



The  
**Falkland  
Islands  
Company**

# **Environmental and Safety Solutions**

# **Safeguarding Policy**

## Safeguarding Policy

### Policy statement

Our centre will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of the community.

### Staff and volunteers

- Our Designated Safeguarding Person is Stephen Dent
- This person is responsible for implementing this policy and for keeping up to date with current guidance from the Falkland Island Safeguarding Children Board and Child Protection legislation. The Designated Safeguarding Person is the point of contact for any member of staff with a safeguarding concern.
- It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Person to forward safeguarding concerns to Social Services. In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Person, the manager or acting manager will take charge of this responsibility.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too. Volunteers do not work with the children without supervision.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
  - the criminal records check reference number;
  - the date the criminal records check was obtained; and
  - details of who obtained it.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the centre so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- The centre is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with parents and statutory agencies with regards to these incidents and/ or concerns.

### Cameras: photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect children we will:

- obtain parents' and carers' consent for photographs to be taken or published in relation to centre events and for training use
- use only the child's first name with an image
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- ensure parents and carers are not permitted to take photographs of the children in the centre unless prior consent has been given by the manager
- inform parents when permitting photographs to be taken that these images should not be uploaded onto any social media sites (eg Facebook) if the picture contains images of children other than their own.
- ensure all cameras used are open to scrutiny
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### Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
  - significant changes in their behaviour;
  - deterioration in their general well-being;
  - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
  - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
  - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
  - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the centre.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.

### Reporting our concerns

- Where we have concerns for a child in our care or for any child known to us, we follow the procedures below:
  - Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and informs the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
  - If we have suspicions of abuse we refer our concerns to the Social Services Department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.
  - We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
  - We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents.

- The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the centre may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

### Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
  - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
  - does not question the child;
  - makes a written record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
  - These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
  - The member of staff acting as the 'designated safeguarding person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity. He/ she will review the evidence and if necessary refer the concern to Social Services: Tel: 27296
  - In the case of the designated person being unavailable, the matter will be passed to the person in charge of the Centre for their consideration and action if necessary.

### Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events, unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger. We inform parents when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger. (This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform parents).

### Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. We have contact details of Social Services. This ensures that it is easy, in any emergency, for the centre and children's social care to work well together.

### Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the centre, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the centre, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or any other person working with the children, which includes:
  - inappropriate sexual comments;
  - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the centre, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the centre, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the centre, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the centre, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to Social Services to investigate and co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chair/director/owner will suspend the member of staff, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

### Disciplinary action

- Any members of staff or volunteers found guilty of any safeguarding related offences or found to be unsuitable to work with children following a safeguarding related matter will be immediately dismissed from employment with the Centre.

### Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the centre to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that staff receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. We also ensure that refresher training is provided and that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about a child's welfare.

## Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of Social Services and/or the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy and only if appropriate under the guidance of Social Services or the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

## Monitoring and Review

This policy and its procedures will be reviewed regularly for improvements as part of our Quality Assurance requirements. This will ensure it is fit for purpose, reflects the services we deliver to our customers and we provide services which are relevant to the requirements of individual needs.