



**HAVEN COALISLAND
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY
AND PROCEDURES**

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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy statement

Haven Coalisland provides faith-based activities for all ages alongside community family events. Staff and volunteers in **Haven** are committed to practice that promotes the welfare of children and protects them from harm. We wish to ensure that all children, without discrimination, participate in an enjoyable and safe environment in which they can have fun and feel valued.

We recognise that a child includes anyone under the age of 18 years.

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause children harm, and to establish and maintain a safe environment for them through the implementation of good practice.

We will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- following carefully the procedures laid down for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;
- reporting concerns to statutory agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately;
- adopting child safeguarding guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers;
- sharing information about child safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers;
- ensuring safety procedures are adhered to.

Awareness

We will ensure that this policy and procedures are widely promoted to parents and children involved in our activities, as appropriate. All staff and volunteers will receive training on these policies and procedures during induction.

Review

We are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures and practice at regular intervals, at least every three years.

Signatories

On behalf of **Haven Coalisland**

Name:

Name:

Role: Designated Person

Role: Chairperson

Date:

Date:

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Procedures

Purpose and aim of procedures

It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers or others connected to **Haven**, regardless of their role, to take seriously any suspicion, disclosure, signs of abuse or allegation against someone involved with this group. These procedures aim to clarify what steps will be taken if anyone involved with **Haven** raises concerns that indicate a child may be at risk of abuse.

All staff and volunteers are required to comply with these policies, procedures and associated guidelines.

Recruitment and Training

Staff and volunteers who supervise children will be recruited in accordance with the recruitment policies. This will include an AccessNI check, asking for references and an interview where appropriate. Where a criminal record will not necessarily inhibit an applicant from working with children it will be considered on a case by case basis. All staff and volunteers who work with children will be required to read this policy and receive training on a regular basis as organised by the Deigned Person.

A description of the different categories of abuse

“Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care.” (Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures) This can include physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect or exploitation:

- **Physical abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child.
- **Sexual abuse** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others.
- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child.
- **Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child’s basic needs.
- **Exploitation** is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person.

(Abbreviated definitions adapted from *Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland*, DHSSPS, 2017)

Although bullying is not defined as a form of abuse, in its more extreme form it can involve physical, sexual or emotional abuse or exploitation. **Haven** is also committed to responding to indications that a child is being bullied, including through cyber-bullying, and will promote a no-tolerance attitude to bullying in its activities.

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How to recognise the signs of abuse

Concerns regarding abuse can arise in a number of different ways:

- You may see or hear something happen
- A child may tell you something has happened
- The child may have bruises or injuries which cannot be explained
- You may observe worrying changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming withdrawn, aggressive, attention-seeking or behaving inappropriately)
- Another person may share information or concerns
- An allegation may be made against another staff member or volunteer

Responding to concerns

Where there is any concern for the welfare of a child, your role is to report as soon as possible, not to investigate. The individual who first notices or is advised of a concern must ensure that they are appropriately raised, reported, recorded and dealt with in line with **Haven's** procedures, as detailed below. The welfare of the child must at all times remain your paramount concern and reporting must not be delayed.

In relation to these procedures:

- The **Designated Person** for this group is:

Sam Walker, Secretary, 07421992239

How to respond to signs or suspicions of abuse

1. Speak to the Designated Person as soon as possible to report your concerns.
2. Record your concerns including as much specific detail as possible on the attached form ('Child Protection Incident Form' included in Appendix 2). Keep this information factual and accurate as it may be shared with other agencies.
3. This form must be signed, dated and passed to the Designated Person as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours.
4. The Designated Person will assess what further action is required. They may check out your concerns or seek advice from social services, the police and/or the Chairperson of **Haven**.
5. The Designated Person must record any discussions they have had, advice that has been given and/or actions taken on the form, signed and dated.
6. If the Designated Person decides that a referral is required, they will contact the Gateway Team or the Police as soon as possible, providing full details of the concerns. This must be followed up in writing within 24 hours.
7. If the Designated Person decides that a referral is not required at this point, this decision must be recorded and countersigned by a member of the Management Committee.
8. Records of the concern will be kept on file by the Designated Person and held securely in line with policy.

How to respond to allegations of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer

If you receive allegations (or have concerns) about inappropriate behaviour or possible child abuse by a member of the **Haven** team:

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1. Speak to the Designated Person as soon as possible to report the allegation. If the concern relates to the Designated Person, contact the Chair of the Management Committee directly.
2. Record your concerns including as much specific detail as possible on the attached form ('Child Protection Incident Form' included in Appendix 2). Keep this information factual and accurate as it may be shared with other agencies.
3. The Designated Person will assess what further action is required, taking advice from the Chair of the Management Committee, social services and/or PSNI as required.
4. If there is a decision to refer, social services and the PSNI will begin their investigation of the complaint. This investigation will take priority over any internal investigation and disciplinary process.
5. Where the matter is referred to social services the member of staff or volunteer will be removed from any involvement with young people and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation, in line with the Disciplinary Policy.
6. Where it is agreed that no referral to social services is required, the Designated Person in discussion with the Chair of the Management Committee will determine whether the complaint needs to be followed up under the internal disciplinary procedures.
7. If no further action is agreed, the subject of the complaint will be informed.

Haven will ensure that the DBS is informed if any staff member or volunteer is removed from work with children due to a concern regarding possible abuse.

How to respond to a child telling you about abuse

A disclosure is where a child tells you that they have been harmed or abused. In these situations, it is important to listen, accept and reassure the child. Remember the following key points:

Do...	Don't...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay calm ● Be receptive and open ● Listen ● Accept and believe ● Reassure and comfort ● Is urgent medical attention required? ● Record in writing ● Report ● Record your report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Panic ● Promise to keep secrets ● Ask leading questions ● Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily ● Show your feelings (upset/anger) ● Delay ● Start to investigate

When a child discloses information regarding abuse:

1. You must first assess whether there is an immediate risk to the child's welfare (see below).
2. Write down what the child told you as soon as possible, using their own words.
3. Then follow the standard procedures for reporting and responding to concerns about abuse of a child, including this detail.

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Where there may be an immediate risk to a child

In any circumstance where there is judged to be an immediate risk to a child:

1. Secure the immediate safety of the child or young person.
2. Contact the Designated Person, their deputy, your line manager or the Chair of the Management Committee immediately.
3. If the Designated Person/Officer cannot be reached, the person who becomes aware of the risk must take responsibility for making the referral by contacting one of the bodies listed in Appendix 1.
4. Follow the procedures for reporting and recording concerns about a child, as indicated above, ensuring all information is documented as soon as possible.

Confidentiality policy

All information provided to **Haven** regarding children and their families is be held confidentially and securely in line with our responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998. We will endeavour to keep information up to date and accurate and will ensure it is held securely.

Confidential information will not normally be shared outside of the organisation or beyond those who have a legitimate need to know, respecting privacy. However, where there is a risk of harm to a child or where an offence may have taken place, we have a legal duty to share information with the relevant statutory agencies, such as the police or social services, in order to protect the child. Staff members and volunteers should therefore never promise to keep secret information that a child or another person discloses that indicates a child may be at risk of harm.

Where we are required to share information in order to protect a child, we will ensure that this is only with people who have a legitimate right or need to know. Appropriate records will be kept by the Designated Person, detailing what information has been shared, why and with whom.

Inappropriate sharing of personal or private information by staff or volunteers involved with the group will be dealt with promptly under the group's disciplinary policy.

APPENDIX

Who to contact if you have a concern about a child

Internal contacts		
Designated Person	First point of contact for any concern, disclosure or allegation	Sam Walker 07421992239
Deputy Designated Person	Second point of contact in group	Martin Dodds 07876702968
Chair of the Management Committee	Alternative senior contact in group for any allegations.	Martin Dodds 07876702968
External contacts		
Gateway Team (Social Services)	First point of contact for people who wish to share a concern about a young person who is not already known to social services.	028 3741 5285 Or Freephone 0800 783 7745
Out of hours Regional Emergency Social Worker	Emergency advice relating to people in crisis which cannot be left until the next working day	028 9504 9999
PSNI	Will handle any criminal aspect of suspected child abuse and refer on child protection or support aspect as part of a multi-agency approach	101 (non-emergency number) Central Referral Unit (CRU) 028 9025 9299
NSPCC	Help, advice and support if you are worried about a child. Can signpost on to other services.	0808 800 5000

CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT REPORT FORM

PART A: To be completed by the person reporting the concern, disclosure or allegation.

Child or young person's details	
Name: Age:	Any special factors?
Parent(s):	Contact number:
Home address:	
Details of the concern	
Source of concern (yourself or concerns passed from someone else?)	
What has prompted this concern? (be specific with dates, times etc of any incidents)	
Any physical signs? Behavioural signs?	
Has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said? (use the child's verbatim language if possible)	
Have the parents been contacted? If so, what was said?	
Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details	
Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details	
Details of person reporting/recording the concern	
Name:	Contact number:
Role in organisation:	
Signature:	Date:

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PART B: To be completed by the Designated Person

Response to concern, disclosure or allegation	
Has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said? (use the child's verbatim language if possible)	
Have the parents been contacted? If so, what was said?	
Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details	
Referral decision	
Have you made a referral? (if so, to which agency, date & time)	
Reason for referral decision	
Followed up in writing? (date and time)	
Name of Designated Officer:	Contact number:
Signature:	Date:
Counter-Signatory If not referred, please ensure this decision is counter-signed by a member of the Management Committee to show agreement with the decision and action taken	
Name:	Role in organisation:
Signature:	Date:

**Form Adapted from Our Duty to Care (Volunteer Now, 2011)*

LIST OF ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All of our policies and procedures within **Haven** are designed to help create a safe environment for children and young people.

The following associated policies and procedures can be found within the **Haven** Policies and Procedures Manual. All staff and volunteers will receive training on these during their induction to the group.

Parents and children will be made aware of the key requirements of these policies and procedures, as appropriate, and can request copies of any of these documents at any time by speaking to the leader in charge of activities:

- Staff/volunteer recruitment and selection policy and procedures
- Staff/volunteer disciplinary procedures
- Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers
- Complaints procedures
- Management and supervision of activities
- Parental consent procedures
- Taking photographs and videos
- Anti-bullying policy

Where these policies do not yet exist, Haven will seek to develop these and include them as soon as possible.