



Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

1. Policy Statement

The Afterschool Service is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children attending the service. All concerns or allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour involving staff, volunteers, students, or any adult working with children will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with Children First guidance. The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration in all circumstances.

This procedure ensures that:

- Children are protected from harm.
- Allegations are managed promptly, sensitively, and fairly.
- Appropriate reports are made to the Tusla Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána where required.
- Staff are treated in line with fair procedures and natural justice.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This procedure is implemented in line with:

- Children First Act 2015
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children
- Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016
- The service's Child Safeguarding Statement
- The service's Code of Behaviour for Staff Working with Children

Newtownwhite Educate Together NS

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3. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Students on placement
- Relief staff
- Contractors
- Any adult working in or visiting the service who has contact with children.

It applies where an allegation suggests a person has:

- Harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to children
- Behaved in a way that breaches the service's Code of Behaviour.

4. Roles and Responsibilities Registered Provider / Service Manager

Responsible for:

- Ensuring the procedure is implemented
- Managing employment issues relating to allegations
- Ensuring children remain safe during the process • Liaising with relevant authorities where required.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The DLP is responsible for:

- Receiving child protection concerns
- Assessing if reasonable grounds for concern exist
- Reporting concerns to Tusla
- Maintaining confidential records
- • Liaising with Tusla.

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Deputy Designated Liaison Person Acts in the absence of the DLP.

5. Procedure When an Allegation is Made

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer:

Step 1 – Ensure Immediate Safety

The immediate safety and wellbeing of the child must be ensured.

This may include:

- Removing the staff member from the situation
- Increasing supervision
- Ensuring the child is safe and supported.

Step 2 – Report the Concern

The allegation must be reported immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

If the allegation concerns the DLP, the report should be made to the Deputy DLP or Service Manager.

Step 3 – Record the Information

A written record must be completed as soon as possible including:

- Date and time of the concern
- Details of the allegation
- Name of the child involved
- Name of the staff member involved
- Names of witnesses (if any) • Action taken.

Records must be factual and signed by the person making the report.

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Step 4 – Assessment by the DLP

The DLP will review the information to determine whether there are reasonable grounds for concern.

If reasonable grounds exist, the DLP will submit a report to Tusla using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (CPWRF), form can be found in the Data Recording Logbook.

6. Reporting to External Agencies

Where appropriate:

- A report will be made to the Tusla Child and Family Agency.
- If a criminal offence may have occurred, An Garda Síochána may also be informed.

Internal procedures will not interfere with any external investigation.

The service will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

7. Protective Measures

Where an allegation is made, the Registered Provider / Service Manager may introduce protective measures to ensure children remain safe.

These may include:

- Increased supervision
- Adjusting staff duties
- Temporary reassignment
- Removal from contact with children
- Temporary suspension (where appropriate)

Such measures are not disciplinary actions and are implemented solely to ensure child safety.

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8. Informing the Staff Member or Volunteer

The person against whom the allegation is made will normally be informed as soon as possible.

They will be:

- Told that an allegation has been made
- Given appropriate details
- Given the opportunity to respond.

However, information may be withheld temporarily if doing so could:

- Interfere with a Tusla or Garda investigation
- Place a child at further risk.

9. Confidentiality

All information relating to allegations will be handled with strict confidentiality.

Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis to:

- Protect children
- Comply with reporting obligations
- Manage the situation appropriately.

10. Record Keeping

The service will maintain secure and confidential records of:

- The allegation
- Actions taken
- Reports made to Tusla or Gardaí
- Advice received from authorities
- Outcomes of investigations
- Protective measures implemented.

Records will be stored securely in accordance with data protection legislation.

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Support for Those Involved

The service recognises that allegations can be distressing for everyone involved.

Support may be provided for:

- The child and their family
- The staff member or volunteer
- Other staff members affected by the situation.

11. Training and Awareness

All staff will:

- Receive Children's First training
- Be familiar with the service's Child Safeguarding Statement
- Be aware of the procedure for reporting concerns and managing allegations.

12. Review of Policy

This procedure will be reviewed:

- Every two years
- Following any allegation or incident
- When legislation or guidance changes.

Date Adopted: 7th September 2026

Review Date: 1st September 2028

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracey Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Tracey Jones - *Manager / Service Provider*
Acting Principal of Newtownwhite ETNS