



Gaelscoil na Cruaiche

(Bunaithe: 1995. Príomhoide: Mairéad Ní Ruáin)

Cathair na Mart, Contae Mhaigheo

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Dealing with Disclosures from Children

When a child does disclose abuse, this needs to be taken very seriously. It is important that any disclosure is dealt with appropriately, both for the wellbeing of the child and to ensure that your actions do not jeopardise legal action against the abuser.

If as a mandated person, you receive a disclosure of harm from a child, which is above the thresholds, you must consult with the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and make a mandated report of the concern to Tusla. You are not required to judge the truth of the claims or the credibility of the child.

An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and you may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. Great care shall be taken not to damage that trust. When information is offered in confidence, you will need tact & sensitivity in responding to the disclosure.

You will need to reassure the child, and endeavour to retain his or her trust, while explaining the need for action which will necessarily involve other adults being informed. It is important to tell the child that everything possible will be done to protect and support him or her, but not to make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anyone else.

It is important to deal with any allegation of abuse or neglect in a sensitive, competent and professional way through listening to and facilitating the child to talk about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened.

The following approach is suggested as best practice for dealing with these disclosures:

- React calmly.
- Listen carefully and attentively.
- Take the child seriously.
- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you.
- Do not promise to keep anything secret.
- Ask questions for clarification only.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood.
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser.
- Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow.

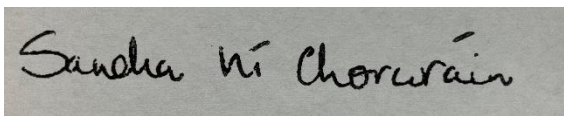
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible.
- Report the disclosure to the DLP or Deputy DLP without delay.
- Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of the Children First National Guidance 2017 and relevant legislation.

It must always be remembered that school personnel have a supportive, not an investigative role.

Important Notes

- Any reasonable grounds for concern must elicit a response. Ignoring what may be symptoms of abuse could result in ongoing harm to the child.
- The same action should be taken if the allegation is about abuse that has taken place in the past, as it will be important to find out if the person is still working with or has access to children
- Dealing with an allegation that a colleague on the school staff has abused a child is difficult but must be taken seriously and dealt with carefully and fairly.

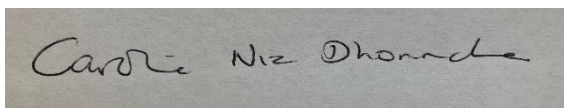
Síniú:



Dáta: 5/5/2022

Cathaoirleach an Bhord Bainistíochta

Síniú:



Dáta: 5/5/2022

Príomhoide