

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Date: 17/11/2020

Review Date: November 2021

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and students completing work placements within Blaydon Youth Club Childcare Services including our Pre-School Nursery and Out of School Clubs.

This policy is in line with the guidance and procedures of Gateshead Local Authority.

Purpose and Aim

At Blaydon Youth Club Childcare we provide a pre-school nursery for children aged 2 – 4 years old and Out of School Clubs for children aged 3 – 11 years old. Our aim is to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which children can learn, grow and thrive. We also aim to work in partnership with parents, carers and families to provide support, advice and guidance and services that benefit children, families and the wider community.

Here are Blaydon Youth Club Childcare we believe that;

- all children have the right to live their lives free from abuse and should never experience abuse of any kind
- everyone has a responsibility to keep children safe,
- everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children,
- the welfare of the child is paramount,
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse,
- working in partnership with children, their parents/carers and other agencies and organisations is essential in safeguarding children effectively,
- the welfare of the child is paramount.

This policy aims to;

- protect children who use our childcare services,
- provide a safe environment for children,
- support staff to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm,
- provide clear direction to staff about how to respond to concerns about a child's welfare.

Policy definitions

Blaydon Youth Club Childcare and its staff have a duty to safeguard any children who use our services or who we come into contact with. A child is defined as; a boy or girl under the age of 18 years old.

Abuse/Neglect is a failure to meet a child's basic needs, not keeping a child safe or deliberate acts that cause harm. Abuse/neglect can be a single or repeated act. It can also be deliberate acts or done unknowingly. Abuse/neglect can happen anywhere – in children's own homes, in hospitals, in residential settings etc. Abuse can also occur online



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



Children with special educational needs and disabilities can be at an increased risk of experiencing abuse and may be less able to recognise when abuse is occurring, communicate with others to ask for help when abuse is occurring or protect themselves from abuse. It is therefore important that all staff working with children with special educational needs and disabilities are aware of the signs/symptoms of abuse and know how to report any concerns they have.

Types of Abuse

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) identifies and defines 4 main types of abuse that children can experience. These 4 areas can overlap and children can often experience more than one type of abuse.

Physical – a form of abuse that causes physical harm e.g. hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning, scalding etc. It can also include a parent/carer fabricating symptoms of or deliberately inducing illness.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) and Breast Ironing are also forms of physical abuse that staff must have an awareness of.

FGM is a cultural ritual in specific ethnic groups which involves cutting young girls genitals; it can be carried out on children from birth up to adolescence.

Breast Ironing is also a process linked to specific ethnic groups; it involves the use of hard or heated objects to iron and/or pound down the breasts to delay the development of breasts.

Perpetrators often believe that doing this will protect the child from early forced marriage, abduction or rape.

Emotional – persistent emotional maltreatment which causes severe adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This can include; conveying to a child they are worthless, unloved or inadequate, not giving the child an opportunity to express his/her views or making fun of what they say, bullying, inappropriate expectations, corruption, witnessing the ill treatment of another person. Emotional abuse can also include limiting a child's opportunities to explore and learn and preventing the child from engaging in normal social interactions. Cyber bullying is an example of emotional abuse. There is some level of emotional abuse involved in all types of abuse of children.

Sexual – forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, this does not necessarily involve violence and the child may not initially be aware that they are being sexually abused. Sexual abuse can involve physical assault, non-penetrative acts of assault e.g. kissing, masturbation, rubbing or touching outside the clothes. It can also include non-contact acts e.g. involving the child in looking at or producing sexual images, watching pornography or sexual acts, encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviours or grooming in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can occur online and with the use of technology. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by men, women and other children.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is also a form of sexual abuse, this can be more difficult to identify as it can appear that the sexual activity has been consensual and usually involves older children. CSE occurs when an individual or group take advantage of a child/children who are vulnerable, the individual/group uses their power or control to manipulate, coerce or deceive the child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim wants or needs. The individual or group involved usually benefit financially or in terms of their status as a result of the sexual activity. CSE



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



can occur online or through the use of technology and can sometimes include blackmail and threats.

Neglect – persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a child’s health and development. Neglect may involve failing to; provide adequate food, clothing or shelter, protect a child from physical or emotional harm, ensure a child is adequately supervised, respond to a child’s basic emotional needs. Neglect can occur during pregnancy.

In addition to these types of abuse it is important for staff to be aware of the risk of children experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, honour based violence and forced marriages.

Witnessing domestic violence can have a significant negative impact on a child’s emotional wellbeing and development. Where domestic violence is regular and/or prolonged it increases the likelihood of children also being harmed. Staff should also be aware that where there is also repeated and/or serious incidents of animal cruelty in a household there is an increased risk of other violence occurring in the household. Harm to pets can also be a form of emotional abuse.

Honour Based violence is a type of domestic abuse which occurs as a form of punishment or in reaction to events which are perceived to have brought shame or dishonour to the family. It can be in response to things like how a family member has dressed, or who a family member has developed a relationship with. Children may be the direct victims of this abuse or may witness it.

Forced Marriage is when one or both spouses do not or cannot consent to a marriage and are under duress to marry. Forced marriages can sometimes include children who are too young to consent to marriage. Forced marriage is different to arranged marriages which are an important part of some cultures and where both parties are willing and able to consent.

The PREVENT duty

This was introduced as part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015), it places a duty on all registered childcare providers to have an awareness of and act upon any suspicions that a child or family may be being drawn into terrorism. Staff must be trained in how to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, know how radicalisation can occur and know what to do if they are concerns that a child may be at risk of this.

Framework, Legislation and related policies

This policy has been written based on legislation, policy and guidance that are in place to protect children in England. This includes;

- The Children’s Act (1989), (2004)
- The Education Act (2002), (2011)
- The Adoption and Children’s Act (2002), (2006)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- The Children and Young Person’s Act (2008)
- The Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- Working together to Safeguard Children (2018)



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



A summary of the key legislation is available from www.nspcc.org.uk/childprotection.

This policy works alongside a number of other policies and procedures which all contribute to keeping children safe, these include but are not limited to;

- Complaints and Feedback
- Confidentiality
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety
- Illness and Injury
- Online Safety
- Partnerships with Parents
- Recruitment and Induction of new employees
- Staff Supervision
- Visitors
- Volunteers
- Whistleblowing
- Lone Working

Roles and Responsibilities

EVERYONE is responsible for being vigilant for signs/symptoms of abuse and for reporting any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of abuse.

Blaydon Youth Club Childcare has two appointed individuals who are responsible for leading safeguarding within the organisation. The designated Child Safeguarding Leads for are;

Chris Marr (Chief Executive Officer) - leads safeguarding for Blaydon Youth and Community Centre as a whole.

chrismarr@blaydonycc.org.uk 0191 414 7849

Rachel Davidson (Childcare and Service Development Manager) – leads safeguarding for Blaydon Youth Club Childcare services.

racheldavidson@blaydonycc.org.uk 0191 414 7849

In their absence the centre's Trustees, acting childcare Deputy Manager, childcare staff and administrator are available to contact.

The Child Safeguarding Leads are responsible for;

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of this policy and are trained in recognising and responding to signs/symptoms/concerns/suspicions of abuse or neglect;
- Ensuring that any reported concerns or suspicions of abuse/neglect are acted upon, clearly recorded and reported to the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Children Teams and Ofsted.
- Following up on any safeguarding referrals to ensure the issues have been addressed;
- Manage/oversee any investigations involving allegations of abuse/neglect made against staff members;
- Review the effectiveness of relevant practices and policies in relation to safeguarding referrals;



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



- Ensuring staff working with children who have experienced abuse/neglect are well supported and receive appropriate supervision;
- Ensuring staff reporting concerns/suspensions of abuse or neglect are supported and protected under the whistleblowing and confidentiality policies.

Preventing Abuse/Neglect

Blaydon Youth Club Childcare has a number of policies and practices that contribute to minimising the risk of abuse/neglect taking place, these include but are not limited to;

- Child Safeguarding Training for all staff who work with or regularly come into contact with children as part of their work duties.
- Pre-employment checks, including Child Workforce DBS checks and references, completed for all new employees who have contact with the children we support.
- Safeguarding discussed during staff supervisions, appraisals and team meetings.
- Ensuring all stakeholders have a copy of the policy.
- Appointed Safeguarding Leads for the company.
- Valuing, listening to and respecting the children we support and come into contact with.

Recognising potential abuse/neglect

Staff working with and coming into contact with children during their work, receive training in Safeguarding Children which includes recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse. We are aware that the type of care we provide and the sometimes high number of hours that staff spend with children mean that we may be some of the first people children will confide in or who can observe potential signs of abuse/neglect.

The signs and symptoms of abuse/neglect can vary depending on the individual, the circumstances and the type of abuse being experienced.

Signs/ Symptoms of abuse.

Physical Abuse

- Delay in parents/carers seeking medical help or not seeking medical help for serious injuries.
- Vague or changing accounts from parents/carers or the child for how injuries occurred or no explanation offered when asked.
- Parents/carers preventing the child from being able to tell you how an injury occurred.
- Repeated injuries or types of injuries that don't usually occur accidentally.
- Suspicious areas of bruising – accidental injuries usually result in bruising to places such as knees and elbows. Accidental injuries very rarely result in bruising to places such as the outer ear.
- Suspicious patterns of bruising – bruising from being grabbed (fingertip bruising), slapped or hit with an open palm, or from being hit with a weapon such as belt will leave clear bruising patterns and will usually be in specific places. E.g. finger tip bruising usually occurs on the upper arms/chest wall, slap marks on the cheeks (usually the left cheek if the abuser is right handed)/buttocks.
- Fabricated or Induced illness (previously referred to as Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy) can be indicated by frequent injuries/illnesses, numerous investigations of physical, psychological and educational problems over a period of time. As one problem is diagnosed



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



or an investigation comes to an end another problem develops. Serious medical problems occurring only when the potential abuser is present e.g. blood in the urine, vomiting blood, seizures, episodes where the child stops breathing.

Emotional Abuse

- In infants/babies emotional abuse can result in; impaired social skills, withdrawn, developmental delay, acts of self-stimulation (e.g. head banging, rocking) and lack of responsiveness towards others.
- In pre-school aged children emotional abuse can result in; developmental delay, delay in learning to talk, behavioural problems such as reduced attention span, hyperactivity and aggression. The child having indiscriminate relationships with adults e.g. seeking physical attention from strangers.
- In school aged children emotional abuse can result in; difficulty learning, poor concentration, over activity, disruptive behaviour, aggression, inappropriate or unusual toileting patterns/habits, low self-esteem, poor social interactions, self-stimulating behaviours and self-harm.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexually transmitted diseases.
- Pregnancy – there may be difficulty in getting the child to identify the father either through refusal or the child not knowing.
- Local trauma and/or infection e.g. bruising, lacerations, bites, burns, scratches or soreness to the inner thighs, breasts, genitals and/or anal region.
- Emotional difficulties such as loss of concentration, poor academic performance.
- Enuresis (bed wetting at an inappropriate age).
- Encopresis (soiling at an inappropriate age).
- Eating disorders.
- Self harm including drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution and suicide attempts.
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge.
- The child receiving gifts, having access to drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or money and unclear where this is from.
- The child being contacted by usually older 'friends/boyfriends/girlfriends' and seeming anxious to respond.

It is possible for there to be no physical symptoms of sexual abuse.

Neglect

- Frequent and numerous physical injuries – including accidental injuries.
- Signs of emotional abuse.
- Failure to thrive e.g. poor weight gain, below expected norms with no physical explanation, development delay.
- Appearing unkempt or dirty, poor hygiene.
- Inappropriately dressed for the weather e.g. no warm clothes in winter.
- Frequent hunger, searching for food e.g. in bins, stealing/hoarding food.
- Frequent illnesses/infections.
- Medical help or attention not being sought for illnesses/infections/injuries.
- Several or repeated missed medical appointments.



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



- Frequent tiredness.
- Being left alone for long periods.
- The child carrying out caring duties for others.
- The parents/carers repeatedly failing to engage in school activities.
- The child missing school frequently.
- Drug/alcohol use.
- Self harm.

Safeguarding Children Procedure

Responding to abuse/neglect

All staff have a duty to act on any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of abuse. We will ensure that staff, centre users, parents/carers and children are provided with a copy of this policy. The overriding priority for staff is the wellbeing and welfare of the child.

In general most concerns should be discussed with the child's parent/carer first and their permission should be sought before any further action is taken.

However if staff are concerned that this would put the child at increased risk or they are significantly concerned about the child's wellbeing they should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss the concerns and seek advice and guidance on how to respond or act. Please see appendix 1 of this policy for contact details for the LADO.

Responding to a child who discloses abuse/neglect

If a child tells a staff member something that causes them concern or discloses that they have been abused in some way the staff member must;

- Stay calm and reassuring.
- Explain that you cannot keep what the child has told you secret.
- Tell the child that you'll have to talk to someone else for help.
- Listen to the child and take the child seriously.
- Tell the child that whatever the circumstances they are not to blame for what has happened.
- Don't press for further details, if further investigation is needed it is better for the child to not have to repeat the details unnecessarily.
- Don't make any promises to the child, hearing a child disclose potential abuse will be very emotional and difficult, however it's important for the child and you to not make promises you may not be able to fulfil
- Tell the child they've done the right thing by telling someone.
- Let the child know that you understand how difficult it is to talk about such an experience.

- Do NOT start a full interview – you should only ask questions to clarify what the child is telling you so you can establish if there is a safeguarding concern
- Do NOT ask 'Why' questions
- Do NOT promise to keep the information secret
- Do NOT examine the child or ask the child to remove clothing to show you any injuries/marks.



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



Witnessing potential abuse/neglect

If you witness abuse, or abuse has just taken place;

- Keep yourself and others safe – call the police or for staff support if needed.
- Call an Ambulance if required or seek appropriate medical attention
- Call the Police if you think a crime may have been committed
- Comfort and reassure the victim
- Preserve any evidence e.g. do not tidy or clean up and discourage the victim from changing their clothes or washing
- Contact the Child Safeguarding Leads, the Manager or Deputy Manager to inform them of the incident and for support, advice and guidance

If you have a concern/suspicion that abuse/neglect may be taking place;

- Write down your concerns, include details of any incidents you are concerned about or any other potential evidence.
- Contact the Child Safeguarding Leads, the Manager, Deputy or the child's Key Worker to report and discuss your concerns and forward them your written concerns.
- If you are still concerned and do not feel that appropriate action has been taken by the staff member you have reported to you can report your concerns to a more senior manager, the other Child Safeguarding Lead or to the Local Authority Safeguarding Team or Ofsted. (Please see the end of this policy for useful contacts).

If you have a concern/suspicion about or witness staff member committing abuse/neglect;

- Do NOT confront the staff member, take steps to ensure the child being abused is safe, keep yourself and others safe.
- Follow the steps outlined above – where possible we will act in a way that will maintain the confidentiality of the person reporting concerns; staff can refer to the Whistleblowing policy for more information.

What happens next?

The Child Safeguarding Lead/ Manager must be contacted and they must ensure that everyone involved is safe and not in any immediate danger. They should also ensure that if needed an ambulance has been called/medical attention has been sought and/or the police contacted.

The staff member who has reported a disclosure, witnessed abuse or has concerns about abuse should be offered reassurance and support. They should complete a written record of the disclosure, incident or their concerns.

The Child Safeguarding Lead/ Manager Lead must then tell the staff member what they are going to do in response.

If the concern is about a member of staff the Child Safeguarding Lead/Manager must decide what steps need to be taken to protect others. This will include assessing whether the staff member needs to be suspended from duty pending an investigation into the allegations/ concerns raised.

The Child Safeguarding Lead/Manager must ensure that the concern is then reported to Gateshead's Child Safeguarding Team. They must also complete a notification to Ofsted and



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer. Please see appendix 1 of this policy for contact details.

Making a safeguarding children referral

The Child Safeguarding Leads/ Managers are responsible for completing a referral/alert to Gateshead Local Authority Child Safeguarding Team. This must be done as soon as possible, on the day that the concern has been reported.

Please see appendix 1 of this policy for contact details.

Sharing information and interagency working is vital for safeguarding children, there are often a number of professionals involved with a family who may all have concerns and different information which can provide a bigger picture of the risks posed to the child. It is therefore important that any concerns about potential abuse/neglect are reported to the Local Authority Safeguarding Team.

Referral Information

The information you provide in your referral must be;

Clear – especially about your concerns for the child,

Factual – it should be clear what you are reporting as facts, any information you provide which is opinion must be clearly identified as opinion,

Complete – all known, relevant information should be included,

Unambiguous – there must be minimal scope for the information you've provided to be misinterpreted.

Recording Information

As soon as possible after the disclosure, incident or event that has caused concern the staff member involved should write down the facts, detailing what has occurred, what action they've taken, anything they've observed about the child or relevant others, what the child or relevant others have told the staff member, what has been discussed with the parent/carer. This can be recorded on a Concern Form or Incident Form – however it is more important that the information is written down as soon as possible so can also be written on blank paper initially.

The following information should be included in the record;

- The child's full name, address, date of birth and gender
- The child's ethnicity and religious background.
- Who lives in the child's household
- Name, date of birth, address or child's parents/carers
- The child's nursery/school name and telephone number
- The child's GP name and number
- Information about other children e.g. siblings, who may also be a cause for concern
- Names and telephone numbers of any relevant agencies or professionals involved
- Name, date of birth, telephone number and address of anyone suspected of harming the child
- Dates and details of events/incidents which had caused concern
- Whether you've informed the child and/or their parents/carers about the referral and whether they agreed to the referral



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



- Details of any strengths /resources which the child, parents/carers or wider family have which could be used in the child's interests.

Gateshead Referral Route

1. Referral person (you/ your manager/ the child safeguarding lead) records information.
2. Speak to duty social worker from the Integrated Referral and Assessment team (IRAT) at Civic Centre **0191 433 3000** or the child's social worker if known.
3. Pass on your concerns which you will have recorded. The IRAT will record your information and will ask you to follow it up in writing (securely)
4. The IRAT will make an initial assessment of the child. They will decide if there is to be an investigation. They may decide that there is to be no further action or it could be that they confirm that the child is a 'child in need', or in need of protection.

Once reported to an external agency such as the police or the duty social worker staff at Blaydon Youth Club Childcare services must follow the advice and guidance of those external professionals and must provide any further information requested.

If you are concerned that Blaydon Youth Club Childcare is not responding appropriately to a Safeguarding concern you've raised.

We take safeguarding very seriously and will always act upon concerns raised, however if for any reason you do not think appropriate action has been taken please contact one of our Child Safeguarding Leads or a Senior Manager.

If you are still concerned or believe that there are safeguarding issues within Blaydon Youth Club Childcare itself you can report a concern directly to Gateshead Local Authority or Ofsted. Please see appendix 1 for contact details.

For more information you can refer to the document 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' which can be found using this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

Supporting children who have experienced abuse

We recognise that children who have experienced abuse, including those who have witnessed the ill treatment of others, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Blaydon Youth Club Childcare may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children in our care.

We therefore recognise that such children might exhibit behaviours of concern; this may include aggression, difficulty engaging in positive social interactions, difficulty forming and maintaining positive relationships. We also recognise that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others.

This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child receives appropriate help and support and that all children in our care are safe and protected from harm.



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



We will endeavour to support all children through:

- Working in partnership with all of the professionals and organisations involved in the child's life in order to assess the child's support needs, define and allocate clear roles and responsibilities and create a comprehensive care and support plan.
- Ensuring staff working with the child are trained and have access to additional supervision and support from suitably qualified staff members.
- Have a clear positive behaviour support plan for each child, which has been developed and shared in partnership with all other relevant professionals.
- Ensure that regular, detailed and clear communication is established with all relevant parties.

Summary

- All staff must attend regular training in Safeguarding and Child Protection and ensure they are familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to report any concerns.
- Staff must report any safeguarding concern or disclosure to the Child Safeguarding Leads, the Childcare Manager, the Centre Manager or the Deputy Manager.
- Staff must not promise to keep safeguarding disclosures or concerns 'secret' – they must be reported.



BLAYDON YOUTH AND
COMMUNITY CENTRE CIO



Appendix 1 – Useful Contact Details

Blaydon Youth and Community Centre Contacts: 0191 414 7849 info@blaydonycc.org.uk

Chris Marr chrismarr@blaydonycc.org.uk 0191 414 7849

Rachel Davidson racheldavidson@blaydonycc.org.uk 0191 414 7849

Anna Smith (acting Deputy Manager) annasmith@blaydonycc.org.uk 0191 414 7849

Gateshead Local Authority Contacts:

Gateshead Referral and Assessment Team 0191 433 300

Can be contacted for informal discussions, advice and guidance. Should be contacted to report concerns of abuse/neglect.

Gateshead Emergency Out of Hours 0191 477 0844

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **Nicholas Leon** 0191 433 3554

Can be contacted for advice, guidance, support and to informally discuss concerns. Should be contacted to discuss concerns.

Local Authority Safeguarding Officer **Elaine Trotter** 0191 433 5117

Can be contacted for advice, guidance, support and to informally discuss concerns. Should be contacted if a referral has been made.

Gateshead Family Information Service 0191 433 5118

Other agencies:

Ofsted 0300 123 1231 www.ofsted.gov.uk

NSPCC 0800 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk

Childline 0800 1111

FGM Helpline 0800 028 3550

Police 101 (non emergency) / 999 (emergency) www.northumbria.police.uk

Parents Against Child Exploitation (PACE) 0113 240 3040 www.paceuk.info