



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff, volunteers and other third parties to share this commitment. The safety of children within our centre is our number one priority. Any concerns or signs of abuse or neglect must be immediately reported to one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL).

Centre Contact Names	
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Dean Johansen-Berg
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Deputy DSL)	David Judge

Local Authority (LA) Contact	
Our school follows the safeguarding protocols and procedures of our geographical local authority	Middlesbrough Local Authority Part of South Tees MACH Daisy Lane Overfields Redcar www.middlesbrough.gov.uk
Local Authority children's social care referral team (Middlesbrough Multi-agency Hub) – First contact if worried about a child	01642 726004 www.teescpp.org.uk - download referral form here Email: middlesbroughMACH@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Emergency contact out of hours	01642 524552

SUPPORTING AND EMPOWERING LOCAL PEOPLE TO ADD REAL AND LASTING VALUE TO THEIR COMMUNITY

Registered charity number: 702916

101 The Greenway, Thorntree, Middlesbrough, TS3 9PA

Where there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anyone can make a referral.

Specific Contacts – neighbourhood specific	
Police Emergency	999
Police Non Emergency	01642 326326/ 101
Operation Encompass (police DV)	www.operationencompass.org 01642 302080 / 07557767950

National Contacts	
NSPCC Help Line	0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk 0808 800 5000
Child Line	0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
NICO – National Information Centre on children of offenders	www.nicco.org.uk
CEOP (Child Exploitation Online Protection)	999 www.ceop.police.uk 0800 1111

Purpose of the Policy

1. This policy aims to make explicit Community Ventures commitment to the development of good practice and robust procedures. The purpose of the policy is, therefore, to ensure that child protection concerns, and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.
2. Community Ventures policy for Child Protection was developed and agreed by the charities team.
3. The policy was updated in June 2021. We are aware that child protection and safeguarding are fundamental to all children using our centre.

Introduction

4. Community Ventures fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect the children using the centre. There are three main elements of Community Ventures safeguarding policy:
 - prevention (positive atmosphere, careful and vigilant staff and volunteers, providing good adult role models)
 - protection (following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns)
 - support (to staff and to children who may have been abused, and also to those children who are the abuser)
5. This policy applies to all adults who work at Community Ventures, including, for example, temporary and permanent members of staff and all visitors and volunteers.

Community Venture's Commitment

6. Our commitment is:
 - To establish and maintain an ethos where children and young people feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to

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- To include in activities opportunities for children and young people to acquire skills and attitudes to both resist abuse in their own home and to prepare themselves for the responsibilities, including parenthood, in their adult lives.
- To ensure that children and parents can manage the risks posed by new technologies and children develop digital resilience.
- To ensure that recruitment procedures deter, reject and identify people who might abuse children.
- To ensure that all centre based staff receive an appropriate level of safeguarding training.

Framework

7. All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. To do this they must

- stay safe • be healthy • enjoy and achieve • make a positive contribution • achieve economic wellbeing (Every Child Matters 2003)

Working with other agencies

8. Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. Community Ventures recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies, both to ensure children's needs are met and to protect them from harm. We endeavour to identify children who may benefit from Early Help i.e. providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. All staff, with the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will work with other professionals and agencies to make referrals, in discussion with parents/carers as appropriate.

9. Community Ventures will pass on all child protection concerns to the local authority. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the South Tees Multi Agency Children's Hub (MACH), or which Middlesbrough Local Authority is a part. We are committed to respond in accordance with the South Tees MACH Procedures in all cases where there is a concern about significant harm.

Significant harm

10. Significant harm is defined as a situation where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, a degree of physical, sexual and/or emotional harm (through abuse or neglect) which is so harmful that there needs to be compulsory intervention by child protection agencies into the life of the child and their family. Harm also includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person (Adoption and Children Act 2002, 2006), or the exposure of a child to extreme ideology, which can hinder their development alongside a very real risk that they could support or partake in an act of violence (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015). Health is defined as physical and mental health, and development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behaviour development.

11. Where there is a suspicion of significant harm having taken place or is at risk of taking place, school will inform the Local Authority (or police if appropriate). The member of staff must inform the

Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. Any member of staff can make a safeguarding referral

12. So called 'Honour-based violence' is a range of crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Where any teacher believes an act of FGM may have been carried out they have a statutory duty to report it to the police, in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

13. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to investigate all cases where a child who is living or is found in their area, is either subject to an emergency protection order, police protection or they have reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. The Local Authority must also investigate children who are missing in education (absent from school without reason for 10 consecutive days).

14. There is potential significant harm where a child is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.

15. In these cases, the Local Authority must make enquiries that are necessary to promote or safeguard the child's welfare (S47 of the Children Act 1989). The Children's Services Social Care Department undertake the responsibility of making these enquiries once a referral has been made. Significance could exist in the seriousness of the harm or the implication of it. This will be a finding of fact for courts. The court will have to establish which standard of health and development would be reasonable to expect for a child with similar attributes, assess the shortfall against the standard and decide whether the difference represents significant harm.' (Children Act Guidelines and Regulation Children and Families Act 2014.

Parental Involvement

16. Community Ventures will endeavour, in all except the most exceptional circumstances, to make parents/carers aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage. In the event of a referral being made, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought unless there is a valid reason not to do so.

17. Parents/carers should be aware that Community Ventures will take any reasonable action to safeguard the welfare of children using the centre. In cases where Community Ventures has reason to be concerned that a child may be subject to significant harm, ill-treatment, neglect or other forms of abuse, staff have no alternative but to follow the Safeguarding Children Procedures and inform the Children's Services Social Care department or the Police Public Protection Unit of their concern.

Roles and responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children.

18. Within Community Ventures we have the following individuals have special responsibilities and will be responsible for co-ordinating all matters relating to safeguarding/child protection issues.

- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Rachel Gault

- Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Ashleigh Hall

19. Key Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead:-

- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed and making referrals to child protection agencies if appropriate.
- Keeping the DSL fully informed of all child protection issues that arise.
- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns.
- Maintaining a confidential recording system.
- Representing, or making sure that Community Ventures is appropriately represented, at inter-agency safeguarding meetings.
- Ensuring all staff receive regular training in safeguarding/child protection.
- Ensuring that all new staff are properly inducted in safeguarding issues

Procedures

20. The welfare and safety of children is the responsibility of all staff in the centre and any concern for a child's welfare must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Leads.

There may also be concerns expressed other centre staff, local parent or other persons, in the following circumstances:-

- suspicion that a child is being abused, or
- there is evidence that a child is being abused
- suspicion that a child is vulnerable to radicalisation

21. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a full record of reports made and make referrals to child protection agencies if necessary.

Professional confidentiality

22. Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. Community Ventures recognises that the only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.

23. We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information about a child or a young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children
- All staff must be aware that they cannot make a promise to a child to keep secrets

- Where safeguarding or child protection concerns are identified for a specific child this information will be held in a Confidential Record within a locked filing cabinet in the management office.

Records and monitoring

24. Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Community Ventures is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to outside agencies.

25. The following should be recorded:

- patterns of attendance • changes in mood • changes in functioning • relationships (with peers, adults) • behaviour • statements, comments, stories, drawings • general demeanour and appearance • parental interest and comments • injuries, marks, past and present

26. Recording is needed when a member of staff is concerned about: • marks on the child's body • unusual, significant changes in behaviour • mood changes • puzzling statements or stories from a child • information from others.

27. Recording should also take place when it is requested by another agency, for example, following an Initial Child Protection Conference.

Training and Support

28. Community Ventures ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies receive training relevant to their role. The charity also ensures that all its employees are kept informed about child protection issues, including radicalisation, through a programme of staff training

29. It is required that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies undertake training in inter agency working and refresher training at two yearly intervals.

30. All other staff who work with children, should undertake training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for Child Protection effectively and this should be updated at three year intervals.

Racial Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement

31. All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their age, gender, race, religion, belief, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. Community Ventures is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

Allegations of abuse made against staff and volunteers

32. Allegations against staff or volunteers about suspected abuse or neglect of children should be made immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the allegation involves the Designated Safeguarding Lead then the Chair of The Board for Community Ventures must be informed. Consultation without delay with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will determine what action follows. A multi-agency strategy meeting will be arranged to look at the complaint in its widest context.

33. The charity has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any member of staff or volunteer (who is in a regulated activity) who has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.

34. This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence. Further guidance on referrals can be found at GOV.UK

Supporting children

35. We recognise that our centre plays a role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; and to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe. We will support parents and all staff to become aware and alert to the needs of keeping children safe online, if necessary.

36. Community Ventures recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Community Ventures may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children within the centre. Community Ventures, therefore, recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour.

37. Community Ventures also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children are also vulnerable and in need of support and protection. We also recognise that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

38. We also recognise that, statistically, children with SEN and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. Staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. Children with SEND have a higher risk of being left out and of being socially isolated from their peers. We are aware that additional barriers can also exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include: • Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration, • The potential for children with SEND to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as being bullying without outwardly showing any signs. • Communication barriers and difficulty overcoming these barriers.

Preventing children from Radicalisation

39. From 1 July 2015, Community Ventures are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies. Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015. Paragraphs 57-76 of the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales are specifically concerned with schools (but also cover childcare). For further guidance see Appendix C.

40. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

41. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.

42. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

43. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Also included in the definition is extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

44. According to the Prevent duty guidance 'having due regard' means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

45. "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

46. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

47. If a staff member has a concern about a child being vulnerable to radicalisation or has been radicalised they should report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding lead who will, if necessary make the appropriate referral.

48. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to monitor this policy on an annual basis. The outcome of this monitoring will be reported to a meeting of The Board of Trustees on an annual basis.

Reviewed September 2022

Next review due September 2024