

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Creative Makers

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1. Policy Statement

Creative Makers is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who attend our provision. We recognise that safeguarding is a fundamental responsibility and underpins every aspect of our work. The safety, wellbeing, dignity and rights of children are always our primary concern.

As a creative, child-centred provision that supports many children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), we understand that some children may have increased vulnerability due to communication differences, emotional regulation needs, neurodivergence, previous trauma, or social and emotional difficulties. These factors can make children both more at risk of harm and less likely to communicate that harm in typical ways. Our safeguarding approach is therefore proactive, relational and rooted in creating emotional as well as physical safety.

We operate in accordance with:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**
- **The Children Act 1989 & 2004**
- **The Equality Act 2010**
- Relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff and volunteers have a duty to act in the best interests of the child at all times.

2. Purpose of This Policy

This policy exists to:

- Protect children and young people from maltreatment or harm
- Ensure children grow up in safe and supportive environments
- Provide clear guidance to staff, volunteers and parents
- Establish clear procedures for responding to concerns

- Promote a culture of vigilance, openness and listening

Safeguarding at Creative Makers is not only about responding to abuse; it includes prevention, early identification of need, emotional wellbeing, and creating a culture where children feel safe to express themselves.

3. Our Safeguarding Ethos

We believe safeguarding is most effective when children feel:

- Seen and valued
- Listened to and believed
- Emotionally safe
- Able to communicate distress in their own way

We recognise that behaviour is often communication. Emotional dysregulation, withdrawal, shutdown, or challenging behaviour may be indicators of unmet need or distress. Staff are trained to look beyond behaviour to understand possible underlying safeguarding concerns.

We aim to create:

- Calm and predictable environments
 - Clear routines and boundaries
 - Safe adults children can approach
 - Trauma-informed practice
 - Inclusive practice that respects neurodiversity
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4. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL holds overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The DSL ensures that safeguarding remains a central focus within the provision.

The DSL's responsibilities include:

- Managing and responding to safeguarding concerns
- Making referrals to children's social care when required
- Liaising with schools, families, health professionals and local authorities
- Maintaining accurate, secure safeguarding records
- Supporting and advising staff
- Ensuring staff safeguarding training is current
- Promoting a culture where safeguarding is openly discussed

If the DSL is unavailable, the Deputy DSL will assume responsibility.

5. Recognising Abuse and Harm

Staff understand that abuse can take many forms. These include:

Physical abuse – deliberate harm or injury

Emotional abuse – persistent emotional harm, humiliation, fear or rejection

Sexual abuse – involvement in sexual activity or exploitation

Neglect – failure to meet a child’s basic needs

We are also alert to:

- Child-on-child abuse
- Bullying (including online)
- Criminal or sexual exploitation
- Domestic abuse exposure
- Radicalisation
- Self-harm or suicidal thoughts
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Online risks

Children with SEND may show distress differently. Staff consider communication style, processing differences and regulation needs when assessing risk.

6. Signs and Indicators of Concern

Concerns may present through:

- Sudden or unexplained behaviour changes
- Withdrawal, anxiety, shutdown or aggression
- Injuries without clear explanation
- Fear of certain individuals or places
- Sexualised language or behaviour
- Extreme tiredness, hunger or poor hygiene
- Reluctance to go home
- Verbal disclosures or indirect hints

Staff are trained to notice patterns over time as well as single incidents.

7. What Staff Must Do If Concerned

If a child makes a disclosure or a concern arises, staff must:

1. Remain calm and listen carefully
2. Allow the child to speak freely without interruption

3. Avoid asking leading questions
4. Never promise to keep secrets
5. Reassure the child they have done the right thing
6. Record the information immediately, using the child's own words where possible
7. Report the concern to the DSL without delay

Staff must not investigate or attempt to resolve safeguarding matters themselves.

8. Recording and Information Sharing

All safeguarding concerns are recorded factually and stored securely. Records include dates, times, observations and actions taken.

Information is shared on a need-to-know basis. We follow data protection law, but safeguarding concerns override confidentiality where a child is at risk of harm.

9. Working with Parents and Carers

We aim to work collaboratively with families. However, the DSL may decide not to inform parents if doing so could increase risk to the child. Decisions are made in line with safeguarding advice and local procedures.

10. Safer Recruitment

All staff and volunteers:

- Undergo Enhanced DBS checks
- Provide references
- Receive safeguarding training
- Follow professional conduct standards

We ensure that only suitable adults work with children.

11. Staff Training and Supervision

All staff receive safeguarding training at induction and regular updates thereafter. Training includes recognising abuse, responding to disclosures, and understanding SEND-related safeguarding considerations.

12. Online Safety

We supervise internet use and ensure devices are used safely. Staff are vigilant about online risks, digital exploitation, and inappropriate content.

13. Child-on-Child Abuse

We recognise that children can harm other children. All incidents are treated seriously, recorded and addressed through safeguarding procedures.

14. Allegations Against Staff

Any allegation about a member of staff is reported immediately to the DSL and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The child's welfare is the priority.

15. Whistleblowing

Staff have a duty to report unsafe practice. Concerns can be raised with the DSL or external safeguarding bodies.

16. Safe Environment

We promote safety through structured routines, emotional regulation support, supervision, and trauma-informed approaches.

17. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes.