

# Safeguarding Policy



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## 1. Introduction.

Speke Adventure Playground believes the safety and well-being of the child to be paramount, and that every child has the right,

- ❖ To live their life free from violence, fear and abuse;
- ❖ To be protected from harm and exploitation;
- ❖ To an appropriate degree of independence

To ensure this, and for the protection of all staff, a comprehensive child protection policy and set of procedures have been developed.

The term “child” refers to any person under 18 years of age.

## 2. STATUTORY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK SURROUNDING THE POLICY.

There is no single piece of legislation that covers child protection, but the following is the legislative framework that is considered.

### ❖ Local Government Act 2000

Local Authorities have a corporate responsibility to address the needs of children and young people living in their area. The Local Government Act 2000 sets out a broad cross-government expectation that there should be a concerted effort to improve the well-being of people and communities. To achieve this, there should be effective joint working by education, children’s social care, housing and leisure in partnership with health, police and other s

### ❖ Children Act 2004

Section 10 requires each local authority (LA) to make arrangements to promote cooperation between the LA, relevant partners and other such persons or bodies working with children in the Local Authorities area. The arrangements are made with a view to improving the well-being of children in the Local Authorities area, which includes protection from harm or neglect. Section 11 requires a range of organisations to make arrangements to ensure that their functions and services are discharged to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Statutory services and the independent sector.

### ❖ The Children Act 1989

The primary focus of legislation on children in need is how well they are progressing and whether their development will be impaired without the provision of services, it also places a specific duty on housing and health services to cooperate with Local Authority services in the interests of child.



Speke Adventure Playground will adhere to the inter-agency child protection policies & procedures that exist in the local authority in which we operate.

- ❖ Ensuring that there is a consistent and effective response to any concerns, incidents or disclosures of abuse;
- ❖ Supporting staff in reporting concerns, incidents or disclosures of child abuse
- ❖ Ensuring staff have knowledge and understanding about child protection and receive training on implementing the relevant child protection procedures;
- ❖ Working in partnership with other organisations
- ❖ Monitoring and evaluating our own practices
- ❖ Working towards creating safer services.

Speke Adventure Playground will ensure that all staff who have specific and regular contact with children will be employed subject to Criminal Record Bureau enhanced checks being carried out. This will be stated at the advertisement stage of the recruitment process.

Speke Adventure Playground will ensure that staff receives appropriate training so that they understand their role in relation to child protection cases and to enable them to deliver this policy effectively.

### 3. WHAT IS MEANT BY ABUSE?

Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. In the context of child protection, abusive or neglectful behaviour is behaviour towards a child or young person which has the deliberate intention of causing harm or is so reckless to the consequences that harm is caused. Abuse can be **physical, emotional, sexual or neglect**

#### Physical Abuse

- ❖ Physically abusive behaviour may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical abuse can also include the physical harm caused by a parent or carer who induces or fabricates illness in a child.
- ❖ Indicators of physical abuse include where the child has been injured and:
  - ❖ The explanation provided by the parent or carer is apparently incompatible with the physical injury;
  - ❖ There are conflicting or differing explanations provided;
  - ❖ There is no explanation provided or a lack of awareness of how the injury occurred;
  - ❖ There is reluctance on the part of the parent or carer to provide information about the current or previous injuries;
  - ❖ There is reluctance to agree to medical assessment;
  - ❖ There is a delay or failure to seek appropriate medical attention for the injury;
  - ❖ There are frequent minor injuries;
  - ❖ The parent or carer is impatient, angry or aggressive towards the child;
  - ❖ The parent or carer is under the influence of alcohol or another substance.

The presence of any of these factors does not indicate that physical abuse has occurred but does indicate that the possibility of physical abuse should be considered



## Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Indicators of emotional abuse include:

- ❖ Conveying to a child that they are worthless and / or unloved;
- ❖ Imposing inappropriate expectations on a child such as an inappropriate caring role or responsibility for household tasks;
- ❖ Causing a child to feel frightened or endangered;
- ❖ Preventing normal social contact and development, possibly through an overprotective and / or restrictive parental approach;
- ❖ Otherwise exploiting or corrupting a child.

A child who lives in a household where domestic violence, adult mental health problems or substance misuse by parents or carers are apparent, can suffer emotional harm.

## Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is the involving of a child in sexual activity, either by force, coercion or harassment, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Such sexual activity can involve physical contact, but can also include activities such as exposing a child to pornography, forcing or allowing a child to observe sexual activity or encouraging a child to behave in a sexually inappropriate manner. Indicators of sexual abuse include disturbed behaviour by the child like:

- ❖ Self harm;
- ❖ Inappropriate sexualised behaviour;
- ❖ Regressive behaviour, such as soiling or wetting;
- ❖ Sadness or depression;
- ❖ Loss of self-esteem;
- ❖ Eating disorders;
- ❖ Sleep disturbance.

Each of these types of behaviour can also be present in children where sexual abuse has not occurred.

## Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet and promote a child's physical or psychological developmental needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Indicators of neglect include the child:

- ❖ Being significantly short and / or underweight for their chronological age;
- ❖ Having cold mottled skin or poor skin condition;
- ❖ Having swollen limbs;
- ❖ Having cuts or sores which are slow to heal;
- ❖ Having diarrhoea caused by a poor or inappropriate diet, irregular meals or tension;



- ❖ Patchy hair or bald spots.

This list is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. Any child can be abused and any child or adult can abuse. Many incidents of abuse are criminal offences. Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute abuse. In other circumstances, abuse is caused by the cumulative effects of significant events, both acute and long-standing, or the damaging impact of neglect, which interrupts and changes or damages the child's physical and psychological development.

#### 4. Responding to Disclosure

Incidents of abuse or crimes may only come to light because the abused child themselves tells someone; Staff will be aware that the child may not appreciate the significance of what they are sharing, (i.e. they may not realise that they are being abused). Disclosure may take place years after the actual event, or when the child has left the setting in which they were afraid. Even if there is a delay between the actual event and the disclosure **you must take the child seriously and you must do something about it. Further advice held within procedure**

#### 5. Recording an Incident

When recording an incident you should note:

- The time & place
- How the incident occurred – do not speculate
- What you saw / heard / were told
- The names of the people involved
- Any obvious evidence (e.g. injuries, blood, weapons etc.)
- The state of the clothing of the abused child and the perpetrator
- The behaviour and attitudes of the people involved in the incident

#### 6. Recording a Disclosure

When recording a disclosure you should aim to:

- Note what the person has said, using their own words & phrases;
- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about;
- Note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time;
- Where appropriate use a „body map“ to indicate the location of cuts, bruises and / or abrasions;
- Ensure that the information you write down is factual. If you include your opinion – make this clear;



- Sign & date the report and print your name legibly;
- Be aware that your report may be required later as part of legal action or disciplinary procedure;
- Note the day, time & location.

## 7. Reporting a Concern, Incident or Disclosure

Staff may hesitate to report concerns, incidents or disclosures of abuse for a number of reasons:

- ❖ they may not feel that you have enough information and are not sure if your concerns are valid;
- ❖ they may believe that action taken in response to possible abuse might be worse, for the alleged child, than the initial incident;
- ❖ they may fear that you are over-riding the wishes and / or interests of the abused child.

Despite any fears that you may have, you **must** report all concerns, incidents or disclosures of abuse within **24 hours**

- Inform your line manager/designated child protection officer.
- Inform Social Services they will advise you what action they will take and what you should do next.

Alerting is a necessary first stage in the process of keeping people safe and empowering them for the future. There may have been other previous concerns. When you report through the formal channels, you will enable information to be collated and assessment / investigation to take place.

## 8. Reporting Concerns about a Paid or Volunteer Care Giver

If a staff member observes an incident, hears a disclosure or has concerns about bad practice, they must inform their line manager. If a line manager or his /her line manager is the abuser, or is colluding in the abuse they must then refer to the chairman of the management committee. If this is not feasible they should take their concerns directly to Care Line or Merseyside Police.

## 9. Performance Monitoring.

All reported suspicions or allegations of abuse will be recorded, monitored and reviewed to ensure that procedures are followed and any patterns or improvements to policies and procedures may be identified. Outcomes will be monitored to ensure the aims of this safeguarding policy are being met.

## 10. Record Keeping.

SLH will maintain clear and accurate records of any allegations or suspicions of Child abuse. These records will be strictly factual, including specific dates and times of incidents or disclosures, the names of anyone



consulted or involved, decision makers and decisions made, these records will be signed by the author. These records will be kept securely but remain accessible when necessary.

## 11. Risk Assessment

Workers should ensure that they are not left alone with children or young people at any time where there is little or no opportunity for the activity to be observed by others. This approach requires careful planning and use of facilities to ensure that others can observe the activity.

- DO NOT: Put a child or member of staff in a position of vulnerability.
- DO NOT: Work in a way, which isolates an individual from other members of staff/children.
- All staff should be aware of procedure in cases of accident NEVER carry out first aid treatment alone always ensure that there is at least one other member of staff present.
- DO NOT: transport children by car or mini-bus alone, always ensure there is at least one other member of staff present.
- DO NOT: allow children to climb or jump on members of staff.
- DO NOT: enter toilets used by the opposite gender.
- DO NOT: enter toilets without another member of staff being present.

## 12. Useful contacts

### **Liverpool Care Line- 0151 233 3700**

#### *CHILDLINE*

Free confidential counselling service for children wishing to discuss abuse Freephone -0800 1111

#### *NSPCC CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE*

Free confidential counselling service for children wishing to discuss abuse Freephone 0800800500

All members of the organisation will adhere to this policy.

