

# COMMUNITY PLAYLINK

(Registered Charity Number 1184505)



## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: POLICY & PROCEDURES

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**Website:** <http://community-playlink.com>

## **SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES**

The welfare of the children using Community Playlink (CPL) is of primary importance. We will endeavour to protect the children attending CPL by following the procedures ‘*Safeguarding our Children*’ as agreed through Southampton’s Local Safeguarding Children’s Board.

Our safeguarding children practice, policy and procedures reflects the “*What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused*”, Department for Education (2015). \*

The Safeguarding Children Officer is the CPL PLAnTS (Playful Learning And Toys) Development Worker. The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for implementing the Safeguarding Policy.

The CPL Trustee Board will ensure that all staff and volunteers where possible, have completed Safeguarding Children Training. CPL’s Trustee Board will ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and follow CPL’s Safeguarding Children Policy.

### **Background to the Policy:**

**\*The Government Document –**

***Working together to safeguard children A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children - March 2015,***

**[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/592101/Working Together to Safeguard Children 20170213.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/592101/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_20170213.pdf)**

### **This clearly sets out the role of Voluntary and Private Sector organisations thus: -**

Voluntary organisations and private sector providers play an important role in delivering services to children. They should have the arrangements in place in the same way as organisations in the public sector and need to work effectively with the LSCB. Paid and volunteer staff need to be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, how they should respond to child protection concerns and make a referral to local authority children's social care or the police if necessary.

These organisations should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

- A clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- A senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements;
- A culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- Clear whistleblowing procedures, which reflect the principles in sir Robert Francis’s freedom to speak up review and are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed;
- Arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and with the local safeguarding children board (LSCB);
- A designated professional lead for safeguarding. Their role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Professionals should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively;

- Safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check;
- Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training:
  - Employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;
  - Staff should be given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare; and
  - All professionals should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
- Clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:
  - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
  - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children. \*

### **Safer Recruitment**

In order to protect the children attending CPL all trustees, staff and volunteers are subject to an interview, receipt of two satisfactory reference checks, receipt of a satisfactory Enhanced CRB check/DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) and a probationary period.

All applicants applying for a position on the Trustee Board, employment or volunteering to help in the play projects are requested to disclose any convictions on their application form.

Any positions advertised in CPL are exempt from the non-disclosure of criminal convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders' Act 1974, even if under the act, they would normally be regarded as "spent".

Any disclosure of convictions will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence. A separate meeting would be arranged with the applicant, the PLAnTS Development Worker and the Chair of the Trustee Board. A decision would be made after the meeting following a personal risk assessment to assess that individual's suitability to be employed at CPL. If the outcome of the meeting is unclear, then the Trustee Board will seek further advice from the Registering body, Ofsted. In keeping with our Equal Opportunities policy; disclosure of information will not automatically prevent the application from proceeding.

Failure to disclose a criminal conviction could lead to termination of employment. In the event of an individual being employed and it is later identified that they have a criminal conviction, an urgent meeting will take place with the individual, the PLAnTS Development Worker and the Chair of the Trustee Board. Depending on the nature of the conviction, a decision will be made, further to a personal risk assessment to assess whether the individual is suitable to remain employed. If the outcome of the meeting is unclear then the PLAnTS Development Worker and Chair of the Trustee Board will seek further advice from the registering body, Ofsted.

A clear recording and outcome of these meetings will be kept on file and kept confidentially by the PLAnTS Development Worker.

## **Categories of abuse**

What is meant by abuse or neglect?

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely by a stranger.

There are four categories of abuse and neglect, as follows:

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using the term Fabricated and Induced illness (previously known as Munchausen's syndrome by proxy).

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **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. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Vulnerable Children**

Children with special needs have the potential to be more vulnerable than other children and young people. Some children may have difficulty with communication or physical mobility. These children may be unaware that they do have power over their own bodies and that they have the right to say no. By having an understanding of the different factors that make children and young people with special needs more vulnerable this can help staff and volunteers to put safeguards in place to protect these children and young people.

**It is our duty to report anything we see or hear  
that leads us to think that a child may be being  
neglected or suffering physical,  
sexual or emotional abuse.**

## **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 (e.g. much older)
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (e.g. 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 below for responding to child abuse.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

It is illegal in the UK to subject a girl or woman to FGM or to assist a non-UK person to carry out FGM overseas. For the criminal law in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, FGM is mutilation of the labia majora, labia minora or clitoris. FGM constitutes a form of child abuse and violence against women or girls and has severe short-term and long-term physical and psychological consequences. There remains a duty for all professionals to act to safeguard girls at risk – with the following key issues to consider.

- An illegal act being performed on a female, regardless of age
- The need to safeguard girls and young women at risk of FGM
- The risk to girls and young women where a relative has undergone FGM
- Situations where a girl may be removed from the country to undergo FGM
- Do not reveal that any enquiries might be related to FGM, as this could increase the risk to the girl
- Do not engage at this stage with the pupil's family or others within the community.
- On referral, the M.A.S.H. team may approach the police for assistance and there might be a joint investigation.
- Particular attention may be given to other family members who might also be at risk.

The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, at marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 and therefore girls within that age bracket are at higher risk. It is believed that FGM happens to British girls in the UK as well as overseas (often in the family's country of origin). Girls of school age who are subjected to FGM overseas are thought to be taken abroad at the start of the school holidays, particularly in the summer holidays, in order for there to be sufficient time for her to recover before returning to her studies.

### **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

## **What to do if you have concerns regarding abuse/radicalisation**

- These could be physical or behavioural signs or any other indicator that raises concerns.
- These concerns should be logged immediately on The Child Monitoring Form (Appendix 1).
- You should log exactly what was witnessed and not include your own opinions e.g. a small circular burn, rather than a cigarette burn.
- You should use one form per child.
- You should continue to monitor the situation recording any further concerns.
- **Remember that this form and anything you have been told is confidential**

For minor concerns regarding **radicalisation**, the PDT will contact the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). 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 PDT will contact the Police using 999.

## **What to do if a child discloses information:**

### **During**

- Stay calm.
- Do not stop a child who is recalling significant events.
- Find a quiet place to talk if possible.
- Listen, but DO NOT press for information.
- Do not appear shocked at anything you might see or hear.
- Listen and sympathise with anything a child might disclose.
- Believe what you are being told.
- Say you are glad the child told you and reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Ask if they have told anyone else.
- If they decide not to tell you, ask them who they would be able to tell.
- **Tell the child you will need to share the information with someone else and you cannot promise to keep it a secret.**

### **As soon as possible after and not during the disclosure:**

Record the following on the Disclosure Form (Appendix 2):

- Name, address and date of birth of child.
- Parent/Carer's name and contact number.
- When and where it happened.
- Who was present?
- What happened up to the time when the child disclosed?
- What the child said. This MUST be recorded in the child's words.
- What you said. This MUST be recorded in your words.
- **Remember that this form and anything you have been told is confidential.**

**You should only discuss details of any Safeguarding issues  
with people who have a legitimate need to know.**

## Dealing with Concerns

If you are unclear whether a referral should be made you can discuss your concerns with the following for advice:

- CPL PLAnTS Development Worker on 02380 335362
- Mash (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)  
on 02380 833 336 or email [mash@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:mash@southampton.gov.uk)  
Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LU
- NSPCC - 0808 800 5000

## Procedure for referral

- Once a child's name has been mentioned, this is then classed as a referral and Social Services will record it as such and decide what action to take.
- You will then need to provide information recorded on The Child Monitoring Form or Disclosure Form.
- You must follow up the referral in writing within 48 hours.
- When making the referral, you should ask for advice about what information should be shared with the parent and child.
- Social Services will then try to find out as much as possible about the child and family before deciding what action to take.
- You may be asked to provide more information if you come into regular contact with the child and you will usually be asked to provide a written report.
- Social Services will contact you upon completion of the enquiry to inform you of any relevant information.
- Your information may be used to help make decisions at a Child Protection Conference and you may be asked to attend.

## Important Note:

**If you think the child is about to suffer, or has suffered significant physical or mental harm, then immediately contact one of the following:**

- Mash (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)  
on 02380 833 336 or email [mash@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:mash@southampton.gov.uk)
- Emergency Duty Team – 023 80 233344 (outside normal working hours)
- Police – 0845 045 4545 (Main Switchboard)

**In cases of extreme emergency, the police should be your first contact.**

**IF A REFERRAL IS MADE THEN THE FOLLOWING SHOULD ALSO BE NOTIFIED:**

- OFSTED: 0300 123 1231 (Main switchboard)
- CPL PLAnTs Development Worker: 02380 335362

**If any of the above professionals advise you to make a referral for suspected child abuse you MUST follow the agreed procedures.**

**Dealing with concerns appropriately may prevent child abuse.**

**If you or other staff would like support because of your distress relating to abuse cases, you can discuss this with The Social Services personnel involved or contact the CPL PLAnTs Development Worker.**

### **Safeguards on staff and volunteers**

- CPL complete 2 reference checks and an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure/DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) on all trustees, staff and volunteers included in an attempt to ensure that they are fit persons to work with children. These checks will be carried out during your induction on commencement of your job role.
- No one should be left alone with child/children whilst at CPL premises or Toy Libraries.

### **Parental Concerns**

- Parents can be assured that any situation will be dealt with sensitively.
- All matters relating to child protection are confidential and should only be discussed with those who have a legitimate need to know.
- Information would only be faxed when the recipient has confirmed by phone that they are there to receive it.

### **Allegations against Trustees, Staff or Volunteers**

- Parents and staff must **report any concerns** regarding trustees, staff or volunteers conduct in relation to a child at a Toy Library or on CPL premises. If this is not appropriate, then the Chair of the Trustee Board should be contacted directly.
- If a **complaint** needs to be made about staff, you should contact **CPL PLAnTs Development Worker** at CPL on **02380 335362** or email **[cplaylink@btconnect.com](mailto:cplaylink@btconnect.com)** or you can contact Ofsted **0300 123 1231**.
- All complaints will be dealt with confidentially and will be investigated thoroughly. Advice will be obtained from the registering body Ofsted, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Charities Commission, and Early Years and Childcare Service.
- The individual will be temporarily suspended from their position at CPL during the investigation. They will be invited to attend a meeting with the PLAnTS Development Worker and the Chair of the Trustee Board, if appropriate, to review the complaint. They are permitted to be accompanied to that meeting. A decision will be made as to whether the individual is suitable to remain employed. The individual will be informed of the outcome of the investigation verbally and in writing by the Chair of the Trustee Board.
- If the individual is dismissed as a result of a Safeguarding Children matter, OFSTED and the local Safeguarding Children's unit will be informed.

**ANY ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF WILL BE REFERRED  
TO THE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S UNIT  
AND OFSTED AS ABOVE.**

## Camera, Mobile Phone and Recording Devices

CPL operates a camera, mobile phone and recording device policy to protect children, protect trustees, staff and volunteers from allegations, and maintain high standards of care within the Toy Libraries and play projects.

- The setting forbids the use of personal cameras, mobile telephones and recording devices by staff members, students and volunteers whilst on duty at Toy Libraries.
- The Toy Librarian is issued with a work mobile. **Mobile number – 07483 303565.**
- The PLAnTS Development Worker has permission from the Trustee Board to use their personal mobile phone during session for emergencies purposes and to keep in touch with the Trustee Board or Toy Librarian only. This responsibility should not be abused.
- Other staff, students and volunteers who are working with children are required to switch off any personal mobile phones and recording devices and store them with their personal belongings.
- Personal devices and belongings can be stored securely within CPL premises.
- Any member of staff who does not comply with the ‘camera, mobile phone and recording device policy’ will be dealt with in line with the CPL’s grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- Children will only be photographed or recorded if parental consent has been obtained.
- CPL is mindful that children and young people accessing our Toy Libraries may have their own mobile phones on their person. We will not prevent children and young people from using their phones during session, but recommend that staff discourage them from taking photographs or recording other children whilst at our Toy Libraries in line with our policy.

## Important Note:

**If you think the child is about to suffer, or has suffered significant physical or mental harm, then immediately contact one of the following:**

- Mash (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) on 02380 833 336

- Emergency Duty Team – 023 80 233344 (outside normal working hours)

- Police – 0845 045 4545 – (Main Switchboard)

**In cases of extreme emergency, the police should be your first contact.**

This revised policy was adopted by CPL Trustee Board:

Signed: *Richard Maunder* (Richard Maunder) Chair of the Trustee Board:

Date: 31st January 2019

Safeguarding Children Policy Review shall be carried out annually.

Policy review date: **January 2020**

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES FLOW CHART

CPL member has concerns about a child's welfare.  
If appropriate Toy Librarians should discuss concerns confidentially with their Line Manager.

Concerns should be logged immediately on the **Child Monitoring Form**. Monitor the situation recording any further concerns.

Discuss your concerns with **CPL PLaNTs Development Worker** at CPL on **02380 335362** or email **[cplaylink@btconnect.com](mailto:cplaylink@btconnect.com)** or **Mobile number – 07483 303565**.

If a child discloses information record the disclosure, as soon as possible and not during the disclosure, on the **Disclosure Form** then contact the **CPL PLaNTs Development Worker**. Remember that this form and anything you have been told is confidential.

Please refer to the Safeguarding Children Policy for the correct procedure to follow when dealing with concerns and for clear guidelines to completing the Child Monitoring Form and Disclosure Form.

Please do not hesitate to contact the **PLaNTs Development Worker** if you have any concerns regarding a child's welfare or the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure.



### COMMUNITY PLAYLINK

(Registered Charity Number 1184505)

**Address:** Room 3, Swaythling Neighbourhood Centre, Hampton Park Way, off Broadlands Road, Swaythling, SOUTHAMPTON, SO17 3AT.

**Tel:** 02380 335362 **E-mail:** [cplaylink@btconnect.com](mailto:cplaylink@btconnect.com) **Mobile number:** 07483 303565

**Website:** <http://community-playlink.com>

**Disclosure Form**

Name:..... Date of Birth:.....

Address:.....

Parent/Carer:..... Contact Number:.....

Date/Time and Place of Disclosure:

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Persons Present:

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What Happened Prior to Disclosure:

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What was said (in exact words):

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Signed:..... Date:.....

Name:..... Position:.....

**Child Monitoring Form**

Name:..... Address:..... Date of Birth.....

Parent/Carer's Name:..... Contact Number:.....

Date	Concerns	Action Taken	Follow up Action	Signed