

Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Munchkids After School Club will endeavour to safeguard the welfare of children and young people who use our service and the activities, by protecting them from neglect and physical, sexual and emotional harm.

The overriding consideration must be to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.

In order to achieve this Munchkids After School Club will:

1) Exclude known abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for posts within MASC that the position is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All applicants for work within MASC will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least one reference. All such references will be followed up together with a Police check using the CRB Enhancement.

All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the Club is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

2) Seek and supply training

Munchkids After School Club will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the Club to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

3) Prevent abuse by means of good practice

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside, e.g. for time out after bad behaviour, will leave the door ajar.

Adults who have not been registered as "fit" persons will not be left alone with children.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

The layout of the playroom will permit constant supervision of all children. Children will be closely supervised whilst playing outside.

4) Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse

Changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated.

Parents will normally be the first point of reference, though suspicions will also be referred as appropriate to the Social Services Department.

All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff, club co-ordinator, head teacher and the management committee chairperson.

5) Keep records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, quite separate from any other on-going records of the child's development. The record will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child: timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation; where possible, the exact words spoken by the child; the dated name and signature of the recorder.

Such records will be kept in a separate, locked, cupboard and will not be accessible to people in the club other than the leader or other member of club staff as appropriate.

6) Liaise with other bodies

Munchkids After School Club operates in accordance with local authority guidelines. Confidential records kept on children about whom the club is anxious will be shared with the Social Services Department if the club feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided.

If a referral on a child is to be made to the authorities, the child's parents may be informed at the same time as the referral is made.

Any such referral will be discussed with the committee and, where appropriate, be fully supported by the committee.

The Club will maintain on-going contact with the registering authority, including names and telephone numbers of individual social workers, to ensure that in an emergency, it would be easy for the club and the Social Services Department to work together.

Records will also be kept of the local NSPCC contact or any other contacts as appropriate.

7) Support Families

The Club will endeavour to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff and volunteers in the group.

Where abuse at home is suspected, the club will continue to welcome the child and family, while investigations proceed.

Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child's parents.

With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount, the club will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

Agreed by Committee

William Allen – Chairperson MASC

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