Safeguarding Policy

Club Kidz is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation.

The Club will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. The Club's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP).

There is a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) available at all times while the Club is in session. The DSL coordinates safeguarding and child protection issues, supports practitioners with safeguarding concerns and liaises with external agencies (eg Social Care and Ofsted).

The Club's designated DSLs are Annette Stapley, Delia Clark, Phillipa Barker, Andrea Buckingham and Nikky Hart.

The club has detailed procedures for suitability checking for new recruits. These procedures are detailed in our safe recruitment policy and all staff responsible for recruitment ensure safe and robust recruitment practice is followed at all times.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or the outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health and development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes

Child abuse, neglect and exploitation

Child abuse, neglect and exploitation 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 or exploit a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect and exploitation 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.
- **Domestic Abuse** : Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of abusive behaviour between people aged 16 and over who are personally connected this could include the following types of abuse:psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

Signs of child abuse and neglect and exploitation

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
- reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, eg in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation (FGM), or that the child may have witnessed or be living with domestic abuse
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member 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 using the **Logging a concern** form. 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.

All staff recognise that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected and/or they may not not recognise their experiences as harmful.This could be due to their vulnerability , disability or language barriers. They may also feel embarrassed, humiliated or are being threatened. Our staff recognise this and where they have concerns about a child they will raise these with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) without reasonable delay.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM is an illegal, extremely harmful practice and a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM is therefore dealt with as part of our existing safeguarding procedures. All of our staff receive training in how to recognise when girls are at risk of FGM or may have been subjected to it.

If FGM is suspected or disclosed

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to to child abuse and will make a report to Children's Social Care directly and inline with existing safeguarding procedures and inline with our mandatory reporting duty. We will make a report to the police by calling 101, the single non-emergency number, if it is disclosed that either:

- a girl is under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girls physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth. We use this guidance Mandatory reporting of female genial mutilation:procedural information (accessible version) - GOV.UK. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a8086f2ed915d74e33faefc/FGM_Mandatory_Reporting_-_procedural_information_nov16_FINAL.pdf

Child-on-Child abuse

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Child-on-Child abuse is taken seriously by staff and will be subject to the same child protection procedures as other forms of abuse. Staff are aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Staff will not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people. The presence of one or more of the following in relationships between children should always trigger concern about the possibility of peer-on-peer abuse:

- Sexual activity (in primary school-aged children) of any kind, including sexting
- One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other (eg much older)
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (eg in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength)
- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to ensure compliance or secrecy.

If child-on-child abuse is suspected or disclosed

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

Extremism and radicalisation

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation, eg:

- feeling alienated or alone
- seeking a sense of identity or individuality
- suffering from mental health issues such as depression
- desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause
- associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

Signs of radicalisation

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified
- viewing violent extremist material online
- possessing or sharing violent extremist material

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations on a **Logging a concern** form, and refer the matter to the DSL.

At Club kidz all staff are aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone issues and events. In most cases multiple issues will overlap. Staff recognise that children might be at risk of harm inside and outside of their time in our club/setting, inside and outside of their home and whilst online. Our team exercises professional curiosity to help identify early signs of abuse or neglect and exploitation and act early in cases where children might need our help or protection.

All staff at Club Kidz are aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of school/college, inside and outside of home, and online.

Staff exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside of their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harrassment and exploitation) domestic abuse in their own intimate relationship (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

All staff at Club Kidz are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the

sharing of abusive images, and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content. In all cases, if staff are unsure, they always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Logging a concern

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, or concern, 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 the incident, or the observation 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 on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about **child abuse,** the DSL will contact Social Care immediately inline with the local reporting procedures. The DSL will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours.

If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Social Care directly.

For minor concerns regarding **radicalisation,** the DSL will contact Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP): For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the DSL will contact the Police using 999.

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) immediately and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (eg 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 48 hours.
- 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 and the risk of radicalisation through its staff training. The Club ensures that:

- the designated DSL has relevant experience and receives appropriate training in safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, and is aware of the Channel Programme and how to access it
- DSLs receive level 3 training every 2 years, with regular updates throughout this period
- all staff receive safeguarding training meeting the requirements of EYFS annex C, which is to be refreshed at a maximum of 2 year intervals.
- annual refresher training will be offered to all staff in the form of online training via 'Flick Training' to help maintain basic skills.staff are supported to implement learning through team meetings.
- procedures to ensure only suitable individuals are recruited, including obtaining references before employment commences, conducting identity and qualification checks, and recording all vetting information as part of safer recruitment processes are understood and followed by all responsible for recruitment, inline with our safe recruitment policy.
- all staff have a copy of this **Safeguarding Policy**, confirm their understanding of its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect or radicalisation
- all staff are aware of how to respond in a timely way at the earliest opportunity
- all staff are aware of their statutory duties with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse, and concerns about radicalisation

- safeguarding is a permanent agenda item at all staff meetings ensuring the whole team communicates well and are kept up to date
- all staff receive basic training in the Prevent Duty
- staff are supported to understand how to keep themselves safe and how to blow the whistle should they be concerned about another adults behaviour or practice
- staff are familiar with the Safeguarding File which is kept in the locked cabinet on the premises.
- The Club's procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)' and staff are familiar with 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)'.
- The DSL and DDSL's will provide support advice and guidance to all practitioners on an ongoing basis, and any specific safeguarding issue is required.

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 nor visitors may use their mobile phones or wearable technology such as smart watches to take photographs at the Club. For more details see our Mobile Phone, Tablet computers and wearable technology Policy.

Contact numbers

Social Care: Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) 0300 123 4043 (24 hours a day)
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): Andrea Garcia-Sangil: 01992 556372
Email: andrea.garcia-sangil@hertfordshire.gov.uk.
Police: 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)
Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321
NSPCC: 0808 800 500
Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

This policy was adopted by: Club Kidz Limited	Date: September 2026
To be reviewed: January 2027	Signed:  Annette Stapley Managing Director

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2026): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: safeguarding policies and procedures [3.4-3.6]* and *Suitable People [3.13-3.19] Safeguarding training [3.31-3.34].*