

Spring Meadows

Policies and Procedures

Amended and adopted

April 2015

Policies and Procedures

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Admissions and fees

Our club is committed to providing a fair and open admission system that offers a competitively priced and good value service. As a provider of registered childcare, we both encourage and actively support eligible parents/carers claiming and taking up the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit.

Admissions

When a parent/carer contacts the club about a place for their child, they will be given relevant information they require including details of the Admissions and Fees policy, and informed of whether there is currently a suitable place available for their child.

If a suitable place is available the parent/carer and, where possible, the child will be invited to visit the club to speak to members of staff. If the parent/carer agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of admission, including the level of fees and arrangements for payment, they will be asked to complete and sign the children's information form and fees agreement to confirm their child's place.

Parents/carers will also be encouraged to complete and sign a consent form which includes consent for Emergency medical treatment.

Once their admission is secure, the manager, or designated member of staff, will contact the parent/carer concerned to arrange a date for the child's first session at the club. At this stage, the provisions of the setting in policy will come into operation.

Waiting list

To ensure that admissions to the club are offered on a fair and transparent basis, the following procedure will apply to the management of waiting lists:

- If, on making an enquiry about a place for their child, a parent/carer is informed that there is not currently a suitable one available, the club's waiting list procedure will be explained and then activated on behalf of the parents/carer's behalf.
- Parents/carers will be encouraged to submit their request for a place for their child in writing. The details of this request will be placed on the waiting list, in the order that they are submitted.
- The waiting list will be kept and used on a 'first come first served' basis. The club will advise the parent/carer of how long they are likely to have to wait before a suitable place becomes available. This information will only be an estimate and will not constitute a binding guarantee from the club.

- When a vacancy at the club becomes available, the manager will contact the parent/carer whose child is suitable for the place and is highest up on the waiting list.
- If that parent/carer still wishes to take up the place for their child, they will be asked to complete the admissions form and follow the remaining steps of the admissions procedures outlined above.
- If the parent/carer concerned no longer wishes to take up a place, the parent/carer of the next suitable child on the list will be contacted.

Fees

- The club understands that the cost of registered childcare may seem expensive to a parent/carer. However, providing a high quality, safe and stimulating service for children is not cheap and to ensure continued high standards and sustainability of the club, it must ask that parents/carers its policy in respect of fees.
- The level of fees will be set by the registered person and reviewed annually in the light of the club's financial position, its future strategic plans and any other broader economic or social considerations deemed relevant.
- Payment of fees should be made weekly, monthly or half termly, on an agreed day prior to the start of the week, month or half term in question. Individual payment arrangements will be negotiated between the manager and parents/carers.
- The club will be sympathetic to requests for daily payment. Parents/carers wishing to negotiate this or any other alteration to the standard fees policy should arrange a meeting with the manager at the earliest possible opportunity.
- If the fees are not paid on time, the club will notify the parent/carer in writing and request a payment at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The manager has the right to issue a formal warning to the parent/carer and inform them that continued late payment will result in their child's place at the club being forfeited.
- If fees are paid persistently late or not at all with no explanation, the club will be forced to terminate that child's place. Under exceptional circumstances, the manager may agree to allow the child to continue attending the club for the remainder of that week.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to a member of staff of the manager if they have any query about the fees policy, or if, for any reason, they are likely to have any difficulty in making a payment on time, parents/carers are strongly advised to arrange a meeting at the earliest possible opportunity, to avoid jeopardising their child's place at the club.

Arrivals and Departures

Our club will give a warm and friendly welcome to each child on arrival and ensure that they depart safely at the end of each session.

Admissions

It is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that an accurate record is kept of all children in the club, and that any arrival or departure to and from the premises is recorded in the register. The register will be kept in an accessible location on the premises at all times (for exemptions to this rule, see the Visits and Outings policy). This process will be supplemented by regular head counts during the day.

Records of daily registers should be kept by the Club for at least one year

Arrivals

On arrival, a member of staff will immediately record the child's attendance in the daily register, including the time of registration.

If the parent/carer wants their child to be given medicine during the day by a member of staff, they must complete and sign the Administering Medication Form. Further details of this procedure are contained in the Clubs Health, illness and emergency policy.

Departures

If the child is to be collected by someone other than the parent/carer, this must be indicated to a member of staff and recorded at the start of the session. The adult nominated to collect the child must be one of those named on the consent form. Only adults- aged 16 years and over- and with suitable identification, will be authorised to collect children.

Permission and arrangements for children leaving the club alone at the end of a session will be a matter of discussion between the manager and parents/carers, based on an understanding of a child's age, maturity and previous experience. Written consent for children the club alone must be submitted to the club before such arrangements are able to commence.

No child under the age of 8 will be allowed to leave the club unaccompanied.

No adult other than those named on the Admissions Form will be allowed to leave the club with a child. In the event that someone else should arrive without prior knowledge, the club will contact the parent/carer immediately.

If the parent/carer or alternative nominated adult is going to be late to collect their child, staff must be informed of this in arrival. If the designated adult is late in picking up their child without prior warning, the provisions of the Uncollected Children's Policy will be activated

Upon departure, the parent/carer of alternative nominated adult will be asked to sign out their child indicating the time of departure and their signature.

Absences

If a child is going to be absent from a session, parent's must indicate this to the club in advance.

If a child is absent for more than three consecutive days, staff will contact the parents/carers to try and ascertain the reasons behind this.

Regular absences from the club could be an early sign and/or symptom that a child or the family may be encountering some difficulties and might need support from the relevant statutory agencies. The club and its staff will always try to discover the causes of prolonged and unexplained absences.

Escorting the children between school and the club

Where children are escorted between the school premises and the club, the following procedures will be carried out:

The manager will ensure that a thorough risk assessment is carried out and regularly reviewed, according to the provisions of the Risk Assessment Policies.

A contact within the school will be identified, with whom the manager will liaise

A clear agreement will be reached between the club and the school about when responsibility for children's safety is officially transferred.

The manager will ensure that a register of all the children who require escorting between locations is updated daily

A regular meeting place for children will be established within both the school and the club. If the meeting place is complex, children under eight should be escorted directly from their classrooms and the clubs premises.

Arranged meeting places:

Stevenage

Letchmore road- brought to club by teachers.

Almond hill- Dining room

Hoddesdon

Roselands – Designated place on the playground, with collection point flags.

St John the Baptist – School Office

Cranbourne – School Office

There will always be two members of staff accompanying any such group including a member of staff at the front and one at the rear

Staff will ensure that children are given instructions on road safety.

If a child is absent from the club without prior warning, staff will check to see if they have attended school that day- they will not simply accept the word of the other children. If the whereabouts of the child is not clear, staff will immediately inform the designated contact at the school and the parents/carers.

Transport

Where Children are collected by car staff will ensure that the following rules are always adhered to:

- All vehicles are suitably insured.
- Appropriate car seats are used
- Children are sat in the back of the car unless all seats are required.
- All drivers are DBS checked.

Behaviour management

Our club recognises the importance of positive and effective behaviour management strategies in promoting children's welfare, learning and enjoyment.

The aims of our behaviour management policy are to help children to:

- Develop a sense of caring and respect for one another
- Build caring and co-operative relationships with other children and adults
- Develop a range of social skills and help them learn what constitutes acceptable behaviour
- Develop confidence, self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement

Behaviour management strategies

The club, the manager and the staff will manage behaviour according to the clear, consistent and positive strategies. Parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to these strategies, raising any concerns or suggestions

Behaviour management in the club will be structured around the following principles:

- Staff and children will work together to establish a clear set of 'ground rules' governing all behaviour in the club. These will be periodically reviewed so that the new children have a say in how the rules of the club operate.
- The clubs 'ground rules' will apply equally to all children and staff
- Positive behaviour will be reinforced with praise and encouragement
- Negative behaviour will be challenged in a calm and assertive manner. In the first instance, staff will try to redirect children's energies by offering them alternative and positive options. Staff will be open in stating and explaining non-negotiable issues
- When dealing with negative behaviour, staff will always communicate in a clear, calm and positive manner
- Staff will make every effort to set a positive example to children by behaving in a friendly and tolerant manner themselves, promoting an atmosphere where children and adults respect and value one another.
- Staff will avoid shouting at work
- Staff will facilitate regular and open discussions with the children about their behaviour. This will help them to understand the negative aspects of their behaviour and enable them to have their say and be helped to think through the causes and effects of their actions
- Staff will work as a team by discussing incidents and resolving to act collectively and consistently

- Staff will try to discuss concerns with parents/carers at the earliest possible opportunity in an attempt to help identify the causes of negative behaviour and share strategies of dealing with it
- Children who experience bullying, racism or other unacceptable behaviour will be given the confidence to speak out
- Staff will encourage and facilitate mediation between children to try to resolve conflicts by discussion and negotiation

Dealing with negative behaviour

When confronted with negative behaviour, staff will be clear to distinguish between 'disengaged', 'disruptive' and 'unacceptable' behaviour

'Disengaged' behaviour may indicate that a child is bored, unsettled or unhappy. With sensitive interventions, staff will often be able to re-engage a child with purposeful activity

'Disruptive' behaviour describes a child's whose behaviour prevents other children from enjoying themselves. Staff will collectively discuss incidents and agree on the best way to deal with them.

'Unacceptable' behaviour refers to non-negotiable actions and may include discriminatory remarks, violence, bullying or destruction of equipment. Staff will be clear that consequences will follow from such behaviour, including in the first instance, temporarily removing the child from the activity session.

When an incidence of negative behaviour occurs, staff will listen to the child or children concerned and hear their reasons for their actions. Staff will then explain to the child or children what was negative about their behaviour and that such actions have consequences for both themselves and for other people.

Staff will make every attempt to ensure that children understand what is being said to them. Children will always be given the opportunity to make amends for their behaviour and, unless it is judged inappropriate, be able to re-join the activity

In the event that unacceptable behaviour persists, more serious actions may have to be taken, in accordance with the Suspensions and Exclusions policy. At all times, children will have explained to them the potential consequences of their actions.

The use of physical interventions

Staff will use physical interventions only as a last resort and only then if they have reasonable grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a child from significantly injuring themselves or others or to prevent serious damage to property

Before reaching this stage, staff will have used all possible non-physical actions, such as dialogue and diversion to deal with the behaviour. The child or children concerned will be warned verbally that physical intervention will be used if they do not stop.

A dialogue will be maintained with the child or children at all times, so that a member of staff can explain what they are doing and why they are doing it. Staff will make every effort to avoid the use of physical interventions if they are alone with the child or children.

Only the minimum force necessary to prevent damage should be applied. For example, by diverting a child or children by leading them away by a hand or an arm around their shoulders.

Staff will use physical intervention as an act of care and control and never punishment. Physical interventions will not be used purely to force a child to do what they have been told to do and when there is no immediate risk to people or property.

As soon as it is safe, the physical intervention will be gradually relaxed to allow the child or children to regain self-control.

The force of the physical intervention will always be appropriate to age, size and strength of the child or children involved.

If staff are not confident about their ability to contain a particular situation or type of behaviour, consideration will be given to calling the manager or, in extreme cases, the police.

Where a member of staff has had to intervene physically to restrain a child, the manager will be notified and the incident recorded in the Incident record book. The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest possible opportunity.

If a member of staff commits any act of violence or abuse towards a child at the club, serious disciplinary action will be implemented, according to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Procedures Policy.

Bullying

Our club is committed to providing an environment for children that is safe, welcoming and free from bullying. Bullying of any form is unacceptable in our club, whether the offender is a child or an adult. The victim is never responsible for being the target of bullying.

Everyone involved in the club, staff, children and parents/carers, will be made aware of the clubs stance towards bullying. Such behaviour will not be tolerated or excused under any circumstances.

The club defines bullying as the repeated harassment of others through emotional, physical, verbal or psychological abuse. Examples of such behaviour are as follows:

Emotional: being deliberately unkind shunning or excluding another person from a group or tormenting them. For example, forcing another person to be 'left out' of a game or activity, passing notes about others or making fun of another person.

Physical: pushing, scratching, spitting, kicking, hitting, biting, taking or damaging belonging, tripping up, punching or using any other sort of violence against another person.

Verbal: name-calling, put-downs, ridiculing, or using words to attack, threaten or insult. For example, spreading rumours or making fun of another person's appearance.

Psychological: behaviour likely to instil a sense of fear or anxiety in another person

Preventing bullying behaviour

The manager and the staff will make every effort to create a tolerant and caring environment in the club, where bullying behaviour is not acceptable, staff will discuss the issues surrounding bullying openly, including why bullying will not be tolerated and the consequences of bullying behaviour.

Dealing with bullying behaviour

Despite all efforts to prevent it, bullying is likely to occur on occasion and the club recognises this fact, in the event of such incidents, the following principles will govern the clubs response:

- All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively
- Children will be encouraged to immediately report any incident of bullying that they witness. They will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously and handled carefully.
- Staff have the duty to inform the manager if they witness an incident of bullying involving children or adults at the club
- If a child or a member of staff tells someone that they are being bullied, they will then be given the time to explain what has happened and reassured that they were right to tell

- The individual who has been the victim of bullying will be helped and supported by the staff team. They will be kept under close supervision and staff will check on their welfare regularly.
- In most cases, bullying behaviour can be addressed according to the strategies set out in the Behaviour Management Policy. The bully will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour and think through the consequences of their actions. Where appropriate, they will be encouraged to talk through the incident with the other person concerned.
- Where bullying behaviour persists, more serious actions may have to be taken, as laid out in the Suspensions and Exclusions policy.
- A member of staff will inform the parents/carers of all the children involved in a bullying incident at the earliest possible opportunity. If appropriate, staff will facilitate a meeting between the relevant parents/carers. At all times, staff will handle such incidents with care and sensitivity.
- All incidents of bullying will be reported to the manager and will be recorded in the Incident Record Book. In the light of reported incidents, the manager and other relevant staff will review the clubs procedures in respect of bullying.

Complaints procedure

Our club is committed to providing a safe, stimulating, consistent and accessible service to children and their parents/carers. We always aim to provide high quality services for everyone, but accept that sometimes they do not always go to plan. In such circumstances, we want to know so that we can put them right and learn from our mistakes.

This policy constitutes to the clubs Formal Complaints Procedure. It will be displayed on the premises at all times.

Under all circumstances, the manager will be responsible for managing complaints. If complaint's made against the manager, the Registered Person will conduct the investigation. All complaints made to staff will be recorded in detail in the Incident Record Book.

Stage One

If a parent/carer has a complaint about some aspect of the club's activity, or about the conduct of an individual member of staff, it will often be possible to resolve the problem by simply speaking to the individual concerned and/or the manager. As outlined in the Partnership with Parents/Carers policy, the club is committed to open and regular dialogue with parents/carers and the club welcomes all comments on its services, regardless of whether they are positive or negative.

In the first instance, parents/carers are encouraged to speak directly to the relevant member of staff, if deemed appropriate. If not, the manager should be approached and will try to resolve the problem. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, then stage two of the procedure will formally come into operation.

Stage Two

If informal discussions or a complaint or problem have not produced satisfactory resolution to the situation parents/carers should put their complaint in detail and in writing to the manager. Relevant names, dates, evidence and any other important information on the nature of the complaint should be included.

The club will acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as possible- within three working days at least- and fully investigate the matter within 15 working days. If there is any delay, the club will advise the parent/carer of this and offer an explanation. The manager will be responsible for sending them a full and formal response to the complaint.

If the manager has good reason to believe that the situation has child protection implications, they should inform the designated Child Protection Officer and ensure that the local social services department is contacted, according to the procedure set out in the Child Protection Policy. If any party involved on the complaint has good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed, then they will contact the police.

The formal response to the complaint from the club will be sent to the parent/carer concerns and copied to all relevant members of staff appropriate. The response will include recommendations for dealing with the complaint and for any amendments to the clubs policies or procedures emerging from the investigation.

The manager will arrange a time to meet the parent/carer concerned and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the complaint and the clubs response to it. The manager will judge if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate.

If at the conclusion of this process parents/carers remain dissatisfied with the response they have received, the original complaint along with the clubs response will be passed to the registered person who will adjudicate the case.

The registered person will communicate a detailed response, including any actions to be taken, to both the manager and the parents/carers concerned within 15 working days.

Making a complaint to Ofsted

Any parent/carer can, at any time, submit a complaint to Ofsted about any aspect of any registered childcare provision. Ofsted will consider and investigate all complaints received.

Contacting Ofsted:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

0300 123 1231

If you want to contact Ofsted to make a complaint or you have a concern about any service Ofsted inspects or regulates go to www.ofsted.gov.uk and then to the 'How to complain' page.

Dealing with Racial Harassment

Our club is committed to promoting tolerance and fairness towards all members of staff, students, volunteers, children and parents/carers. We fully and wholeheartedly adhere to both the spirit and the detail of both the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000, which outlaw discrimination against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, nationality or ethnicity.

The club accepts its duty to try to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations. All staff and children at the club are entitled to an environment free from harassment and discrimination, as outlined in the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Preventing racial harassment and discrimination

Proactive steps can be taken to prevent racial harassment and discrimination, and the club believes that this is more effective than tackling the situation once it has already occurred. Therefore, alongside the procedures outlined later in this policy to deal with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination, the club will:

- Ensure that all children are valued, irrespective of race, colour, nationality or ethnicity.
- Encourage all individuals to treat each other with respect, regardless of their race, colour, nationality or ethnicity.
- Acknowledge the existence of racism in society and take steps to promote harmonious race relations in our community
- Promote good relations between different ethnic groups and cultures within the club and in the wider community.
- Ensure that different cultural and religious needs are met, understood and communicated to all individuals involved in the club

Examples of racial harassment and discrimination

Racial harassment and discrimination can manifest itself in a variety of ways some overt and others much less so, some examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- The use of patronising words or actions towards an individual for racial reasons- including name calling, insults and racial jokes.
- Threats made against a person or group of people because of their race, colour, nationality or ethnicity.
- Racist graffiti or any other written insults or the distribution of racist literature.
- Physical abuse or assault against a person or a group because of their race, colour, nationality or ethnicity.

All staff and children should be encouraged to take responsibility for promoting racial tolerance and for protecting each other from racial harassment and discrimination by reporting any suspected incident to the manager or another responsible person.

The club as an employer

As an employer, the club is committed to ensuring that the workforce reflects the multicultural community that it serves. To this end, the club will:

- Advertise job vacancies in a variety of media sources and outlets in a variety of places
- Ensure that the club's human resources procedures prohibit racial discrimination and harassment and investigate any concerns when this is suspected of failing.
- Investigate any allegation of racial discrimination or harassment according to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Procedures and Behaviour Management Policies.
- Collect and monitor information about the ethnic background of the staff and children

Addressing racial harassment and discrimination

If a member of staff or a child becomes aware of an incident of racial harassment or discrimination occurring at the club, they will be encouraged to report the incident to the manager or other senior members of staff.

Any allegation made against a member of staff or child will be investigated thoroughly. The individual concerned will be told that such behaviour will not be tolerated at the club, and that steps will have to be taken to ensure that it does not happen again.

Each incident will be fully investigated and details will be recorded in a separate section of the Incident Record file.

In the case of children, incidents will be reported to their parent/carer and a course of action agreed upon to resolve the situation, in accordance with the provisions with the Behaviour Management Policy. However, if a solution cannot be found, then the club may have to inform the child and parent/carer that they are no longer allowed to attend sessions at the club, in accordance with the Suspensions and Exclusions policy.

In the case of staff, provisions within the Staff Disciplinary Procedures policy will be activated and a record of the incident will be kept and made available to statutory authorities if appropriate.

The manager is responsible for ensuring that all incidents are handled both professionally and sensitively. All incidents will be kept confidential, with initials being used in the place of names in the Incident Record book.

In cases where the manager is involved in an allegation, the registered person will handle the incident, or nominate a senior member of staff in their place.

In all cases, continued racial harassment or discrimination from any individual will result in exclusion from the club where all other efforts have failed to provide a satisfactory resolution.

Documentation and information

The club recognises the importance of maintaining up to date and accurate records, policies and procedures necessary to operate safely, efficiently and in accordance with the law.

The club is also aware of its obligations with regards to the storing and sharing of information under the Data Protection act 1998, and it is committed to complying with its regulations and guidance. The manager and staff are aware of the implications of the Data Protection Act 1998 in so far as it affects their roles and responsibilities within the club.

The club is committed to a policy of openness with parents/carers with regard to its policies and procedures and the information that the club holds on their child. Records and information will be made available to parents/carers on written request unless subject to an exemption. If for any reason a request is going to be refused, then this decision, with an explanation, will be communicated in writing.

Record Keeping

Ordinarily, information kept on a child will include:

- Birth name (along with any other name the child is known by)
- Date of birth
- Gender
- School attended
- Ethnic background
- Religion
- Languages spoken
- Home address and telephone number(s)
- Parents or carers name
- Parents or carers place of work and contact number(s)
- Any other emergency contact names and numbers
- Family doctors names, address and telephone number
- Details of any special health issues (including a special educational needs or physical disability statement)
- Details of any dietary requirements, allergies and food and drink preferences
- Appropriate records of children's progress and achievements
- Names of people authorised by parents/carers to collect children
- Any other information relating to the child deemed by staff or parents/carers to be relevant and significant

Additionally in accordance with our policies and procedures, the following records and information will be stored and maintained by the club:

- An up to date record of all the staff, students and volunteers who works at the club, including their name, address, telephone number, Criminal Records Bureau check, references, employment details and any other information (such as their Personal Development Plan) accrued during their time spent working at the club
- A record of any other individuals who reside at, or regularly visit/ spend time at the club, including their contact details
- The daily attendance registers, as set out in the Arrivals and Departures policy
- An up to date waiting list with the details of all children waiting for a place at the club, as set out in the Documentation and Information policy
- Records of the activities planned and implemented by the club, including off-site visits or outings
- Records of any medication being held by staff on behalf of the children, along with the signed Administration of Medication form, in the Medication Record Book (in accordance with the Health, Illness and Emergency Policy)
- Records of signed
- Emergency Medical Treatment Forms, giving parental authorisation for staff to consent to emergency treatment for children (in accordance with the Health, Illness and Emergency Policy)
- A fully and completed and up to date Accident Record Book and Incident Record Book
- Additionally, a regularly updated version of the admissions list will be kept off of the premises, but close by, in case of an emergency, such as a fire.
- Information and records held on children will be kept in a locked file, access to which will be restricted to the manager and out other member of staff.

The manager has overall responsibility for the maintenance and updating of children's records and ensuring they are accurate.

All required records relating to the individual children are maintained and retained for one year after the children last attended the club. This rule will be disregarded where regulations and guidance from Ofsted or other statutory agencies overrides it.

Notification of changes

The club recognises its responsibilities in keeping children, parents/carers, staff and Ofsted informed of any changes to the running or management of the club that will directly affect them.

Wherever possible, if changes are to be made affected parties will be given as much warning as possible. In the case of proposed changes that are of considerable scope or importance, the club will facilitate consultation with affected groups or individuals

In the following cases, it is mandatory for the club to inform Ofsted at the earliest possible opportunity:

- Any change in members of staff and/or people living on the premises
- Any significant change to the premises
- Any significant change to the operational plan to the club
- Any allegation of abuse by a member of staff or volunteer or any abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises
- Any other significant events

Confidentiality

The manager, staff, volunteers any other individual associated with the running or management of the club will respect confidentiality by:

- Not discussing confidential matters about children with other parents/carers
- Not discussing confidential matters about parents/carers with children or other parents/carers
- Not discussing confidential information about other staff members
- Only passing sensitive information in written or oral form to relevant people

In circumstances where staff have good reason to believe that a child is at risk, likely to be at risk, child abuse or neglect, the child protection policy will override confidentiality on a 'need to know basis'

Staff failing to show due regard for confidentiality will be liable to disciplinary action under the provisions of the staff disciplinary procedures policy.

Equal opportunities

Our club is committed to taking positive and proactive steps to ensure that we provide a safe and caring environment, free from discrimination, for everyone in our community.

The clubs equal opportunities procedures aim to help everyone involved in the club to counteract and eliminate both direct and indirect discrimination in decision making, employment practices and service provision and to ensure that our services strive to achieve equality of opportunity for all.

The club aims to provide a welcoming and caring environment that promotes and reflects cultural and social diversity and is equally accessible to all. The club will endeavour to challenge any offensive behaviour, language or attitudes with regards to race, ethnicity, nationality, class, religion, culture, gender, language, sexual orientation and disability.

The club recognises that achieving the objectives of our equal opportunities policy relies on the active involvement of parents/carers, as set out in the Partnership with parents/carers policy. As such, the club will welcome and encourage parents and carers to get involved in the running and the management of the club, and to comment on the effectiveness of its policies and procedures.

The club will facilitate regular opportunities for consultation with parents/carers about the service that the club provides, as a means of monitoring the effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy.

Equal opportunities procedures

To realise the clubs objective of creating an environment free from discrimination and welcoming to all, the club will:

- Ensure that its services are open and available to all parents/carers and children in the local community
- Ensure that issues of race, ethnicity, class, religion, culture, gender, language, sexual orientation and disability do not inhibit a child from accessing the child's services
- Treat all children and their parents/carers with equal concern and value
- Have regard for promoting understanding, respect and awareness of diversity and equal opportunities issues in planning and implementing the clubs programme of activities
- Help all children to celebrate and express their cultural and religious identity by providing a wide range of appropriate resources and activities
- Ensure that the clubs recruitment policies and procedures are open, fair and non-discriminatory.
- Endeavour to recruit a staff team that reflects the make-up of the clubs local community
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of, and understand, the Equal Opportunities policy as it relates to all aspects of its work.

- Encourage and support to act as positive role models to children by displaying and promoting tolerant and respectful behaviour, language and attitudes and challenging any discriminatory incident, according to the provisions set out in the Staff Disciplinary procedures, the Behaviour Management and Dealing with Racial Harassment policies.
- Treat seriously any member of staff found to be acting, or have been acting, in a discriminatory way, according to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Procedures Policy
- Work to fulfil all the legal requirements of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Human Rights Act 1998 and race relations (amendment) Act 2000. The manager will be responsible for ensuring that the equal opportunities policy is implemented and that its effectiveness is regularly monitored. They will be responsible for ensuring that:
 - Staff receive appropriate training
 - The equal opportunities policy is consistent with current legislation and guidance
 - Appropriate action is taken wherever discriminatory behaviour, language or attitudes become apparent.

All the clubs policies and procedures will be kept under review to ensure they do not operate in a discriminatory manner or in any way against its commitment to equal opportunities.

Equipment

Our club is committed to providing children with access to a wide range of equipment that stimulates enjoyment, learning and development, both indoors and outdoors.

All furniture, toys and equipment are kept clean, well maintained and in good repair and in accordance with BS EN safety standards or the toys (safety) regulations (1995) where applicable.

Equipment will be properly maintained and inspected in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All electrical toys and equipment are subject to PAT (Portable Appliance Testing), and that relevant staff are trained on the correct use of computers and other IT equipment.

Levels of staff supervision will be sufficient to ensure that the safety of children is assured and set according to the type of equipment being used, along with ages and number of children involved in a given activity.

All equipment and resources will be selected with care and risk assessments carried out before new toys and equipment are purchased, according to the principals of the Risk assessment Policy.

The club has equipment and resources suitable for all children currently in attendance, including those with special educational needs, physical disabilities and for those who do not speak English as their first language.

The club's equipment and resources reflects positive images with regard to culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

Resources will, whenever possible, show men and women in a variety of roles and jobs and people with different abilities being both active and creative. Examples of everyday life will portray people from a variety of family groupings and cultural backgrounds in a range of non-stereotypical roles.

The club provides a wide selection of books that are regularly updated as financial resources allow. The selection will always allow reference books, dual language books and a range of age appropriate formats. Staff are encouraged to select books that reflect a multicultural society, challenge stereotypes and which meet the educational needs of the children.

Outside a club's opening hours, all equipment will be kept in a suitable and secure location; safe from unauthorised access or use. When discovered, defective or broken, equipment will be taken out of use and stored in a safe place before being disposed of. Flammable equipment will be stored in a safe place away from sources of heat and naked flames.

There will be a named member of staff with responsibility for planning and reviewing the stock of equipment every 3 months and annually updating the club's inventory record. The inventory record must include all electrical items, all items valued at £50 or more and any item not otherwise included that is considered to be at high risk of theft. The inventory record will be kept on the club's records and updated whenever a new item is added or when an old item is removed from use.

The manager, or designated member of staff, will keep a formal record of any item of equipment loaned to a member of staff, a voluntary organisation or a parent/carer to ensure that it is returned on time and in a good state.

Equipment refers to things such as books and toys while resources could include posters, audio/video equipment, pens and paper.

Fire safety

Our club understands the importance of vigilance to fire safety hazards. The club has an up to date fire certificate and notices explaining the fire procedures are positioned next to every fire exit. All staff, students, volunteers and children are aware of the fire safety procedures set out in this policy.

All staff are aware of the location of all fire exits, the fire assembly point and where the fire safety equipment is stored. They are all trained in using basic fire fighting equipment. Particular attention is paid to distinguishing between the various types of fire extinguisher and their methods of operation.

Children will be made aware of the fire safety procedures during their settling in period and on regular occasions from then on. All children will be made aware of the location of fire exits and the fire assembly point.

Fire doors and exits will be clearly marked, not obstructed at any time and easily opened from the inside.

Fire exits are kept closed at all times but never locked. Fire extinguishers and fire alarm systems are regularly tested in accordance with manufacturer's guidance.

The manager will appoint a designated fire safety officer who will be responsible for arranging fire drills and tests. Fire drills will take place periodically and staff will be informed of when these will occur.

Twice a year the club will hold a fire drill without prior warning.

All the fire drills, fire incidents and equipment checks will be recorded in the Incident Record File.

Fire prevention

The club will take all steps possible to try and prevent fires occurring, as such the manager and the staff team are responsible for:

- Ensuring that power points are not overloaded with adaptors
- Ensuring the club's no smoking policy is always observed
- Checking for frayed or trailing wires
- Checking that fuses are replaced safely
- Unplugging all equipment before leaving the premises
- Storing any potentially flammable materials safely

The manager will explain fire safety procedures to new staff, students and volunteers as part of the induction process.

In the event of a fire

A member of staff will raise the alarm immediately and the emergency services will be called at the earliest possible opportunity

All children will be immediately escorted out of the building and to the assembly point using the nearest marked exit. No attempt will be made to collect personal belongings or to re-enter the building after evacuation.

The entire premises will be checked out by the Fire Safety Officer and the register will be collected, providing that this does not put anyone at risk. On exiting the building, the Fire Safety Officer will close all accessible doors and windows to prevent the spread of fire.

The register will be taken and all children and staff accounted for. If any person is missing from the register, the emergency services will be informed immediately. If for any reason the register is not to hand, the manager should access the emergency contacts list that is kept off of the premises.

If for any reason the designated fire safety officer is absent at the time of an incident, the manager will assume responsibility, or nominate a replacement member of staff.

Food and Drink

Our club is committed to providing healthy, nutritious and tasty food and drinks for the children during our sessions. The manager and staff will make every effort to ensure that food and drink is safely prepared and sensitive to the dietary, religious and cultural requirements of all of the children.

When preparing food and drink, staff will be mindful of the provisions of the hygiene policy to ensure that the safety of the staff and children is paramount. In addition to these provisions, staff will be careful to ensure both the safety of themselves and the children when using sharp or dangerous equipment in food and drink preparation.

The manager and staff are mindful of their responsibilities and obligations under the Food Safety Act 1990. The club is registered with the local authority to provide food. All staff who either handle or prepare food have up to date Food Handling Certificates and are fully trained in food storage, preparation, cooking and food safety.

As part of a child's settling in period, the club requires that the parents/carers complete the Children's Information Form, including information about any special dietary requirements or allergies the child suffers from, along with their food and drink preferences. The manager and staff will ensure that the food and drink offered to the children take into account this information to safeguard their health, and meet- as far as possible- their particular preferences.

No child will ever be forced to eat or drink something against their will and the withholding or granting of food and drink will never be used as either a punishment or reward.

Allergies

Details of any children's allergies, their name & allergy, will be displayed in food preparation area and made known to all staff. Allergen chart is to be completed by the club to show what foods contain. This should be displayed in a suitable place for all to see. Staff will ensure and children with allergies are cared for in the correct way & will take much care in the preparation of food.

Healthy eating

The club recognises the importance of healthy eating and a balanced diet. Because of this the club will endeavour to make a variety of foods available including meat, vegetarian and vegan options, plenty of fruit and low fat and low sugar food. Sandwiches can be made with either brown or white bread depending on the child's preference.

The club will not regularly provide sweets for the children and avoid excessive amounts of fatty or sugary foods. The club will provide a choice of non-sugary drinks and make sure that fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Cultural and religious diversity

The club and its staff are committed to embracing the cultural and religious diversity of the families who use our services. The manager and staff will work with the parents/carers to ensure that any particular dietary requirements are met. The club is also keen to introduce children to different religious and cultural festivals and events through different types of food and drink.

Health and safety

Our club takes the maintenance of health and safety extremely seriously as a matter of both legal and moral importance. All staff will be familiarised with the provisions contained within this policy as part of their induction and be expected to act in accordance with them at all times.

The club aims to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff, children, visitors and other individuals who may be affected by the club's activities and actual existence. The Health and Safety Work Act 1974 and the Workplace (health, safety and welfare) Regulations 1992 and their associated Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) and guidance will be complied with at all times. The manager and staff will always strive to go beyond the minimum statutory standards to ensure that health and safety remains the first priority.

The steps below will be actioned as a matter of course:

- Create an environment that is safe and without risk to health
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Use, maintain and store equipment safely
- Ensure that all staff are competent in work in which they are engaged.

Responsibilities of the registered person, the manager and staff

The identification, assessment and control of hazards within the club is vital in reducing accidents and incidents. Both the manager and one other designated member of staff are responsible for assessing risks to health and safety arising out of the club's activities and introducing suitable steps to eliminate or control any such risk identified.

It is vital to ensure that health and safety matters are taken seriously by all members of staff and other persons who are affected by the club's activities. Staff who have been found to have blatantly disregard safety instructions or recognised safe practices will be subject to the procedures laid out in the Staff Disciplinary Procedures Policy.

The Registered Person holds ultimate responsibility and liability for ensuring that the club operates in a safe and hazard free manner. The registered person- along with the manager- is responsible for ensuring that staff both understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to health and safety procedures.

The registered person will ensure that adequate arrangements exist for the following:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Policy and authorising any necessary revisions to its provisions
- Providing adequate resources, including financial, as is necessary to meet the club's health and safety responsibilities.
- Providing adequate health and safety training to all staff

- Ensuring that all accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences, and the club's response, to enable corrective measures to be implemented
- Ensuring that all staff, students, volunteers or any other adult who come into contact with children at the club have appropriate and up to date Criminal Record Bureau checks.

The manager is responsible for the day to day implementation, management and monitoring of the Health and Safety policy. The manager is required to report any matter of concern regarding the Health and Safety policy to the registered person.

The manager will ensure that:

- An additional designated member of staff is made jointly responsible with them for the health and safety and risk assessment provisions at the club, as set out in this and other policies.
- Regular safety inspections are carried out and the reports are accurately logged
- Any action required as a result of a health and safety inspection is taken as rapidly as possible
- Information received on health and safety matters is distributed to the Registered Person and all members of staff
- An investigation is carried out on all reported accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences
- Staff are adequately trained to fulfil their role within the Health and Safety policy

Staff are responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the Health and Safety policy are adhered to at all times, and act upon it whenever appropriate:

- Have regard for the Health and Safety policy and their responsibilities under it
- Have regard for any health and safety guidance issued by the manager or the designated member of staff and act upon it whenever appropriate
- Take responsible care for their own health and safety as well as other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work
- Take all responsible care to see that the equipment and premises are used by children, and the activities that are carried out at the club are safe
- Report any accidents, incidents or any dangerous occurrences that have led to, or may in the future be likely to lead to, injury or damage, and assist in the investigation of any such events
- Undergo relevant health and safety training when instructed to do so by the manager

Insurance

The Children Act 1989 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, place a number of legal responsibilities on the club. Therefore the club has insurance cover appropriate to its duties under this legislation, including Employer Liability Insurance. Responsibility will, in most cases, rest with

the club, but staff will take responsible care, both for themselves and other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. If the club is held responsible for any incident that may occur, public liability insurance will cover compensation.

Liability

Under provisions contained in the Occupiers Liability Act 1957, the club has a duty to ensure that both children and any visitors are kept reasonable safe. The parties named in the wording of the premises contract are responsible for this duty.

The clubs full responsibilities and procedures in respect of Health and Safety are constrained in this policy, alongside the relevant sections of the following policies:

- Staffing
- Physical environment
- Equipment
- Risk assessment
- Site security
- Fire safety
- Visits and outings
- Health, illness and emergencies
- Hygiene
- Managing behaviour
- Child protection
- Documentation and information

Health, Illness and Emergency (including medication)

Our club is committed to encouraging and promoting good health and to dealing efficiently and effectively with illnesses and emergencies that may arise while children are on our care.

First Aid

Under duties set out in Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981, the club recognises its responsibilities in providing adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel to enable suitable first aid to be given at the club.

The club has a designated member of staff responsible for First Aid. This person has an up to date First Aid certificate. They are responsible for maintaining the correct contents of all first aid boxes and administering basic First Aid when necessary and appropriate.

The manager and designated member of staff will ensure that there is a fully trained First Aider available at all times during sessions at the club. The manager will be responsible for enabling the members of staff concerned to receive adequate First Aid training.

The First Aid box will be regularly checked to ensure the contents are up to date, in good condition and fulfil the criteria set out in the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981

The box should

- A card or leaflet containing general guidance
- Sterile triangular bandages
- Adhesive plasters
- Sterile eye pad with attachment
- Crepe bandages
- Sterile gauze
- Micropore tape
- Sterile cornering for serious wounds
- Individually wrapped assorted dressings
- Waterproof disposable gloves
- Disposable bag for soiled material
- instant ice pack

The location of the first aid box and the names of any other first aiders will be clearly displayed around the clubs premises.

The First Aid box will be taken on all off site visits or outings. This is the responsibility of the designated First Aider and where this is not possible, the manager.

The event of a major accident, incident or illness

The club requests that parents/carers complete and sign the Consent for Form which includes permission for Emergency Medical Treatment Form (See Appendix 3) enabling the manager or any member of staff so empowered, to give permission for emergency medical treatment for their child in the event of a major accident, incident or illness occurring at the club.

In the event of this, the following procedures will apply:

- In the first instance, the First aider will be notified and take responsibility for deciding the appropriate action.
- The First Aider will assess the situation and decide whether the child needs to go straight to hospital or whether they can safely wait for their parent/carer to arrive.
- If the child needs to go straight to hospital, an ambulance will be called. The parent/carer will be contacted. A member of staff will try to accompany the child to the hospital, however, this cannot be guaranteed due to the staff: child ratio being left at the club. If a member of staff does accompany the child they will consent to medical treatment being given, so long as the Emergency Medical Treatment Form has been completed and signed, otherwise responsibility will be handed over to paramedics.
- If the child does not need to go straight to hospital but their condition means they should go home, the parent/carer will be contacted and asked to collect their child. In the meantime, the child will be made as comfortable as possible and kept under close supervision (from this point on, the provisions of the clubs Infectious and Communicable diseases policy will govern the child's return to the Club)
- Parents/ carers will be made fully aware of the details of any incidents involving their child's health and safety and any actions taken by the club and its staff.
- All such accidents or incidents will be recorded in detail and logged in the Accident and incident file. Parents/carers will be asked to sign in the relevant section of the book to acknowledge the incident of accident and any action taken by the club and its staff.
- The manager and other relevant members of staff should consider whether the accident or incident highlights any actual or potential weakness in the clubs policies or procedures and act accordingly, making suitable adjustments where necessary.

In the event of a minor accident, incident or illness

- In the first instance, the designated first aider will be notified and take responsibility for deciding upon any appropriate action.
- If the child does not need hospital treatment and is judged to be able to safely remain at the club, the first aider will remove the child from its activities and, if appropriate, treat the injury/illness themselves.
- If and when the child is feeling sufficiently better, they will be resettled back into the activities but will be kept under close supervision for the remainder of the session.
- At the end of the session, the first aider will fully inform the parent/carer of the incident/accident and any treatment given.

- If the injury or illness incurred is such that treatment by the first aider is deemed inappropriate, but does not warrant hospitalisation, the parent/carer will be contacted immediately and asked to collect their child. Until the parent/carer arrives the child will be made as comfortable as possible and kept under close supervision (from this point on, the provisions of the clubs Infectious and Communicable diseases policy will govern the child's return to the Club)
- All such accidents and incidents will be recorded in detail and logged in the Accident and Incident file and parents/carers should sign to acknowledge the incident and any action that should be taken.
- The manager and other relevant members of staff should consider whether the accident or incident highlights any actual or potential weakness in the clubs policies or procedures and act accordingly, making suitable adjustments where necessary.

Medication

In circumstances where the designated First-aider is absent, the manager will assume all responsibilities or nominate an appropriately trained replacement.

- Wherever possible, children who are prescribed medication should receive their doses at home. If it is necessary for medication to be taken during sessions at the club, children should be encouraged to take personal responsibility for this where it is appropriate. Parents/carers and staff should discuss such situations at the earliest possible opportunity and decide together on the best course of action.
- Staff may only administer medication if it is prescribed by the GP, and of the request to do so is from the child's parent/carer and is given in writing at the start of the session, stating the frequency and dosage. Parents/carers can make such a request by completing and signing the Administering medication form (see appendix 4)
- Staffs have the right to decline such a request from a parent/carer if they are in any way uncomfortable with this. The club is likely to decline a request from the parent/carer to administer medication where it involves technical knowledge or training,

The procedure for administering medication at the club is as follows:

Medication will never be given without prior written request of the parent/carer and a written and signed instruction from the child's GP, including frequency, dosage, any potential side effects and any other pertinent information

A member of staff will be assigned to administer medication for each individual child concerned. They will also be responsible for ensuring that:

- All necessary details are recorded
- All the medication is properly labelled and stored safely during the session
- Another member of staff acts as a witness to ensure the correct dosage is given

- Parents/carers sign in the Medication Record file to acknowledge that the medication has been given
- If for any reason the child refuses to take their medication, staff will not attempt to force them against their wishes. If and when such a situation occurs, the manager and the child's parent/carer will be notified, and it will be recorded in the Medication Record Book.
- Staff will not administer 'over the counter' medication, only that prescribed by the GP
- Where children carry their own medication (inhalers or insulin for example), the club recommends that staff hold onto their medication until it is required. This is to minimise possible loss of medication and to ensure the safety of other children. Inhalers should always be labelled with the child's name.

If there is any change in the child's medication- whether it be dosage or other changes that differ from that given on the Administering Medication Form- a new form must be completed.

Sun protection

The manager and staff understand the dangers posed to children and themselves by over exposure to the sun.

In hot weather parents/carers are encouraged to provide sunscreen for their children. A store of sun protection should also be kept on the premises. Children will also be encouraged to wear a hat when playing outside in the sun.

When deemed necessary, staff may apply sunscreen for children who cannot do so for themselves, where prior permission has been given by the parent/carer on the Admission form (see appendix 4)

In hot weather staff will encourage children to drink water frequently. Staff should also ensure that shady areas out of the sun are available to the children when playing outside.

Closing the centre in an emergency

In very exceptional circumstances the club may need to be closed at very short notice due to an unexpected emergency. Such incidents could include:

- Serious weather conditions (combined with heating system failures)
- Burst water pipes
- Discovery of dangerous structural damage
- Fire or bomb scare/explosion
- Serious assault of a member of staff by the public
- Death of a member of staff
- Serious accident or illness

In such circumstances, the manager and staff will ensure that all steps are taken to keep both the children and themselves safe. All staff and children will assemble at the pre-arranged venue, where

a register will be taken. Steps will then be taken to inform parents/carers and to take the necessary actions in relation to the cause of the closure. All children will be supervised until they are safely collected.

Hygiene

Our club recognises the importance of maintaining the highest possible standards of hygiene on and around the premises so as to minimise the risks posed to children, staff and other visitors.

The manager and staff are committed to taking all practical steps to prevent and control the spread of infectious germs and to uphold the high standards of personal hygiene in order to minimise the risk of catching or spreading infections.

Personal hygiene

In all circumstances, staff will adhere to the following examples of good personal hygiene:

- Washing hands before and after handling food or drink
- Washing hands after using the toilet
- Encouraging children to adopt the same routines
- Covering cuts or abrasions while at the premises
- Keeping long hair tied back
- Taking any other steps that are likely to minimise the spread of infections

Hygiene in the club

The manager and all staff will be vigilant to any potential threats to good hygiene in the club. To this end, a clean and tidy environment will be maintained at all times. More specifically, the manager will ensure that the toilets are cleaned on a daily basis and that there is always enough soap and hand drying facilities for both staff and children. Staff will be vigilant to any sharp objects, such as glass, which may be on the premises.

Dealing with spillages

Spillages of substances likely to result in the spread of infections will be dealt with rapidly and carefully. Blood, vomit, urine and faeces will be cleaned up immediately and disposed of safely and hygienically. Staff will wear disposable plastic gloves and an apron while using disinfectant or bleach and they will wash themselves thoroughly afterwards. Children will be kept clear while such substances are being dealt with.

First Aid and Hygiene

Further to the provisions set out in the health, illness and emergency policy, the designated first aider will be mindful of the need to observe the highest standards of personal hygiene when administering treatment to children. As such they will wash their hands thoroughly both before and after giving First Aid and ensure that any cuts, wounds and skin damage are covered by plasters or disposable gloves.

Kitchen hygiene

All areas where food and drink are stored, prepared and eaten are prone to spread infections. Therefore, staff must be careful to observe high standards of hygiene in such instances. To ensure this, the following steps will be taken:

- Waste will be disposed of safely and all bins kept covered
- Food storage facilities will be regularly and thoroughly cleaned
- Kitchen equipment will be cleaned after every use
- Staff and children will wash and dry their hands thoroughly before coming into contact with food
- If cooking is done as an activity, all surfaces and equipment involved will thoroughly be cleaned before and after the session

Additionally staff will be aware of the provisions set out in the Food and Drinks policy when handling, preparing, cooking and serving food or drink at the club

Animals

No animals will be allowed on the premises without prior knowledge and permission of the manager. Children will be strongly discouraged from bringing pets or other animals to the club, and parents/carers are asked to help enforce this rule. If for any reason an animal does come onto the premises, the manager will be immediately informed.

Infectious and communicable disease

Our club is committed to the health and safety of all children and staff who, play, work and learn here. As such, it will sometimes be necessary to require a poorly child to be collected early from a session or be kept at home until they get better. In such cases, the provisions of the health, illness and emergency policy will be implemented.

In accordance with the procedures set out in the Health, illness and emergency policy, parents/carers will be notified immediately if their child becomes ill and needs to go home. Poorly children will be comforted, kept safe and under close supervision until they are collected.

If the child has had to go home prematurely due to illness, they should remain at home until they are better for at least 24 hours, or according to the times set out in the table below. If a member of staff becomes ill at work, similar restrictions of their return will apply.

If a child or a member of staff becomes ill outside of club hours, they should notify the club as soon as possible. The minimum exclusion periods outlined in the table below will come into operation.

If any communicable disease is detected on the clubs premises, the club will inform parents/carers personally in writing as soon as possible. The club is committed to sharing as much as information as possible to about the source of the disease and the steps being taken to remove it. Ofsted will also be informed of any infections or communicable diseases discovered on the clubs premises.

Head lice

When a case of head lice is discovered at the club, the situation will be handled carefully and safely. The child concerned will not be isolated from other children, and there is no need for them to be excluded from activities or sessions at the club.

When the child concerned is collected, their parent/carer will be informed in a sensitive manner.

Other parents/carers will be informed as quickly as possible in writing, including advice and guidance on treating head lice.

Staff should check themselves regularly for head lice and treat whenever necessary.

Minimum exclusion periods for illness and disease can be found on the 'Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings' poster. (Available from a member of staff)

Involving and consulting children

Our club, and all its members of staff are committed to the principle of involving and consulting children whenever decisions are made within the club that affect them.

The club believes that activity promoting the participation of children in decision making process is beneficial to the children, staff and the club as a whole.

The clubs commitment to involving and consulting children stems from the 'listening of the children' provisions set out in articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These state that:

- A child's opinion should be taken into account in anything that affects them
- Children should have information disseminated in a way that enables them to make choices and decisions

For children, involvement and consultation helps them to develop new skills such as negotiating, sharing and understanding the perspective of others. It helps them to understand how decisions are made. It helps them to understand how decisions are made and recognise that their opinions are important.

For both staff and the club, there are multiple benefits of such an approach such as improved behaviour, a relationship with children based on partnership, a more cohesive environment and activities and decisions that children feel a sense of ownership over.

The manager and staff will work with children to draw up a charter that will set out the expectations and responsibilities of the club, the staff team and the children in respect of consultation and involvement. Parental involvement in drawing up and implementing the character will also be encouraged.

All children will be listened to and consulted actively. This will take a number of forms, including:

- Listening to what children say in speech and other forms of communication
- Observing body language and behaviour
- Drama and role play
- Through play and creative expression and the use of visual aids
- Via regular group based discussions and Q and A sessions
- Questionnaires and other regular feedback on activities
- Notice boards that carry important information about activities at the club
- Regular children's meetings, between children and staff, discussing the club's activities and any other relevant topics

Age, maturity and the type of decision making will determine the extent and nature of children's involvement. However, the emphasis should always be strongly in favour of involving the children.

Consultation and involvement will be regularly monitored and acted upon so that children are able to see that their input has led to visible outcomes. The club and its staff will also be clear about what decisions children will be involved and attempt to offer clear explanations if and when consultation and involvement is deemed inappropriate.

Missing children

Our club has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. Staff will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions.

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore members of staff will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions (in addition to the registration procedures set out in the arrival and departures policies). If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for this child's whereabouts during a session at the club, the following procedure will be activated:

- The member of staff in question will inform the manager and the rest of the staff team that the child is missing and a thorough search of the entire premises will commence. The staff team will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children will remain safe and adequately supervised.
- The manager will nominate two members of staff, one male if possible and one female, to search the surrounding area of the premises. All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the area.
- After 15 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the manager will inform the police then the parent/carer.
- While waiting for the police and parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, other members of staff will maintain as normal a routine as possible for the rest of the children at the club.
- The manager will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer. The manager will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the police, and all the can do to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
- Once this incident is resolved, the manager and the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes. (paying particular note to the relevant provisions of the club's site security and risk assessment policies.
- All incidents of children going missing from the club will be recorded in the incident record book and in cases where either the police and social services have been informed, Ofsted will also be informed, as soon as is practical.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Our club recognises that parents/carers play a fundamental role in a child's development and this should be acknowledged as the basis for a partnership between the club and parents/carers.

The staff team is committed to working with parents/carers to provide high quality, safe and stimulating care, learning and play opportunities for children. The club aims to achieve this by:

- Ensuring that parents/carers are made to feel welcome and valued in all dealings with the club
- Ensuring that parents/carers concerns are always listened to by the club whenever they are raised. The manager will always ensure that parents/carers receive a prompt response by the club.
- Developing an information pack for parents/carers which outlines what they can expect from the club. This information pack will be given to every parent/carer when their child starts the club. A copy will be available at the clubs premises and on the website.
- Making all information and records held by the club on a child available to their parents/carers, unless it is subject to investigation by the police or other statutory agencies.
- Ensuring that the clubs policies are made available to their parents/carers on request.
- Encouraging parents/carers on the club's policies and procedures and consulting them on a regular basis about the activities that are planned and provided for their children
- Ensuring that there are regular opportunities for parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss their child's progress and any problems they may be encountering.
- Ensuring that any complaints from parents/carers are dealt with swiftly and effectively in accordance with the provisions of the Complaints Procedure policy.
- Encouraging parents/carers to undertake supportive roles in the club, such as volunteering or participating in activities, visits or outings.
- Encouraging parents/carers to help in the running of the club, including becoming involved in its management committee where appropriate.
- Providing parents/carers with formal, and if necessary, confidential means to comment on the work of the club. This will include an annual satisfaction survey.
- Keeping parents/carers up to date with any changes in the operation of the club, such as alterations to the opening times or fee levels.

Physical Environment

Our club is committed to providing children with a stimulating and safe environment. We will do all we can to make our premises welcoming and friendly to children, their parents/carers and any other visitors.

The club's premises are safe, secure and adequately spacious for its purpose. The environment and atmosphere of the club is welcoming to children and offers access to the necessary facilities for a broad and varied programme of activities.

The club is committed to taking every possible step to ensure that all children have equal access to facilities, activities and play opportunities; including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (for further details look at the special needs policy)

The club's premises comply with all the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant regulations and guidance.

The manager is responsible for ensuring that the clubs premises is clean, well lit, adequately ventilated and maintained at an appropriate temperature. Daily risk assessments are carried out, in accordance with the Risk Assessment policy, to ensure that the facilities are maintained in a suitable state of repair and decoration.

During the opening hours, the premises are solely used by and available to the club, its staff and the children, as far as this is possible.

The club will do all it can to maintain an open room layout, allowing children to use a variety of play opportunities. All children will have adequate space to play and interact freely (a minimum of 2.3 square metres per child).

There is adequate space for storing all the clubs equipment safely and securely.

Under normal circumstances, staff will ensure that there is one toilet and one wash basin with hot and cold water for every 10 children, ensuring an adequate balance between male and female facilities.

No child will be left unsupervised in the kitchen area

Members of staff will have access to a telephone on the clubs premises at all times.

Outdoor play

Any outdoor play will take place in safe, secure and well-supervised spaces. Before any outdoor activities commence, a thorough safety check and risk assessment will take place.

Ponds, drains pools or any unnatural water will be made safe, or inaccessible to children.

Any outside water features will be kept safe and inaccessible to unsupervised children. If children are involved in water sports, staff will ensure that a qualified lifeguard supervises them.

In the event of ice or snow on external walkways, staff will ensure that this is regularly cleared and kept safe.

Staff will make sure there is a regular supply of water available to children at all times, especially in hot conditions. In such circumstances, staff will also ensure that children are adequately protected from the sun, according to the provisions set out in the Health, Illness and Emergency policy.

Risk Assessment

We understand the importance of ensuring that systems are in place for checking that our club is a safe and secure place for children, staff and other visitors. Our risk assessment procedures are part of a continuous process to prevent any dangerous incident taking place. They are the responsibility of all staff as part of their daily duties.

In accordance with our duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the club is required to undertake regular risk assessments and take necessary action arising from these according to provisions set out in the Health and Safety policy and elsewhere.

The manager is responsible for making sure that risk assessments are completed, logged and effectively monitored. Reviews are conducted when there is any change to equipment or resources, any change to the clubs premises, or when particular needs of a child or other visitor necessitates this.

The manager is further responsible for conducting any necessary reviews or making changes to the club's policies or procedures in the light of any potential risks that they or other members of staff discover.

Official inspection of both the equipment and the entire premises both indoors and outdoors will be carried out daily. This will ordinarily be carried out by a designated member of staff on arrival at the club and will be completed before any child arrives.

During the session staff will be vigilant and continuously aware of any potential risk to health and safety arising from:

- The clubs environment both indoors and outdoors
- All surfaces both indoors and outdoors
- All equipment used by children or staff

On discovering a hazard, staff will take all steps necessary to making themselves and any other people potentially affected safe. They will then notify the manager and ensure that a record is made in the Incident Record File.

The manager is then responsible for ensuring that any necessary action is taken.

Recording accidents, Incidents and Dangerous Occurrences

All accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences will be recorded in either the incident record file or the accident file on the same day as the event took place.

Records must contain:

- The time, date and nature of the incident, accident or dangerous occurrence
- Details of people involved.

- The type of nature or location of any injury sustained.
- The action taken and by whom.
- The signature of the member of staff who dealt with the event, any witnessed and if deemed necessary, a counter signature of the parent/carer of the child or children involved.

Staff should inform the parents/carers of the child or children concerned at the end of the session in which the incident, accident or dangerous occurrence took place. Where this is not possible, the information will be passed on at the earliest possible opportunity.

Introduction

This policy applies to all staff including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Spring Meadows Out of School Club. It shows a commitment to protecting and safeguarding children against potential harm or actual harm. It fully accepts and promotes the principle enshrined in the Children Act 1989 that the welfare of the child is paramount.

The policy also demonstrates a commitment to working with statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other faith communities to promote the safety and welfare of children and acting promptly whenever a concern is raised about a child or about the behaviour of an adult Spring Meadows will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse is necessary

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to respecting them
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Spring Meadows will endeavour to safeguard the children who are members or who attend activities we organise or facilitate by following the procedure if a concern is raised about a child's welfare.

The definition of a child for the purpose of this document is anyone under the age of 18 years.

Important contacts

Spring Meadows has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any safeguarding concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for workers to consult with.

The named persons for Child Protection within Spring Meadows are:

Named person for safeguarding	Louise Prior (Stevenage & Hoddesdon)
Work telephone number	07738570321
Mobile number	07738570321
Deputy name of contact person	Roma Marshall or Abigail Mallon (Stevenage Site) Alison Sharman (Hoddesdon Site)
Work telephone number	07967 511247 (Roma) 07792591613 (Abigail Mallon) 07818080043 (Alison)
Mobile number	07967 511247 (Roma) 07792591613 (Abigail Mallon) 07818080043 (Alison)

Other key contacts

Children's Services	0300 123 4043 (including out of hours)
Police (CAIU)	0845 33 00 222 (or in an emergency 999)
NSPCC	0808 800 5000

Further useful contacts are listed in Appendix 5

Responsibilities of individuals in implementing this policy and procedure

All members of Spring Meadows are to:

- *Understand and apply this policy and procedure in their activities;*
- *Identify opportunities and undertake appropriate training to support them in their role;*
- *Act appropriately at all times and be able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in others;*
- *Be able to recognise harm; and*
- *Know how to report any concerns in a timely and appropriate way.*

In addition, senior members of the organisation are to:

- *Encourage all staff and volunteers to understand this policy and procedure*
- *Offer opportunities to undertake appropriate safeguarding training and refresher training*
- *Ensure that the policy and procedure is adhered to and to undertake regular compliance audits*
- *Ensure that a whistle blowing policy is developed, agreed and communicated with all staff and volunteers*

The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- *To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person maybe subject to abuse or neglect.*
- *Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.*
- *The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Safeguarding policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.*

Outcomes for children and their families

In developing this policy Spring Meadows intends that it will promote the welfare of children and young people attending and taking part in activities.

Children and young people and their parents / carers can be assured that Spring Meadows takes their welfare seriously and wants them to enjoy the activities in a safe and secure environment.

Every adult who works with or on behalf of Spring Meadows is aware of the contents of this policy and understands what the reporting procedures are if there are any activities that may be unsafe or may present a risk of harm, or if the child or young person (or their parent(s) / carer(s)) makes a disclosure of abuse or an allegation against an adult working with them. Such disclosures or allegations will be taken very seriously to ensure that the child is protected.

All adults working for or with Spring Meadows will have been appropriately recruited, DBS checks will be applied for and references taken up. Their induction into the organisation will include basic child protection training and a briefing on this policy.

Policy statement

In implementing this child protection /safeguarding policy Spring Meadows will

- Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation by including training on Child Protection in their induction and in subsequent training that is undertaken;
- Ensure that all workers understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the organisation's Child Protection Procedures and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice;
- Ensure that all workers are aware of HSCB Inter-agency child protection & safeguarding children procedures and are confident in how to work within these guidelines by ensuring their attendance at training and at subsequent refresher training organised by the HSCB.
- Ensure that all workers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's named person for child protection;
- Ensure that a named person responsible for child protection is appointed and that they understand their responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Children's Services (CS));
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner;
- Provide opportunities for all workers to develop their skills and knowledge, particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people;
- Ensure that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the organisation's Complaints Procedure;
- Ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of the organisation and, when requested, have access to all guidelines and procedures;
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

- Ensure that appropriate background checks are undertaken when anyone joins the organisation and before they start working directly with children and young people.
- Ensure that all people working directly with children and young people have at least a basic understanding of child protection and as part of their training have at the very least undertaken an online, certificated child protection course.

Legal framework

The Children Act 1989 sets out that the child's welfare is paramount and safeguarding and promoting it is the priority.

The Children Act 2004 set out a duty on Local Authorities to work closely with those providing services to children and young people.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013](#) sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and how practitioners should conduct the assessment of children:

'Safeguarding children - the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.'

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out key principles which are enshrined within these acts and the statutory guidance. From 15 January 1992, when the treaty came into force, every child in the UK has been entitled to over 40 specific rights. These include:

- the right to life, survival and development
- the right to have their views respected, and to have their best interests considered at all times
- the right to a name and nationality, freedom of expression, and access to information concerning them
- the right to live in a family environment or alternative care, and to have contact with both parents wherever possible
- health and welfare rights, including rights for disabled children, the right to health and health care, and social security
- the right to education, leisure, culture and the arts
- special protection for refugee children, children in the juvenile justice system, children deprived of their liberty and children suffering economic, sexual or other forms of exploitation

The rights included in the convention apply to all children and young people, with no exceptions (<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/healthandwellbeing/b0074766/uncrc>)

Recognising abuse and neglect

Definition of abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. 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 for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

An abused child is any boy or girl, under 18 years of age, who has suffered from, or is believed likely to be, at risk of significant risk of physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse.

Physical abuse

(including when masqueraded as discipline and chastisement)¹

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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Physical abuse often arises from a wish to chastise. English law allows smacking by parents in that parents can use the defence of “reasonable chastisement” but only in a charge of common assault.

The introduction of section 54 of the Children Act 2004 changed the law, to remove the reasonable chastisement defence for actual bodily harm. Actual bodily harm includes minor visible injuries such as a graze, a scratch, an abrasion or bruising around the eye. Common assault implies a transient trifling injury such as reddening of the skin or no injury at all. The use of an implement to hit a child though not specifically prohibited is more likely to leave a mark. Thus the law allows a parent to smack a child where doing so leaves no mark upon the skin, so only light smacks are permitted. “Over chastisement” which implies at least actual bodily harm would be against the law and the reasonable chastisement defence would not apply. This means, for example, that a parent can no longer justify beating a child on the grounds that the child is difficult to raise.

Although the reasonable chastisement defence only applies to the criminal law the concept influences decisions taken in the family courts. The defence applies only to parents and adults acting in loco parentis with the parent’s permission. Physical chastisement, i.e. corporal

¹

punishment, of any form has been prohibited in state schools since 1986, private since 1998 and by child minders since 2003.

It is important that all professionals treat injuries caused to children by their parents as an assault and do not condone or excuse this because their intention was to discipline the child. Professionals should be cautious about referring to such assaults as “over-chastisement” as this can have the effect of minimising the impact on the child of the injuries or implying the child’s behaviour was a contributory cause.

There is evidence that even smacking allowed within the law is harmful to children. For example, minor forms of regular smacking of pre-school children is associated with an increased risk of antisocial behaviour after 2-3 years even when allowing for other parenting risk factors and the presence of such behaviour at study. Maternal depression and violence between adult partners are associated with a greater risk of smacking children than either factor present alone regardless of child behaviour. Parents who experience physical punishment in their childhood are more likely to smack their own children.

The following definition is taken from [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013](#), p85:

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 harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for gym
- Bald patches
- Chronic running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Emotional Abuse

The following definition is taken from [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013](#), p85:

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Physical, mental and emotional development delay
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Sexual abuse

The following definition is taken from [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013](#), p86:

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

Neglect

The following definition is taken from [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013](#), p86:

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- *provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);*
- *protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;*
- *ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or*
- *ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.*

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone.

Bullying

Bullying affects everyone at some point in their lives. It may be at school, at college, in an activity group or club, in the workplace or even at home.

Parents, carers, teachers and others working with children have a duty to take action if they suspect or discover that child(ren) are being bullied.

Bullying includes:

- People calling you names
- Making things up to get another person into trouble
- Hitting, pinching, biting, pushing and shoving
- Taking things away from someone
- Damaging another persons belongings
- Stealing someone's money
- Taking someone friends away from them
- ['Cyberbullying'](#)
- Spreading rumours
- Threats and intimidation
- Making silent or abusive phone calls
- Bullies can also frighten the victim so that they don't want to go to school or take part in other activities. The victim may pretend to be ill to avoid the bully

Developing a 'code of conduct' with children and young people can assist with minimising the opportunity for bullying and encourage their participation in the activities of the group.

Steps to follow if you are worried about a child or *if a child confides in you*

Spring Meadows recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse and believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts, hesitations, or other considerations (such as the potential to have a negative impact on professional relationships with a family). When worrying changes are observed in a child's or young person's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, staff will follow the steps set out below.

If a child confides in you:

- *Stay calm, approachable and open to what they have to say*
- *Listen to them carefully without interrupting*
- *Make it clear that you are taking what they are telling you seriously*
- *Acknowledge that you understand how difficult this might be for them to say what they are saying*
- *Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling someone*
- *Let them know that you will do everything you can to help them*
- *Do not show any shock or disgust;*
- *Do not probe further;*
- *Do not ask leading questions that might suggest the answer;*
- *Do not make assumptions;*
- *Do not make any comments about the alleged abuser;*
- *Do not make promises you cannot keep, particularly about keeping the information 'secret', but explain that you may need to share it with an appropriate person;*
- *Do not discuss with colleagues apart from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or their deputy); and*
- *Follow the steps set out below*

Step 1

- Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay? But never use leading questions
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously;
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child/young person talks about matters that may be indicative of abuse;
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others, if this indicates they and or other children are at risk of harm;

- Notify the organisation's Named Person for Child Protection / Safeguarding
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure on the form attached at Appendix 1 and send to the Named Person for Child Protection / Safeguarding;
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;

Step 2

- The Named person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person will contact the police and/or Children's Services (CS). If a referral is made direct to CS this must be followed up in writing within 24 hrs.

NB Parents / carers will need to be informed about any referral to CS unless to do so would place the child at an increased risk of harm.

- The named person can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern through CS **0300 123 4043** or from the NSPCC National Child Protection on **0808 800 5000**. Specific advice about issues concerning South Asian children can be sought on the NSPCC National Child Protection Asian Helpline on **0800 096 7719**.

Professionals, employees, managers, helpers, carers and volunteers in all agencies must make a referral to Children's Services:

- If it is believed or suspected that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, or
- Where a professional has identified unmet need in relation to a Child in Need

A referral must be made as soon as possible when any concern of significant harm becomes known - the greater the level of perceived risk, the more urgent the action should be.

IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD YOU HAVE A DUTY TO REFER

The belief or suspicion about significant harm may be based on information which comes from different sources. It may come from a member of the public, the child concerned, another child, a family member or other professional staff. It may relate to a single incident or an accumulation of lower level concerns.

The information may also relate to harm caused by another child, in which case both children, i.e. the suspected perpetrator and victim, must be referred. The suspicion or allegation may relate to a parent or professional or volunteer caring for or working with the child - see managing allegations against an adult who works with children or young people.

A referral must be made even if it is known that Children's Services (social care) are already involved with the child/family

Professionals may seek advice and consultation about the appropriateness of a referral by contacting the Children's Services Targeted Advice Service (see below) or, if the case is open, from the allocated social worker. Alternatively advice may be sought from the Police or a [Designated Professional](#) or [Named Professional](#) within your agency.

Safer staffing and DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks

Every organisation has its own processes for recruiting to paid and unpaid work. The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board sets out guidance in the Safe Staffing Handbook:

http://www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk/adults/files/Safe_Staffing_Handbook.pdf

Key points to consider including are DBS checks (see http://www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk/adults/prof_Disclosure_and_Barring_Service.html) for staff or volunteers working directly with children or who have frequent contact with children through your organisation. Ideally, references should be taken up in advance of them commencing with the organisation and these should be checked.

Any staff or volunteers who have not been vetted prior to working with children should be closely supervised and never be left alone with a child in a one to one situation.

Managing allegations against an adult who works with children or young people

Whenever it is alleged a person who works with children has in any activity connected with her/his employment or voluntary activity:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against / related to a child
- Behaved toward a child in a way which indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

The procedures apply to situations when:

- There are suspicions or allegations of abuse by a person who works with children in either a paid or unpaid capacity - as a permanent, temporary or agency staff member, contract worker, consultant, volunteer, approved foster carer, child minder or approved adopter
- It is discovered that an individual known to have been involved previously in child abuse, is or has been working with children

If concerns arise about the person's behaviour to her/his own children, Police and/or Children's Services (social care) must consider informing her/his employer in order to assess whether there may be implications for children with whom the person has contact at work. A decision as to whether the person's employer should be approached, either for further information and/or whether it is appropriate to invite the employer to a future strategy meeting when decisions are to be made about managing the possible risk, should be made at the initial strategy meeting when all agencies can contribute. The risk that someone presents needs to be properly considered and a decision made whether the risk outweighs the employee's right to confidentiality before an employer is approached. If an allegation relating to a child is made about a person undertaking paid or unpaid care of vulnerable adults, consideration must also be given to the need to alert those who manage her/him in that role.

Procedure

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification, it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

Actions to be taken include making a written record of the allegation using the informant's words - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said and anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. The recipient of an allegation must **not** unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

If there is an immediate or imminent risk of significant harm to a child or young person, you should contact Children's Services (social care) or the Police and then speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to inform them of the actions you have taken and follow this up in writing on the form attached at Appendix 1.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must take steps to ensure that the person against whom the allegation is removed from the situation immediately. This may be done by either agreement or suspension from the organisation until the matter has been fully investigated.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the [Managing Allegations against Adults who work with Children and Young People](#) policy in the HSCB manual by referring the issue to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Any member of staff who believes that allegations or suspicions, which have been reported to the appropriate manager, are not being investigated properly has a responsibility to report it to a higher level in her/his agency or directly to the LA Designated Officer.

The LA Designated Officer must be told, within one working day, of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and appear to meet the criteria so that s/he can consult or refer to the Police Designated Unit Manager and Children's Services (social care) as appropriate.

If, for any reason, there are difficulties with following the above procedure, the Whistle Blowing Procedure should be considered or a referral made directly to Children and Families (Social Care) and / or the Police.

The need for consultation must not delay a referral, which should be in accordance with

Referral procedure.

The employer should keep the subject of allegations informed of progress in the case and arrange to provide appropriate support (via Occupational Health or equivalent). If the person is suspended, s/he should be kept informed of development in the workplace and if a member of a Trades Union or professional association, advised at the outset to contact that body.

Confidentiality

Information about a referral about a child or an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to:

- Protect children
- Facilitate enquiries
- Avoid victimisation
- Safeguard the rights of the person about whom the allegation has been made and others who might be affected
- Manage disciplinary/complaints aspects
-

The Named Person for Safeguarding may ask you for further information in order to make any referrals. You should not discuss or share this information with anyone else within the organisation. Any paperwork you have generated should be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet, or if stored on a computer it should be password protected.

Managing activities involving children and young people

When managing an activity involving children and young people, it is important to consider a risk assessment, both in terms of the health and safety of the participants, but also of the potential child protection issues.

Each activity should have a risk assessment undertaken to consider what level and impact of risk there may be to the children and to the staff or volunteers.

Record keeping

Whilst record keeping may seem overly bureaucratic from time to time, it is important to keep good and clear records of the work of your organisation. It is particularly important to keep a register of attendance and a fire register and emergency contact details for all children and adults working with you

Any details must be kept securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

You should also store copies of your risk assessments for activities (see the next section).

Good record keeping promotes confidence in the organisation and in the safety of children who are participating in the activities.

Risk management

'As an employer, Spring Meadows has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed - requiring them to be reduced to an "acceptable" or "tolerable" level. This requires that proportional (suitable and sufficient) risk management systems are in place, requiring Spring Meadows to provide such support, training and resources to its employees as is necessary to implement this policy.

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. Spring Meadows strongly recommends a “Risk-Benefit Assessment” approach, whereby the starting point for any risk assessment should be a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes. This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is “acceptable”. We advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

There is a legal requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual, or harm several people.

Taking photographs or videos of children

From time to time photographs may be taken on behalf of the organisation of children participating in activities.

If photos are taken for personal use they are not covered by the Data Protection Act 1998.

Photos taken for official use may be covered by the Act, so children and young people should be advised why they are being taken.

Examples

Personal use

- A parent takes a photograph of their child and some friends taking part in the school sports day to be put in the family photo album. These images are for personal use and the Data Protection Act does not apply.
- Grandparents are invited to the school nativity play and wish to video it. These images are for personal use and the Data Protection Act does not apply.

Official use

- Photographs of pupils or students are taken for building passes. These images are likely to be stored electronically with other personal data and the terms of the Act will apply.
- A small group of pupils are photographed during a science lesson and the photo is to be used in the school prospectus. This will be personal data but will not breach the Act as long as the children and/or their guardians are aware this is happening and the context in which the photo will be used.

Media use

- A photograph is taken by a local newspaper of a school awards ceremony. As long as the school has agreed to this, and the children and/or their guardians are aware that photographs of those attending the ceremony may appear in the newspaper, this will not breach the Act.

If photographs need to be taken for an official reason, e.g. ID cards etc, then the Data Protection Act 1998 applies and the child / young person and their parents / carers should be informed of the reasons for taking the photograph, the purpose it will be used for and how it will be stored.

If parents are invited to an activity and they wish to take photographs, the images are for their personal use and the Data Protection Act will not apply. However, as the organiser of the event, if you wish to take photographs for publicity material or for promotion of your group or activity, you should first gain the consent of the parents / carers using the form at Appendix 3.

Appendix 2 - code of conduct for all staff and volunteers

Always remember that while you are caring for other people's children you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times.

DO NOT:

- Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting
- Smoke in front of any child
- Use non-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child.
- Use any racist, sexist, homophobic, discriminatory or offensive language
- Invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times
- Engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a child you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.
- Engage in rough or physical games, including horseplay
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Rely upon good nature to protect you or believe 'it could never happen to me'
- Give children presents or personal items *

*(Exceptions to this could be a custom such as: buying children a small birthday token or leaving present, help to a family in need such as equipment to enable them to participate in an activity. Both types of gift should come from the organisation and from a professional capacity and be agreed with the named person for safeguarding children and the child's parent/carer. Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations, which you should mention to the activity leader)

DO:

- Exercise caution about being alone with a child. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker or volunteer knows what you are doing and where you are.
- Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset. Always prompt children to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help.
- Talk explicitly to children about their right to be kept safe from harm
- Listen to children and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- Work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from children and be consistent in enforcing it
- Remember if you have to speak to a child about their behaviour you are challenging 'what they did', not 'who they are'.

- Make sure you have read the safeguarding children procedure and policy statement and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.
- Seek advice and support from your colleagues and your designated champion for safeguarding children
- Be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and wellbeing of a child that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself.
- Seek opportunities for training
- Where possible encourage parents to take responsibility for their own children.
- Make sure you are familiar with your organisation's confidentiality policy and the HSCB Information Sharing Protocol.

E Safety Advice for professionals who work with children, when using any form of ICT, including the Internet².

For your own protection it is advised that you follow this advice:

- Ensure all electronic communication with children, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with the policies of the organisation.
 - Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook and YouTube.
 - Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend anyone connected to your setting, member of the community or be incompatible with your professional role.
 - Use your organisation's or setting's ICT systems and resources for all official business. This includes your business email address, business mobile phone or photography equipment.
 - Do not give out your own personal details, such as mobile phone number, personal e-mail address or social network details to children, parents, carers and others.
 - Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data is kept secure and used appropriately.
 - Only take images of children and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with business policy. Ensure that the parent/carer of any child under 18 has given written consent.
 - Ensure that any images are represented only in a positive context and are removed from your websites when they expire.
 - Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
 - Ensure that your online activity, **both in work and outside**, will not bring your organisation or professional role into disrepute.
 - You have a duty to report any eSafety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or your organisation.
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Appendix 3 - image consent form for use by staff and volunteers

We sometimes take photographs or video footage for publicity purposes. These images may appear in our printed publications and publicity materials, on our website, or both.

We may also send the images to the news media, who may use them in printed publications and on their website, and store them in their archive. They may also syndicate the photos to other media for possible use, either in printed publications, or on websites, or both. When we submit photographs and information to the media, we have no control on when, where, if or how they will be used.

The images we take will be of activities that show the children / vulnerable adults / day services / service users / council staff / organisation in a positive light. The images will not be associated with negative, distressing or sensitive issues to do with an individual's welfare or that may cause offence or embarrassment.

It is the responsibility of the senior staff to ensure that consent is obtained from parents/guardians/social workers, and that children or vulnerable adults who are at risk or cannot have their photograph taken for legal or social reasons, are not in the photograph.

Please note that our websites can be viewed throughout the world, not just in the United Kingdom where UK law applies. In giving your consent, you understand that the photos may be used in both printed and electronic form.

We will take all reasonable measures to ensure the images are used solely for the purposes for which they are intended. However we cannot guarantee this and take no responsibility for the way images are used by other websites or publishers, or for any consequences arising from publication.

To give your consent, please answer the questions overleaf, then sign and date the form where shown and fill in any other relevant information.

Settling in

All children are unique and the amount of time that a child takes to settle into our club can vary enormously. Therefore, children will be given time to settle in at their own pace, so as to make them feel welcome, safe and confident in their new environment.

The club strongly encourages parents/carers to visit the premises with their children during the week before they are due to start. During this week, the club requires that parents/carers concerned both complete the return the Admission Form (see appendix 4)

Children new to the club will be greeted in a warm friendly manner. They will be introduced to all members of staff and told about any other regular visitors to the club.

Depending on age and maturity of the child, the parent/carer will stay with the child while the rules and routines are being explained. The parent/carer will have the option of being part of the induction process if they wish.

Children will be informed about the clubs routines and programme of activities. They will be shown around the club, told where they can and cannot go, and have both registration and signing out procedures made clear.

Ground rules will be explained to the child and they will be encouraged to ask questions and raise any concerns. The child will be told about the fire evacuation procedure and the location of all fire exits, according to the provisions of the Fire Safety Policy.

Parents/carers are offered the opportunity to stay with their child for a period of time during their first week.

On their first day, children will be introduced to other children at the club. The child will be allocated a 'buddy' who, under the supervision of a member of staff, will show them around the club and introduce them to the other children. The child will then be encouraged to get to know the other children. The child will then be encouraged to get to know the other children and settle into the group.

All staff will supervise children new to the club to ensure they are happy with their new surroundings. The appropriate level of such supervision will be judged according to the child's age, maturity and previous experiences.

Staff will ask how a child is feeling on a regular basis, what activities they enjoy and if they are unhappy about anything. At the end of the first, second and third weeks, the manager will find some time to talk to the child about how they are settling in.

If it seems that a child is taking a long time to settle in, this will be discussed with their parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Likewise, if a parent/carer feels there is a problem during the settling in period, they should raise this with a member of staff.

Staff will always be available to discuss any concerns or other issues with parents/carers regarding their child and their attendance at the club. If parents/carers wish to meet with the manager, they should make an appointment to come in for a chat.

Site Security

Our club is committed to providing care and learning for children in a safe and secure environment. All staff have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that they have continuous regard for the safety and security of all children at the club.

Parents/carers are encouraged to talk to their children about the importance of staying safe and not leaving the clubs premises during the session.

These messages will be reinforced by both the club and its staff.

Safety and security procedures will be regularly reviewed by the manager in consultation with staff and parents/carers.

Staff and any other authorised person who are regular visitors to the club will be issued with wither an identity badge or clearly identifiable clothing, which they are expected to wear at all times while on the clubs premises.

Supervision

Children will not be left unsupervised at any time during activity sessions. In the event of staff shortages, available space will be restricted to ensure children are adequately supervised, in accordance with the staff ration provisions set out in the Staffing Policy.

The manager will allocate responsibility to individual members of staff for observing and supervising the main entrance and exit points at the beginning and end of the session.

Visitors

The club has a visitor's book which is kept close to the main entrance in which visitors must sign on arrival, alongside giving the following information:

- Their name
- Date and time of their arrival
- The reason for their visit
- Their expected departure time

Visitors to the club will not be left unsupervised with children at any time.

Staff have a duty to approach any visitor on the premises who has not signed in. They must introduce themselves and establish immediately who the visitor is and the reason for them being

on the clubs premises. If the visitor has no suitable reason to be on the clubs premises, then they will be asked to leave immediately and escorted off of the premises. If the visitor refuses to leave, the police will be called immediately.

A record will be made of any such incidents in the Incident Record file and the manager will be immediately notified.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Our club strongly prohibits the use or possession of cigarettes, alcohol and illegal drugs on our premises at any time. If staff, students, volunteers or children are found to have broken the rules in respect of this policy, it will be treated as a very serious disciplinary matter.

All staff will be made aware of the provisions of this policy during this introduction, including the importance of them, setting a positive example to children. All children will be made aware of the rules during their settling in period. Any contravention of the provisions of this policy will be dealt with under the clubs staff disciplinary procedure and behavioural management policies.

Drugs

Staff, students, volunteers or children who arrive at the club clearly under the influence of illegal drugs, will be asked to leave immediately and disciplinary procedures implements.

If a child is found in possession of illegal drugs on the premises, their parents/carers will be informed at the end of the session. If staff are found in possession of illegal drugs, serious disciplinary action will follow.

In cases where staff are taking prescribed drugs which may affect their ability to function effectively at work the manager must be informed as early as possible.

If a member of staff has good reason to suspect that a parent/carer is under the influence of illegal drugs when they drop off or collect their child, they have a duty to inform both the manager and the designated child protection officer, according to the provisions of the child protection policy.

In such circumstances the manager and the child protection officer will then be responsible for deciding upon the appropriate course of action, ensuring that the safety and the protection of the child remains paramount at all times.

Staff will make all possible efforts that children are not allowed to travel in a vehicle driven by someone who is clearly under the illegal influences of drugs.

Where an illegal act is suspected to have taken place the police will be called.

Alcohol

Staff, students, volunteers of children who arrive at the club clearly under the influence of alcohol will be asked to leave immediately and disciplinary procedures will follow.

If a child is found in possession of alcohol on the premises, their parent/carer will be informed at the end of the session. Staff are strongly advised not to bring alcohol onto the clubs premises.

If a member of staff has good reason to suspect that a parent/carer is under the influence of alcohol when they drop off or collect their child, to the extent that the safety of the child is

threatened they have a duty to inform both the manager and the designated child protection officer according to the provisions of the Child Protection policy.

The manager and the child protection officer will be responsible for deciding upon the appropriate course of action, ensuring that the safety and protection of the child remains paramount at all times.

Staff will make all possible efforts to ensure children are not allowed to travel in a vehicle driven by someone who is clearly over the legal alcohol limit.

Where an illegal act is suspected to have taken place the police will be called.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the premises. These rules apply equally to staff, students, volunteers, children, parents/carers or any other visitors. If a child is found in possession of a cigarette on the premises, they will be confiscated and their parents/carers will be informed at the end of the session.

Special Needs

Our club is aware that some children have special educational needs and/or physical disabilities that require particular support and assistance. We are committed to taking appropriate action to make sure that all children are able to access our services, made to feel welcome, and that our activities promote their welfare and development.

The club is committed to the integration of all children in its care. The club also believes that children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities have a right to play, learn and be able to develop to their full potential alongside other children. Whenever possible, children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities will have access to the same facilities, activities and play opportunities as their peers. Everybody stands to gain if all children are allowed to share the same opportunities and are helped to overcome any disadvantages they may face.

The policies, procedures and practices of the club in relation to children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities are consistent with current legislation and guidance. These include the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The club believes that by identifying individual needs and taking proactive steps alongside parents/carers and other statutory professionals or agencies, all children should be able to play a full, active and equal part in the clubs activities.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator

The manager will appoint a member or staff as the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator to manage provision for the children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities. This individual will be fully trained and experienced in the care and assessment of such children.

All members of staff will be expected to assist the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator in caring for children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities. The co-ordinators responsibilities will include:

- Working alongside the manager to ensure that all staff are aware of all legislation, regulations and other guidance on working with children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities.
- Working with the manager to ensure that all staff who work with children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities have appropriate skills and training.
- Co-ordinating regular monitoring and reviews of children's progress; involving parents and carers, other members of staff, relevant representatives from statutory agencies and, if appropriate, the child themselves. Alongside the manager, they will also be responsible for ensuring that any actions following such reviews are followed through.

- Assessing each child's specific needs and adapting the club's facilities, procedures, practices and activities as appropriate.
- Ensuring that systems are in place to adequately plan, implement, monitor, review and evaluate the Special Needs policy.
- Ensuring that children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities are fully considered when activities are being planned and prepared.
- Liaising with parents/carers about the needs of their children and the plans and actions of the club, as well as being the point of contact for parents/carers.
- Liaising with other agencies and seeking advice, support and training for themselves and other staff as is necessary.
- Supporting other members of staff to become more skilled and experienced in the care of children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities.
- Ensuring that all children are treated with equal concern and respect and are encouraged to take part in all activities.
- Ensuring that accurate observations and assessments of children's progress are regularly made and properly recorded.

Staff Development and Training

Staff is the club's most valuable resource, as it is only through their commitment and effort that good quality provision can be both established and maintained. We are therefore committed to providing good training and development opportunities for staff so that they are able to perform their roles both efficiently and effectively.

The club recognises that regular training and monitoring of professional development is important for all staff. Staff development and training is vital because it allows staff to keep up to date with current thinking and practice in both play and child development issues.

The club is committed to providing staff:

- A full induction process
- A regular system of appraisals
- An up to date record of staff qualifications and training.

This will help ensure that staff development needs are being met and the qualifications are meeting the requirements of the club and the National Standards.

Staff inductions

New members of staff will be issued with a job description and a copy of the clubs policies and procedures. Staff will undergo an induction process for the first month of their employment and assigned a mentor to help them settle in.

As part of the induction, the mentor will discuss the everyday practices of the club. These include:

- Showing new staff around the premises, showing all fire exits, toilets and areas such as the staff room and kitchen.
- Explaining staff shifts and aspects of the day-to-day running of the club.
- Introducing the new member of staff to their colleagues, children and parents/carers when appropriate
- Pointing out all practical implications of the clubs policies and practices, including how they relate to the clubs obligations under the national standards.

Staff appraisal and supervision

The main objective of the clubs appraisal and supervision system is to review employees' performance and potential, and to identify suitable and appropriate training and developmental needs

Appraisals will take the form of an annual meeting between the staff and the manager. They will be used to identify current knowledge, skills and areas of future development and training needs.

Supervisions will take the form of regular monthly discussions between the staff and the manager and will be an ideal opportunity on reflecting on recent professional progress.

The appraisal and supervision process will be used to build up a personal development plan for each member of staff.

Staff Meetings

Where appropriate, these will be fortnightly staff meetings for problem solving and information sharing. There are also opportunities for staff to reflect on their work performance.

Personal development planning

Personal development planning is a continuous process to ensure that the staff needs are both identified and acted upon as they arise. It is the joint responsibility of both the staff and the manager to ensure the plan is kept up to date and the decisions are followed through.

Training Opportunities

The club will do all it can to support the staff who are working towards improving their qualifications and experience. All staff are encouraged to take up training opportunities to expand their professional development.

It is the responsibility of the manager to identify and promote suitable training courses for staff and strongly encourage them to take advantage of these.

It will be expected to attend training courses and update skills when they are requested by their manager. Staff will not suffer financially for any training they are required to undertake.

Specific training courses in food hygiene, equal opportunities, child protection, special educational needs, data protection and health and safety are required and staff must always attend courses when requested.

Staff Disciplinary Procedures

Our staff will maintain a well-motivated, highly skilled and professional staff team. However, occasionally action will need to be taken to encourage improvement in individual behaviour and performance.

The club will provide a fair method of dealing with disciplinary incidents our aim is to always to support and encourage staff, while prompting good employment relations.

If a member of staff is subject to disciplinary action, fair and consistent procedures will be employed:

- The incident will be fully investigated and facts established
- Investigations will be non-discriminatory and apply equally to all staff irrespective of sex, marital status, sexual preference, race or disability
- At every stage, the member of staff concerned will be advised of the nature of the complaint and given an explanation for any penalty imposed.
- Staff will be given the opportunity to state their case, and be accompanied by a friend , colleague or trade union representative of their choice, during any part of the disciplinary process.
- Staff will not be dismissed for the first breach of discipline unless in the case of gross misconduct.
- Staff have a right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them.
- Investigations will be conducted by either the manager or the registered person.

The staff disciplinary procedure operates as follows:

Informal Discussion

The manager will make every effort to resolve the matter by discussions with the parties concerned. Only where this fails to bring about improvement will result in disciplinary procedures to be formally implemented.

Formal verbal warning

Once a formal verbal warning has been given by the manager, the member of staff in question will be notified and given an explanation for this. They will be informed of their right to appeal and a note kept of the clubs records. This will be disregarded after 6 months of satisfactory performance.

Written warning

Following the formal verbal warning, if there is no improvement in standards, or a further incident takes place, a written warning will take place. A reason will be given and if there is not resolution after a month a final written warning will be given. This will be kept in the clubs records, but disregarded after 12 months subject to conduct or performance.

Final written warning

If the staff members' behaviour continues to be unsatisfactory, of the misconduct serious, a final written warning will be given making it clear that any further breach of standards may result in the employees' dismissal. A copy of this will be kept in the clubs record, but disregarded after 24 months, subject to satisfactory conduct and or performance. The warning will state clearly that dismissal will result from a failure to comply.

Gross Misconduct

If, after investigation, it is deemed that a member of staff has committed an act of the following nature, dismissal will be the normal outcome:

- Child abuse
- Serious infringement of Health and Safety rules
- Assaulting another person
- Persistent bullying, sexual or racial harassment
- Being unfit for work through alcohol or illegal drug use.
- Gross negligence which either causes or might cause injury, loss or damage to persons or property.
- Theft, fraud or deliberate falsification of the clubs documents
- Deliberate damage to club property
- Being an unfit person under the terms of the Care Standards 2000 or the Children's Act 1989

While the alleged incident of gross misconduct is being investigated, the individual concerned is likely to be suspended.

If the staff member has been found to have committed an act of gross misconduct they will be dismissed without notice.

Allegations against staff

All staff are advised to minimise the amount of time spent alone with children and to be aware of potential risks in doing so.

If an allegation of abuse had been made against a member of staff, the manager will follow the procedures of the child protection policy.

If an allegation of abuse is made against the manager, then another designated member of staff will report the matter to the registered person, local social services department and Ofsted.

Appeals

Staff wishing to appeal against a disciplinary decision, must do so in 15 working days of the decision being communicated. Appeals will be dealt with as quickly as possible and within at least a further

15 days. If possible, the Registered Person, or a senior member of staff who was not involved in the original disciplinary action, will hear the appeal and impartially adjudicate the case.

At all stages of the procedure, the right to appeal will be confirmed as part of the warning, suspension or dismissal letter.

Staffing Policy

Our club is committed to placing the best interests of children's welfare, care and development at the centre of all staffing matters.

- The manager will arrange regular staff meetings where all staff are able to discuss and contribute in a positive matter. The manager should encourage staff to contribute to the development and quality of the programme or activities provided
- Members of staff are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a professional, warm, helpful and consistent manner.
- Members of staff are expected to display both knowledge and understanding of multi-cultural issues and a commitment to treating all children as individuals and with equal concern and respect.
- Members of staff will have regard for maintaining appropriate dress and personal appearance for working with children and with awareness of health and safety issues.
- Personal mobiles must be switched off and not used during working hours. If staff do need to receive an emergency call, the person calling them should use the main club number.
- The manager will ensure that space is made ensuring the work day for staff to take regular breaks, ensuring that no member of staff exceeds the legal limit of six hours consecutive work without a break

Terms and Conditions

The club is committed to promoting family friendly employment practices to help staff balance work and family commitments. The club will make every effort to be flexible with staff and promote harmonious working relations, through trade unions and other organisations.

The club will work with staff and their main representatives to ensure that all employment legislation and regulations- including Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Paternity Pay, Parental Leave, Statutory Sick Pay and Working Time Regulations- are abided by.

In return, the club expects honesty, loyalty and diligence from its staff.

The written detail of employment contracts, including rates and levels of pay and other terms and conditions, are the responsibility of the registered person.

Qualifications, Experience and Safety checks

The manager and all staff will be suitably qualified, have relevant experience and have undergone full Criminal Records Bureau checks.

The staff will not employ staff that have been convicted of an offence or have been the subject of an order that disqualifies them for registration under regulations made under schedule 9A of the Children's act 1989. Criminal records will be updated every three years.

No person who has not received full Criminal Record Bureau checks, but who is on the premises will be left alone.

The manager will have at least an NVQ level 3 qualification appropriate to the pose, along with at least two years' experience of working in a day care setting.

Standards of Behaviour

Under no circumstances should any arguments or disagreements between members of staff occur in the presence of children or parents/carers.

No smoking, alcohol or drug use on the premises.

No bullying, swearing, harassment or victimisation will be tolerated on the clubs premises.

Offensive behaviour such as sexist or racist language or harassment will not be tolerated.

All staff are expected to treat everyone respectfully at all times and inappropriate behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.

Staff to Children Ratios

The club is conscious of the importance of maintaining adequate staff to child ratios, ensuring that children are cared for safely and given adequate attention and support. In all cases the minimum staffing ratio for children aged 3-7 will be 1:8. For children aged over 8, the club will make every effort to maintain a ratio of staff to children of at least 1:10.

The manager will ensure that there are always at least 3 members of staff on duty at the premises at any given time.

The manager will further ensure that suitable and sufficient contingency plans are in place to cover emergencies, unexpected staff absences, staff breaks, holidays and sickness.

Confidentiality

Staffs have a right to privacy, as do children and their parents/carers. Personal details should not be discussed except in exceptional circumstances.

Staff will not talk about individual incidents or the behaviour of children in front of parents/carers and other children.

Under no circumstances should staff provide any information about children to any branch of the media. All media enquiries should be passed in the first instance to the manager.

Further details of the clubs confidentiality procedures are set out in the documentation and information policy.

Absences

Staff should negotiate statutory annual leave with the manager, in all cases giving as much notice as possible.

If staff are unable to attend work due to illness or other medical conditions, they must contact the manager prior to the start of the working day.

Staff should indicate why they are unable to attend work and when they expect to return.

On returning to work, staff should complete a self-certification form for any sickness absence.

For absences for longer than 7 days, a doctor's certificate must be submitted

The manager will keep records of all sick leave, other absences and lateness.

Students and Volunteers

We believe that a placement for a student or volunteer at our club is a valuable opportunity to build experience while learning about working within a childcare setting. Equally, we appreciate the positive contribution that such committed and enthusiastic people can bring to our club.

However, at all times the needs of the children are paramount and therefore the club needs to restrict the number of students and volunteers admitted at any particular time, in order to minimise disruption to the club's core activities.

The manager is responsible for ensuring that all students and volunteers working at the club are suitable and they will not detrimentally affect the service provided for children and their parents/carers. The manager has overall responsibility for supervising and supporting students and volunteers while they are at the club.

All students and volunteers must be over the age of 16, submit two character referees and have an up to date Criminal Recorded Bureau checks before they begin placement at the club.

The manager will enter into a formal written agreement with students and volunteers at the start of the placement agreeing hours of work, dress code and expected behaviour within the club. This agreement will also detail what the student can expect from the club. Students and volunteers must read, sign and understand the conditions of work before accepting the work.

Students will be encouraged to discuss their individual learning needs with the manager when they start the club and during their placement.

Students required to conduct child studies beyond the normal activities i.e. a survey, as part of their course will need to obtain appropriate written consent from the parents/carers of the children.

The manager will ensure that students and volunteers undertake the full induction process given to permanent staff.

New students and volunteers will be allocated a member of staff who will have day to day responsibility for them and their needs while at the club.

Students and volunteers will be expected to adopt a professional manner at all times, and work within the clubs existing policies and procedures.

While on the placement, students and volunteers will be both allowed and expected to participate in all aspects of work at the club, unless otherwise instructed by the manager. Students and volunteers will attend staff meetings and will be encouraged to contribute ideas and opinions.

Regular supervision and appraisal sessions with the manager and the designated member of staff will be established as a means of monitoring progress.

Students and volunteers on placement should not be included in the staff to children ratio.

Suspensions and Exclusions

Our club is committed to dealing with negative behaviour in a non-confrontational manner. Wherever possible, disruptive or challenging behaviour will be tackled collectively between staff and children in the club. Such procedures are outlined in the Behaviour Management policy.

However, there are occasions when such strategies alone will not alter or prevent negative behaviour. In such cases, further actions will be necessary, including reviewing a child's place at the club on either a permanent or temporary basis.

Persistent unacceptable behaviour from a child will result in them receiving a formal warning from staff about their actions. Staff will explain why their behaviour is unacceptable and the consequences of their actions if such behaviour continues.

Details of all warnings, suspensions and exclusions will be recorded and kept on the club's records. Each warning should be discussed with the child concerned and their parent/carer. All staff will be made aware of any warnings given to a child. As a last resort, the club has a right to temporarily suspend or permanently exclude a child for persistent unacceptable behaviour.

Only in the event of an extremely serious or dangerous incident will a child be suspended from the club immediately. In such circumstances, the parent/carer will be contacted immediately and will be asked to collect their child.

After an immediate suspension has taken place, the manager will arrange a meeting with the child and their parents/ carers to discuss the incident and their possible return to the club.

Suspensions' and exclusions should be seen as consistent and fair to the behaviour concerned. Consideration should be given to the age and maturity of the child as well as any information about the child and the situation.

Children will only be suspended or excluded as a last resort if there is no alternative action that can occur.

Staff should always keep parents/carers informed about behaviour management issues relating to their child and work with them to tackle their disruptive or unacceptable behaviour.

No member of staff will impose a suspension without prior discussion with the manager.

When a suspension is over and before a child is allowed to return to the club, there will be a discussion between staff and their parent/carer, setting out the conditions of their return.

Uncollected children

Our club has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care- from the moment they arrive to the moment they leave.

At the end of every session in the club will ensure that all children are collected by a parent, carer or designated adult, in accordance with the Arrivals and Departure policy. If for some reason a child is not collected at the end of the session the following procedures will be activated.

- If a parent, carer or designated adult is more than 15 minutes late collecting their child, the manager will be informed.
- The manager will call the parent, carer or designated adult to find out the cause of delay and how long it is likely to last.
- While waiting to be collected, the child must be supervised by at least two members of staff who will offer reassurance to the child.
- If after repeated contact no contact is made with the parent, carer or designated adult, and a further 30 minutes have elapsed, the manager will call the local social services department for advice.
- In the event of the social services being called and responsibility for the child being passed to a child protection agency, the manager will attempt to leave a further message with the parent/carers answerphone. Furthermore a note will be left on the club door of the club's premises informing the parent, carer or designated adult of what has happened. It will ensure them of their child's safety and will instruct them to contact local social services.
- Under no circumstances will a child be taken to the home of another member of staff, or away from the club's premises unless necessary.
- The child will remain in the care of the club until they are collected by a parent, carer or designated adult, or alternatively placed in the care of social services.
- Incidents of late collection will be recorded by the manager and discussed with the parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Parents/ carers will be informed that persistent late collection will result in a fine or the loss of their child's place at the club.

Visits and Outings

Our club believes that visits and outings play an important role in the programme of activities that we provide for the children. However, during such events, the safety of children remains paramount.

Prior to a visit or outing, a member of staff will carry out an exploratory visit of the proposed destination so as to pre-empt any potential difficulties.

The manager will ensure that a thorough risk assessment has been carried out prior to the visit or outing, according to the provisions set out in the Risk assessment policy. This should include the consideration of the journey and any transport involved.

The club will make every effort to involve children in the planning of a visit or outing, with staff explaining the aims and objectives of the event, along with what is expected in terms of their behaviour and contribution.

Children will be talked through any potential safety hazard and told to remain with staff at all times and will be given a meeting point in the case of an emergency.

Parental consent

No less than two weeks before a proposed visit or outing, the club will send a letter and the visits and outings form (see appendix 1) to parents/carers with detailed information about the proposed outing, including the costs, arrival and departure times.

Parental consent is needed for all off-site visits and outings, the manager will take a photocopy of this on the trip while the original copies are left at the club.

Parents/carers have the right to withhold consent for a proposed visit or outing.

During visits and Outings

The staff to child ration will be 1:8 unless all children are over 10 in which case it can be 1:10, subject to the nature of the activity and the risk assessment.

Children will remain under close supervision at all times. The manager will ensure the full First Aid kit is on hand, complying with the Health, Illness and Emergency policy.

Two designated members of staff will keep mobile phones on them at all times and their numbers given to all parents/carers in advance of visits and outings.

A register will be taken at the beginning, middle and end of each outing and regular head counts will be taken by staff.

A list of all members of staff and children going on the visit or outing, along with mobile phone numbers, will be left with a member of staff left on duty at the club's premises.