

Fernheath Play: Safeguarding Children Policy

Fernheath Play is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation. Fernheath Play will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. Fernheath Play's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Fernheath Play's designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) is the Centre Manager: Joe Elston. The CPO coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (eg Social Care, the LSCB and Ofsted).

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 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 (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 Fernheath Play is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.

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,

including:

- 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.

Logging an incident

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 Fernheath Play's CPO who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about child abuse, the CPO will contact Social Care. The CPO 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 CPO will contact the Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator. For more serious concerns the CPO will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

For urgent concerns the CPO 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 Fernheath Play 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 Fernheath Play will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Promoting awareness among staff

Fernheath Play promotes awareness of child abuse and the risk of radicalisation through its staff training. Fernheath Play will ensure that:

- the designated CPO 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

- 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, 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
- all staff receive basic training in the Prevent Duty
- staff are familiar with the Safeguarding File which is kept in the main office
- Fernheath Play's procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)' and staff are familiar with the guidance in '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. Only authorised cameras will be used to take photographs of children at the Centre or on trips. Neither staff nor children may use their mobile phones to take photographs at the Centre.

Contact numbers Social Care:

Children First 01202 458101

Social Care out of hours contact: 01202 657279

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): Laura Baldwin 01202 456744

LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board): LSCB Administrator Tel: 01202 458873

Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator: Andy Williams: 01202 458101

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

Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

NSPCC: 0808 800 500 Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

This policy was adopted by: Fernheath Play on 25th January 2016

Date To be reviewed: 25th January 2017

Signed:



(Chair of Trustees)

Written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014):
Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Child Protection [3.4-3.8] and Suitable People [3.9-3.13].
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)