

Highfield After School Club

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

INTRODUCTION

Our club fully recognises the responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with children and direct work with families, staff at the club have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to Social Care (Designated Person for Child Protection to refer).

This policy sets out how the club discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who attend the club.

There are four main elements to our policy:

PREVENTION through the support offered to children and the creation and maintenance of a whole club protective ethos.

PROCEDURES for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

SUPPORT TO CHILDREN who may have been abused.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the club including volunteers. Concerned parents may also contact the club and it's Designated Person for Child Protection.

PREVENTION

- We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.
- The club will therefore:
- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are actively listened to;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

PROCEDURES

We will follow Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, which can be accessed online.

**LSCB's bring together representatives of each of the main agencies and professionals responsible for helping to protect children from abuse and neglect in a given area. The LSCB is a multi-agency forum set up to agree how the different services and professional groups should co-operate to safeguard children in that area, and for making sure that arrangements work effectively to bring about good outcomes for children.*

The Designated Person for Child Protection is the Registered Person

The club will:

- ensure it has a designated person for child protection available, who has undertaken, as a minimum, the 2 day child protection training course;
- ensure this training is updated at least every three years;
- recognise the importance of the role of the designated person and ensure s/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties;
- ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated person not be available (*another trained person will be on site*);
- ensure that the designated person will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases. (The designated person has access to Social Care for 'what if' conversations. The emergency duty team (out of hours) is also available).

The Role of Club Staff and the Management

The club will ensure every member of staff knows:

- the name of the designated person and her/his role;
- how to pass on and record concerns about a child;
- that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in LSCB procedures;

The club will provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, and ensure that it is updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know:

- their personal responsibility,
- the local procedures,
- the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse,
- how to support and respond to a child who tells of abuse.

The club will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.

Liaison with Other Agencies

The club will work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and written reports at child protection conferences and core groups.

Record Keeping

The club will keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children using the logging a concern form (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately;

The club will ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or Social Care Team as required.

The designated person will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

Communication with Parents

The club will:

- undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency (unless the circumstances will put the child at further risk of harm).
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the club and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the club brochure.

SUPPORTING THE CHILD AT RISK

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and trust those around them. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The club will endeavour to support the child through:

- activities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation,
- the club ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and values people.

* The Local Safeguarding Children's Board Guidance on the Sharing of Information on Children in Need and in Need of Protection can be accessed from the LSCB website at www.cambslscb.org.uk

- the club's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable children. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the child's sense of self worth. The club will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- liaison with other agencies which support the child such as Social Care, and the Locality Teams;
- a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents;
- recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection;
- vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Care **as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.**

Drug Use and Child Protection

The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the club will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse;
- to believe the young person's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse.

Children of Drug Using Parents

Further enquiries and or further action will be taken when the club receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers in the following circumstances;

- the parental misuse is regarded as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use including injection);
- a chaotic and unpredictable home environment exists which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse;
- children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care;
- children are exposed to criminal behaviour.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

- The club will operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring DBS and reference checks are undertaken
- The club will immediately consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. The LADO will advise if other external/internal agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and we will act upon the advice given to ensure that any investigation is not jeopardised. The club will notify Ofsted of a significant incident, which includes any allegation against a staff member.
- Adults at the club will not work alone with children and will work in a minimum of pairs at all times. There will always be 2 approved adults having been certified by the Criminal Records Bureau to work with each group of children. Volunteers/visitors will be welcome at the club but will always work alongside a designated adult or will have to follow recognised DBS checks as appropriate.
- Children and staff present at the club will be signed in on the club register. Details of a child's name, address, telephone number, parent/carers names, along with any health details that may be relevant will be kept at the club. There will be a first aid kit and phone available in case of need.
- The club will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with children and parents. The staff will receive guidance as part of Induction about how to communicate and create appropriate professional boundaries with disabled and vulnerable children.

Children with Special Needs

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Club staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

The club has children with emotional and behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviours. The club will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behaviour support plan agreed with parents.

We are aware that children who may have communication difficulties are vulnerable to abuse because they are unable to express themselves to others. Such children will often exhibit changes in behaviours or signs and symptoms of abuse recognised by staff with a good knowledge of the child.

Where necessary, the club will provide additional training to staff to use Makaton, PECS or other communication systems.

We promote high standards of practice, including ensuring that disabled children know how to raise concerns, and have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.

Staff will receive appropriate training in relation to Intimate Care. Staff will never carry out intimate care for a child if they can do it for themselves. If support is required, staff will follow the child's intimate care plan. Unless a child has a particular need, staff should not accompany children into the toilet cubicle.

Useful Numbers:

Social Care: 0345 045 5203 Outside Hours: 01733 234724

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)- helpline 01223 727967

Or:

Katherine.Jeary@cambridgeshire.gov.uk 01223 727968

LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) www.cambslscb.org.uk 01480 373522