



Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

April 2020; next review due August 2020, or as changes in legislation require

Safeguarding Statement

Fighting Words Belfast believes that all children's lives are enriched by the arts, and is committed to practice that protects children and vulnerable adults from harm, creating safe and stimulating environments for their creative expression and development.

This policy has been approved and endorsed by senior management and the Board of Directors.

In all of Fighting Words Belfast's work, the welfare of the child and young people is paramount, with children and young people being treated equally and in a manner that is respectful of their religious, racial, cultural and linguistic, social, gender, and sexual identity. Staff and volunteers are provided with relevant training to uphold this policy and procedures.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Order (NI) 1995
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation/identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

Principle of Good Practice

Fighting Words Belfast will:

- Place children at the heart of our work, recognising their rights as individuals listening to, acknowledging and valuing their opinions and needs
- Treat children and young people with care, respect and dignity



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- Assess the risk to children and young people in all activities
- Provide staff and volunteers with training on safeguarding best practice and procedures
- Review policies and procedures regularly

Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers must abide by the Code of Conduct, and induction of staff will fully cover the requirements of this code. Any breach of this code of conduct may result in disciplinary action.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them as individuals
- Setting a good example by using appropriate language, attitude and demeanour at all times
- Wearing FWB-branded clothing as provided/relevant
- Avoiding excessive physical contact with children & young people and refraining from activity such as tickling/wrestling
- Recruiting staff & volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Providing all staff & volunteers with training, support and appropriate supervision in safeguarding issues
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff & volunteers, ensuring communication is open and clear
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents & children appropriately

FWB staff and volunteers will never:

- Work or perform without supervisory staff/volunteers present
- Give personal details to children or young people
- Invite/accept invites from young people's personal social networking sites
- Promise to keep secrets
- Offer/accept lifts, or travel with young people (unless as part of activity and properly supervised)
- Arrange meetings with children or young people outside organised activities
- Bring alcohol to premises of activity, or smoke in presence of children/young people



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Physical Contact

Physical touch should only occur when it is appropriate to the age/development of the child, and in response to particular needs of the child. There will be instances when physical contact is unavoidable, and in fact necessary.

Appropriate:

- Context-dependant touch within a controlled and supervised environment (e.g. demonstration of dance, positioning, supporting a lift, demonstrating a breathing technique)
- Preventing injury (e.g. catching a falling child, appropriate restraint)
- Handshake and 'high fives'
- Fitting safety equipment (e.g. harness, safety restraint)

Inappropriate:

- Touch which is unnecessary, unexplained, out of context, without consent
- Any touch to breast, groin or buttocks areas
- Kissing or hugging
- Slapping/hitting (even in jest)
- Holding hands

Young children particularly will often demonstrate affection. Staff and volunteer training and induction will include best practices and methods of how to best respond when a child tries to hug, wants to hold hands, etc.

Use of Photography/Filming of Children & Young People

All staff & volunteers will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Ensure that clear information and/or signage is displayed when photography/filming is being used
- Ensure that consent from the child or young person's guardian or carer, written or verbal, is granted prior to any photography or filming
- Provide clear information about content and use of image
- Identify the photographer to the group or individuals
- No unsupervised access to children or young people
- Avoid using full names if image is used or published



Recruitment of Staff & Volunteers

Fighting Words Belfast is committed to equality of opportunity and recruiting on a basis which is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination, while ensuring that recruitment procedures do not increase or ignore potential risk of harm to children and young people, nor do they compromise or put staff and volunteers at risk.

Fighting Words Belfast is a registered body with Access NI and requires enhanced disclosures checks on any staff or volunteers in supervisory or regular contact with children and young people under 18. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a person working with Fighting Words Belfast; this will depend on the nature of the position, and the circumstances and background of offences. Any information revealed on an Access NI Disclosure certificate will be forwarded to the recruitment panel. The decision as to the relevancy of the information will be theirs alone.

Fighting Words Belfast monitors recruitment of all staff and volunteers by:

- Providing Job Descriptions for all staff posts (permanent and project-based)
- All personnel engaged will be asked if there is any reason they cannot work with children or young people
- Interviewing candidates (if applicable)
- Obtaining two written references
- Obtaining ID documents to verify identity
- Completing relevant Access NI checks (if applicable)
- Setting a probationary period (if applicable)
- Ensuring all new recruits undergo induction process and are familiar with Safeguarding Policy and procedures

Induction & Training

Core Staff

Fighting Words Belfast ensures that Safeguarding Training is included as part of the company induction programme for all staff.

Project-based Staff & Volunteers

Induction sessions are a compulsory element of project preparation for all project-based staff and volunteers, covering all aspects of the company's policies and procedures, including additional elements as deemed necessary by the nature of the activity.



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What is Abuse?

Abuse can be Physical, Sexual, Neglect or Emotional:

Physical

Deliberate physical injury to a person, or willful and neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering

Sexual

Forcing or enticing a young person to engage with sexual activity, whether or not the person is aware of what is happening; it may include physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, or involving young people in looking at or watching pornographic material or sexual activity

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a person's physical, emotional or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm

Emotional

Persistent emotional ill treatment of a person likely to result in severe and persistent adverse affects on the person's emotional development

Other behaviours may be harmful to children & young people including verbal abuse and bullying.

Safeguards for children/young people with a disability are the same as those for other children, however certain factors can mean children with a disability are more vulnerable and could therefore be more susceptible to abuse.

What Constitutes a Safeguarding Concern?

A concern is the possibility that a children or young person is suffering from harm or abuse. Most likely examples are:

- Worrying remarks made by a child or young person
- Situations in which a child or young person has been exposed to potential risk of harm
- Concern about the behaviour of a staff member or volunteer (e.g. inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour or language, negligence, favouritism)
- Disclosures: when a child or young person tells you they are/have been abused or harmed in any way
- Potential physical signs of abuse (e.g. visible and unexplained injuries, bruises, bleeding)



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Reporting Procedures

Fighting Words Belfast is aware of the importance of recording and reporting concerns, allegations or disclosures. It is not Fighting Words Belfast's role to investigate any concern. Staff & volunteers simply need to ensure all information is passed to the Safeguarding Officer without delay. All concerns should be reported, no matter how insignificant the information may seem.

The Safeguarding Officer is FWB's Operations Manager, Emily DeDakis, who can be reached via office phone (02890230660), mobile phone (07871178805) or e-mail (emily@fightingwords.co.uk).

Her role is to:

- Be the first person staff, volunteers or members of the public approach with concerns
- Ensure that policy and procedures are implemented
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of safeguarding policy and procedures, and receive appropriate safeguarding training
- Ensure that any concerns, allegations and disclosures are properly recorded and reported
- Contact statutory agencies about concerns and make referrals as necessary

In the case of a child/young person disclosing it is important to:

- Listen to the child rather than directly question him or her
- Stay calm, offer reassurance without making promises
- Listen to everything the child has to say, do not stop the child from recalling significant events
- Be clear in your mind what the child has related to you, but under no circumstances interrogate the child
- Explain to the child that it may be necessary to inform others
- Ask if he/she has told anyone else and if not, who would be a good person to contact
- Thank the child for informing you and reassure him/her that they were right to do so

ACTIONS

- Complete report form, found in Appendix A. Record the discussions accurately, factually, and as soon as possible after the event. Avoid opinion and hearsay.
- Immediately contact Fighting Words Belfast's Safeguarding Officer; give them the report, and details of who else a copy of the report has gone to (see below).



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- If at a host venue (e.g. school or nursery) copy report form and immediately contact their designated officer and give them copy of report. If host venue's Safeguarding Officer is not available, notify Fighting Words Belfast's Safeguarding Officer, who will follow up.
- Do not discuss information with anyone else.

All reports will be held confidentially and supplied for any further investigation. Staff and volunteers will need to make themselves available should a meeting be required.

If the Designated Officer is not available?

If the Safeguarding Officer, and/or host venue's Designated Officer, is not available, ensure a message is left for them to contact you urgently.

You may also contact Fighting Words Belfast's Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

If you feel the matter is urgent and cannot wait you should contact the Gateway Service Belfast team during office hours (02890507000) or out of hours (02895049999), informing the Safeguarding Officer you have done so as soon as possible afterwards. (Other regions' Gateway contact details available in Appendix B.)

In case of an allegation against a Fighting Words Belfast staff member

If an allegation is made against a Fighting Words Belfast staff member the employee will be suspended on full pay until such time as the investigation is complete, or for the duration if shorter.

Fighting Words Belfast has dual responsibility in respect of both the child/ young person and the worker, therefore it is recommended that the same person should not have responsibility for dealing with the safeguarding reporting issues and the employment issues. Within Fighting Words Belfast the safeguarding reporting will be handled by either the Fighting Words Belfast Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer, and the employment element by the Chair of the Fighting Words Belfast's Board of Directors. Fighting Words Belfast's Board of Directors will be notified when the allegation is made.

Allegations made against the Safeguarding Officer should be reported directly to Fighting Words Belfast's Board of Directors, through the Chair.



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APPENDIX A

SAFEGUARDING REPORT FORM

Please return to Safeguarding Officer:

Emily DeDakis
Fighting Words Belfast
Cotton Court
30-42 Waring St
Belfast BT1 2ED

Office: 02890230660
Mobile: 07871178805
emily@fightingwords.co.uk

Recording Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

April 2017

Abuse of a child is a criminal offence. If you have a suspicion that someone is being or has been abused, or if an allegation of abuse has been made to you, it is vital that you faithfully, truthfully and swiftly record the details. It is also important that you fully comply with the Safeguarding procedures of the host organisation (school, youth club) in which you are working, Fighting Words Belfast's Safeguarding Policy & Procedures, and the full requirements of the law.

The following questions are designed to help you provide accurate, factual information to support any investigation. You may not be able to, and are not expected to, answer all the questions, but please try to give as much information as possible, even if you think it may not be relevant. Continue on additional sheets if necessary.

Any suspicion or allegation must be directed to Fighting Words Belfast's Safeguarding Officer, and the Designated Officer of any host venue (e.g. school, nursery). Please remember you should NOT discuss the details of your concerns with any other party outside of those directly involved.



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Name of child: _____ Age: _____

Parent/Guardian's name(s) if known:

Home address, if known: _____

Home Tel, if known: _____

Are there any special factors about this child?

Are you expressing your own concerns or passing on those of someone else?
(If so, please record details.)

What has prompted the concerns? Are there any physical, behavioural or indirect signs of abuse? *(Include dates/times of specific incidents.)*

Has the child been spoken to or spoken to anyone about this? If so, what was said? *(Please include what was said to them as well as by them if possible.)*



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Has anyone else been consulted or spoken to? If so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser?
(If so, record details.)

Have steps been taken to ensure the child is safe?

Please give us your details in case we need to contact you:

Name: _____ Tel No: _____

Address:



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APPENDIX B

USEFUL CONTACTS

ACCESS NI	www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni 0300 200 7888
ACE (Advisory Centre for Education) Advice on bullying	www.ace-ed.org.uk Helpline 0300 0115 142
Bullying UK Good advice for children on bullying is outlined here - how to recognise it, and what to do if you are the victim or know of someone who is. For those unwilling to tell anybody, help is available on the site via email.	www.bullying.co.uk
Child Exploitation Online Protection	www.ceop.police.uk
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	www.thecpsu.org.uk 0203 222 4246
Childline Northern Ireland Childline has helped hundreds of thousands of children in trouble or danger. Also check out their website. There are fact sheets on many subjects including bullying.	www.childline.org.uk Helpline 0800 11 11
Children's Law Centre	www.childrenslawcentre.org.uk CHALKY Helpline 0808 808 5678
Department Of Culture Arts and Leisure	www.dcalni.gov.uk
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	www.dhsspsni.gov.uk
Disclosure and Barring System	www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service



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Domestic Violence	www.womensaid.org.uk
Health	www.kidsallergies.co.uk
<p>Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Teams If you are concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person contact the Gateway Service.</p> <p>Belfast HSC Trust Gateway Team Northern HSC Trust Gateway Team South-Eastern HSC Trust Gateway Team Southern HSC Trust Gateway Team Western HSC Trust Gateway Team</p> <p>Out of Hours Contact</p>	<p>028 90507000 0300 1234333 0300 1000300 0800 7837745 028 71314090</p> <p>028 9504 9999</p>
<p>Family Lives Advice for parents on supporting a child who is being bullied.</p>	<p>www.familylives.org.uk Freephone 0808 800 2222</p>
<p>Internet Watch Foundation UK Hotline for reporting criminal online content</p>	<p>www.iwf.org.uk</p>
<p>Kidscape Operates an anti-bullying helpline for parents of bullied children with advisers available Monday-Thursday from 10am-4pm.</p>	<p>www.kidscape.org.uk 08451 205 204</p>
National Children's Bureau	www.ncb.org.uk
NI Anti-Bullying Forum	www.niabf.org.uk
NI Commissioner for Children & Young People	www.niccy.org
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	<p>www.nspcc.org.uk Helpline 0808 800 5000</p>



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Parenting NI	www.parentingni.org Freephone 0808 8010 722
Suicide and self-harm	www.samaritans.org
Volunteer Now	028 90236100 Further information on developing Safeguarding policy and procedures are provided in the documents Our Duty to Care and Getting it Right available at www.volunteernow.co.uk
YouthNet	www.youthnetni.org.uk/ 028 90331880
Fighting Words Belfast	Safeguarding Officer Emily DeDakis (Operations Manager) Office 02890230660 Out of Hours 07871178805 E-mail emily@fightingwords.co.uk Deputy Safeguarding Officer Colette Thompson (Vice Chair) Office 02890230660 Out of Hours 07920055545 E-mail colettelthompson@hotmail.co.uk

PSNI Child Abuse Investigation Units

The PSNI have the following specialist units who will investigate all reports of institutional abuse.

Child Abuse Investigation Unit	PSNI District	Address	Phone number
Antrim	D (covers Antrim, Carrickfergus, Lisburn, Newtownabbey)	24 Castle Street Antrim BT41 4JE	028 9448 2633



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Coleraine	H (covers Coleraine, Ballymoney, Moyle, Ballymena, Larne)	17 Lodge Road Coleraine BT52 1LY	028 7028 0904
Dundonald	C (covers Ards, Castlereagh, North Down, Down)	825-827 Upper Newtownards Road Dundonald Belfast BT16 1RF	028 9056 1759
Grosvenor Road	A (covers north and west Belfast)	105-107 Grosvenor Road Belfast BT12 4GL	028 9070 0604
Maydown	G (covers Foyle, Limavady, Magherafelt, Strabane)	4 Maydown Road Londonderry BT47 6SJ	028 7186 1355
Willowfield	B (covers south and east Belfast)	277 Woodstock Road Belfast BT6 8PR	028 9025 9832
Banbridge	E (covers Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Newry and Mourne)	14 Castlewellan Road Banbridge BT32 4AX	0845 600 8000
Omagh	F (covers Cookstown, Dungannon and South Tyrone, Fermanagh and Omagh)	1 Derry Road Gortmore Omagh BT78 5DR	028 8225 6630

Regional Emergency Social Work Service (RESWS)

About the Service

The new regional out-of-hours social-work service provide an emergency social work response across Northern Ireland on an out of hour's basis:

- 5 p.m. to 9 a.m. weekdays
- 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays.



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This service covers all of Northern Ireland and will replace all existing local arrangements that operated in Trust's prior to 29 May 2013.

Emergency Remit

This is an emergency service to be used only when you need a social worker urgently, after hours.

Wherever you live in Northern Ireland, Out of Hours Social Workers can be contacted through one central telephone number:

Tel: (028) 9504 9999

Child Care Referral Criteria

RESWS will accept referrals where:

- There are concerns that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm
- There are concerns in relation to children who are Looked After by a health and social care Trust or their carers including foster carers
- There is suspected or confirmed abuse of a child.
- In cases where there is a serious and imminent risk of family breakdown both in the community, foster care or kinship placements.
- An appropriate adult is required for young people who are subject of a care order
- There is a need for authorised professionals to make an enquiry to the Child Protection Register.