



*326 After School Club @ Codicote
Policy for: Child Protection
Sept 2007*

At 326 Club we intend to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

Aims

- To have an atmosphere where children feel secure, are listened to and are valued
- To recognise the signs and symptoms of suspected abuse
- To have clear procedures and lines of communication
- To work closely with parents and other agencies
- To monitor children at risk
- To provide child protection training to all staff

In order to achieve this we will:

Ensure that appointments are made with regard to safeguarding children principles and practice.

- Exclude known abusers. All applicants must understand that the position is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974.
- All applicants, voluntary or paid, will be interviewed and at least one reference obtained.
- Any gaps in employment history must be explained.
- All appointments are subject to a period of probation and will only be confirmed when the Club is sufficiently confident that the children will be safe in the care of this person.

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Training

Regular training will be provided for staff.

Prevention of Abuse

- Adults will not be alone with individual children or small groups for a sustained period of time.
- Should a one to one period be necessary, for example following unacceptable behaviour, the pair will remain in an area where they may be seen.
- Children will only be accompanied to the toilet by adults that are registered as 'fit' for the purpose.
- We will encourage children to find words for their feelings and offer support for making choices
- We will aim to develop a sense of independence to offer the children greater self

- confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

Response to Suspicions

- Our first concern is for the children. We will listen and try to reassure them that they themselves remain valued and respected and have not been at fault.
- We will notify parents immediately of any suspicions. If these suspicions remain we will also notify the Social Services Department.
- If we have strong reason to have suspicions against members of the immediate family we may use Social Services Department as a first point of reference.
- Any and all suspicions will remain confidential and any investigations handled in a discreet manner.
- Any and all discussions held will be only with the people who must be informed. Normally, the member of staff, Club Supervisor, Headteacher, and Social Services/parents if applicable.

Allegations about member of staff and volunteers

If an allegation of any form of child abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer the matter must be reported to Social Care, the police and Ofsted. Advice regarding internal enquiry will be sought from these agencies to ensure that this does not jeopardise any investigation.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, it will be factually recorded in the Incident Book stating the actions taken. All witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.

Records

Any and all worrying changes, in physical appearance or mentality, will be recorded confidentially and separately to the normal administrative records. We will record the time and date, name, address and age of the child along with our observations in an objective manner, using exact words and details where possible. These records will then be signed by the recorder. These records will only be accessible to the Club supervisor, chair and members of staff as necessary. If required, these records would also be shared with the Social Services Department and Social Workers. We will maintain records of any contact with the local NSPCC and other bodies as appropriate.

Relationship with parents and family

- We will take positive action to build a trusting and supportive relationship with the parents and families of the children within our care.
- Should abuse at home be suspected, we will continue to welcome the child while separate investigations proceed.
- The care and safety of the child will always remain foremost in our minds while we work with the parents, family and other bodies as appropriate to support the child.

HM Government Guidance

We will follow HM Government guidance laid out in the document 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'.