



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

All adult visitors to SCHOOLS OUT will be supervised at all times.

SCHOOLS OUT is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children, with well-being and safety of the children being our primary goal. The following policy and code of behaviour are a means of achieving this.

The interest of the child will be the prime consideration when any decision is being made about a child suspected of being abused. SCHOOLS OUT supports the role of statutory agencies, i.e. the Police and Child, Youth & Family, in the investigation of abuse and will report cases of suspicion of abuse to these agencies.

SCHOOLS OUT will maintain a good working relationship with Child, Youth and Family, and will be familiar with the law that serves to protect children from abuse. SCHOOLS OUT will consult with the Department and any other appropriate agencies that have specialist knowledge. We will not assume responsibility beyond the level of our own expertise.

SCHOOLS OUT will respond to suspicions of child abuse by recording all observations, impressions and communications about children suspected of being abused. All documentation will be kept confidential and only disclosed to the appropriate people and agencies when necessary.

No staff member shall act alone about suspicions but will consult with the Programme Manager and/or the National Operations Manager who will be committed to taking action and arranging consultations with appropriate agencies. Staff are expected to follow the programme procedure for reporting abuse, however any person including staff, has the right to report suspected abuse directly to Child, Youth and Family or the Police if they feel that the child's immediate safety is threatened.

All permanent staff will receive training in recognising indicators of child abuse and procedures in dealing with suspected abuse. This will be done through a variety of means including online, in-house professional development and public workshops along with support from appropriate agencies.

SCHOOLS OUT will act on the recommendations made by the relevant agencies and Child, Youth and Family concerning the official reporting of the suspected abuse and on the consulting of families.

If SCHOOLS OUT suspects that a staff member or a person within our organisation has perpetuated child abuse, we will not collude with or protect that person and will promptly report the matter to the statutory authorities. The suspected staff member will be prevented from having further access to children during any investigation and will be fully informed of their rights.

All services and programmes of the SCHOOL'S OUT organisation reflects the principle that at all times the safety, the welfare and interests of the child and the young person are the first and paramount consideration.

April 2016.