



# Play in Ltd

## Safeguarding Policy

Play in Ltd is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation.

The Club will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. The Club's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP).

There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) available at all times while the Club is in session. The Club's DSL is Niala Haq. The DSL coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (eg Social Care, the LSCP and Ofsted).

### Forms of child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below:

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Physical abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

### Signs of child abuse and neglect

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- deterioration in a child's general well-being
- unexplained bruising or marks
- comments made by a child which give cause for concern
- reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, eg in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation (FGM), or that the child may have witnessed domestic abuse
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

### If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- Reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to speak out

- Listen to the child but not question them
- Give reassurance that the staff member will take action
- Record the incident as soon as possible (see *Logging an incident* below).

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the matter straightaway using the **Logging a concern form**. If a third party expresses concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they will not do so, we will explain that the Club is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.

## **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

FGM is an illegal, extremely harmful practice and a form of child abuse, and is therefore dealt with as part of our existing safeguarding procedures. All of our staff receive training in how to recognise when girls are at risk of FGM, or may have been subjected to it.

### **If FGM is suspected or disclosed**

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

## **Peer-on-peer abuse**

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Peer-on-peer abuse is taken seriously by staff and will be subject to the same child protection procedures as other forms of abuse. Staff are aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Staff will not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people. The presence of one or more of the following in relationships between children should always trigger concern about the possibility of peer-on-peer abuse:

- Sexual activity (in primary school-aged children) of any kind, including sexting
- One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other (eg much older)
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (eg in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength)
- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to ensure compliance or secrecy.

### **If peer-on-peer abuse is suspected or disclosed**

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

## **Extremism and radicalisation**

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation, eg:

- Feeling alienated or alone
- Seeking a sense of identity or individuality
- Suffering from mental health issues such as depression
- Desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause
- Associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

### **Signs of radicalisation**

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- Changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified
- Viewing violent extremist material online
- Possessing or sharing violent extremist material

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations on a **Logging a Concern form**, and refer the matter to the DSL.

### **Logging an incident/concern**

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, or concern about radicalisation, will be recorded on the **Logging a concern form** as soon as possible after the event. (We will only complete an **Incident Record** if a member of staff witnesses a specific incident happen whilst the child is at the club.) Either record should include:

- Date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern
- Date and time at which the record was made
- Name of the child involved
- A factual report of what happened. If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words
- Name, signature and job title of the person making the record

The record will be given to the Club's DSL who will decide on the appropriate course of action. For concerns about child abuse, the DSL will contact Social Care. The DSL will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Social Care directly.

For minor concerns regarding radicalisation, the DSL will contact the LSCP or the Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator. For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the DSL will contact the Police using 999.

### **Allegations against staff**

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded on an **Incident record form**. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it
- The allegation must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (eg police) should be informed, and the Club will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation
- If appropriate the Club will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Ofsted

### **Promoting awareness among staff**

The Club promotes awareness of child abuse and the risk of radicalisation through its staff training. The Club ensures that:

- The designated DSL has relevant experience and receives appropriate training in safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, and is aware of the Channel Programme and how to access it
- Designated person training is refreshed every two/three years
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- All staff have a copy of this Safeguarding policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect or radicalisation
- All staff are aware of their statutory duties with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse, and concerns about radicalisation
- All staff receive basic safeguarding training, and safeguarding is a permanent agenda item at all staff meetings
- All staff receive basic training in the Prevent Duty

- Staff are familiar with the Safeguarding File which is kept on site
- The Club's procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)' and staff are familiar with 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)'.

## Use of mobile phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission. This permission will be obtained from the **Photo Permission Form** which all parents must fill out as part of the initial Admission Pack when their child starts at the club. Only the club camera will be used to take photographs of children at the Club, except with the express permission of the Manager. Neither staff nor children may use their mobile phones to take photographs of the children whilst at the Club. For more details see our Mobile Phone Policy.

## COVID-19 Safeguarding and child Protection

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak (beginning March 2020) may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children and they may be or have been at increased risk of harm or abuse when in national lockdown or isolating at home. Due to these circumstances, vulnerable children may be particularly isolated, meaning that the family, community and professional networks they usually rely on may be unavailable or hard to access. Our staff are aware of the safeguarding issues that can put children at risk, such as abuse and neglect, and the signs to look out for.

Signs to look out for which may suggest that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm include:

- unusual injuries, including bruises, burns, fractures, bite marks or signs of self-harm
- consistently poor hygiene, poor living conditions or inappropriate clothing
- communicating aggressively or using sexual language
- appearing withdrawn, guarded, anxious or frightened, particularly around certain individuals

If safeguarding issues come to light, we will follow our above existing Safeguarding Policy.

Staff are aware of the Barnardo's See, Hear, Respond Service (<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/see-hear-respond>), which is a programme created to help children and young people in England who are experiencing harm and increased adversity during lockdown by providing support to those who are not being seen by schools or other key agencies.

All our staff have and will continue to undertake additional training on child protection and safeguarding issues before reopening our setting after national lockdowns. We will continue to assess and provide relevant training in relation to COVID-19 for all staff to ensure they are up to date on protocol and expectations.

We will always ensure that:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should act immediately
- appropriate designated safeguarding lead arrangements are in place
- unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- any volunteers are appropriately supervised. Under no circumstances should a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

**\*Also see FGM Policy for further information on Safeguarding in reference to FGM.\***

## Contact numbers

NSPCC: 0800 800 5000  
NSPCC FGM Help Line: 0800 0283550  
Ofsted: 0300 123 1231  
Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

## Sheffield:

Safeguarding Advisor for Early Years: 0114 273 5484 / 07969 857 635  
Early Years Inclusion Service: 0114 273 6411  
Sheffield LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer & Prevent Co-ordinator): 0114 273 4850  
SCSP (Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership): 0114 273 4450  
Out of hours contact: 0114 273 4855  
WEST MAST: 0114 2506 865/2736 461  
Early Help: 0114 2037 485  
SEN Support Help Line: 0114 2736 009  
South Yorkshire Police: 0114 220 2020 / 999 (emergency) / 101 (non-emergency)  
Prevent channel : 0800 789 321 The Police Prevent Team: 0114 2523217

This policy was adopted by: Play in Ltd	Date: Sept 2021
To be reviewed: Sept 2022	Signed:

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Child Protection [3.4-3.8] and Suitable People [3.9-3.13]*.