

FOI 2125

01/02/2024

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

- 1. The guidance documents, check sheets, and procedures used by Social Workers in the Trust to investigate allegations of emotional abuse of children and/or parental alienation. Where these are publicly available please provide links.**

Response:

All children and young people referred to Children and Young People's Social Work Service are assessed in line with the Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland [Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland \(UNOCINI\) Guidance | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#). This is underpinned by the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures [Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Procedures Manual \(proceduresonline.com\)](#), this includes investigations relating to emotional abuse of children. The Trust do not record or report on 'parental alienation' as this is not defined in the SBNI Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

- 2. Details of the possible indicators of signs and symptoms of emotional abuse and/or parental alienation used by Social Workers investigating allegations of emotional abuse and parental alienation. Where these are publicly available please provide links.**

Response:

Details in relation to indicators of signs and symptoms of emotional abuse are outlined in the above document on the SBNI website (as above) and the Health NI website; [Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland \(UNOCINI\) Guidance | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

- 3. Guidance documents and procedures on who should be and who should not be interviewed/contacted by Social Workers investigating the welfare of children, in relation to emotional abuse / parental alienation. Where these are publicly available please provide links.**

Response:

The above guidance provides the framework for investigation and assessment of children referred to Social Services due to allegations of emotional abuse.

- 4. How many cases of parental alienation have been investigated by Social Workers in the Trust in 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019.**

Response:

As noted above the Trust do not record or report on 'Parental Alienation'.

- 5. How many of these investigations have resulted in parental alienation been identified**

Response:

Not applicable

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