



Safeguarding Children Policy

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

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

The Club's designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) is the club's manager. The CPO coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (eg Social Care, the LSCB 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
- 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 incident straightaway. 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.

Logging an incident

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure will be recorded on the **Logging a concern** form as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- Date of the disclosure or of the incident causing concern
- Date and time at which the record was made
- Name and date of birth 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 CPO who will decide whether they need to contact Social Care or make a referral. If other members of staff think that the incident has not been adequately followed up, they may call Social Care themselves.

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.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.

Promoting awareness among staff

The Club promotes awareness of child abuse issues through its staff training. The Club ensures that:

- Its designated CPO has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- All staff have a copy of this Safeguarding Children policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse
- Staff are familiar with the Safeguarding File which is kept in the club filing cabinet.
- Staff are familiar with the 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' flowchart
- Its procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2012)'.

Use of mobile phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission. 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 at the Club.

Contact numbers

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): Mark Goddard 0116 3057597

Local Authority Central Duty Team: 0116 3050005

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Police: 0116 222222

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

This policy was adopted by: Smiles Children's Clubs	Date: 09/2018
To be reviewed: 09/2019	Signed: <i>Kelly Palfreyman</i>

