



Early Bloomers After School Club Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Early Bloomers After School Club is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse and harm.

The Club will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur. The Club's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by Southwark Safeguarding Children Partners.

The Club's **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is **Talvinder Kaur**, who is deputised by **Pat Harris** in her absence. The DSL coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies, e.g., Children's Social Care. Police and Ofsted.

Forms of child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or neglect that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below.

- **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, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **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, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

Signs of child abuse and neglect

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- deterioration in a child's general well-being
- unexplained bruising or marks
- comments made by a child which give cause for concern
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

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 speak out
- Listen to the child but not question them
- Give reassurance that the staff member will take action

- Record the incident as soon as possible (see *Logging an incident* 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 will not do so, we will explain that the Club is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.

Logging an incident

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure will be recorded on the **Logging a concern** form as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

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

The record will be given to the Club's DSL who will decide whether they need to contact Children's Social Care for advice or make a referral. All referrals to Children's Social Care by phone will be followed up by a referral in writing within 1 working day. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Children's Social Care directly.

Allegations against staff

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

- The allegation will be recorded on an **Incident record** form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The allegation must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and the Club will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 1 working day.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If appropriate, the Club will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Promoting awareness among staff

The Club promotes awareness of child abuse issues through staff training. The Club ensures that:

- The DSL has relevant experience and receives appropriate training **renewed every year**
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- All staff have a copy of this Safeguarding & Child Protection policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements with regards to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse
- Staff are familiar with the Safeguarding File, which is kept in the store cupboard.
- Its procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DfE, 2024), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024).
- Staff are familiar with the 'What to Do if You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused' (2015) flowchart.
- All staff access training in order to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns. In addition, impact of training on their practice discussed at staff meetings. Staff training access is monitored annually through annex cards.
- **Our whistleblowing policy is discussed with all staff members as a safeguarding practice to report any malpractice and or wrongdoing without fear of retaliation.**

Use of mobile phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission. Only the club camera will be used to take photographs of children at the Club, except with the express permission of the manager. Neither staff nor children may use their mobile phones to take photographs at the Club. Please see the Club's **Safeguarding Mobile Phone and Digital Images Policy** for details.

Prevent Duty Legislation 2015

- From 1 July 2015 all schools and registered early years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “**due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism**”.
- This duty is known as the Prevent duty. For the Club to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that we are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of our wider safeguarding duties, and it is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences. Referrals must be made to the appropriate safeguarding agencies, including the police (dialling **101**). For more information, the Department for Education Help Line **020 7340 7264**.
- **British Values:** we will also endeavour to build our children’s ‘resilience to radicalisation’ by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views: **democracy, rules of law, individual liberties, mutual respects and tolerance for those with different faiths.**
- Thereby, through play activities and assisting our children’s personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world, we will promote children developing those fundamental values underpinning British life.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other safeguarding concerns

- As childcare practitioners, we are also aware that early years practitioners should follow local authority published safeguarding procedures to respond to FGM and other safeguarding issues, which involves contacting police if a crime of FGM has been or may be about to be committed.
- If we suspect 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 or a victim of child sexual exploitation, we will immediately report this to the Southwark Safeguarding partners.

Safe Drop Off and Collection

All members of staff have a duty to inform the Club manager and the DSL if they believe that a parent or carer is a threat to the safety of a child due to them being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs when they drop off or collect their child. The manager and DSL will decide upon the appropriate course of action.

If a parent or carer is clearly over the alcohol limit, or under the influence of illegal drugs, staff will do their utmost to prevent the child from travelling in a vehicle driven by them by contacting first the emergency contact from the child’s registration form. If necessary, the police will be called.

Contact numbers

Southwark Children’s Social Care: 0207 525 1921

Out of hours contact: 0207 525 5000

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): 0207 525 3297/ 0207 5250689

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Police: 0207 230 1212 /101

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

Prevent Duty Help Line (DfE): 0207 340 7264

Southwark Prevent Officer: 07825 366 187

This policy was adopted by: Early Bloomers After School Club on 12/09/2014	Review Date: August 2025
To be reviewed: Yearly or following changes in legislation or practice	Signed: Mrs Talvinder Kaur

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2025)*:
Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Child Protection and Suitable People.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice>