

Pioneer Childcare

Safeguarding Children Policy

Pioneer Childcare is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm, and radicalisation. It is everyone's responsibility to be aware of and report any safeguarding concerns.

We have a vital role to play in protecting children and young people from the risks of extremism and radicalisation. This role is underpinned by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Pioneer Childcare ensures all staff are aware of the Prevent Strategy and can protect children and young people who are vulnerable or at risk of being radicalised. Staff are made aware of the Prevent Duty during their induction and through regular supervision. (Related policy: **Prevent Policy, Protecting Children from Extremism and Radicalisation**)

We will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur. Pioneer Childcare's Child Protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation detailed in the Children Act 1989, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, The Children Act 2004 and with guidance issued by the West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children Partnerships. (West Sussex: Integrated Front Door (IDF), East Sussex (Single Point of Access (SPOA), Brighton and Hove (Front Door for Families FDF)).

Pioneer Childcare's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are Jo Wilkins, Amy Watson, Sam Blasco, and Demi Fox. The DSL coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (e.g., Social Care, Local Partnerships, and Ofsted). Before making a referral to Social Services, we aim to share any safeguarding concerns with the parent/carer (providing the child is not in danger of immediate harm.)

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads receive regular training, every 3 years (or sooner, if legislation changes.) and are available during the time our clubs are open. Provision is made during times of absence. Our DSL's took undertook training in April/May 2022.

A copy of the Local Authority Safeguarding and Child Protection letter will be displayed at all our clubs, and parents/carers will be made aware of our duty to inform Social Services if we have any safeguarding concerns (either within or outside of the setting) regarding their child.

Club Managers will never release a child to an unknown person without parental consent. Authorised persons collecting a child on behalf of a parent/carer will be asked to provide identification before the child is released into their care. Club Managers will follow any instructions relating to court orders that may be in place.

Information is shared on a need-to-know basis, and in line with our **Confidentiality Policy**.

Forms of child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect a child from harm. The following are some signs often associated with particular types of child abuse and neglect. These types of abuse are more often found in combination than alone.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Emotional abuse includes witnessing domestic violence, bullying (including online and child-on-child), deliberately silencing, or making fun of a child and withdrawing the rights of the child to express their views. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Emotional abuse can also be referred to as **psychological abuse**.

Physical abuse can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, or non-contact activities such as showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. Neglect can involve a failure to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter.
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm.

- ensure adequate supervision.
- allow access to medical treatment.

Other areas of abuse

We are equally committed and aware of the need to be vigilant in protecting children from the following areas of abuse:

- Racist, disability, homophobic and transphobic abuse.
- Gender-based violence and violence against women or girls.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- Sexting and accessing pornography.
- Substance misuse.
- Gang and youth violence.
- Domestic violence.
- Absent or missing children.
- Female Genital Mutilations (FGM).
- Unaccompanied refugees.
- Honour killing.
- Child-on-child abuse.
- County Lines (criminal exploitation where children are manipulated to sell drugs).

Staff are aware of how to respond should they become aware of a child who may be at risk.

Child Sexual Exploitation

CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are exploited for money or power of status. Young people may be groomed and persuaded or forced into sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, or affection.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in the UK. An immediate referral to Social Care and the police is required if FGM is suspected. This can be done without first contacting the parent/carer.

Child on child abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is referred to as child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. It includes (but is not limited to) bullying, sexual violence and harassment, physical abuse (such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting or hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm) sexting, and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. Staff know to report any concerns or disclosures to their manager and the procedure to follow as for all other types of abuse.

If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- Reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to talk to them.
- Listen to the child but not question them or ask leading questions.
- Give reassurance that the staff member will take action.
- Escalate the disclosure to the Club Manager (who in turn will notify the DSL).
- Record the incident as soon as possible (see below).

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the incident straightaway. If a third party expresses concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they do not do so, we will explain that we are obliged to and then the incident will be logged accordingly.

Logging an incident

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure will be recorded as soon as possible after the event. The record must include:

- Date of the disclosure or of the incident causing concern.
- Date and time at which the record was made.
- Full name and date of birth of the child involved.
- A factual report of what happened. **If recording a disclosure, it is essential to use the child's own words.**
- Name, signature, and job title of the person making the record.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed of significant concerns or when a disclosure is made. They will make a decision on the action to be taken and whether to make a referral, or if the child is at immediate risk, whether to contact the police.

The Club Manager and DSL will decide whether they need to contact Social Care and make a referral. The Club Manager will share the concern or disclosure with the parent/carer (unless it is felt this will put the child at greater risk). Referrals may be shared with other professionals to provide the best outcome for the child. If other staff feel that the incident has not been adequately followed up, they may call Social Care themselves.

Making a referral

Where it is decided that a referral should be made, the Club Manager will contact the parent/carer to share the incident with them (unless it is felt this will put the child at greater risk). Details of the conversation with the parent/carer will be recorded on the **Report of a potential safeguarding issue** form. The referral must be made as soon as possible using the online referral forms provided by the Social Care teams and within 24 hours of the disclosure.

Any details and records relating to safeguarding concerns and referrals will be held by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with our Confidentiality Policy.

Allegations against staff

We recognise that if an allegation is made against a member of staff this will be distressing for all involved. Any allegations will be dealt with sensitively and with the understanding that staff need to be protected against mistaken or false accusations. Staff are reminded that all allegations are confidential and should not be shared outside of the setting. Staff are aware that they have a duty to report if they believe a staff member is abusing or harming a child. This also includes information that comes to light outside of the workplace and may affect the staff members' suitability to work with children.

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded in the Incident Book. Any witnesses to the incident must sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The DSL will be informed and report the allegation to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (using the contact details below listed under each local authority) within one day of the allegation being made, either by phone or email. Ofsted will also be notified. The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g., Police) should be informed, and we will act upon the advice. Internal investigations will take place under the guidance of LADO.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending a full investigation of the allegation.

Promoting awareness among staff

At Pioneer Childcare we will promote awareness of safeguarding through regular staff training. Staff are kept up to date with changes to safeguarding legislation or guidance when these occur.

We will ensure that:

- Our Designated Safeguarding Leads have relevant experience and receive appropriate training every 3 years. The Designated Safeguarding Leads training took place between April-May 2022.
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all staff.
- All staff are familiar with our Safeguarding Children Policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect.
- All staff are familiar with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015 and Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1. Staff are also familiar with the 'Information for staff on possible signs of child abuse and neglect' poster.
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and know to seek support from their manager should they need it.
- Staff know that other considerations, such as the worry of what might happen to a child, should not be a reason to stop them from reporting a concern.
- Club Managers liaise with our DSL when safeguarding concerns become evident and action is taken as advised by the DSL. In the first instance, providing it is safe to do so, the Club Manager will likely inform the parent/carer of the concern. Referrals to Social Care teams may then follow.

Contact numbers

West Sussex

West Sussex Integrated Front Door (IFD): 01403 229900 (between 9am-5pm)
Out of hours number: Emergency Duty Team: 0330 222 6664 (5pm-9am), 07711 769657 (no texts)
Email: WSChildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 0330 222 6450 (9am-5pm) (Miriam Williams and Donna Tomlinson)
Out of hours LADO number: 0330 222 6664 (5pm-9am, weekends and Bank Holidays)
Email: LADO@westsussex.gov.uk

Brighton and Hove

Brighton and Hove Front Door for Families (FDFF): 01273 290400 (between 9am-5pm)
Out of hours number: Emergency Duty Service: 01273 335905/335906 (5pm-8.30am)
Email: frontdoorforfamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Kay Whitcroft, 01273 290400, Mobile: 07584 217271
Email: ladoenquiries@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Prevent Coordinator, Nahida Shaikh, Partnership Community Safety Team: 01273 290584/07717 303292
nahida.shaikh@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk
PAN Sussex procedures www.bhscp.org.uk Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP)

East Sussex

East Sussex Single Point of Advice (SPOA): 01323 464222 Mon-Thurs 8.30am-5pm & Fri 8.30am-4.30pm
Out of hours: 01273 335905/335906 (5pm-8.30am)
Email: 0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk
LADO enquiries: email 0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk

Other numbers

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231
Police: 999 or 101
NSPCC: 0808 800 500
NSPCC Whistleblowing: 0800 028 0285
Public Concern at Work: 020 3117 2520

Related Policies: Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices, Prevent Policy, Arrivals and Departures Policy, Data Protection Policy, and Confidentiality Policy. Copies of all our policies are held onsite at club/camp or can be found on our website: <https://www.pioneerchildcare.co.uk/legalpolicies>

This policy was adopted by: Pioneer Childcare Ltd	Date: 25 th January 2025
To be reviewed: 24 th January 2026	Signed: <i>J. Wilkins</i>

Written in accordance with the EYFS welfare requirements: *Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare, Organisation and Suitable people.*