

Safeguarding and Children's Welfare Policy

Safeguarding

FFS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all colleagues to share this commitment.

FFS has a legal duty to recognise and respond appropriately to:

- Significant changes in the children's behaviour
- Deterioration in their general well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse
- Signs of neglect
- Comments children make which give cause for concern

If you recognise one of the above for a child, the severity and circumstance will dictate your actions. The important thing for you is to do something and not ignore it. We will create an environment to make the children be and feel safe. Any suspicions or allegations of abuse will be taken very seriously, and they will be acted on quickly and correctly by following the procedure set by the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Four Categories of Abuse – This list is not exhaustive

All Types of abuse can occur in all types of homes, across all social and income groups.

Neglect

Definition

Longstanding and/or severe neglect
Effect on the Child's development
Non-organic failure to thrive

Signs/Symptoms

Constant Hunger, Tiredness, stealing or scrounging
Poor personal hygiene, or inappropriate clothing for weather or activities
Untreated medical problems
Low self-esteem, poor social relations

Physical

Definition

Deliberate injury to the child – allowing injury.
Beyond 'reasonable' chastisement
Poisoning, inc. alcohol
Withholding drugs or apparatus
Both the use of an implement e.g. a belt or a physical strike that leave a mark are illegal

Signs/Symptoms

Unexplained or untreated injured, especially if repetitive
Refusal to discuss injuries, and untreated injuries
Shrinking from physical contact

Fear of returning home, undressing, or medical help
Aggression or bullying
Unexplained pattern of absences which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries

Sexual

Definition

Sexual exploitation of any kind including watching others and viewing pornographic material

Signs/Symptoms

Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age, through drawings, games, vocabulary etc
Frequent public masturbation
Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, fearfulness
This is a short summary, there are other signs, individual to certain children

Emotional

Definition

Must be persistent
Must undermine the child's sense of self worth
Might reflect poor parenting skills
Includes witnessing domestic violence of primary carer

Signs/Symptoms

Continual self-depreciation, self-harm or mutilation
Inappropriate response to painful situations
Compulsive stealing/scrounging
Air of detachment, social isolation or desperate attention seeking behaviour, depression or withdrawal. Eating problems, either overeating or a lack of appetite

Child Sexual Exploitation CSE

Involves exploitative situations where a child, male or female, receives something from an adult as a result of engaging in sexual activity. This can be seemingly 'consensual' relationships to serious organised crime gangs. There will be an imbalance of power where the perpetrator holds power over the victim. Technology is often used. This is a serious crime.

Female Genital Mutilation FGM

This is illegal and a form of child abuse. It involves a procedure to remove all or some of the female genitalia or any other injury to these organs. It is a legal duty to report **known** cases to the police.

Forced Marriage

Is illegal and a form of child abuse. A marriage entered without the full and free consent of one or both parties, where violence, threats or coercion is used.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Children can be vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

All colleagues are aware of all safeguarding "hot topics" more information of which can be found in

Appendix A.

Dealing with a Disclosure

1. Listen and stay calm. Do not condemn the abuser, do not judge, do not make promises you can't keep
2. Reassure them. Tell them that you believe them. Tell them that it happens to others and that they are brave to tell you.
3. Stay with them. If you can 'ground' them ("grounding" means to draw the child back to a more comfortable state of mind through things like normal conversation e.g. what activities have you done today, what's your favourite TV program)
4. Accurately record on the **Incident Log** the child words. Make it clear whether it is a fact, opinion or hearsay. Safeguarding incidents/concerns are not to be logged on MagicBooking.
5. Report immediately to the Head of Safeguarding as soon as you can on the same day of the event; they will know the right procedure to follow. In some cases, they will speak to the parents first or report to the Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership.
6. 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 we are obliged to, and the incident will be logged accordingly.

If you have any concerns about a child's welfare at your setting, do not keep it to yourself. Write it down on an **Incident Log** and take advice. Only speak with the Head of Safeguarding or the DSL at this stage.

If you are not satisfied with an outcome or anything related to how FFS have conducted themselves, you will find the Local Authority contact details on the setting noticeboard and can report directly to them. All settings work within different Local Authorities, you can find the relevant **Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership** information displayed on your information board.

Protecting yourself

Part of safeguarding is also to protect yourself from allegations and to ensure your actions are not misinterpreted by anyone. Do this by observing the following:

- Avoid being alone with a child
- Take a register of which children are with you for each session, noting the time of the session.
- If you take a child somewhere e.g. an empty room, do not enter with them, wait outside. If you have to enter the room, it's vital you keep all doors open.
- Do not play-fight
- Children should not be encouraged to sit on your lap
- Challenge any child using 'bad' language
- Never let children touch themselves or others inappropriately in any form
- Never let a child's allegation go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on
- Never do personal things for children that they are capable of doing themselves. Encourage children to help each other.
- Do not build 'special' relationships with individual children

- You must not, before, during or after your employment make or accept any contact with a child or a friend of a child you know through your work with FFS or through social networking websites.
- Any images of children taken on site must only be of those children whose parents allow photos to be taken. Colleagues should not take any photos off site.
- Any images taken must be appropriate.
- It is each individual colleagues personal responsibility to delete any images from cameras, phones and recording devices.
- Images must not be published elsewhere without the authorisation of a company director.

Whistle Blowing

FFS will not accept or condone any behaviour by colleagues or other adults associated with FFS that is contrary to our Aims and Objectives, Policies and Procedures. We will actively encourage and fully support the reporting of such behaviour. We will do this by:

- Promoting an environment of mutual respect, trust and open communication.
- Promoting an environment that is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Treating everyone equally and fairly, with dignity and respect and by valuing individual differences.
- Ensuring that the quality of the work of each colleague/volunteer is effectively monitored as well as the work of the setting as a whole.
- Ensure that procedures are in place for reporting unacceptable behaviours/practices.
- Provide colleagues with a number of ways to report including a confidential form on our website.
- Actively supporting colleagues/volunteers that 'blow the whistle' both during the investigation and after, and in line with the relevant legislation.

To report a concern please contact Head of Safeguarding Nikki McNulty

Nikki.mculty@junioradventuresgroup.co.uk or HR people@junioradventuresgroup.co.uk

Allegation against a colleague within FFS

If there is a serious allegation of abuse made against you, FFS will have to suspend you whilst the investigation is carried out. This is to protect all parties, including you. You should:

- Stay calm
- Follow your line manager's instructions
- Co-operate with questions and enquires
- Seek advice – FFS support office or citizens advice bureau.
- Not confront the accuser
- Not speak with your 'victim'
- Be supported through the process by the People Team and Head of Safeguarding

We provide a form on our website for concerned parties to report any worries directly to the Safeguarding Lead. We take all allegations seriously and will seek advice from the LADO.

FFS has a legal duty to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service of any suspicions of any allegations even if colleagues leave before an investigation is started or completed.

Allegation against an Adult Outside of FFS

If you have any concerns about an adult's behaviour, even if they do not work for FFS, for example a parent, other provider on a school site, a member of school staff, etc. you have a duty to report your concerns using our normal procedure of escalating to the Head of safeguarding or the company Designated Safeguarding lead.

Promoting awareness among colleagues & training

FFS promotes awareness of child protection issues through its colleague training. This ensures that:

- Its DSL has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
- Safer recruitment practices are followed for all new colleagues
- All colleagues have a copy of this Child Protection Policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect
- All colleagues are aware of the 'Safeguarding Reporting' poster displayed on the site information board
- All colleagues are aware of their statutory requirements with regards to the disclosure of information or discovery of child abuse
- Colleagues are familiar with 'Site specific' Safeguarding information (Local Authority) which can be found within the setting's own SharePoint folder and displayed on the setting information board
- Its procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)' and that colleagues are familiar with the 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' flowchart

All FFS colleagues are required to complete mandatory/core training in the following areas prior to starting in service;

- Safeguarding & Children's welfare
- FFS Policies & procedures
- Induction & Welcome
- Food Safety level 2
- Moving & Positioning

It is a requirement of FFS to ensure colleagues update their training annually or at any time when it is deemed necessary due to significant events or updates.

FFS provides all colleagues with a wide range of optional CPD training, including;

- Introduction to adverse childhood experiences & early trauma
- Mental Health First aid
- FGM
- Prevent awareness
- Water safety
- Behaviour support & intervention

ENGAGING & EDUCATING CHILDREN THROUGH ACTIVITY

For more information please call 020 8742 4990 or go online at www.fitforsport.co.uk

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Good practice guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur, you should report this immediately to the Head of Safeguarding and record the incident on a **Safeguarding Incident log, A Safeguarding Body Map and Safeguarding Cronology** where appropriate. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a child
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- If a child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Use of mobile phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' prior written permission. Only the club iPad/tablet will be used to take photographs of children at the setting. Please see our mobile and camera policy for full information.

Parents and visitors must not use their mobile phones or any camera devices whilst at the setting. This includes making or receiving calls.

Changing

Under 8's – Ensure there is always 2 colleagues in the changing area and that you can see each other at all times. FFS colleagues should not dress or dry children but support them in doing so themselves. Wait until all children are ready.

Over 8's – Colleagues should wait outside of the changing rooms. If there is a disturbance that warrants entry, avoid entering alone and never enter alone if there are less than 3 children left.

Toilet Supervision

Children in Reception, Year 1 and 2

- Children will be escorted to the toilets and colleagues will remain outside the door to assist if help is requested.

Children in years 3-6

- All children will ask to use the toilet facilities.
- Colleagues will monitor numbers and ensure children return to their play in the appropriate location.

See Toileting and Personal Care Policy.

Prevent Duty

FFS recognises their duty to prevent children and families being drawn into terrorist or extremist behaviour and employ the following methods:

- Follows the guidance in the government document 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015'
- Colleagues have access to Prevent training
- We value all children and their families equally
- We promote the development of positive attitudes and behaviours to all people, whether they are different from or similar to themselves
- We have a commitment to challenging prejudice
- Report any concerns about children, colleagues or families to the relevant authorities

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact your local Social care Team (contact information is on display in all our clubs) or the police direct, or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Child line on 0800 1111.

The FFS Designated Safeguarding Lead is Craig Jones (COO).

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APPENDIX A - SAFEGUARDING 'HOT' TOPICS FACT SHEET

The NSPCC defines safeguarding as the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It means protecting children from abuse and maltreatment, preventing harm to children's health or development, ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.

'Keeping children safe in Education' (DofE September 2021) defines abuse as a form of maltreatment of a child. Through inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm

4 MAIN Categories of abuse to be aware of

P – Physical – a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms or deliberately induces illness in a child.

E – Emotional – persistent emotional maltreatment of a child – may involve conveying a child is worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only to meet the needs of another person. Not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed.

N – Neglect – the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. May occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Neglect may involve failing to provide food, clothing, shelter, protect a child from harm or danger, ensure access to medical care and treatment.

S – Sexual – forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. Activities may involve physical contact including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts. Non contact activities such as looking at or being involved in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, grooming. Sexual abuse can take place online.

Child Sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) – Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse which occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or financial advantage or increased status. CSE and CCE can affect both male and female children and can include children who have been moved (trafficked) for the purpose of exploitation.

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Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) – CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through **County Lines**, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims and their families with violence. They may be coerced into carrying weapons. **County Lines** is when gangs and organised crime networks exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone ‘lines’ to supply drugs. Gangs are deliberately targeting children. These gangs groom, threaten or trick children into trafficking their drugs for them. They might threaten a young person physically, or they might threaten the young person’s family members. The gangs might also offer something in return for the young person’s cooperation – it could be money, food, alcohol, clothes and jewellery, or improved status – but the giving of these gifts will usually be manipulated so that the child feels they are in debt to their exploiter. However, they become trapped in county lines, the young people involved feel as if they have no choice but to continue doing what the gangs want.

Child Sexual exploitation (CSE) – CSE is a form of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts. It may involve non-contact activities such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexual inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without a child initially knowing e.g., through others sharing videos and/or images of them on social media. Children may not realise they are being exploited e.g.; they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) a form of honour-based abuse is the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting. FGM is often performed by someone with no medical training who uses instruments such as a knife, scalpel, scissors, glass, or razor blade. Children are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained. FGM is child abuse and is illegal in the UK, as well as being extremely dangerous. Sometimes religious and cultural reasons are given to justify FGM, however it is dangerous and can cause lifelong health problems. If it is discovered that an act of FGM appears to have taken place on a girl under the age of 18 this must be reported to the police.

Breast Ironing/Flattening is practiced in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem ‘child-like’ for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Once girls’ breasts have developed, they are at risk of sexual harassment, rape, forced marriage and kidnapping; consequently, breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Concerns have been raised that breast ironing is also to be found amongst African communities in the UK, with as many as 1,000 girls at risk.

Peer on Peer abuse (child on child) abuse includes but is not limited to; physical & sexual abuse, sexual harassment & violence, emotional harm, on (cyberbullying) and offline bullying and teenage relationship or intimate personal relationship abuse. It can even include grooming children for sexual and criminal exploitation. Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18. Unfortunately, peer-on-peer abuse can and does happen in a whole

range of settings that children attend. However, it often goes unseen. It might take place online, in or away from the school or setting. Downplaying certain behaviours like dismissing sexual harassment as “banter”, “having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment and in the worst cases a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting this as normal and not reporting this abuse.

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Modern slavery can take many forms including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Domestic abuse – the definition of domestic abuse recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Domestic abuse is recognised as can be physical, emotional, economical, coercive and/or controlling. Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. In some cases a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have to leave the family home as a result.

The Prevent Duty – we are subject to a duty under section 26 of the counter terrorism and security act 2015 to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, this is The Prevent Duty. **Prevent** is about safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism. As a childcare provider we have a duty to protect children being drawn into extremist behaviour. Prevent is designed to support people at risk of joining extremist groups and carrying out terrorist activities. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the wider safeguarding program and is just as important as protecting children from other harm.

Mental Health problems can be in some cases an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood and into adulthood. It is key to know how these children’s experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

Serious violence is defined as children being at risk from or are involved in serious violent crime. Signs which could give cause for concern are increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self harm or significant change in wellbeing or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with criminal networks or gangs and may then be at risk of criminal exploitation.

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