



## Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

Sprouts Childcare 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 Board (LSCB).

There is a designated safeguarding officer available or on call at all times while the Club is in session. This person coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies. **Sprouts Childcare WILL share information with the child's school in the best interests of the individual.**

The Club's designated safeguarding officers are Amy Fernandes (07920 194723) and Charlotte Sherwood (07710517445)

### 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 and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member 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.

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.

### **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 CPO.

## County Lines

The term county lines refers to urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas, as well as market and coastal towns, by using dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. Gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money to these areas. Once caught up in county lines, exploited individuals are at risk of extreme physical and/or sexual violence, gang recriminations and trafficking.

### **A young person who is involved in county lines activity might show some of these signs:**

- persistently going missing from school or home, or being found out-of-area
- unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones
- excessive receipt of texts or phone calls
- relationships with controlling, older individuals or gang association
- parental concerns, and leaving home or care without explanation
- suspicion of self-harm, physical assault or unexplained injuries
- significant decline in school performance and changes in emotional well-being

**This is a form of abuse and must be recorded and reported to the DSL immediately. If the child is in immediate danger call the police on 999.**

## Logging a 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. The 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 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 designated safeguarding officer who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about **child abuse**, we will contact our local Child Protection Officer and assist them in their investigations.

For minor concerns regarding **radicalisation**, we will contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). For more serious concerns we will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the Police will be contacted 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.

## Promoting awareness among staff

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

- all staff have a copy of this **Safeguarding (Child Protection) 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
- 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 (2018)'.

## 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 nor visitors may use their mobile phones to take photographs at the Club.

## Use of School Computers

Computers will only be used when supervised by a member of Sprouts Staff. All computers must have been locked-down by the school so limited access to the internet. No use of social media to be accessed or any games that communicates with others outside of the room.

If access gained to sites inappropriate for their age group, school and parents must be made aware so the appropriate action can be taken as stated below.

Support for families requiring further support on internet safety can be found at <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Should a member of sprouts staff notice any changes to a child's behaviour whilst using the ICT equipment it will be reported to the CPO.

Sprouts endeavour to:

- take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material. However, due to the global and connected nature of Internet content, it is not possible to guarantee that access to unsuitable material will never occur via a school computer. Sprouts cannot accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences resulting from Internet use.
- Sprouts will ensure that the Schools audit the ICT use to establish if the e-Safety policy is adequate and that the implementation of the e-safety policy is appropriate.
- Ensure that all users are aware that the use of computer systems without permission or for inappropriate purposes could constitute a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990 and breaches will be reported to the relevant authorities.
- Ensure that there are methods in place to identify, assess and minimise risks and will be reviewed regularly.

## Security

Children are not allowed to leave the premises at any time. At the beginning of each session a safety talk is given to the children to understand barriers and exclusions of areas. Staff monitor entrances at all times, there is a member of staff in each room. The ratios are 1/30 and we do not exceed these numbers with the maximum number of each club is 4/40. We ask all parents to report to a member of staff on arrival of dropping of and collecting their child so we can sign them in/out on our online system.

We work closely with each school we work in to ensure that we are kept up to date with who is on site when we are in session time along with any major activity that will be happening.

Please raise any concerns to the Managers to be assessed should you have any concerns. If you feel that we have not dealt with your concern, please refer to our complaints procedure.

## Contact numbers

Sfyc (Services for young children): 01329 286750

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): 01962 876364

Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership: 0300 555 1384 or 0300 555 1373 (OOH)

Police: 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)

Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231