

Allhallows Community Centre, Fletchertown

Child Protection Policy & Procedure

Policy Statement

In order to ensure “safe and appropriate activities” Allhallows Community Centre has the safety of young people at the heart of all its policies and practices. Throughout all its activities, wherever they take place, the Centre aims to maintain the safety and promote the welfare of young people. It aims to achieve this in the three following procedural areas:

- Awareness and training
- Recruitment procedures for staff and volunteers
- Action to be taken if a child protection issue arises or is suspected

This policy believes in the following principles:

- The welfare of children and young people is paramount
- All children and young people without exception have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately; and all Allhallows Community Centre’s trustees, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns.

Procedures

Worker Awareness And Training

People have a responsibility to be vigilant and sensitive and to prioritise the protection of young people. All people working in Allhallows Community Centre must be aware of this policy and the procedures that ensure child protection. Initially this will be undertaken during induction training.

People are to:-

- Maintain their awareness of child protection issues
- Identify their personal training needs as a result of/or meet the CPD programme requirements
- Be familiar with relevant guidance texts such as the Cumbria Child Protection Handbook and “Safe from Harm” (code of practice for safeguarding the welfare of children in voluntary organisations in England and Wales (1993) the home office).
- Appropriate concerns and challenges are to be made in accordance with Allhallows Community Centre’s stated procedures
- In the event of a referred child protection issue arising, staff must follow the stated procedures.

Allhallows Community Centre will support people in all child protection issues with information, guidance, supervision, line management, training (or the support of relevant training opportunities) and via the appointment of a designated child protection worker.

Recruitment of persons to Allhallows Community Centre

- People will be recruited under the guidance of the equal opportunities policy and best recruitment practices.
- In order to ensure the health, welfare and safety of vulnerable adults and young people, people must be **COMPETENT** to do the job and **SUITABLE**.
- **COMPETENCE** may be a pre-requisite for the position and evidence of relevant experience, training and/or qualifications will be required. If not a pre-requisite, competence may be gained by relevant training.
- **SUITABILITY** checks will be made on applicants who apply to work with and who will have regular access to vulnerable adults and young people through the Centre’s activities.
- The checks for suitability will follow good recruitment practice and entail the completion of an application form, matching the applicant to the job and person specification and a declaration from the applicant regarding any criminal record.

Allhallows Community Centre, Fletchertown Child Protection Policy & Procedure

- Upon the offer of employment, a Criminal Record Bureau disclosure procedure will be completed
- This will entail taking up two references, receiving two approved forms of identification and completing an enhanced disclosure check from the Criminal Record Bureau.
- At the start of work with Allhallows Community Centre, a probationary period will be identified.

Action to be Taken if a Child Protection Issue Arises or is Suspected

ALL INFORMATION MUST REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL and the data protection policy adhered to.

- If there are obvious signs of abuse (see annex 1) the case must be referred IMMEDIATELY by telephone to social services. DO NOT DELAY. The receiving authority will offer immediate guidance.
- If there is some suspicion, concern or need for advice or information, people can contact the project's designated child protection person. The decision to refer or not will remain with the individual staff member.
- However, if the person with whom you have consulted has grave concerns and understands that you may not intend to refer on, they may act on the information that has been supplied.
- A report of the incident should be made on Allhallows Community Centre's Child Protection Incident report form (annex 2) and this should be witnessed. A copy of this should be sent without delay, in the case of a referred incident, to the social services/police department accepting the referral. Another copy should be sent to the designated person.

Remember CONFIDENTIALITY.

The following notes will help when completing the form:

- A description of the activity which has led to the presenting cause for concern
- Circumstances e.g. bruising, inappropriate sexual behaviour, poor standards of cleanliness; signs which may suggest deliberate injury, neglect and failure to thrive, emotional abuse or sexual abuse (see annex 1)
- Details of any marks – draw diagrams
- Details of any comments made by the young person.
- Do not question, investigate
- Details of worker's/witness's observations of young person's behaviour
- Referral by a third party?

The following notes will help when responding to the young person:

DO

- Believe what you are being told and acknowledge this
- Explain who you have to tell and why
- Recognise how difficult this situation may be for the child and say so
- Reassure the young person that what has happened is not their fault and you are pleased they shared it with you
- Explain that abuse happens to many other people – not to minimise, but to reassure
- Remember the abuser is responsible
- Any body language of yours that expresses distaste may have to be explained to the young person
- Involve a witness if possible

DO NOT

- Agree to keep secrets
- Make promises you cannot keep

Allhallows Community Centre, Fletchertown Child Protection Policy & Procedure

- Interrogate the young person with lots of questions – obtain the facts, which should be observable and not include speculation, interpretations or recommendations
- Doubt what is being said – it has probably taken a great deal of courage to speak out
- Make the young person feel responsible by inappropriate verbal and non-verbal responses
- Panic – listen to the child, then contact the designated person
- Make an individual decision not to refer

Good Practice When Working With Young People

- DO** treat everyone with respect;
- DO** provide an example you wish others to follow;
- DO** ensure that the ratio of qualified/experienced adult workers to young people is appropriate to the activity;
- DO** respect a young person's right to personal privacy;
- DO** have appropriate sleeping accommodation for separate genders and adults and young people;
- DO** provide opportunities for young people to talk to others about any concerns they may have;
- DO** encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they find unacceptable;
- DO** remember how someone else might interpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned;
- DO** recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.
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- DO NOT** work alone;
- DO NOT** permit abusive youth peer activities (eg racism, bullying or homophobia);
- DO NOT** engage in any inappropriate physical or verbal contact;
- DO NOT** make derogatory or suggestive remarks or gestures;
- DO NOT** jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts;
- DO NOT** exaggerate or trivialise child protection issues;
- DO NOT** allow yourself to be drawn into any inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as crushes;
- DO NOT** show favouritism to any individual;
- DO NOT** rely on just your good name to protect you;
- DO NOT** believe that "it could never happen to me.;
- DO NOT** take a chance.

<p style="text-align: center;">Emotional Abuse</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Physical Signs:</p> <p>Failure to thrive Erratic weight and growth patterns Frozen awareness Psychosomatic illness Developmental delay</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Behavioural Signs:</p> <p>Self mutilation Wetting and/or soiling day or night in school age children Withdrawn behaviour Aggression Difficulty in forming relationships Bizarre behaviour Unexplained under achievement in school Inappropriate seeking of attention Escape attempts, e.g. running away, sleeping out, Suicide attempts or substance misuse Elective mutism Neglect Voracious appetite Child thrives away from home The child is unresponsive Chronic listlessness Faltering or static weight gain and growth Child left unsupervised, unattended or without adequate provision Inadequate or inappropriate clothing Smelly and dirty appearance Untreated conditions</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Physical Abuse</p> <p>Any bruising on a baby Multiple bruising other than on the shins Bruises and scratches to face and head Bilateral black eyes Torn upper lip fraenum Fingertip bruising on front and back of chest Corresponding finger marks on both cheeks Finger marks or hand weals on any part of the body Bite marks anywhere Ligature marks Weal marks and bruising as a result of a beating Cigarette burns Linear burns Burn showing the mark of an object, such as an iron Scalds inconsistent with an accident Fractures to a non-ambulant child Spiral or multiple fractures of different ages Head injury, often with finger tip bruising Ear injuries/bruising Poisoning Suffocation Induced Illness Syndrome/Munchhausen's Syndrome by Proxy</p>
<p>Sexual Abuse</p> <p>Any, even minor, injury or bruising in the anal or genital areas (protected normally by legs) Anal or genital soreness, bleeding, discharge Recurring genito-urinary infection The finding of pregnancy or venereal disease is a strong indicator of child sexual abuse.</p> <p>Behavioural problems vary with age and may include: - Sudden onset of bed wetting or soiling, day or night Sleep disturbances such as nightmares or refusing to sleep alone Inappropriate sexual play Explicit sexual knowledge especially in younger children Excessive masturbation Promiscuous attention seeking behaviour Escape attempts, eg running away, sleeping out, suicide attempts or substance misuse Self-Mutilation Eating disorders such as Bulimia and Anorexia Persistent abdominal pain and headaches without obvious cause</p>	

Child Protection Incident Report Form

Date: _____ Place: _____
Time: _____

Reporter: name: _____ Position: _____
Address: _____
Contact details: Tel. _____ Email. _____

Young person: name: _____ d.o.b. _____
Address: _____
Contact details: Tel. _____ Email. _____
Next of Kin: _____

Report details :

Signed: _____ date: _____
Witness name: _____ date: _____ Signature: _____
Witness position: _____
Contact details: Tel. _____ Email. _____