



Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Guidelines





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Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Guidelines

1.0 Introduction

The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) is committed to working practices which promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm. The organisation will take steps to ensure that all children and vulnerable adults, insofar as they come into contact with CCEA employees and/or suppliers, participate in a safe environment.

CCEA recognises and accepts its responsibility to develop an awareness of issues which may cause children and vulnerable adults harm, and to establish and maintain a safe environment for them. It is committed to reviewing policy, procedures and practice every 3 years and or when legislation changes.

CCEA will seek to protect the safety of children and vulnerable adults and provide a safe environment by following the guidance set out by the Independent Safeguarding Authority in relation to employing/contracting people who are suitable for working with children and vulnerable adults. This will be achieved by vetting the background of persons who are recommended for appointment as employees or suppliers to posts which have access to children and vulnerable adults, particularly on a one to one or regular basis.

CCEA's Guidelines has been developed in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Policy Standards for Child Protection.

2.0 Aims of the Policy

The key aims of the policy are:

- To commitment to providing and maintaining a service that protects children and vulnerable adults from harm as well as protecting the organisation, CCEA employees and suppliers
- To ensure employees/suppliers with access to children and vulnerable adults are carefully selected, trained and supervised, and are made aware with the CCEA Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Guidelines
- To promote an environment in which everyone feels free to share information and concerns relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- To publish CCEA Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Guidelines on CCEA website.

CCEA will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- Ensuring safe recruitment selection and appropriate vetting arrangements for staff
- Undertaking risk assessment where required

- Providing effective management of such suppliers and staff by enabling supervision, support and training
- Reporting concerns to the relevant statutory agencies
- If required, sharing appropriate information about child and vulnerable adults protection and good practice with staff
- Recognising that the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults is paramount
- Ensuring proper and appropriate training is provided to staff and suppliers
- Taking prompt and appropriate action to respond to Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults issues involving CCEA staff and suppliers, in consultation with the DCPO/and or Deputy CPO.

3.0 Scope of Policy

The CCEA Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Guidelines relates to employees and suppliers who have access to children and vulnerable adults. These individuals will be subject to relevant recommended checks and child protection training. Before appointing anyone to a job or contract for services role designated as a regulated activity, a check will be carried out by Access NI. These checks will be carried out in order to make sure that people who might be a risk to children and vulnerable adults are not appointed or employed in positions that are deemed to be regulated. CCEA will ensure robust systems are in place to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Within curriculum, examinations and assessment activities of CCEA, there are no instances where CCEA has primary and direct responsibility for children and vulnerable adults. As a commissioner and publisher of learning resources, CCEA is involved in decisions relating to the choice of suitable texts for study, performance and publication. Across this diverse spectrum of engagement, CCEA is committed to applying the highest standards in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Additionally, all employees/suppliers have a responsibility to protect the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults who may come into contact with CCEA, and to protect themselves from allegation or accusation.

4.0 Legislation and Code of Practice

CCEA's Child Protection Guidelines are a response to the legal requirements set out in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the principles enshrined in The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

Co-operating to Safeguard Children & Young People in Northern Ireland" (DOH 2017).

5.0 Safeguarding Principles

5.1 All children and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be safeguarded from harm. Their welfare must be promoted and they must be given every opportunity to develop to their full potential. The primary responsibility for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults rests with their parents or carers, however, those who work with children, vulnerable adults or families, in whatever capacity, have a particular responsibility to promote their welfare and ensure they are safe.

5.2 All employees of CCEA have a responsibility to ensure that the children and vulnerable adults with whom they work or have contact are safeguarded. The following principles underpin all child protection/safeguarding practice within CCEA and are reflective of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the principles enshrined in The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

- The child or young person's welfare is paramount
- The voice of the child or young person should be heard
- Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped to stay together
- Partnership
- Prevention
- Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances
- Protection
- Evidence-based and informed decision making

6.0 Awareness of Abuse or Potential Abuse

A concern about awareness of abuse relates to the possibility of a child or vulnerable adult suffering harm. This may include:

- Sudden, unexplained or worrying changes in behaviour
- Physical signs or symptoms that may be indicative of abuse
- Worrying remarks made by a child or vulnerable adult (or annotated within an examination script/coursework materials)
- A situation where a child or vulnerable adult is exposed to potential risk or harm.

Should a member of staff or supplier have a concern about a child or vulnerable adult, they should refer to CCEA Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and should report their concern to the Designated Child Protection Officer or DCPO/and or Deputy CPO

7.0 Definition of Harm and Significant Harm

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 defines '**harm**' as ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development. The Order states that 'ill-treatment' includes sexual abuse, forms of ill-treatment which are physical

and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical; 'health' means physical and/or mental health; and 'development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

There is no absolute definition of '**significant harm**', as this will be assessed on a case by case basis. Article 50(3) of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 states that "where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child".

*To note: **This also includes vulnerable adults.***

8.0 Types of Abuse

8.1 Harm can be suffered by a child or vulnerable adult by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children and vulnerable adults may be more at risk if their parents/carers have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Children with disabilities can also be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or vulnerable adult, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Communications with key professionals is essential for responding to incidents.

Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or vulnerable adult may experience more than one type of harm or significant harm.

8.2 Harm can be caused by:

Physical abuse;
Sexual abuse;
Emotional abuse;
Neglect; and
Exploitation.

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

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit a child/ vulnerable adult 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 a child/vulnerable adult in the production of sexual images, forcing a child/ vulnerable adult to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging a child/vulnerable adult to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child/vulnerable adult in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology).

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child/ vulnerable adult. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child/ vulnerable adult emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child/ vulnerable adult that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child/vulnerable adult 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/vulnerable adult's peers.

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's/vulnerable adult'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/vulnerable adult health or development. A child/vulnerable adult who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

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

8.3 The abuse of a child/ vulnerable adult can manifest in a number of ways and can involve a combination of the forms of abuse defined above. The ways in which abuse manifests can also change over time and all those working to safeguard a child/ vulnerable adult must have an awareness and understanding of the nature and prevalence of different manifestations of abuse. The key consideration must always be how the individual child/ vulnerable adult is impacted by the harmful actions of others.

8.4 The above definitions are included in "Co-operating to Safeguard Children & Young People in Northern Ireland" (DOH 2017).

Further information in relation to indicators of abuse as well as other specific forms of abuse are available on the SBNI Regional Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures web-page at <http://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/p>.

9.0 Guidelines for staff should a Child/Vulnerable Adult disclose Concerns of an Abuse Nature

Golden Rules

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take the child seriously	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promise confidentiality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell the child they have done the right thing by telling you	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarify if necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask leading questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make an accurate record as soon as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeatedly question/ask the child/ vulnerable adult to repeat the disclosure over and over
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform the designated person/line manager without delay	

10.0 General Guidance for Employees and Suppliers

When attending centres CCEA employees/suppliers have a responsibility to ensure professional behaviour when carrying out their work. Attitude, demeanour and language, as well as behaviour, all require care and thought. It is also important to ensure account is taken of a child and vulnerable adult right to appropriate privacy and modesty when providing for a safe and secure environment.

11.0 Working for CCEA in a centre

CCEA employees/suppliers when undertaking work at a centre should ensure that they exhibit the following positive behaviours and are aware of the negative behaviours that could place them or a child/vulnerable adult at risk.

Do

- Ensure that the care, welfare and safety needs of a child or a vulnerable adult is paramount.
- Give child/vulnerable adult as much encouragement as possible
- Adopt a friendly, relaxed, informal atmosphere
- Listen to what the child/vulnerable adult has to say
- Keep a physical and professional distance
- Be aware of the effect that words and actions may have
- Be approachable
- Be alert, co-operative and open-minded
- Only restrain a child/vulnerable adult who is at imminent risk of inflicting harm to themselves or others
- Ensure the timing of assessments fall within the normal timetable parameters and regulations.

Do not

- Ever stray from the task allocated
- Do not be unnecessarily inquisitive
- Do not do or say anything that might make a child/vulnerable adult feel uncomfortable
- Do not say things that could be interpreted as aggressive, hostile or impatient
- Do not be drawn into personal conversations or introduce personal subjects
- Do not make comments that could be misinterpreted e.g. comments about their appearance
- Do not sit or stand too close to the child/vulnerable adult
- Never stand over the child/vulnerable adult as this may make them feel pressured
- Never meet other than in the agreed assessment venue
- Never exchange personal contact details
- Never make physical contact (except when there is a need to restrain a child/vulnerable adult who is at imminent risk of inflicting harm on themselves or others).

These negative behaviours could result in allegations, sanctions and subsequent police involvement so should be avoided in all circumstances. Failure to follow the aforementioned guidelines could result in investigation and possible subsequent disciplinary action/termination of contract.

12.0 Reporting Guidelines

12.1 What to Say and Do

If a person raises a concern, it will probably be a child/vulnerable adult to whom the staff member is talking; but it could be anyone. The basic guidance is the same in all cases:

- Listen to the child/vulnerable adult and take down what has been said seriously
- Do not promise to keep secrets
- Explain that you will find people who can help

- Do not interrupt them when they are recalling significant events
- Do not make them repeat the story
- Do not prompt or ask leading questions.

12.2 What to Write Down

A staff member should always pass on any information that they receive as a matter of urgency to the CCEA Designated Child Protection Officer/and or Deputy (DCPO). They should make a written record by completing the CCEA Child Protection Record Form available at www.ccea.org.uk or on the Hub. This should include aspects such as: Please also see 12.3 below.

- Date, time and place of incident
- Who was there?
- What was told and by whom, using exact wording wherever possible.

This information must be passed to the DCPO/and or Deputy CPO immediately following the incident or as soon as possible or within two days at most. To note if this is exam related then the first point of contact is BA.

12.3 On receipt of information by telephone

If a staff member receives a telephone call which raises issues of concern about a possible child protection/vulnerable adult matter then they should offer that caller the opportunity to speak to the DCPO/and or Deputy CPO. However, there may be an occasion where the staff member has to handle the call themselves. In this case the staff member should try to establish:

- Name
- What happened
- Where and when
- Name of person they have concern about
- Record other details but do not become the investigator
- Assure the caller that the matter will be followed up urgently
- Tell the caller that someone will get back to them in due course
- Do not ask leading questions
- Do not offer personal opinion or comment
- Do not rush the caller

Always pass on any information received as a matter of urgency to the DCPO/and or Deputy CPO. They will give support and assistance at all stages of the process and will act as a liaison point.

12.4 Concerns about Assessment of Written Materials

If a staff member comes across material in written work (e.g. examination related materials) that gives cause for concern, they should contact Business Assurance as the first point of contact. It is, of course, not always easy to distinguish between fact and/or fiction in peoples writing, but that should not be seen as a reason to ignore the issue. Business Assurance will manage the process from then on and will liaise with the DCPO and/or Deputy CPO regards the need to refer onto the centre for their consideration. To refer a case for consideration, please complete the Duty of Care form available on The Hub and provide a copy of the material to Business Assurance.

12.5. Inappropriate activities at centres

A child protection concern may also arise at a centre where an activity is being observed. Two possible contexts for this are a performance and/or discussion under observation. If an activity being observed gives cause for concern, whether or not to stop the assessment prior to completion will need to be considered. No activity should continue that might be seen as raising child protection issues. If concerned about an activity, contact should be made with the DCPO/ and or Deputy CPO.

13.0 High Risk Situations

Specific situations relating to conduct that require thorough and careful consideration are detailed below:

13.1 One to one contact

CCEA employees/suppliers should whenever possible seek to avoid situations where they are alone with an individual candidate. If this cannot be avoided CCEA representatives should ensure that, where possible, the meeting is conducted in a room with visual access or by leaving the door open and/or in an area likely to be frequented by other people. CCEA representatives should alert a colleague/teacher that the meeting is taking place. If there are extra stipulations expressed by the centre these should be followed.

13.2 Transporting Pupils

CCEA employees/suppliers must not transport pupils in their own vehicles during the course of their CCEA duties under any circumstances.

14.0 Potential incidents

If an incident occurs involving a staff member and they feel their actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, they should submit a written report of the incident immediately to the CCEA DCPO/and or Deputy CPO who will consider the next steps.

150 Managing Allegations of Abuse Against CCEA Employees

151 CCEA treats any allegation of abuse of a child/ vulnerable adult by an employee as a serious matter and where such an allegation is made the timely resolution of that allegation should be a priority for all concerned. Any unnecessary delays should be avoided.

152 Any allegation of abuse or suspected abuse in relation to an employee of CCEA must be referred to the DCPO/ and or Deputy CPO immediately.

153 If a concern arises during a visit to a centre where the CCEA employee/supplier is in direct contact with children/vulnerable adults, contact the head of centre immediately and as soon as possible, contact the DCPO/and or Deputy CPO.

16.0 Duties of a Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) and Deputy (Deputy CPO)

- To act as an advocate for the child/vulnerable adult with regards CCEAs work
- To receive a disclosure of alleged abuse made towards a child or vulnerable adult by an employee or supplier of CCEA
- To manage concerns raised by members of staff or suppliers about colleagues not fulfilling CCEA's Policy and Procedures on Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults - such concerns should be taken to the relevant line manager in the first instance
- To ensure records are maintained of all disclosures (and their associated reports, decisions/outcomes) all written records on child protection issues are securely and confidentially
- To keep up to date with relevant child protection legislation, best practice and developments
- To ensure the ongoing implementation and review of CCEA's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Guidance.

17.0 Training and Support

17.1 CCEA Council and Executive Team members have a commitment to and recognise the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare through appropriate child protection awareness training for all CCEA staff and volunteers who work with or have contact with children and children/vulnerable adults.

17.2 Child protection and safeguarding training for CCEA staff will be appropriate to the job role. All new staff will be made aware of the child Protection Policy and Guidelines induction. All suppliers and staff who are in regulated positions will receive additional child protection training as appropriate.

18.0 Confidentiality

CCEA employees and suppliers have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children/vulnerable adults. All employees and suppliers should recognise that in order to protect children/vulnerable adults from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality must be subordinate to the need to take appropriate action, by informing and involving others, in the child's/vulnerable adult's best interest. No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be made to a child/vulnerable adult or anyone else giving information about possible abuse.

19.0 Right to feedback

If a staff member has reported an incident/concern they have a right to receive feedback. However, this may be limited and it may be delayed if there are ongoing investigations. The staff member has the right to raise their

concerns at the highest level if they feel a child protection matter has not received due attention. This can be done by writing to the DCPO/and or Deputy CPO. The envelope should be marked as follows:

RESTRICTED – PERSONAL

**FAO Designated Child Protection Officer
CCEA
29 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast BT1 3BG**

20.0 Conclusion

Even for those experienced, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is not the responsibility of CCEAs employees/suppliers to prove that abuse is taking place. Instead, it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them to the CCEA DCPO/ Deputy CPO.

If there are any concerns regarding the content of these Guidelines Policy and Procedures or if advice and guidance is needed in how someone should act in particular circumstances they should consult the CCEA DCPO and Deputy CPO.

This policy is not contractual and may be varied from time to time.

Related Documents

CCEA Child Protection Procedures
CCEA Child Protection Record

Revision History Record

Date	Version Number	Prepared by	Approved by	Amendment	Comments
04.11.10	1	CMI	SS	New document	
01.07.13	2	JMcC	SS	Updated legislation	
4/11/2014	3	JMcC	SS	Reviewed – no further amendments	
12/09/2018	4	LT	MM	Revised and updated	
27/01/2020	5	LT	RB	Major amendments made. Policy and Guidelines combined	In line with operational plan review of policies
08.04.2020	6	RB		Feedback taken on from Child Protection Committee	
17/11/2020	7	KMcB/LT/ JMcG		Further feedback taken on. Policy now includes reference to vulnerable adults	
3/10/2023	8	RB	MG	Typo amends	

Appendix 1

CCEA Regulated Activity

The Protection of Freedoms Bill 2012 has amended the provisions of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007. Main changes from 10 September 2012 are: definition of regulated positions; repeal of controlled activity.

The new definition of regulated activity includes: unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on wellbeing, or drive a vehicle only for children. Work in a school with opportunity for contact (regularly - four or more days in a 30 day period)

Occasional or temporary services are outside the scope of regulated activity.

Type of contract	Interface with children/vulnerable adults/centres	Regulated Activity?	Reason
CCEA employees – office based	Contact with centres is by phone and letter and never directly with pupils. Any contact with a centre will be on centre premises	No	Not classed as a regulated activity as per definition
CCEA employees – temporary staff (office based)	Work on CCEA premises only. Contact with centres is by phone and letter and never directly with pupils	No	Not classed as a regulated activity as per definition
CCEA employees – occasionally visiting centres	Professional staff meeting teachers	No	Not classed as a regulated activity as per definition
Multimedia cameraman employees and contractors	For photo shoots, sound technicians etc.	No	Does not meet the frequency and intensity requirements
Delivery staff	Deliveries and collection of question papers	No	Not classed as a regulated activity as per definition.

Top Teams - Chair of Examiner, Chief Examiner, Principal Examiner, Reviser, Scrutineer	Write papers and mark schemes. No direct contact with centres in their capacity as CCEA contractors. May receive comments in written materials that give cause for concern	No	Not classed as a regulated activity as per definition
Research Consultants	Some can have access to groups of children/vulnerable adults in centre settings	Yes	Need checked if it involves teaching, instructing, supervising or providing guidance to children/vulnerable adults and meets the frequency and/or intensity test. Not a regulated activity and/or under centres
Examiners	Mark question papers. No direct contact with children/vulnerable adults. Papers carry centre code and candidate numbers only – no names or addresses etc. May receive comments in written materials that give cause for concern	No	Not classed as a regulated activity as per definition
Visiting Examiners/Assessors/Moderators	Direct contact with centres and children/vulnerable adult's pupils across a range of subjects. Some have one-one access.	Yes	Involves teaching, instructing, supervising or providing guidance to children/vulnerable adults but does not meet frequency and intensity test
Invigilators	Direct contact with children/vulnerable adults through invigilation of examinations. Centre appointments with CCEA providing guidance and payment processes	Yes	Centre is Regulated Activity Provider
Professional Associates	Only contact with centres is by phone and letter and with teachers only	No	Not classed as a regulated activity as per definition

