



Family Link



Our mission: The provision of leisure opportunities for children and young adults with disabilities.

Safeguarding Children Policy

Purpose and Scope

Family Link is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who attend its services. All staff; trustees, volunteers, and contractors are required to always act in the best interests of the children.

This policy applies to everyone working with Family Link, including:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Trustees
- Agency workers
- Students or interns on placement

Key objectives:

- Ensure safe recruitment and vetting practices.
- Provide clear procedures for identifying and reporting concerns or allegations.
- Maintain a safe and supportive environment where children can learn, play, and develop safely.

Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy is aligned with:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2023)
- Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding
- Local safeguarding procedures (local authority)
- Prevent Duty guidance

Definitions

- **Safeguarding:** Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, and ensuring children grow up in safe circumstances.
- **Child Protection:** Measures to respond to specific cases where a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.



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- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** The person responsible for managing all safeguarding concerns and referrals.
- **Trustee responsible for safeguarding:** The board member who oversees safeguarding governance and compliance.
- **Abuse:** Includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers:

- Be alert to signs of abuse or neglect.
- Record and report a concern to the DSL immediately.
- Understand and follow this safeguarding policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- Receive and manage safeguarding concerns.
- Make referrals to local authority children's services and/or the police as required.
- Support staff and volunteers in responding to concerns.
- Maintain secure records of concerns and actions taken.

Trustee responsible for safeguarding:

- Ensure the charity has effective safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Monitor safeguarding compliance and training.
- Liaise with regulators, such as the Charity Commission or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), when needed.

Board of Trustees:

- Ensure safeguarding is a standing agenda item in board meetings.
- Approve and review the safeguarding policy at least annually.
- Ensure adequate resources and training for safeguarding responsibilities.

Safe Recruitment and Staff Vetting

- All staff and volunteers must undergo enhanced DBS checks before working with children.
- References and employment history will be verified.
- Recruitment processes must follow safer recruitment principles.
- Staff training on safeguarding is mandatory and refreshed at least annually.



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Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Step-by-Step Procedure:

1. Observation/Disclosure: If a child shows signs of abuse or makes a disclosure, act calmly and listen carefully.
2. Immediate Reporting: Report the concern to the DSL without delay.
3. Recording: Record all details factually, including date, time, observations, and child's statements.
4. Escalation: DSL assesses the concern and, if necessary, makes a referral to:
 - Local Authority Children's Services
 - Police (if urgent)
 - LADO (for allegations against staff or volunteers)

Confidentiality: Share information only with those who need to know to protect the child.

Temporary Suspension of Sessions

Family Link is committed to inclusion and will make every reasonable effort to support children and young people to continue accessing services safely.

However, where behaviour presents a significant risk to the safety and wellbeing of the child, other participants, staff or volunteers, Family Link may determine that a temporary suspension from sessions is necessary.

Such decisions will:

- Be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Be based on a risk assessment.
- Take into account the needs of all parties involved.
- Be discussed with parents/carers wherever possible.

A temporary suspension is not intended as a punishment but as an opportunity to review support arrangements, complete risk assessments, implement additional controls and consider any training or resources required.

Family Link will work with families and relevant professionals to consider appropriate reintroduction arrangements wherever possible.



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Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers:

- Must be reported to the DSL immediately.
- LADO must be contacted within 24 hours.
- Staff or volunteer should be suspended from duties pending investigation if appropriate.

Record Keeping

All safeguarding records must be:

- Factual and accurate
- Dated and signed
- Stored securely in locked locations or encrypted systems

Records must be retained in line with data protection and safeguarding legislation.

Safeguarding Training

- Mandatory for all staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Includes recognising abuse, reporting procedures, and Prevent Duty awareness.
- Refreshed annually or as guidance changes.

Creating a Safe Environment

- Promote a culture of listening and respect for children.
- Encourage children to speak up and ensure they know how to seek help.
- Supervise activities appropriately and maintain safe ratios.
- Recognise and support children with additional vulnerabilities.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Share safeguarding information only on a need-to-know basis.
- Follow GDPR and data protection legislation.
- Always prioritise the safety and welfare of the child over confidentiality concerns.

Monitoring and Review

- The DSL provides annual reports to the board on safeguarding concerns and training.
- The Board reviews the policy annually, or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.
- Trustees ensure adequate resources and oversight for safeguarding compliance.



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Communication

- This policy will be circulated to all staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Parents and carers will be informed of Family Link's safeguarding responsibilities.
- Policy is available on request to parents, carers, and stakeholders.

Policy approved and adopted by the Family Link Board of Trustees

On the: 29 April 2015

Reviewed: 8th January 2026 by Trustee – Paula Hollywood

Current Play Leader – Kenzie / Megan / Reneé / Emma

Current Safeguarding Trustee – Julia James – 07894 672019

Policy due for review: 8th January 2027