfort or reassurance for a distressed child, or physical support, for example, in contact sports such as gymnastics. In all cases, physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child or young person.
- It is normally not permissible to take children alone in a car or journey, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it will be undertaken with the full knowledge and consent of the parents, and either the worker-in-charge or a member of the management committee.
- Staff and volunteers will not meet with children outside organised activities, unless it is with the full knowledge and consent of parents, and the chairperson of the management committee.
- Workers should be particularly careful when supervising members in a residential setting where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to members in circumstances very different from the normal youth centre environment.
- Workers who are involved in relationships with other workers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their leadership role in the youth centre.
- Staff and volunteers should never:
  - engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay.
  - allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
  - make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child or young person, even in fun.

- let allegations a child or young person makes go without being addressed and recorded.
- do things of a personal nature for children or young people that they can do themselves.

## **C. Sharing Information about Child Protection**

The management committee will ensure that information on child protection issues is available to all those involved in the youth centre and its activities. Some information is confidential however, and will only be shared on a need to know basis.

- Information regarding how, and with whom young people can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties child protection issues will be openly displayed in the youth centre.
- We will seek to ensure that parents, legal guardians and other appropriate adults will have access to our child protection policy. Information about the activities of the Youth Centre/G.A.C will be openly displayed in the centre and in relevant public fora.
- We will provide parents/guardians with details for all trips and activities taking place away from the Youth Centre/G.A.C. In return parents/guardians will be requested to give their written consent for their son/daughters participation in any such trip.
- The name of the designated officers to whom they refer in the event of concerns or complaints will be circulated to parents and legal guardians.
- Where a worker has concern about the behaviour of a young person or a colleague, they will consult the designated officer about this concern.
- The management committee, in consultation with the worker-in-charge will decide upon the most appropriate manner for the distribution of such policies and information.

## **D. Safety Considerations**

Staff and volunteers can significantly reduce the risk of injury to members by

- Checking that the room or area to be used is safe.
- Explaining safety precautions prior to the activity commencing.
- Being aware of any relevant medical condition members may have.
- Regularly checking that equipment is safe.
- Having the appropriate ratio of staff for the planned activity.
- Having access to a telephone with the number of the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

## **In the Case of an Emergency**

- Stop the activity immediately;
- Assess the injury – is it a major or minor injury?
- Give immediate, appropriate and adequate treatment;
- If major, notify emergency services immediately;
- Stay with the young person until help is at hand;
- Notify the Youth Worker in Charge;
- Notify the young person's parents;
- Record the details in the Centre's accident report book.

## **Under Age Gaelic Football Code of Conduct**

During the development of young footballers it is imperative that acknowledged standards of sportsmanship are adhered to by managers, coaches, volunteers, parents and players. The following code of conduct is designed to promote the well-being of all of the children involved and encourage the enjoyment of the activities experienced. Use of authority for any reason other than the development of football skills will be regarded as an offence and will be handled by the Centre's disciplinary procedures.

In a game that involves physical contact, it is important for managers, coaches and volunteers to instil in the under-age players the ethos of Gaelic football in Clann Eireann Youth Club /G.A.C, i.e.:

1. high standards of sportsmanship;
2. a sense of fair play;
3. conforming to the laws of the game;
4. Pride for Clann Eireann Youth Centre/G.A.C;
5. respect for their managers, coaches, and volunteers;
6. respect for team mates and opposition players;
7. respect for the referee.

## **Managers, Coaches and Volunteers Code**

Children are influenced by the behaviour of those around them. It is important, therefore, that managers, coaches and volunteers:

- lead by example;
- be fair in the treatment of players;
- positively reinforce good play and sportsmanship. Do not condone or encourage violation of rules;
- involve all players in team decisions;
- set realistic goals for the team and the individual players;
- be responsible in their demands on children's energy and enthusiasm;
- be honest with players;
- follow informed professional medical advice at all times;
- keep themselves informed and updated on sound coaching methods;
- create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to play.

## **Recording Allegations/Suspicion of Abuse**

In any case where an allegation is made or concerns are present a record must be taken. The designated officer will only keep this. Copies will not be kept by any other worker or committee member. The following issues must be addressed in the keeping of such a record, either on this form or other written record.

Name of child

Age

Parents name

Home Address (and phone number if possible)

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else?

What has prompted these concerns?  
Include dates and times of specific incidents if possible.

Any physical signs? Behaviour signs? Indirect signs?

Has the young person been spoken to? If so, what was said?

Have the parents been contacted? If so, what was said?

Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details.

Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

## Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse.

Any concerns regarding the abuse of a child should be reported to one of the designated officers of the management committee as named below.

Name: Mr Stephen Mc Nally leader in Charge

C/O Clann Eireann Youth Club

53 Lake Street, Lurgan Co Armagh N.I

Postcode BT679DT

Tel No: 028 38323080/028 38391169

Name: Mrs Fiona Corry Secretary Management.

C/O Clann Eireann Youth Club

53 Lake Street, Lurgan Co Armagh N.I

Tel No: 028 38323080/028 38325970

## Gateway Team (Craigavon/Banbridge) - Southern Trust

### Contact Information

Address

Brownlow HSS Centre, 1 Legahory Centre, Craigavon

Postcode

BT65 5BE [View Location on Map >](#)

Contact Person

Duty Social Worker

Telephone Number

028 38343011

Fax Number

028 3832 4366

Please contact our office for more information using the telephone number given in this profile.

### Facilities Information

#### Main Services Provided

We provide an initial assessment of need for children and families and signpost to further statutory involvement at Child Protection, Looked after Children or Family Support; and/or voluntary and community resources.

Other help childline Helpline Freephone 0800 1111 twenty fours hrs.

NSPCC Helpline, Freephone **0800 800500 (24 hours).**