

Annex E

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Youth Settings: A Summary Guide

1. Introduction/Overview

- 1.1 Current DE guidance on safeguarding and child protection is set out in the document [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools](#) [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools](#).
- 1.2 The guidance clearly sets out comprehensive safeguarding and child protection functions and processes which **should be employed across all settings where children and young people are educated**, including **youth services**.
- 1.3 In recognition that the terminology and focus within the guidance is on schools this addendum has been produced to act as an aid for EA Statutory Youth Service and EA registered/non-registered Voluntary youth work organisations to deliver a ²²regulated activity with children and young people and to apply the overarching DE safeguarding and child protection guidance. In the interest of brevity for this addendum these will be referred to as **statutory youth work providers and voluntary youth work providers**.
- 1.4 This document provides clarity on the terminology commonly used within youth settings; staffing and organisational roles and responsibilities; need for robust risk assessment; guidance on good practice, and reference to relevant safeguarding and child protection documentation including that pertaining to adult safeguarding.

2. Legislation and Policy in respect of Youth Services

- 2.1 Youth services within Northern Ireland are underpinned by statutory legislation as set out in the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and the Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. These provide the requirements in regard to providing youth services and the establishment and remit of the Youth Council respectively.
- 2.2 The overarching policy for youth work is set out in the Department's policy document [Priorities for Youth – Improving Young People's Lives through Youth](#)

²² Regulated Activity in relation to Children

Work which can be accessed on the Department's website at: [Priorities for Youth](#).

3. Operational Responsibility

- 3.1 The Education Authority (EA) has operational responsibility for youth services. For the purposes of this addendum and for the overarching DE guidance on safeguarding and child protection the term youth services applies to all statutory youth work providers and voluntary youth work providers delivering youth work activities for persons aged 4 to 25 years in an informal setting.
- 3.2 All statutory youth work providers and voluntary youth work providers must have robust safeguarding and child protection policies in place. EA has responsibility for quality assuring such policies and processes, which must be evidenced as part of an organisation's EA registration. The responsibility for ensuring child protection policies are in place falls to the management committee / governance body within each organisation. **This is applicable to all statutory youth work providers and voluntary youth work providers.**

4. Youth Services

- 4.1 Youth services are delivered through a variety of settings and targeted at the following five age bands:
- **4-8** (focusing on general provision);
 - **9-13** and **14-18** (focusing on youth work activities);
 - **19-21** (focusing on issues based programmes, volunteering and leadership); and
 - **22-25** (focusing on those who are either in, or at risk of being in the groups of young people not in education, employment or training or those who have not yet accessed developmental or other educational opportunities and are unlikely to do so.
- 4.2 Given the wide age range of children and young people engaging in youth services (4 years to 25 years), safeguarding policies and procedures must be in place to give protection to **all** those accessing these services including adults at risk.
- 4.3 Youth Services fall within 2 main categories:
- Statutory (also referred to as Controlled)

- Education Authority Youth Service managed by EA.
 - Voluntary (including Church based; Uniformed; Community and Other)
 - Voluntary Sector youth work organisations working under mainly voluntary Management Committees/ Board of Directors and not managed by the EA.
- 4.4 Safeguarding and child protection applies equally within all settings.

5. Safeguarding And Child Protection Policy

- 5.1 All statutory youth work providers and voluntary youth work providers must have a robust safeguarding and child protection policy in place that clearly states staff responsibilities with regard to the reporting of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect and includes relevant contact names and telephone numbers. Those who work in youth work settings must have a clear understanding of the policy and their responsibility to follow the agreed procedures.
- 5.2 EA Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) provides a comprehensive range of support including advice (incorporating a daily helpline Monday to Friday); guidance; training; support visits and dissemination of information to all EA services including EA Statutory Youth Service.
- 5.3 All voluntary youth work providers must be able to access Safeguarding and Child Protection advice, support, training and resources including that for safeguarding for adults at risk of harm from their nominated Headquarter Organisation. For those that do not have a nominated Headquarter Organisation/Umbrella Organisation for Safeguarding it is the responsibility of the Management Committee to ensure this is in place. Such resources are provided from Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) that will provide both training and Access NI services.
- 5.4 EA Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures guidance is available for **all staff employed directly by the EA** to enable them to fulfil their child protection and safeguarding responsibilities. This guidance is for staff employed directly by the EA who work in schools and in any other education settings such as EA Youth Service; Outdoor Learning Centres; EOTAS Centres; Learning Support Centres, and Exceptional Teaching Arrangement settings and can be accessed via the following link: [Child Protection Support Service](#).

- 5.5 This is supported by the [Education Authority Safeguarding Guidance for Statutory Youth Services](#). This comprehensive guidance sets out information on training requirements; reporting concerns; dealing with allegations of abuse; recording concerns and record keeping; displaying child protection information and other key safeguarding and child protection information.
- 5.6 All staff must receive initial comprehensive safeguarding and child protection training and must undertake on-going refresher training as required.
- 5.7 Further EA Youth Service Guidance on Safeguarding Policies for voluntary youth work providers can be accessed via the link below. This provides youth organisations with details of the essential components that should be included in their Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as part of registration with EA and to access EA [Youth Service Funding](#).
- 5.8 All staff and volunteers working within youth services must have a full understanding of the safeguarding and child protection policies (including safeguarding for adults at risk of harm) specific to that setting, how these are to be applied and their role in ensuring the comprehensive adherence to them.
- 5.9 Children and young people using youth services and their parents/guardians/responsible adult must be informed of the safeguarding and child protection policies applicable to a setting, how these are applied, the different roles of staff within each setting and must be supported to ensure they understand them regardless of age; ability or ethnicity etc.
- 5.10 It is imperative that staff and service users have a full understanding and ability to 'Raise a Concern' if they have concerns that a child or young person is at risk of/subject to harm and to 'Make a Complaint' if they are a concerned child/young person, parent/guardian/responsible adult. Information on such reporting arrangements must be provided to both staff and service users and displayed clearly within settings.
- 5.11 Easy read information should be displayed within settings to ensure accessibility to this information, in particular by children and young people of all ages and abilities. Examples of flow charts can be found in the appendices within the EA Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures guidance.
- 5.12 Safeguarding Information Boards should be clearly visible throughout a setting (placed at eye level for children and young people) for example at the entrance to the unit/centre, within rooms where group work is undertaken to aid discussion on difficult issues. The messaging displayed must be child friendly;

clear and easily followed. Where possible it should be consistent to material used within other education settings such as schools to provide consistent messaging in particular for younger children throughout educational settings.

5.13 The information should include:

- Photographs, names and contact details of key staff such as Designated Youth Worker (DYW) and Deputy Designated Youth Worker (DDYW) and their roles.
- How to access the Complaints Policy.
- Contact details for Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs) Gateway (including Adult Gateway Teams) and PSNI.
- Step by step information on how to raise a concern and how to make a complaint.
- Child-line posters and other child friendly information may also be included.

6. Safeguarding for Adults at Risk of Harm

6.1 Safeguarding is applicable not only to children and young people accessing youth services but also those adults who may be at risk of harm.

6.2 The definition of adult safeguarding as set out in the joint Department of Health and Department of Justice adult safeguarding policy is the term used for activities which **prevent** harm from taking place and which **protect** adults at risk (where harm has occurred or is likely to occur without intervention).

6.3 The policy aims to improve safeguarding arrangements for adults who are at risk of harm from abuse, exploitation or neglect and is for all organisations working with, or providing services to, adults across the statutory, voluntary, community, independent and faith sectors. It sets clear and proportionate safeguarding expectations across the range of organisations. It states that at a minimum, any public service, voluntary, community, independent or faith organisation providing recreational social, sporting or educational activities or services will be expected to safeguard adults who may be at risk by:

- **recognising** that adult harm is wrong and that it should not be tolerated;
- **being aware** of the signs of harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect;

- **reducing opportunities for harm** from abuse, exploitation and neglect to occur; and
 - **knowing how and when to report** safeguarding concerns to HSC Trusts or the PSNI.
- 6.4 Safeguarding for adults at risk of harm must be an integral part of all youth settings safeguarding and child protection policies and staff and volunteer training.
- 6.5 Further information is available at:

[Adult Safeguarding - Prevention and Protection in Partnership](#)

[SBNI](#)

7. Youth Service Terminology

- 7.1 Terminology in respect of youth settings should be substituted where appropriate within the overarching DE Guidance, Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools.
- 7.2 To assist, common staffing terminology used within the EA Youth Service and clear detail on their associated roles is set out within the EA Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures guidance and associated Education Authority Safeguarding Guidance for Youth Services. Common terms include:
- Designated Youth Worker (DYW)
 - Deputy Designated Youth Worker (DDYW)
 - Heads of Service (HoS)
 - Senior Youth Officers (SYO)
- 7.3 Terminology may differ within voluntary; uniformed and private youth service settings. Common terms within these settings include:
- Safeguarding Champion
 - Director/ Manager
 - Management Committee

- 7.4 Terminology used for staff within each setting and their roles should be clearly articulated and understood by staff, parents and users.

8. Training and Vetting of Staff and Volunteers

- 8.1 All staff, volunteers and young people in leadership roles working within youth settings must receive safeguarding and child protection training at the start of their employment/volunteering and prior to engaging directly with children and young people and fully understand their responsibilities and duties in this respect.
- 8.2 It is the responsibility of each settings management committee to ensure all staff, volunteers and young people in leadership roles are vetted and trained. Guidance on recruitment and vetting of staff is set out in the overarching DE Guidance, Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools Section 4 and youth settings should ensure they are familiar with this.
- 8.3 Safeguarding and Child Protection training must be undertaken by all staff, volunteers and young people in leadership roles (and where applicable the management committee of voluntary youth organisations), working within all youth work settings at the start of their employment/volunteering and prior to engaging directly with children and young people.
- 8.4 For EA statutory youth work providers this is set out in EA safeguarding guidance and is delivered by CPSS:
- All full time and part time staff working with children and young people (including volunteers) will attend Child Protection and Safeguarding Whole Service Training which is delivered over four sessions by the DYW/DDYW. This training focuses on child protection awareness and reporting processes. Refresher training is to be completed every 3 years before their 3rd year period ends.
 - All new DYWs and DDYWs will attend a 2 day CPSS DYW/DDYW course and will complete refresher training every 3 years before their 3rd year period ends.
 - The Head of Service/Advisor/Senior Youth Officer will receive one day training on safeguarding and child protection and will complete a follow up of a half day annual refresher training.
 - DYW must ensure that each unit/project retains a written record of when each member of staff including volunteers was in receipt of training; this

includes records of Safeguarding induction for all new staff; refresher training for all staff; DYW/DDYW training and refresher training.

- 8.5 Good practice such as this should be applied by all settings. Advice and guidance is available from EA CPSS for statutory youth work providers and for voluntary youth worker providers their nominated Headquarter Organisation/ Umbrella Organisation for Safeguarding or Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) should they not have a nominated Headquarter Organisation. In addition, guidance for the evaluation of child protection/safeguarding has been produced by the Education and Training Inspectorate (see Section 10 of this addendum).

9. Robust Risk Assessment

- 9.1 Risk assessment is a vital tool in safeguarding and child protection and must be embedded within the practices and processes of all bodies/organisations providing youth services to children and young people. It is the responsibility of each organisational management structure to ensure robust risk assessment is part of their child protection/safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 9.2 Many youth services often use public facilities for the delivery of programmes/ activities and it is essential that robust risk assessment is incorporated within the delivery of all programmes/activities to take account not only of the activity but also the environment in which they are delivered, including transport. Examples of risk assessments can be found at Qualitative Risk Assessments and Quantitative Risk Assessments.
- 9.3 Residential/overnight visits and sport/outdoor activities are key components of youth services delivery. Comprehensive guidance on education and residential visits can be accessed in EA [Educational Visits](#) Interim Guidance which is applicable to both schools and youth settings.

10. Guidance for Assessing Robust Practices

- 10.1 The assessment of effective practice is key to ensuring robust safeguarding processes are in place. To assist in this the Education & Training Inspectorate (ETI) has produced [Safeguarding Guidance](#) and an [Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework](#) for the evaluation of child protection/safeguarding.
- 10.2 These clearly set out how effective practice is demonstrated and should be used by the senior/leadership staff and management committees to evaluate and support effective safeguarding and child protection practices within each youth setting.

11. Record Keeping

- 11.1 To support effective safeguarding and child protection each youth setting should hold a register of members and the attendance of individual children, young people and young adults at sessions should be recorded. Registration details should include contact details of parent/guardian/responsible adult; medical issues; emergency contact details and any other relevant information. These should be reviewed at least annually to ensure they remain up to date and kept in line with general data protection regulations (GDPR).
- 11.2 Both the overarching DE guidance (Section 9) and EA guidance clearly state the procedures which should be adopted if you have concerns about, or allegations relating to, staff within your organisation or concerns about a possible abuse by someone other than your staff member and the need for good record keeping in relation to documenting concerns.
- 11.3 For further advice also see [UNOCINI](#) - Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland Guidance.

12. Specific Types of Abuse including E-Safety

- 12.1 Further departmental guidance in respect of specific types of abuse such as Grooming; Sexting; Child Sexual Exploitation; Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse; E-Safety/Internet Abuse is available and set out in Section 6 of the overarching DE safeguarding and child protection guidance. In respect of Adult Safeguarding additional information on Domestic Abuse; Human Trafficking and Hates crimes is contained within [Adult Safeguarding - Prevention and Protection in Partnership](#).