

Causey Farm

Child Protection Policy

Child Protection Policy Statement

Causey Farm, is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the respect and welfare of, the child/young person are paramount. We will adhere to the “Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children” by having and implementing procedures covering:

- Safe recruitment, training, and management/supervision of staff
- Code of behaviour for staff
- Incidents and accidents
- Complaints
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse or allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff

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We are committed to respecting the child/young person and to putting their interests first.

To that end, we will:

- Operate child centred policies in accordance with best practice
- Listen to, respect, and treat all children and young people equally and as individuals
- Lead by example, providing a positive atmosphere of trust in which to have fun and learn through our activities

We undertake to:

- Inform parents/carers and schools of all activities and potential activities;
- Comply with health and safety practices;
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice;
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform teachers/carers as appropriate.

Code of behaviour for staff

1: Child centred approach

- Treat all children and young people equally;
- Listen to and respect children and young people;
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability);
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal);
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere;
- Respect a child's/young person's personal space;
- Ensure that a staff member is never alone with a child
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion, race and sexual orientation.

2: Good Practice

- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour;
- Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers;
- Report and record any incidents and accidents;
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.

3: Inappropriate behaviour

- Never use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language;¹
- Never single out a particular child/young person for unfair favoritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus of attention;
- Never allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- Never hit or physically chastise children/young people;

4: Physical Contact

- Seek consent of child/young person in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation);
- Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch;

5: Health and Safety

- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised;
- Manage any dangerous materials;
- Provide a safe environment;
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly.

Recruiting and Selecting Staff.

Recruitment Policy Statement.

We will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job;
- We will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified personnel;
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed;
- Some of the exclusions would include:
 - any child related convictions;
 - concealing information on one's suitability to working with children;
- There will be a three-month probationary period;
- All will have references fully checked prior to employment

Managing and Supervising Staff

Staff management policy statement

To protect both children/young people and staff we undertake that:

New staff will:

- Take part in an induction training session where appropriate;
- Be made aware of the company's code of conduct, child protection procedures, and the identity and role of who has been designated to deal with issues of concern;
- Undergo a probation or trial period.

All staff will:

- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of work their practices;
- Be expected to have read and signed the Child Protection Policy Statement;

We undertake to:

- Make primary carers aware of our child protection policy;
- Inform parents/carers and schools of all activities and potential activities;
- Comply with health and safety practices;
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice;
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform teachers/carers as appropriate.

Dealing with allegation against staff.

Two separate procedures will be followed:

A) Deirdre Murtagh (designated person) will deal with issues relating to the child/young person;

B) Angela Murtagh will deal with issues relating to the staff member against whom the allegation has been made.

- The first priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk;
 - Both the primary carers and child/young person should be informed of actions planned and taken. The child/young person should be dealt with in an age appropriate manner;
 - The staff member will be informed as soon as possible
1. Of the nature of the allegation;
 2. The staff member should be given the opportunity to respond.
- Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee should be taken in consultation with Health Service Executive and Gardaí;
 - After consultation, designated person will advise person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.

In the event of an allegation made against a staff member, the person accused will not be allowed to work unsupervised with children/young people in any context while the allegation is being investigated. If an allegation of abuse is substantiated against the accused person this will be considered grounds for dismissal as per contract of employment.

Complaints and comments procedure

In the event of complaints or comments:

- Written complaints/comments will always be responded to;
- Deirdre Murtagh has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to the appropriate person;
- Verbal complaints will be logged and responded to.

Incident/Accident Procedures

- All accidents/incidents that occur while children are at Causey Farm must be reported both verbally and written in report book.
- First aid boxes are located in the cookhouse and cottage and are restocked regularly;
- Accident/incident books are stored in the office of the cookhouse;
- A risk assessment is carried out on Causey Farm quarterly and twice weekly inspections of all facilities used and reporting of problems and remedial action taken.