



Child Protection Policy

Background:

On 20 March 2006, the Secretary of State for N.Ireland announced a range of measures to strengthen child protection arrangements in N.Ireland. One of the measures included the requirement for each Public Body to have a nominated senior official with responsibility for child protection. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) subsequently nominated the LMC Human Resources Manager to the role of Child Protection Officer. Subsequent training for both this role and the deputy role, Education Services Manager has been provided.

Relevant legislation in this area is the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (POCVA) Order 2003 which strengthened Vetting Procedures for potential workers and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007. These create statutory lists of those banned from working with children and vulnerable adults and the offence of applying to work in certain posts whilst disqualified. In addition, the Independent Safeguarding Authority has been established from April 2009 and from July 2010 individuals can apply to be registered through AccessNI if they intend to undertake a regulated activity.

New definitions of regulated activity, controlled activity and vulnerable adult came into effect from 12 October 2009. This means that employers are required to obtain an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure Certificate for individuals who work in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults.

Regulated Activity involves:

- Undertaking activity which is of a specified nature; or
- Undertaking activity in a specified places, and there is the opportunity for contact with children; or
- Holding a defined position of responsibility; or
- Fostering, childminding and day care provision; or
- Managing / supervising a worker in regulated activity.
- In addition, the activity must take place on a frequent (once per month or more) or intensive (three or more days in any 30 day period) basis.

LMC has conducted an audit of current posts and work carried out by staff and sub-contractors. Under the new definitions it has been determined from the audit that the schools work undertaken by LMC is a regulated activity, both for the staff members involved and the sub-contractors.

LMC is committed to practice which protects children and young people from harm in relation to those aspects of our work which interface with them. For the purpose of the policy, both children and young people up to the age of 18 are included. Staff and sub-contractors to LMC accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm and to establish and maintain a safe environment for them.

Policy:

LMC will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Carefully following procedures for recruitment of staff and sub-contractors, taking into account child protection issues as relevant, and seeking Enhanced Disclosure Certificates as required.
- Providing effective management for staff and sub-contractors through supervision, support and training.
- Following best practice guidelines such as “Our Duty to Care” (Volunteer Development Agency 2009).
- Nominating the Human Resources Manager (per DARD) as the LMC Child Protection Officer.
- Providing direction for School Cookery Demonstrators on how to minimise any risk during school visits.
- This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals (nominally every three years).

Any member of LMC staff who has any concern in relation to the issue of child protection either in relation to their own work or in relation to that of others should in the first instance contact the HR Manager who can provide advice and guidance, or in absence, the Educations Services Manager. We all have a duty to safeguard children from harm.

References: (copies held by HR Manager)

1. “Our Duty to Care” – Volunteer Development Agency (VDA) (www.volunteering-ni.org)
2. “The Protection of Children (NI) Service – A simple Guide” – VDA
3. ”Getting it Right – Standards of Good practice for Child Protection” – VDA