

the nerve centre

**Safeguarding  
Policy and Procedures**

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Policy & Procedures  
October 2009

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been adopted by the Nerve Centre and its Belfast subsidiary, Studio On Creative Learning Centre.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to live their lives to the fullest potential, to be protected, to be able to participate in and enjoy activities and to be treated with dignity and respect. There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards designed to ensure that these groups are protected from harm. Everybody has a responsibility for the safety of children and in accordance with relevant legislation, **The Nerve Centre** as an organisation which has significant contacts with children across its various programmes and activities, has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure a duty of care.

The purpose of this policy and its associated procedures is to help protect the children, young people and vulnerable adults who use our programmes and facilities and to ensure that **Nerve Centre** staff, and the Board of directors, are aware of issues that can cause children harm, and take effective action to protect them. By complying fully with the policies and procedures, **The Nerve Centre** seeks to ensure that staff, and elected members are also protected whilst carrying out their duties.

## **2.0 POLICY STATEMENT, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1 Aims**

Every child has a right to feel safe and protected and as a provider of cultural and educational programmes and facilities, **The Nerve Centre** is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for the children and young people who use our facilities and come into contact with members of our staff. We will take all reasonable steps to protect children using our programmes and facilities from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment whilst respecting their rights, wishes and feelings.

**The Nerve Centre aims to do this by:**

- Recognising that all children have the right to freedom from abuse and protection from harm.
- Putting in place robust recruitment procedures to ensure that those individuals whose behaviour could be a threat to the safety and wellbeing of children are not offered employment.
- Raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities throughout our organisation.
- Actively encouraging good practice amongst all staff and board members and promoting wider awareness wherever possible, i.e. partnership organisations and user groups.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all our programmes, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Listening to, respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children and working closely with other agencies.
- Recruiting, training, supervising and supporting staff who work with children to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children, from abuse, and themselves against false allegations. Staff who work with children will be subject to the appropriate level of employment checks.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Requiring staff and elected members to follow the Nerve Centre's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Policy and Procedures.
- Having in place Designated Child Protection Officers who will be trained appropriately to coordinate child protection issues and give advice.
- Ensuring confidentiality is maintained where appropriate and that access to confidential information is restricted to the appropriate authorities.
- Carrying out a regular audit and review of the effectiveness of our Safeguarding Policy.
- Helping to maintain professionalism and standards of service which are associated with best practice provision.

## 2.2 Objectives

The Nerve Centre's objectives to achieve these aims are:

- To provide appropriate training for staff.
- To aid staff to respond sensitively and rigorously to anyone who discloses information about abuse, and be confident and able to take appropriate action swiftly, regardless of whom the allegation is about.
- To promote the general welfare and well being of children within **Nerve Centre** programmes and facilities.
- To develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to complaints of alleged or suspected child abuse.

Signed: <u><i>Veer Jayaram</i></u>	Date: <u><i>Dec 09</i></u>
Chair	<b>The Nerve Centre</b>
Signed: <u><i>Pense If</i></u>	Date: <u><i>Dec 09.</i></u>
Chief Executive	<b>The Nerve Centre</b>

### 3.0 DEFINITIONS

- The term children or young person is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years. The term also refers to vulnerable adults (defined under The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Definitions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005).
- The term parent is used as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians.
- The term staff and board members is used to refer to employees, company directors, and anyone working on behalf of and/or representing **The Nerve Centre**.

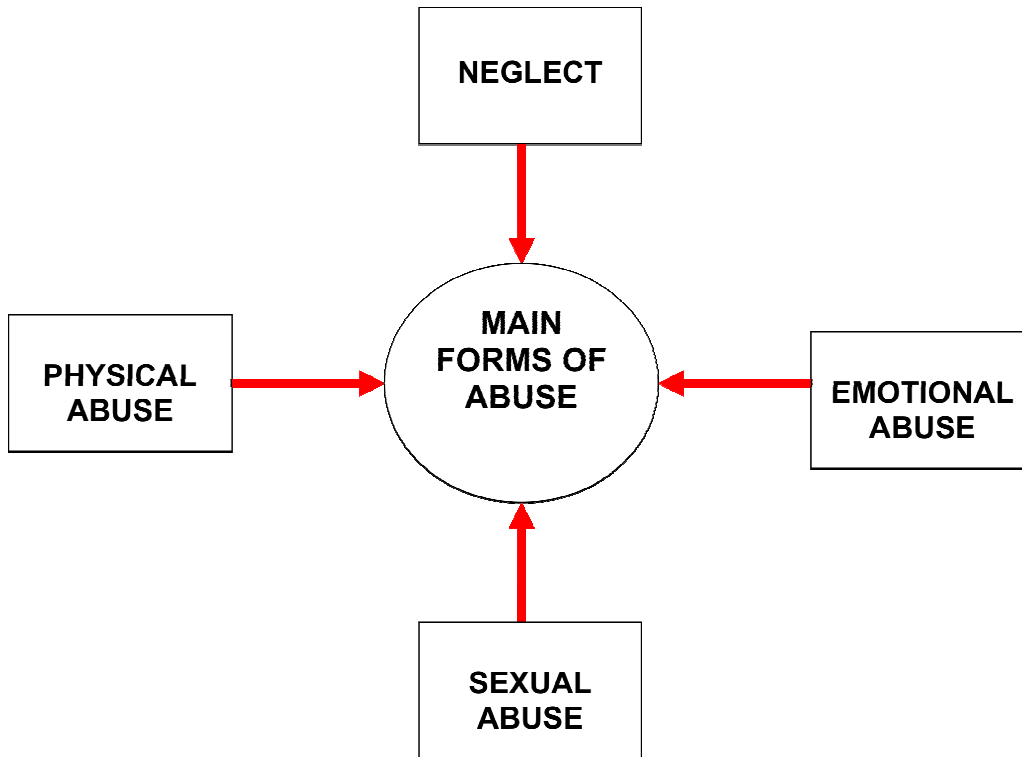
#### 3.1 What is Child Abuse?

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. It is generally accepted that there are four main categories of abuse which are outlined as follows. These definitions are based on those from Co-operating to Safeguard Children (2003) (Northern Ireland) (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety).

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Throughout this document 'children or child' is used. Unless specifically mentioned this relates to 'children, young people and vulnerable adults'.

## MAIN FORMS OF ABUSE



It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time.

### **3.1.1 Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate foods, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision.

### **3.1.2 Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may also involve causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

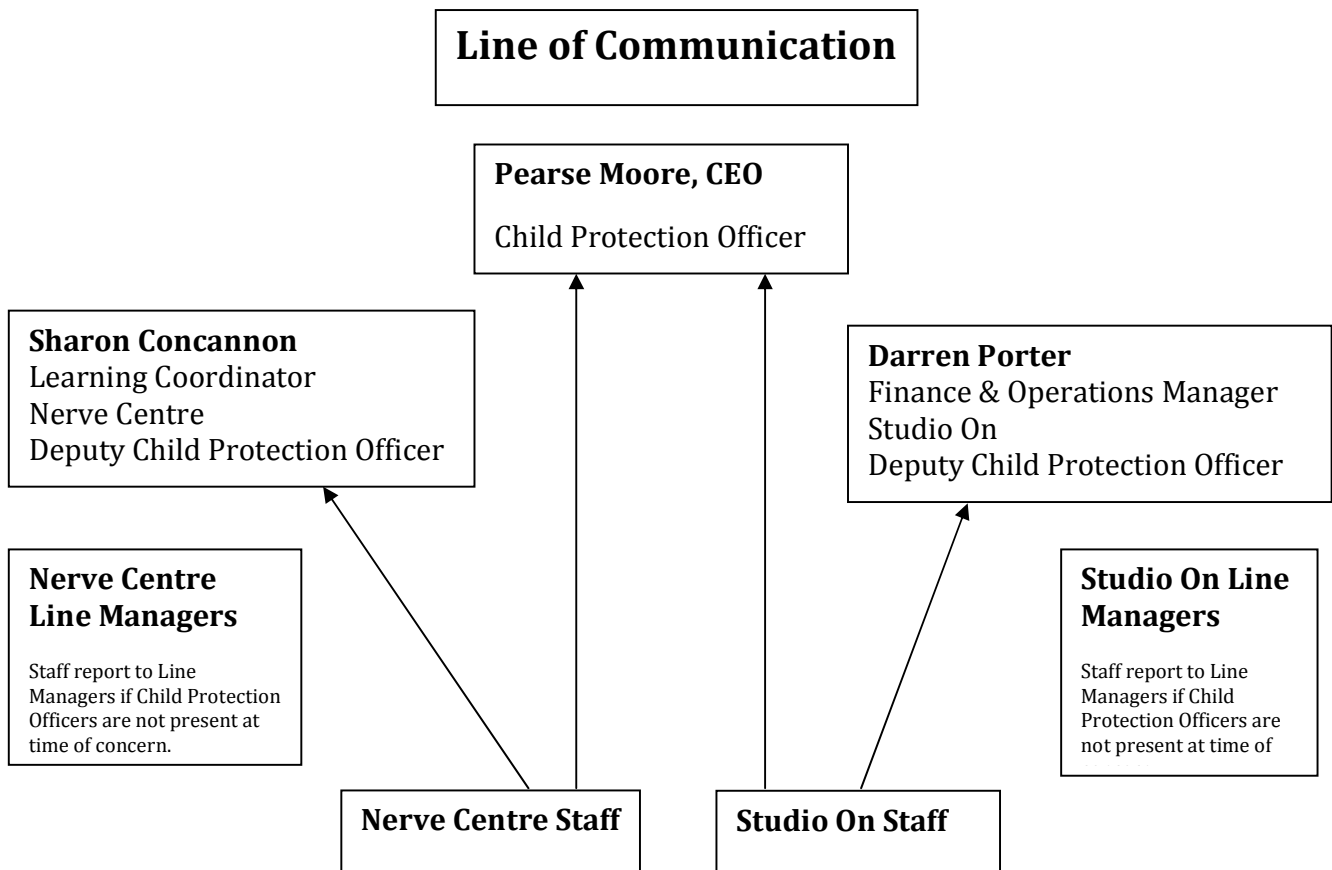
### **3.1.3 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the willful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

### **3.1.4 Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non penetrative acts. They may include activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

#### 4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES



##### 4.1 Chief Executive

As the Designated Officer, the Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance of this policy. Day to day responsibility for implementation is however delegated through the management structure to individual Managers and Officers who are held accountable for ensuring that the requirements set out in this policy are fully implemented.

##### 4.2 The Learning Co-ordinator

The Learning Co-ordinator (also the Deputy Designated Officer) will ensure that this Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Policy is widely available to all staff. She will also ensure that where identified through job descriptions and representations from individual managers that

employment checks are carried out for those members of staff who have a substantial level of contact with children. The Learning Co-ordinator will also ensure that any records of suspected abuse are stored appropriately.

4.2.1 The Learning Co-ordinator will have responsibility for ensuring that all staff are made aware of the importance of this policy.

4.2.2 At their Induction training, new employees will be made aware of their role and responsibilities in the area of child protection.

4.2.3 The Learning Co-ordinator has the responsibility to ensure that there are the necessary procedures for the supervision and support of Nerve Centre managers and senior staff in their discharge of this policy.

4.2.4 The Learning Co-ordinator will ensure as part of the duty of care to all employees, that there are suitable support mechanisms in place for staff who have had any allegations made against them or who are undergoing any investigation under this policy.

### **4.3 Managers**

Managers are expected to ensure employees are aware of this policy; and to notify the Designated Child Protection Officer(s) in strict confidence regarding any matters of child protection brought to their attention. Managers will also be expected to ensure that their staff members who have substantial contact with children attend the relevant training.(see section 5)

### **4.4 Staff**

All staff of the Nerve Centre have a duty to adhere to this Policy and procedures and to notify the Designated Officer(s) on any matters of child protection. They will also be responsible for undertaking the relevant training should they be working with or have regular contact with children. Attention is drawn to the Code of Conduct contained at Appendix 1 of this policy. It is normal practice for the Nerve Centre to use freelance staff who will also be subject to the requirements outlined within this policy.

#### **4.5 Designated Child Protection Officers**

The Nerve Centre has three designated Child Protection Officers and their details are:

Pearse Moore	Sharon Concannon	Darren Porter
Chief Executive Officer	Learning Coordinator	Finance & Operations Mgr
The Nerve Centre	The Nerve Centre	Studio On
Tel: 028 71 260562 Ext 227	Tel: 028 71 260562 Ext 213	Tel: 028 90 449821
Mobile: 0779898542	Mobile: 07909690651	Mobile: 07986348546

They will be responsible for acting as a central point and source of advice on child protection matters; for coordinating any action necessary within the organization and for liaising with the PSNI, Health and Social Services Trusts and other relevant agencies about suspected or actual cases of child abuse.

The designated Officers will undertake comprehensive training on child protection (the Designated Safeguarding Children Officer programme) and will be required to attend any necessary refresher training to update their knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis.

##### **4.5.1 Responsibilities of the Designated Child Protection Officers**

- Gathering information on any reports of child protection incidents.
- Acting as an information service to other members of staff on child protection issues.
- Keeping only relevant people within the organisation informed about any action taken on child protection incidents and any further action required.
- Ensuring the maintenance and safe keeping of individual case records in a confidential manner.
- Establishing a link with a senior member of Social Services staff responsible for child protection in Derry and Belfast.
- Ensuring that appropriate information is available to social services/police at the time of referral.
- Promoting the implementation of The Nerve Centre's Safeguarding Policy and

procedures among staff.

- Auditing, monitoring and reviewing the Child Protection Policy and procedures on an annual basis.

## **5.0 TRAINING OF STAFF**

The Nerve Centre will arrange for and provide relevant training in child protection for all managers and staff, who have substantial contact with children. The training will be provided at three levels: (According to Job description and role, all staff will be required to attend either)

**Level 1.** General awareness training for **all** staff. This will also form part of the general induction training for all new employees.

**Level 2.** Safeguarding Children and young people (and Vulnerable adults) training for those with substantial contact with children, young people and Vulnerable adults and relevant managers.

**Level 3.** Comprehensive training for Designated Officers, Relevant Managers (Designated Safeguarding Children Officer training)

(Training in Child protection should be offered on a regular basis providing opportunities for managers and staff to update their knowledge and skill as appropriate. While the Nerve Centre will provide refresher training every 3 years for existing staff, there will be an annual training session to remind staff of reporting procedures).

## **6.0 CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS USING NERVE CENTRE FACILITIES**

All groups and organisations hiring or using Nerve Centre facilities must have in place an acceptable Child Protection Policy, particularly those groups and organizations with a substantial child membership, i.e. membership where children represent more than 50% of the overall membership.

As a minimum requirement, all such groups and organizations must complete and sign a Declaration of Child Protection Form (See Appendix 3) and confirm that they will comply with the Nerve Centre's Policy. Where groups and organizations have booked facilities, the Nerve Centre would encourage these groups to ensure that adequate child protection checks have been

carried out on those members who will have unavoidable, substantial access to children. The Declaration Form will be made available to hirers of Nerve Centre facilities with the Terms and Conditions of Hire information. It is the responsibility of the relevant manager to ensure this is completed. Those groups and organizations which do not have a child protection policy must comply with the Nerve Centre's Child Protection Policy and it is the responsibility of the relevant manager to ensure that the group / organisation receives a copy of the document and a signed declaration form with terms and conditions agreed.

**All groups, organizations or individual tutors who make use of Nerve Centre facilities must also report any concerns if they encounter a case of alleged or suspected abuse, to the Designated Child Protection Officers within the Nerve Centre as named below**

**Pearse Moore**

**Tel: (028)71 260562 M. 07798938542**

**E. [p.moore@nerve-centre.org.uk](mailto:p.moore@nerve-centre.org.uk)**

**Sharon Concannon**

**Tel: (028)71 260562 M. 07909690651**

**E. [sharon@nerve-centre.org.uk](mailto:sharon@nerve-centre.org.uk)**

**Darren Porter (Studio On)**

**Tel: (028 90) 449821 M: 07986348546**

**E. [darren@studio-on.org.uk](mailto:darren@studio-on.org.uk)**

## **7.0 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS RESPONDING TO CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS**

It is important that all staff members are aware that the first person that has concerns or encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. However, staff do have a duty of care to the child or young person to report any suspicions they may have.

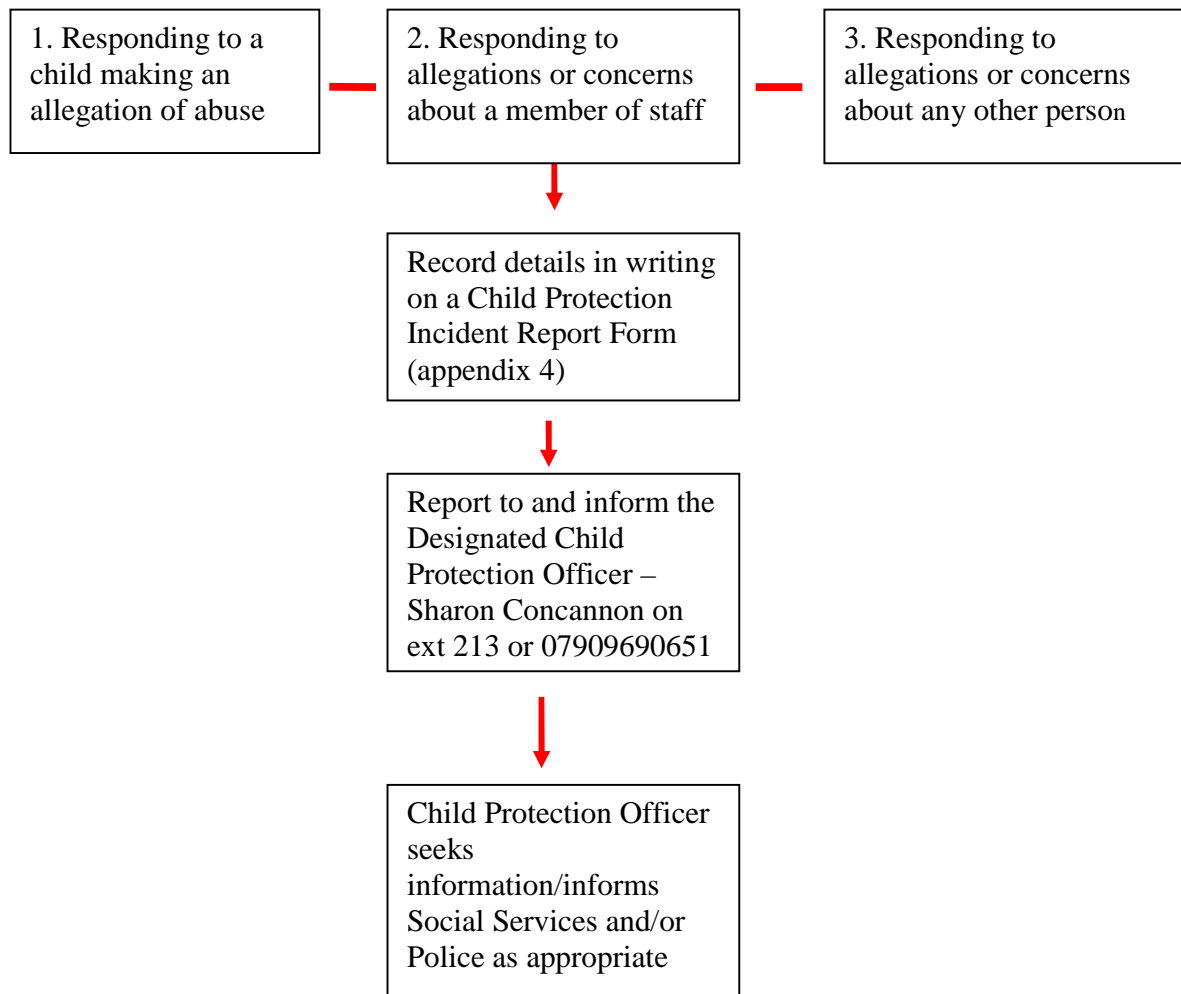
### **REMEMBER**

**It is not your job to judge or investigate or to decide that abuse has taken place. It is your responsibility to inform the right people so that the necessary action can be taken to protect children.**

In general there are 3 possible situations where staff may need to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse:

1. Responding to a child disclosing abuse, i.e. the child makes an allegation of abuse
2. Responding to allegations or concerns about a member of staff
3. Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person, i.e. parent, carer, other service user.

## 7.1 BASIC RESPONSE PROCEDURES/ACTIONS



## **7.2 SPECIFIC RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

The following procedures should be followed in each situation.

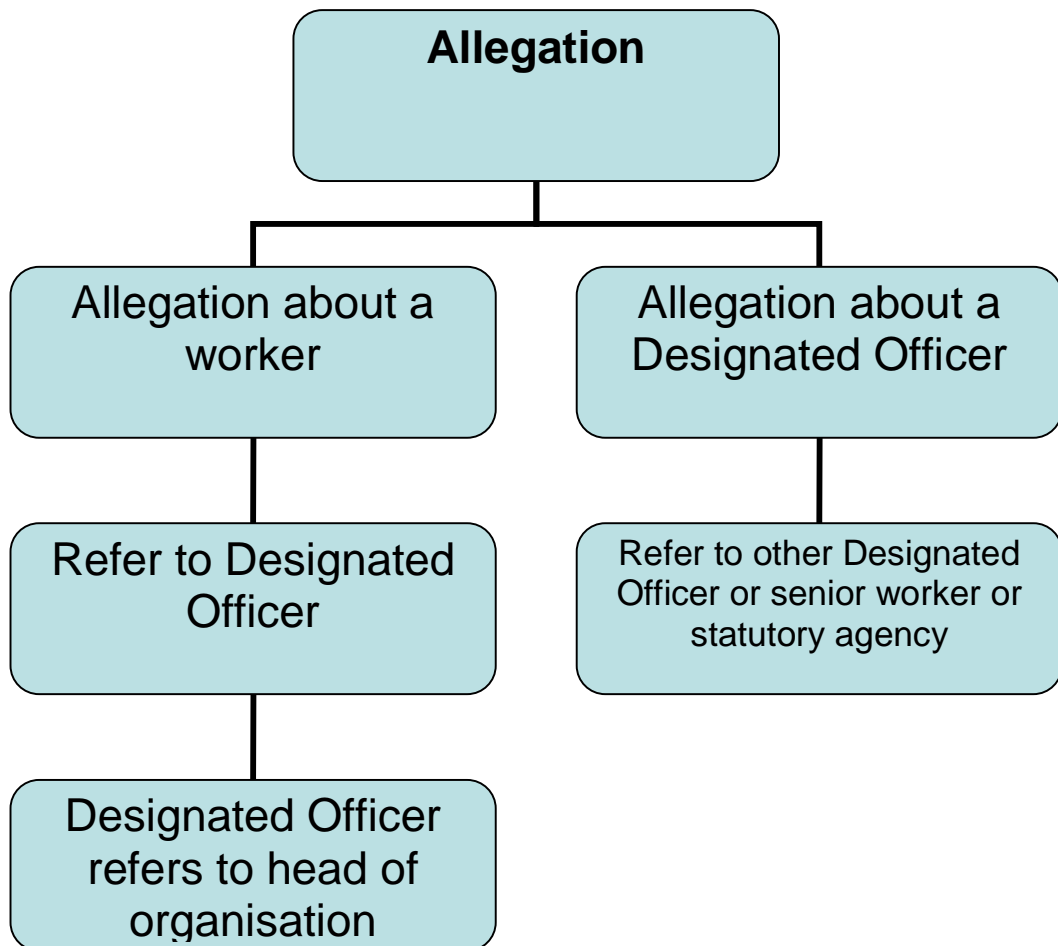
### **7.21 Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse**

- Children and young people who have been or are experiencing abuse rarely talk about this and will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. The following points are a guide to help you respond appropriately.
- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that the information will need to be shared with others – **do not promise to keep secrets.**
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times **avoid asking questions** that suggest a particular answer i.e. leading questions
- Reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell the child what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (see Appendix 4) all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the child's own words, as soon as possible.
- Report to your line manager and/or inform the Designated Child Protection Officer as soon as possible.
- Designated Child Protection Officer informs relevant persons, i.e. Social Services and/or the Police if appropriate.

### **7.2.2 Responding to allegations or concerns against a member of staff, board member, or any other person**

- Take all allegations or concerns seriously.
- Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Report Form (see Appendix 4) all the details that you are aware of as soon as possible.
- Report to and inform the Designated Child Protection Officer as soon as possible.
- The Designated Child Protection Officer will inform relevant persons, i.e. Social Services and/or the Police if appropriate.

- The individual may or may not be advised of the allegations depending on advice from Social Services and/or PSNI.
- Depending on the allegation, the individual may be asked to stand aside from duties or be temporarily suspended pending the investigation. This is a protection for both child and adult.
- Report to and inform the Director of the Nerve Centre if the allegation is made against a Designated Officer.



### **7.3 Procedures for Referrals to Disqualification List**

Working closely with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) will assess every person who wants to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults.

The CRB will receive applications to the ISA and will gather and monitor information. It will also use the information previously found in, the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (PoVA) list, the Protection of Children Act (PoCA) list; and List 99 (a list of people considered unsuitable for work with children, held by the Department for Children, Schools and Families). The Independent Safeguarding Authority will then assess this information and decide whether to give the individual concerned ISA registration or put them on one of the ISA Barred Lists.

These are lists of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. The Nerve Centre will refer individuals to this list on the following basis:-

- That the Nerve Centre has, on such grounds, suspended the individual or provisionally transferred them to a non -child care position, but has not yet decided whether to dismiss them or to confirm the transfer.
- The Nerve Centre has dismissed the individual on the grounds of misconduct (whether or not in the course of their employment) which harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm
- The individual has resigned, retired or been made redundant in circumstances such that the Nerve Centre would have dismissed them, or would have considered dismissing them, on such grounds if they had not resigned, retired or been made redundant.
- The Nerve Centre has, on such grounds, transferred the individual to a position which is not a child care position.
- Additionally, the Nerve Centre may refer names to the DHSSPS in other circumstances. This would be where they have dismissed an individual, the individual has resigned, retired or has been transferred to a position with the organisation which is not a child care position and where information not available to the Nerve Centre at the time has since become available.

#### **7.4 Confidentiality and Sharing Information**

- Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only, e.g. Designated Child Protection Officers, Social Services, Police, child, parents and staff.
- It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child, their family and any child protection investigations that may follow.
- Informing the parents of a child or young person that there are concerns about needs to be dealt with in a sensitive way and should be done in consultation with Social Services. This will be done in an open and transparent manner.
- Any individual under supervision has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This will be done in joint consultation with Social Services and the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation.
- Recorded information should be stored in a secure place in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).
- If enquiries arise from the public (including parents) or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff and board members are briefed so that they do not make any comments regarding the situation. Staff and board members should reply 'no comment' to all questions / enquiries.
- A Complaints Procedure is available for children, parents and staff. Verbal, written or other accessible format complaints should be made to the Chief Executive, Pearse Moore, and the Nerve Centre's complaints procedure will be activated. (Contact details in Appendix 6)

## 8.0 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 (SVG Order) and equivalent legislation in England, Wales and Scotland has established new safeguarding arrangements across the UK aimed at strengthening protection for children and vulnerable adults in workplace situations.

Key features of the new arrangements are:

- The establishment of a **new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)**, which will register those working with children and vulnerable adults and maintain lists of those barred from such work on the basis of harm or risk of harm;
- A **requirement** for employees (both paid and unpaid) working in specified positions to **register with the ISA and pay a registration fee**;
- A **requirement for employers to check whether an individual** working in specified positions **is registered with the ISA** prior to employing them. This will be done by way of an on-line check;
- **Phased ISA registration of the existing children's and vulnerable adults' workforces**;
- **Continuous monitoring** of those registered with the ISA;
- A **requirement** for employers, professional registration bodies and inspection authorities **to refer relevant information to the ISA**;
- **Offences for not meeting the requirements** created by the legislation; The new arrangements began in October 2009. The fee in Northern Ireland for ISA registration is £58 (which includes an enhanced disclosure from Access NI).

Children are the least able to protect themselves from abuse or exploitation, and the least able to seek help if they are ill treated. It is important, therefore, that all staff working in a 'Regulated' position with children and young people, whether they are full time, part time, freelance, paid or unpaid, have the same recruitment and selection procedures applied to them and that as much information as possible is ascertained as to their suitability for the position. This means choosing people with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience, and ensuring those, whose behavior could be a threat to the safety and well being of children are screened out. To ensure this the Nerve Centre adheres to the following professional standards.

Under the Nerve Centre's Equal Opportunities Policy, an open recruitment process is applied to both external and 'internal trawl' positions. This process involves the advertisement of a vacancy, completion of an application form, a requirement to attend for test and/or interview, a requirement for written references from two referees and a declaration of accuracy of the information supplied. Following a conditional offer of employment/volunteering appointment, an Access NI check will be requested on the preferred applicant.

Successful candidates must provide proof of identity by presenting either a) Passport b) Birth Certificate c) National Insurance Number and proof of address, eg. recent Utility bill.

All job positions will be assessed to ascertain whether the position is a regulated position or not. This will be the responsibility of the relevant manager and where necessary, in consultation with designated child protection officers. Where the post is deemed to care for, train, supervise or be in sole charge of children then the recruitment team will insert a reference to the fact that the post is a 'Regulated' position governed by The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007. It will also be stated that before appointing anyone to such a post, it is the Nerve Centre's policy to request the relevant ISA registration and Access NI check. An identification check will also be requested from the individual, these checks will require photographic identification i.e. passport or driving license.

In defining a '**Regulated**' position, the following criteria will be used

- A position whose normal duties include caring for, training, advising, counseling, supervising or being in sole charge of children
- A position whose normal duties involve unsupervised contact with children under arrangements made by a responsible person
- A position whose normal duties include supervising or managing an individual in his/her work in a regulated position
- Where any doubt exists in assessing a job, the Nerve Centre will seek an
- Access NI check as part of the recruitment process.

The Nerve Centre will only request a check on the **preferred** applicant for a regulated post, that is, an individual to whom a conditional offer of appointment has been made –**not** short listed applicants. The Nerve Centre will seek a Access NI check in all cases. Checks will not normally be requested on existing staff however, a check may be requested if:

- An individual takes up new duties in a regulated position with children, where this had not previously been the case
- Serious allegations are made about an individual already working with children or new information comes to light

Where an applicant lives or has lived in another part of the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man, the Police Service of Northern Ireland will check for criminal records with the relevant police force. Where we cannot obtain a Access NI check due to the individual living outside these jurisdictions, the applicant will be required to present an original Certificate of Good Conduct or extracts from their criminal records or similar document of their suitability to work with children by the relevant national authority prior to appointment. However, as the level of information disclosed in this way varies from country to country; some provide complete criminal records, others only extracts. We will treat such certificates with caution, if it is difficult to confirm that the information is genuine or complete. In these instances we will personally discuss with the referees the individual's suitability to work with children.

Information provided under The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 (SVG Order) arrangements will be treated as highly sensitive and strictly confidential. Such information will be stored in a locked cupboard or cabinet which will only be accessible by the Nerve Centre's nominated officers. After making a final decision about the applicant, the original information and all copies will be destroyed immediately by shredding. The Nerve Centre will, however, include a note on any personnel file stating that a check was carried out and that the person's conditional offer of appointment was confirmed/withdrawn as a result.

If the Nerve Centre becomes aware that an individual who is employed is disqualified from working with children under The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007, then the individual will be transferred to a non -child care position or the employment may be terminated.

No matter how good the recruitment and selection procedures may be, they are not ‘foolproof’. Best practice professional standards in management and supervision of staff after appointment is as important.

## **9.0 PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO POLICY**

There is evidence that some people have used children and young people’s activities and events, as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of children and young people. Staff members should be vigilant at all times and any person using cameras or videos at Nerve Centre events or activities which involve children and young people should be approached and asked to complete a Consent form for the use of Cameras and other Image Recorders (see Appendix 5).

When the Nerve Centre commissions professional photographers or invites the press to cover our events and activities you must ensure that the following is adhered to in relation to child protection.

- Check credentials of any photographers and organisations used.
- Ensure identification is worn at all times, if they do not have their own – provide it.
- Do not allow unsupervised access to children or young people or one to one photographic sessions.
- Do not allow photographic sessions outside of the activities or services, or at a child or young persons home.
- Parents must be informed that photographs or the recording of images of their child or young person may be taken during Nerve Centre activities or events, and parental consent forms need to be signed agreeing to this. This must include information about how and

where these photographs will be used.

- It is recommended that the names of children or young people should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent.

## **10.0 ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS**

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. They should be taken seriously and brought to the attention of the Designated Child Protection Officers who will treat them in accordance with this policy. The information will be checked out and handled in a confidential and appropriate manner.

## **11.0 COMMUNICATION**

The Nerve Centre will promote public awareness of our Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy both within our premises and through our website.

## **12.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN & REVIEW**

The following plan outlines the mechanisms that the Nerve Centre will use to ensure that this policy is implemented in an effective, efficient and professional manner.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Designated Child Protection Officers to take account of developments in the area of child protection.

The Designated Child Protection Officers will carry out an annual audit of all facilities to ensure compliance with this policy. Training appropriate to the level of involvement in child protection will be arranged by the relevant manager. Prior to any activity involving children, staff will have received the appropriate level of Child Protection Training.

The Nerve Centre will ensure that Designated Child Protection Officers have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to undertake the role.

Designated Child Protection officers will keep their own knowledge about child protection up-to-date in order to support staff.

The Nerve Centre senior management will provide the necessary support, control and guidance on child protection issues and ensure the appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure staff safety.

### 13.0 DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS

Any issues or queries relating to this policy should be addressed to:

Pearse Moore	Sharon Concannon	Darren Porter
The Nerve Centre	The Nerve Centre	Studio On
7/8 Magazine Street	7/8 Magazine Street	School Road, Crossnacreevy
Derry, BT48 6HJ	Derry, BT48 6HJ	Belfast
Tel: 028 71 260562	Tel: 02871 260562	Tel: 02890 449821
Mob: 07798938542	Mob: 07909690651	Mob: 07986348546
E. <a href="mailto:p.moore@nerve-centre.org.uk">p.moore@nerve-centre.org.uk</a>	E. <a href="mailto:sharon@nerve-centre.org.uk">sharon@nerve-centre.org.uk</a>	E. <a href="mailto:darren@studio-on.org.uk">darren@studio-on.org.uk</a>

NB: In the event of either Designated Child Protection officer not being available or the issue has taken place outside the hours of 9am to 5pm, staff should refer any concerns they have to their immediate line manager in the first instance. Information and actions taken should be recorded and reported to the Designated Child Protection Officers as soon as is practicable within one working day.

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Code of Behaviour for Safeguarding for Employees

Appendix 2 Declaration of Safeguarding Form

Appendix 3 Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

Appendix 4 Consent Form for the use of Cameras and other Image Recorders

Appendix 5 Useful Contacts

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR ON SAFEGUARDING FOR EMPLOYEES**

The Nerve Centre recognises that it is not practical to provide definitive instruction that would apply to all situations at all times whereby staff come into contact with children and to guarantee the protection of children and staff. However, it is important for all employees to have clear guidelines as to what is expected of them by the Nerve Centre in their interaction and decision making with children and to understand and implement the standards of behaviour required of them in order to fulfill their roles within the Nerve Centre.

These guidelines would also apply to volunteers should they ever be engaged to work in an unpaid capacity both within and away from Nerve Centre premises.

#### **Underlying principles and philosophy**

The Nerve Centre recognises that children should be:

Listened to, taken seriously and have a right to the safe use of Nerve Centre facilities and programmes.

Nerve Centre employees have both a moral and a legal responsibility to protect children through following these procedures and adhering to this policy.

Children have a valuable role to play as users of Nerve Centre programmes and facilities.

The Nerve Centre will promote a culture in the organisation where children's participation is both encouraged and promoted.

#### **Some points of guidance**

- Employees should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others. Any contact with an individual child should take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed for any reason, doors should be left open and other employees informed where possible.
- Employees are advised not to make unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact with children and young people. There may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable such as providing comfort and reassurance to distressed children or physical support in

learning instruments. In all cases physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child or the young person and information provided to parents/ carers about the likelihood of physical contact and the context for this.

- Where it is necessary and unavoidable to take children alone in a vehicle on journeys this should be with the full consent of the parents and a more senior member of management. Every effort should be made to provide parents and carers with contact telephone number of the staff, ensure the child can talk with parents (and vice versa) if required and provide an estimated length of journey time. The staff member should not travel alone with the child it would be best practice to have two adults to travel .
- Employees must not meet with children outside of the Nerve Centre without the consent or knowledge of parents and line managers.

#### **EMPLOYEES SHOULD NEVER:**

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games including horse play.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language or behaviour unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child, even in fun.
- Let allegations a child makes go without being recorded and reported to the Child Protection Officer.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.
- Take a child to the toilet unless another adult is present or has been made aware (this may include a parent, group leader).

## Anti-bullying

The Nerve Centre is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment. Bullying is unacceptable and children are encouraged to tell a leader about any incidents so these can be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullying is defined as the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person, resulting in pain and distress to the victim and which will negatively impact on their wellbeing. In many instances, there are three parties involved – the bully, the victim and the onlooker.

Bullying can be categorised as:

<b>Emotional</b>	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures).
<b>Physical</b>	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence against another person.
<b>Racist</b>	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
<b>Disability</b>	Gestures, taunts and exclusion on the grounds of disability.
<b>Gender</b>	Unfriendliness and exclusion.
<b>Sexual</b>	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
<b>Homophobic</b>	Because of, or focusing on, the issues of sexuality.
<b>Verbal</b>	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
<b>Cyber</b>	Internet, e-mail and internet chat room misuse; mobile phone threats by text messaging, Bluetooth and phone calls; misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities.

Every child has the right to be treated with respect - no one deserves to be a victim of bullying and children who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. Bullying of any kind should not be tolerated.

- report incidents of bullying to the Designated Officer without delay.
- the leader should make a record of the report.
- an investigation into the bullying behaviour/threats should be undertaken and the bullying quickly stopped.
- an attempt should be made to help the bully/bullies change their behaviour.
- in serious cases, parents/guardians should be informed and asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary, the PSNI may be consulted.

Some possible outcomes are:

- to ask the bully/bullies to make a genuine apology.
- to reconcile the children, if possible.
- in serious cases, to consider suspension or exclusion.
- after the bullying has been investigated and dealt with, the situation should be monitored to ensure a repeat incident does not take place.

### **Implications for Employees**

Employees who breach any of the above may be subject to the Nerve Centre's disciplinary procedures. If an allegation against an employee has occurred then an investigation will be carried out in accordance with the procedure for dealing with allegations. The investigating officer will be required to liaise with the Designated Child Protection Officer to clarify if she/he has any relevant records or any other child protection information in relation to the individual.

### **Further Information**

Should employees require further information, please contact your line manager or the Designated Child Protection Officers.

Pearse Moore Tel: 028 71 260562 ext 227                      M. 07798938542

Sharon Concannon, Tel: 028 71 260562 Ext 213            M. 07909690651

Darren Porter (Studio On), Tel: 02890 449821           M.07986348546

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR SPECIFIC ARTFORMS**

#### **Music**

In relation to Child Protection in Music, examples of good practice considerations might include:

The teaching of specific musical instruments will involve at all times the physical touch of children and young people to ensure they are following the teacher's directions.

- Good practice would highlight the importance of ensuring that children and young people are informed that touch may be involved. As much as possible, teachers should attempt to demonstrate techniques and encourage students to copy these without the need for any actual physical interference by the teacher.
- When teaching drums or guitar, it may be necessary to stand behind the person and lean over them. This can be very threatening and good practice would highlight the importance of a child's comfort with this and if any discomfort/hesitation is shown, then it must not occur.
- When teaching singing, physical touch may involve the touching of the diaphragm to enhance/demonstrate breathing techniques. This needs to be carried out firstly with permission and secondly as lightly and sensitively as possible.

#### **Digital Photography/Film/Stop Motion Animation**

Examples of good practice considerations in relation to these areas might include:

- Use of all types of camera must be well supervised and guided by trainers, with clear role allocation and purpose outlined.
- Children and young people should not be given the opportunity to use a digital stills or DV camera in an unsupervised environment.
- Use of mobile phones in general should be prohibited during programme sessions, but this should also apply to using mobile phones for taking photos and video footage.

- All tapes should be collected, clearly labelled (including name of group/school and date/time of usage) and inventoried by trainers.
- Footage should always be watched through thoroughly from beginning to end before digitisation or deletion. All tapes must be safely stored or deleted/disposed of after usage.
- Trainers should never be left alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a darkroom or editing suite situation.
- In the event that editing training is only being undertaken by one or two of the participating children/young people, the door must remain open and the receiving school/organisation's adult supervisor must be present alongside the Nerve Centre trainer/s at all times.

### **Multi-Media Animation & Internet**

When exploring the creation of digital visual imagery and animation, it is important for trainers to consider the following:

- It is recognized that many young people will use drawing to show how they are feeling, and may draw images of abuse situations and experiences. Trainers must be aware of this and respond appropriately.
- Accessing the Internet can of course provide a breadth and depth of creative opportunities for children and young people and vulnerable adults; however this needs to be monitored to ensure its safe use.
- It is important that key IT protocols are agreed at all stages of the centre's programme planning and delivery which ensure:
- Provision of a suitable child protection block on computers used by young people who are participating on The Nerve Centre programmes.
- Provision of protected and tailored user access to the network on site.

- Appropriate levels and quality of supervision of young people's internet usage during programme sessions.
- Levels of taste, decency and appropriateness of internet and other audio-visual stimulus material selected by The Nerve Centre staff/trainers for viewing by children, young people and vulnerable adults taking part on programmes.

### **Audio Visual Material**

Through work with a wide variety of digital media, many audio-visual representations are created by and of children and young people participating on the Nerve Centre programmes. Staff and trainers must follow correct procedures in relation to the storage and use of this audio-visual material.

It is important to understand the motivation of a person who is involved in the sexual exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults and that for them even the most innocent of photographs, images or film can provide them with sexual stimulation.

No images of or produced by a young person may be used in any form or for any purpose in The Nerve Centre or by The Nerve Centre staff without the written permission of the young person's parent/legal guardian. Consent for any kind of showcasing of such material also needs to be given by the consenting parent / carer / guardian. Good practice will also ensure that those adults signing a consent form are aware of all the visual mediums that their child or young person's image may be displayed on and permission sought for their consent in this way. Neither individual nor groups of children or young people should be photographed or/and filmed without parental permission.

When permission has been received, images may only be used for display, showcasing and publicity purposes. Signed consent forms must be kept on file and be made available for inspection upon request. Any consented photographs for inclusion in press releases or the Nerve Centre website must not name the children or young people shown. All photographs should be securely stored after usage.

## **Appendix 3**

### **DECLARATION OF SAFEGUARDING FORM**

#### **Groups & Organisations**

“The Nerve Centre is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for the children and young people who use its facilities.

#### **Groups & Organisations Using Nerve Centre facilities**

All groups or organisations which have substantial child membership and who are seeking to use any Nerve Centre facilities must be able to demonstrate that they have are committed to the principles of child protection.

Completion of the following information is therefore required before any such group or organisation will be granted authorisation to use Nerve Centre facilities.

**APPENDIX 3 (cont)**

**Declaration of Safeguarding Form**

**Name of Club/ Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address & Contact Tel Number of Chairperson or Secretary:**

\_\_\_\_\_

I, the above named employee can confirm the following information is correct in respect of the above club / organisation **(Please circle as appropriate)**:

<b>ESSENTIAL</b>		
1. The group / organisation has a child protection policy in place (if so please attach a copy)  Where a policy is not in place they are willing to adopt the Nerve Centre's policy. A copy of this Child Protection Policy will be provided for them.	Yes	No
2. At no time will any adult be left alone with any child/ children during activities	Yes	No
3. All incidents of reported or suspected abuse, no matter how trivial, will be reported to the Designated Child Protection Officer, line manager or other appropriate authority as appropriate	Yes	No
4. Persons using facilities on behalf of this organisation/ group will, at all times, follow all guidelines as laid down in the Nerve Centre's Child Protection Policy	Yes	No
<b>DESIRABLE</b>		
1. All adults involved in supervising children within the group / organisation have been subjected to adequate child protection checks	Yes	No

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position in organisation/ group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 4

### SAFE GUARDING INCIDENT REPORT FORM

All information will be treated in strict confidence

1. DETAILS OF THE CHILD	
Name Of Child:	
Date Of Birth:	Age in years
Address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone Number:	Name of Parent/Guardian
Capacity in which the child is known to you:	
2. DETAILS OF THE ALLEGED INCIDENT	
Date & time of alleged Incident:	
Location address where alleged incident took place:	
Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of someone else? Give details including names & contact details:	
Brief description of what has prompted the concerns, include date, time etc of any specific incident:	
Are there any signs of abuse? E.g. the 4 main forms of abuse Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Neglect Give details.	

Record what was said by both the child and by yourself. (Remember, do not lead the child – record the actual details, do not summarise. Record where possible in the child's own words)

Has the alleged abuser/s been identified? If so give details

### 3. ACTIONS TAKEN

Have you spoken to the parent(s), guardians? If so, what was said?

Have you consulted anybody? Give details:

Your name:

Position and contact number:

To whom reported

Date of reporting

Signature

Date

**This form should now be given to a Designated Child Protection Officer by hand in a sealed envelope marked confidential.**

## APPENDIX 5

### CONSENT FORM FOR THE USE OF CAMERAS AND OTHER IMAGE RECORDERS (for use of Photographs, Film or Video Recordings of Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults)

#### PERMISSION TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS OR RECORD IMAGES

There is evidence that some people have used children and young people's activities and events, as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or video footage. In order to protect children from such abuses the Nerve Centre's policy is that:

**"Photography and the recording of images of any kind are allowed only with the written permission of the management of the premises".**

The procedure for obtaining permission is to complete the form below and forward to the relevant Manager prior to taking photographs or recording any images.

#### Details of Person Requesting Permission

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Subject:

\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of Photographer and Subject:

\_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Photography:

\_\_\_\_\_

How do you intend to use the images?

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Declaration

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby declare that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

I also understand and agree that if anyone has any complaints or expresses concern about my use of photographic or recording equipment I will respect the rights of other people and stop when requested.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 6**

### Useful Contacts

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline** 24 hours 0808 800 5000

### **Police Service of Northern Ireland**

From 31 March 2008, Child Abuse Investigation Units have replaced the CARE units.

Derry/Londonderry 02871 861355

A District (North and West Belfast) 028 9070 0604

B District (South and East Belfast) 028 9025 9832

C District (Castlereagh, Carryduff, Dundonald) 028 9056 1767

D District (Lisburn, Antrim, Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus) 028 9448 2633

### **Health and Social Services Trusts – Gateway Teams**

Belfast Trust 028 9020 4550

#### Northern Trust

Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Portrush and Coleraine 028 7032 5462

Ballymena, Magherafelt and Cookstown 028 7965 1020

Antrim, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey and Larne 028 9334 0165

#### Southern Trust

Craigavon 028 3834 3011

Dungannon 028 8772 2821

Newry 028 3082 5152

South-Eastern Trust 0300 1000 300

#### Western Trust

Enniskillen 028 6634 4037

Omagh 028 8283 5043

L'Derry 028 71314090

## **Out of Hours Emergency Social Work Service**

<u>Belfast Trust</u>	028 9056 5444
<u>Northern Trust</u>	028 9446 8833
<u>Southern Trust</u>	
Craigavon & Dungannon	028 3833 4444
Newry	028 3083 5000
<u>South Eastern Trust</u>	028 9056 5444
<u>Western Trust</u>	
Enniskillen	028 6638 2000
Omagh	028 8283 3100
L'Derry	028 7134 5171

