

# Child Protection Policy

## 1. Statement of intent

The welfare of children of the children using **{name of group}** is of primary importance. We will endeavour to protect children at our events and will ensure that all staff and volunteers working alone with children will have been checked by the Criminal Records Bureau. That all staff and volunteers will:

- i. Have read this policy
- ii. Are familiar with signs and symptoms of abuse.

### **Types of abuse:**

#### **Neglect:**

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, or failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

#### **Physical Injury:**

Actual or likely physical injury in a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

#### **Sexual Abuse:**

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

#### **Emotional Abuse:**

Actual or likely severe effect on their emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment.

It is our duty to report anything we see or hear that leads us to think that a child may be neglected or suffering physical sexual or emotional abuse.

## 2. Statement of Purpose

The aim of this policy is to outline the practice and procedures for paid and voluntary staff, in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. It is aimed at protecting the child and the worker, recognising the risks involved in working with children and young people.

### 3. Statement of responsibility

Every person involved in the {name of group} even those not working with child will:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy
- Have a responsibility for ensuring the safety and well being of the children using the project
- Have a responsibility to report all cases of suspected child abuse.

### 4. Signs and symptoms of abuse

There is no clear dividing line between one type of abuse and another. The following section is divided into four areas to help categorise what may be seen or heard. Children may show symptoms from one or all of the categories.

This should not be used as a checklist: Workers and volunteers should be aware of anything unusual displayed by the child.

Physical Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bruises in places that are not usually harmed in normal play</li><li>• Bruise marks consistent with either straps or slaps</li><li>• Undue fear of adults</li><li>• Aggression towards others</li><li>• Unexplained injuries or burns – particularly if they are recurrent.</li></ul>
Physical Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exposure to danger/lack of supervision</li><li>• Inadequate/inappropriate clothing</li><li>• Constant hunger</li><li>• Poor standards of hygiene</li><li>• Untreated illnesses</li></ul>
Emotional Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overly withdrawn child</li><li>• Overly aggressive child</li><li>• Constant wetting or soiling</li><li>• Frequent vomiting</li><li>• Persistent rocking movement</li><li>• Very poor language development, and</li><li>• Inability to relate to peers or adults</li></ul>
Sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Language and drawing inappropriate for their age</li><li>• Sexual knowledge inappropriate for their age</li><li>• Wariness on being approached</li></ul>

Sexual abuse (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soreness in the genital area</li> <li>• Unexplained rashes or marks in the genital areas</li> <li>• Pain on urination</li> <li>• Difficulty in walking or sitting</li> <li>• Stained or bloody underclothes</li> <li>• Recurrent tummy pains or headaches</li> <li>• Bruises on inner thigh or buttock.</li> </ul>
Remember- Signs and symptoms often appear in a cluster, but also many of the indicators above may be caused by other factors	

## **5. Procedures to be followed for reporting cases where child abuse is suspected:**

### **Dealing with disclosure**

- Stay calm
- Find a quiet place to talk
- Tell the child you need to share the information with someone who will help them and that you will not keep it a secret
- If they decide not to tell you, ask them who they would be able to tell
- Listen and sympathise with anything the child might disclose
- Do not appear shocked at anything you might see or hear
- Do not stop a child who is recalling significant events
- Believe what you are being told
- Listen, but do not press for information
- Say you are glad the child told you and reassure them that they are not to blame
- Ask if they have told anyone else

### **As soon as possible after the disclosure:**

- Make a note of the discussion and record
- When and where it happened
- Who was present
- What the child said
- If possible keep notes of what happened up to the time when the child disclosed
- Remember that all notes and anything you have been told is confidential

## **6. Responsibilities – what to do next**

- i. Paid workers

Workers with concerns should discuss them with their line manager on the same day. If their line manager, main or deputy contact is not available, contact Social Service. Any concerns can be discussed in confidence with Social Services, who will advise on the subsequent action to be taken.

## ii. Volunteers

Volunteers with concerns should discuss these discreetly with the Main or deputy Child Protection contact as soon as possible. This should be done at a time when the injury or behaviour is observed. All concerns about the child, even if they seem minor, should be discussed with the main or deputy contact. If they are unavailable contact Social Services. Any concerns can be discussed in confidence with Social Services, who will advise on the subsequent action to be taken.

### **7. Concerns about colleagues**

Paid staff and volunteers having concerns that a colleague's behaviour may be putting children at risk must pass their concerns on to the main or deputy contact immediately.

### **7. Recruitment**

All staff and volunteers working with children and young people will follow this recruitment process:

- Completion of the application form
- Satisfactory checking of two references, at least one of which is from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid or volunteering work with children
- Criminal Records Bureau checks
- Successful completion of a probationary period.

All staff and volunteers have a duty to declare any existing or subsequent conviction, adverse child protection or care proceedings. Failure to do so will be regarded as gross misconduct possibly resulting in dismissal.

### **8. Management and supervision**

It is the line managers responsibility to clarify with the worker or volunteer their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection. Regular supervision for staff and volunteers will monitor the work of the project and offer the opportunity to raise issues.

### **9. Training**

All staff and volunteers will be trained in the issues of child protection – the training will consist of:

- Familiarisation of this policy
- Understanding the signs and symptoms of abuse
- Understanding the procedure for disclosure and reporting

**10. Policy Review**

In order for this policy to remain current it will periodically be reviewed the next review will be in March 2009.

**11. Named Persons**

To ensure the policy is implemented properly.

Child Protection Officer  
Chair

Deputy Protection Officer  
Trustee

Signed..... Signed.....

Printed..... Printed.....

Dated..... Dated.....