



Safeguarding Policy

Including Protocol and Procedure

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Colin Sure Start to safeguard the wellbeing of all children and young people. This means that all persons working for or who are connected in any way with Colin Sure Start must show respect and understanding for the rights, safety, health and welfare of children and young people and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles and ethos of Colin Sure Start

Principles

- The welfare of the child will always be paramount
- The welfare of families will be promoted
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families will be listened to and respected
- Keeping children safe from harm requires people who work with children to share information

We endeavour to safeguard and protect children, and create an environment that considers the wellbeing of children as the most important factor in all the work that we do by the following protocols and processes.

Colin Sure Start has a clear statement about confidentiality and how this should be respected. However, the legal principle that **“the welfare of the child is paramount”** means that confidentiality is not allowed to override the right of the child to be protected from harm.

In a situation where there are concerns about a child’s welfare, an allegation or suspicion of abuse, Colin Sure Start has clear guidance for all staff in this policy on what steps to take, and regularly support staff with training, information and supervision to understand their responsibilities to protect children.

Colin Sure Start value the rights of all those who use our services, and will respect confidentiality, however the paramountcy of children’s right to safety and wellbeing will always be the priority in all actions. This will be achieved by ensuring that the relevant information is given on a need to know basis, in line with legislation and in consultation with the relevant authorities.

Any member of staff who complies with Colin Sure Start procedures in making a report of suspected child abuse is acting in the course of his/her employment. It therefore follows in such circumstances, where they acted in good faith, they will receive the full support of the Management Board, and will not be legally or financially responsible.

At all times Colin Sure Start will have a named Designated Child Protection Officer and a Deputy Child Protection Officer with key responsibilities for protecting children, passing on concerns to the relevant authorities and implementing this policy. The current designated officers are:

Roger Winter (Designated Officer)

Mobile: 07834589644

Kelly Watson (Deputy Designated Officer)

Mobile: 07407681753

Contact for SE Trust Gateway Social Services: 0300 100 0300 (Office hours, Mon-Fri 9-5)

Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team:

0800 197 9995

Recruitment and Training of Staff and Volunteers

Colin Sure Start undertakes a formal procedure for recruitment and selection, whereby the uptake of at least two references and an Access NI check are required in respect of all staff and volunteers ensuring that no relevant convictions have been identified and that employees and volunteers are appropriately vetted and thorough checks completed.

Careful selection is followed by effective induction, training, and ongoing supervision. All members of staff and volunteers will be supported to develop awareness about child protection and recognising the signs of abuse. The organisation will provide regular training and ongoing support through supervision and line management, which will enable them to be sensitive and alert to child welfare issues and foster an environment in order to keep children safe.

All new appointments will be subject to a probationary period, which will be reviewed within six months of taking up the post.

Each Programme Supervisor within our registered settings is fully trained to Designated Officer standard, as an additional safeguarding measure. This ensures reporting concerns are given first priority, especially in the case of absence of Senior or Deputy Designated Officers.

Safeguarding Commitments

Fully accredited, face to face Child Protection Training is a minimum requirement for all staff and volunteers. This will be arranged for all new staff and updated every three years. A record of this training will be held on file for all staff and volunteers.

All new staff and volunteers will be given a thorough induction, and will receive clear guidelines during the induction process on this Policy, the Colin Sure Start Safeguarding Flowchart protocol, and be made aware of the Designated Officers and their contact details.

Staff and Volunteers will be supported with advice, regular meetings and supervision to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities regarding sharing any concerns with Managers and relevant agencies on a need to know basis. Safeguarding will be a standing item on all supervision documentation within the organisation. Staff and Volunteers will be trained and supported in using appropriate strategies to support children who may make a disclosure of abuse and how this is to be recorded. Staff and Volunteers will be trained in keeping appropriate records in accordance with Colin Sure Start policy. Appropriate documentation and records will be kept and stored in line with current legislation.

Creating a Safe Environment

In our children's groups, appropriate adult/child ratios will always be maintained and adults will not be left alone for extended periods with individual children or small groups. The layout of the room will permit constant supervision of all children, and appropriate activities to develop children's self-esteem and independence with regard to self-care will be promoted in Colin Sure Start's groups and services.

Staff will monitor and observe children on an ongoing basis, noting any significant changes in behaviour that may give cause for concern.

Colin Sure Start will involve parents and children appropriately as recommended by DHSSPS Guidelines and make all parents and carers aware of this Policy and associated Procedures. All parents and carers whose children are being cared for by Colin Sure Start will receive a copy this Policy and be made aware of the Safeguarding Flowchart and Designated Officers.

In all Colin Sure Start groups including those where parents or carers attend a copy of the Safeguarding Flowchart will be displayed within the venue during the times that the service or group is running.

Fit Person Assessments and Enhanced Checks

In line with requirements for all Registered Childcare Settings in Northern Ireland, Fit Persons documentation and assessments will be provided and facilitated for all staff required by the **Social Services Early Years Team**. This includes the Project Coordinator, Early Learning Coordinator and the enhanced checks required for all staff working in the project's registered childcare settings.

Recognising Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse

Physical is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or

grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Neglect

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

Exploitation

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation.

Staff and volunteers need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources, including abuse by members of the organisation.

All staff and volunteers in the organisation should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children and where there are concerns about a child's welfare. There is an expected responsibility on all staff and volunteers to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. However staff and volunteers **MUST NOT** discuss any concerns with parents or carers in the following circumstances:

- Where sexual abuse or sexual exploitation is suspected
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Where fabricated or induced illness (previously known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child, the staff member themselves, or others at immediate risk

These decisions should not be taken in isolation. Consultation with the Designated Officer or Deputy Designated Officer in the first instance, and possibly the Gateway Social Work team if appropriate.

What you should do if you suspect a child is being abused:

Disclosures

If a child discloses to any staff member about any type of abuse, either individually or in a group where a staff member is present, the staff member **MUST**:

- Listen carefully to the child. Do not directly question the child
- Give the child time and space to explain and give them your full attention
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop or interrupt a child who is freely recalling significant events
- Make an accurate record of the information, taking care to record the time, setting, individuals mentioned, people present at the time, child's presentation and what was said. **A Record of Key Issues form** * is attached as an appendix for this purpose
- Use the child's own words where possible
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared – do not offer false confidentiality.
- Reassure the child, let them know that they have done the right thing in telling you and that they have not done anything wrong.
- Explain to the child what will happen next and that you will help to keep him/her safe.
- Do not ask the child to repeat the account of events

If you have a concern you should discuss immediately with **Designated Child Protection Officer** or in their absence, the Deputy Child Protection Officer. If neither are available, you should speak to your Line Manager or another Senior Manager.

Observations

There may be times when staff or volunteers may be concerned about observations that they have made of a child in their care or whom they come in contact with, or information that they have received which causes concern about a child or young person who has not spoken to them directly.

It is important to remember that it is our duty to **gather information accurately but not to investigate**. It is good practice to ask a child / young person or parent why they are upset or how a cut, bruise or injury was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk to you. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

If a staff member or volunteer has concerns in these circumstances, they should contact the Designated Child Protection Officer or Deputy Officer.

In some cases it may be appropriate for a staff member to consult directly with a Social Worker at the Gateway team. The following instances may warrant such action:

- When a staff member or volunteer remains unsure after internal consultation as to whether child protection concerns exist
- When there is disagreement as to whether child protection concerns exist
- When a staff member or volunteer is unable to consult promptly or at all with the Designated or Deputy Child Protection Officer
- When the concerns relate to or involve any member of this or another organisation

Bruising on Pre-Mobile Babies

The Safeguarding Board have in place specific guidance where bruising is observed on pre-mobile babies, that is not explained by 'previous treatment and care provided by Health Professionals' and there is a specific flowchart for such circumstances. All Sure Start staff should be aware of this guidance, available at

https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/p_bruising_babies.html

Where staff identify bruising on infants meeting this description, they should report this immediately to the DCPO and contact will be made with the Gateway team in line with the protocol above. Line Managers will ensure that all staff are aware of the definitions, descriptions and protocol for bruising on pre-mobile babies.

Other Sources

Concerns about a child's welfare may also come from other sources such as parents, family members, other professionals involved or any other individuals. Any concerns that arise from whatever source will be dealt with in the same manner – by gathering information, accurately recording and passing this on to the Designated Child Protection Officer.

Making a Referral

A referral involves giving Gateway Social Services or the Police information about concerns relating to an individual or family in order that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency followed by any necessary action.

Where children are under the age of 18 years old a reciprocity agreement exists between Social Services and the Police Service.

After consultation with the Designated Child Protection Officer, Deputy Child Protection Officer or if for any reason neither are available, it may be appropriate for staff or volunteers to make a referral to the Gateway team using a **UNOCINI** form ** attached.

Parents or carers should be normally be informed if a referral is being made, except in the circumstances where this may further put a child or adult at risk of harm, with some examples of situations below. This is not an exhaustive list, and decisions about whether or not to consult the parent or carer will be guided by the Gateway social worker and Designated Officer:

- Where sexual abuse or sexual exploitation is suspected
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Where fabricated or induced illness (previously known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child, the staff member themselves, or others at immediate risk

However, inability to inform parents or carers for any reason should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Gateway about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

- If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from a family member or someone known to the children, you should make a telephone referral to Gateway.

- If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from someone not known to the child or child's family, you should make a telephone referral directly to the Police and consult with the parents or carers.
- If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from an adult in a position of trust, contact Gateway for information and advice
- If your concern is that a child or family need additional help or support, you should contact Gateway or Family Support Panel.

Information required when making a referral

Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible when making a referral, although in emergency situations all of this information may not be available. The availability of some information or lack thereof should not prevent the making of a referral where there are concerns. The **UNOCINI** form will guide what information is required, and is attached to this policy, but will include the following:

- Your name, contact number, position or role in organisation and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking
- Full name, address, contact number of family, date of birth of child and siblings
- Gender, ethnicity, first language and any known additional or medical needs of child
- Names and dates of birth of any household members, their relationship to child, and any significant others.
- The names of any professionals known to be involved with the child/family e.g. GP, Health Visitor, Teacher etc.
- The nature of the concern and how it came about
- Whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe in your view
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and family
- Whether consent of the parent or carer for the referral has been given or whether the parents/carers have been informed in any way.

After making a referral

Once a referral has been made, the staff member or volunteer should ensure the following steps are taken:

- Record accurately your concerns and what action was taken, using a **Record of Key Issues Form** *.
- Report immediately to the Designated Officer/Deputy Designated Officer or Line Manager if neither are available.
- Retain a record in the family file if there is Family Support work ongoing with the family, observing confidentiality at all times as appropriate
- Accurately record any action agreed or that no further action taken at this time and the reasons for this decision

Allegations against Adults who work with Children

If you have concerns or information which suggests that a staff member, volunteer or any adult who works with a children in a paid or voluntary capacity has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or in relation to a child

- Behaved in any way towards a child/children that is inappropriate or that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children,

You should speak immediately with the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Deputy.

The Child Protection Officer will make contact with Gateway / Police if appropriate and inform the Chairperson of the Board and take any necessary action.

If your concerns relate to the Designated Child Protection Officer you should raise your concerns directly with the Chairperson of the Management Board who is:

Theresa Brady, 028 90 620373

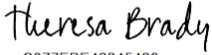

Confidentiality

Colin Sure Start will ensure that all personal information that is recorded or held is retained in accordance with GDPR legislation and only shared with the appropriate agencies where there are concerns about a child/children or young person's welfare. The context and reasons for which Colin Sure Start hold data is explained fully in Colin Sure Start's **Privacy Statement**, which is given to all parents/families when they register, is available from our office or online at <https://www.colinsurestart.com/parents/useful-forms/>

Information in relation to safeguarding children should be shared on a "need to know" basis, and staff need to consider carefully where and with whom sensitive information is being shared. However the sharing of information is vital to child protection, and therefore confidentiality is secondary to the immediate welfare of children.

Online version of the UNOCINI referral form is available here:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/taxonomy/term/576>

Management Committee Approval		
Board Review and Approval Date:	13th January 2021	
Signature:	Position:	Date:
DocuSigned by:  C377EBE42245420...	Board Chair	04/03/2021
DocuSigned by:  3FC59E768B884EF...	Board Member	04/03/2021

Colin Sure Start Reporting Procedure



**Staff Member has concerns
about a child's welfare**



Staff member reports concerns immediately to:

**Designated Child Protection Officer
Roger Winter – 07834589644**

or in their absence

**Deputy Child Protection Officer
Kelly Watson – 07407681753**

If none of the above are available, inform your line manager or another senior member of staff. If this is not possible, or if a child is in immediate danger you may move on to the following step



If appropriate, the DCPO or a staff member may pass on to:
**Area Gateway Team, Stewartstown Road – 0300 100 0300
(Out of Hours) – 0800 197 9995**

Or in an emergency situation:
999 or **101** for non-emergency advice



Make a factual and accurate record using the **Record of Key Issues form** including any information from the child, observations and action taken.

It may also be appropriate to inform the Social Services Early Years Team on 028 44513807 if the incident took place in one of the project's registered settings. DCPO will advise.

Record of Key Issues Form



DATE:		
STAFF MEMBER:		
LINE MANAGER:		
FAMILY DETAILS: (to include Name, Address, Contact details and Child's DOB)		
KEY ISSUES / CONCERNS/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:		
STAFF INVOLVED:		
DISCUSSED WITH DESIGNATED OFFICER?	YES / NO	
GATEWAY TEAM CONTACTED?	YES / NO	
UNOCINI COMPLETED AND SENT?	YES / NO	
OUTCOME/ACTION PLAN:		
SIGNATURE (Staff Member)		DATE:
SIGNATURE (Designated Officer)		DATE:



UNOCINI
Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland
A1 REFERRAL V2_1

Section 1: Child or Young Person's Details		
Surname:		ID No.
Forename:		
Known As:		HCN:
Address:		Previous Address:
Postcode:	Previous Postcode:	
Telephone No:	Locality:	
Mobile No:		
Date of Birth:	Gender	
GP Name:	GP Tel No:	
GP Address:	GP Email Address:	
GP Postcode:		
School Name:	School Tel No:	
School Address:	School Postcode:	
Does the Child have a Disability? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, What Disability: (& source of diagnosis)	Other Special Needs:
Nationality:		Ethnic Origin:
Religion:		Country of Origin:
Language Spoken:		Communication Support: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/>	Signer <input type="checkbox"/>	Document Translator <input type="checkbox"/>

Section 2a: Referrer's Details	
Name of Referrer:	Designation:
Address:	Date of Referral: Click here to enter a date.
Postcode:	Contact Details:
Section 2b: Reason for Referral	
Section 2c: Immediate Actions	
Are Immediate /Actions necessary to safeguard the child(ren) or young person(s)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Section 3a: Primary Carers & Other Household Members (Incl. non-family members)				
	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4
Last Name:				
Alternative Last Name:				
First Name:				
Telephone No:				
Mobile No:				
Date of Birth:				
Relationship to Child/ YP:				
Language Spoken:				
Nationality:				
Communication Support:	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Signer <input type="checkbox"/> Doc. Trans Details	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Signer <input type="checkbox"/> Doc. Trans Details	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Signer <input type="checkbox"/> Doc. Trans Details	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Signer <input type="checkbox"/> Doc. Trans Details
Section 3b: Significant Others (Incl. family members who are not members of the child(ren) or young person(s) household)				
	Other 1	Other 2	Other 3	Other 4
Last Name:				
Alternative Last Name:				
First Name:				
Address:				
Postcode:				
Mobile No:				
Date of Birth:				
Relationship to Child/ YP:				
Language Spoken:				
Nationality:				
Communication Support:	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Signer <input type="checkbox"/> Doc. Trans Details	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Signer <input type="checkbox"/> Doc. Trans Details	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Signer <input type="checkbox"/> Doc. Trans Details	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Signer <input type="checkbox"/> Doc. Trans Details

Section 4a: Summary of Referrer's Previous Involvement

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Section 4b: Referral Consent

Child(ren) / Young Person(s)

Is the Child(ren) / Young Person(s) subject to this referral aware the referral is being made? Yes No

Does the Child(ren) / Young Person(s) consent to the Referral? Yes No

If NO, please explain

Parent/ Carer

Is the Parents/ Carers aware that Referral has been made? Yes No

Do they consent to the Referral? Yes No

If NO, please explain

Section 5: Additional Information: Agencies Currently Working with Child or Young Person**Agency and Contact Details****Name:****Role:****Tel No:****Email:****Name:****Role:****Tel No:****Email:****Name:****Role:****Tel No:****Email:****Name:****Role:****Tel No:****Email:**