



# Safeguarding & Children's Welfare

## Safeguarding and Children's Welfare Policy

### Safeguarding

Drop & Dash is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all colleagues to share this commitment.

Drop & Dash have a legal duty to recognise and respond appropriately to:

- Significant changes in the children's behaviour
- Deterioration in their general well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse
- Signs of neglect
- Comments children make which give cause for concern

If you recognise one of the above for a child, the severity and circumstance will dictate your actions. The important thing for you is to do something and not ignore it. We will create an environment to make the children be and feel safe. Any suspicions or allegations of abuse will be taken very seriously, and they will be acted on quickly and correctly by following the procedure set by the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership.

### **Four Categories of Abuse – This list is not exhaustive**

All Types of abuse can occur in all types of homes, across all social and income groups.

#### **Neglect: Definition**

Longstanding and/or severe neglect

Effect on the Child's development

Non-organic failure to thrive

#### **Signs/Symptoms**

Constant Hunger, Tiredness, stealing or scrounging

Poor personal hygiene, or inappropriate clothing for weather or activities

Untreated medical problems

Low self-esteem, poor social relation

### **Physical : Definition**

Deliberate injury to the child – allowing injury.

Beyond 'reasonable' chastisement

Poisoning, inc. alcohol

Withholding drugs or apparatus

Both the use of an implement e.g. a belt or a physical strike that leave a mark are illegal

### **Signs/Symptoms**

Unexplained or untreated injured, especially if repetitive

Refusal to discuss injuries, and untreated injuries

Shrinking from physical contact

Fear of returning home, undressing, or medical help

Aggression or bullying

Unexplained pattern of absences which may server to hide bruises or other physical injuries

### **Sexual: Definition**

Sexual exploitation of any kind including watching others and viewing pornographic material

### **Signs/Symptoms**

Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age, through drawings, games, vocabulary etc

Frequent public masturbation

Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity

Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, fearfulness

This is a short summary, there are other signs, individual to certain children

### **Emotional: Definition**

Must be persistent

Must undermine the child's sense of self worth

Might reflect poor parenting skills

Includes witnessing domestic violence of primary carer

### **Signs/Symptoms**

Continual self-depreciation, self-harm or mutilation

Inappropriate response to painful situations

Compulsive stealing/scrounging

Air of detachment, social isolation or desperate attention seeking behaviour, depression or withdrawal. Eating problems, either overeating or a lack of appetite

### **Child Sexual Exploitation CSE**

Involves exploitative situations where a child, male or female, receives something from an adult as a result of engaging in sexual activity. This can be seemingly 'consensual' relationships to serious organised crime gangs. There will be an imbalance of power where the perpetrator holds power over the victim. Technology is often used. This is a serious crime.

### **Female Genital Mutilation FGM**

This is illegal and a form of child abuse. It involves a procedure to remove all or some of the female genitalia or any other injury to these organs. It is a legal duty to report *known* cases to the police.

### **Forced Marriage**

Is illegal and a form of child abuse. A marriage entered without the full and free consent of one or both parties, where violence, threats or coercion is used.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Children can be vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

## Dealing with a Disclosure

1. Listen and stay calm. Do not condemn the abuser, do not judge, do not make promises you can't keep
2. Reassure them. Tell them that you believe them. Tell them that it happens to others and that they are brave to tell you.
3. Stay with them. If you can 'ground' them ("grounding" means to draw the child back to a more comfortable state of mind through things like normal conversation e.g. what activities have you done today, what's your favourite TV program)
4. Accurately record the child words. Make it clear whether it is a fact, opinion or hearsay.
5. Report it to your relevant manager or head office as soon as possible; they will know the right procedure to follow. In some cases, they will speak to the parents first or report to the local safe guarding children's board.
6. 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.

If you have any concerns about a child's welfare at your club, do not keep it to yourself. Write it down and take advice. Only speak with your relevant manager or directly to the qualified designated persons for child protection at head office.

If you are not satisfied with an outcome or anything related to how Drop & Dash have conducted themselves, you will find the Local Authority contact details on the club noticeboard and can report directly to them.

## Protecting yourself

Part of safeguarding is also to protect yourself from allegations and to ensure your actions are not misinterpreted by anyone. Do this by observing the following:

- Avoid being alone with a child
- Take a register of which children are with you for each session, noting the time of the session.
- If you take a child somewhere e.g. an empty room, do not enter with them, wait outside. If you have to enter the room, **it's vital you keep all doors open.**
- Do not play-fight
- Children should not be encouraged to sit on your lap
- Challenge any child using 'bad' language
- Never let children touch themselves or others inappropriately in any form
- Never let a child's allegation go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on
- Never do personal things for children that they are capable of doing themselves. Encourage children to help each other.
- Do not build 'special' relationships with individual children

- You must not, before, during or after your employment make or accept any contact with a child or a friend of a child you know through your work with Kids' Club or through social networking websites.
- Any images of children taken on site must only be of those children whose parents allow photos to be taken. Colleagues should not take any photos off site.
- Any images taken must be appropriate.
- It is each individual colleagues personal responsibility to delete any images from cameras, phones and recording devices.
- Images must not be published elsewhere without the authorisation of a company director.

## **Whistle Blowing**

Drop & Dash will not accept or condone any behaviour by colleagues or other adults associated with the Club that is contrary to our Aims and Objectives, Policies and Procedures. We will actively encourage and fully support the reporting of such behaviour. We will do this by:

- Promoting an environment of mutual respect, trust and open communication.
- Promoting an environment that is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Treating everyone equally and fairly, with dignity and respect and by valuing individual differences.
- Ensuring that the quality of the work of each colleague/volunteer is effectively monitored as well as the work of the club as a whole.
- Ensure that procedures are in place for reporting unacceptable behaviours/practices.
- Provide colleagues with a number of ways to report including a confidential form on our website.
- Actively supporting colleagues/volunteers that 'blow the whistle' both during the investigation and after, and in line with the relevant legislation.

## **Allegation against a person within Drop & Dash**

If there is a serious allegation of abuse made against you, Drop & Dash will have to suspend you whilst the investigation is carried out. This is to protect all parties, including you. You should:

- Stay calm
- Follow the manager's instructions
- Co-operate with questions and enquires
- Seek advice – head office or citizens advice bureau.
- Not confront the accuser
- Not speak with your 'victim'
- Be supported through the process by a designated person at head office and/or your manager.

We provide a form on our website for concerned parties to report any worries directly to the Safeguarding Lead. We take all allegations seriously and will seek advice from the LADO.

Drop & Dash has a legal duty to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service of any suspicions of any allegations even if colleagues leave before an investigation is started or completed.

### **Allegation against an Adult Outside of Drop & Dash**

If you have any concerns about an adult's behaviour, even if they do not work for Drop & Dash, for example a parent, other provider on a school site, a member of school staff, etc. you have a duty to report your concerns using our normal procedure of escalating to your manager or the company safeguarding lead.

### **Promoting awareness among colleagues**

The Club promotes awareness of child abuse issues through its colleague training. The Club ensures that:

- Its designated CPO has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new colleagues
- All colleagues have a copy of this Child Protection Policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect
- All colleagues are aware of the 'Safeguarding Children Procedure for colleagues' poster displayed on the site information board
- All colleagues are aware of their statutory requirements with regards to the disclosure of information or discovery of child abuse
- Colleagues are familiar with 'Site specific' Safeguarding information (Local Authority) which can be found within the club's own SharePoint folder
- Its procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)' and that colleagues are familiar with the 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' flowchart

### **Good practice guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

#### **Good practice means:**

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.

- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

### **Practices never to be sanctioned**

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves

### **Incidents that must be reported/recorded**

If any of the following occur, you should report this immediately to the appropriate officer and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a player
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

### **Use of mobile phones and cameras**

Please see our Smart Devices Policy in the section below for full details and guidance of the use of mobiles and cameras in our clubs.

### **Changing**

Under 8's – Ensure there is always 2 members of colleagues in the changing area and that you can see each other at all times. Colleagues should not dress or dry children but support them in doing so themselves. Wait until all children are ready.

Over 8's – Colleagues should wait outside of the changing rooms. If there is a disturbance that warrants entry, avoid entering alone and never enter alone if there are less than 3 children left.

## **Toilet Supervision**

### ***Children in Reception, Year 1 and 2***

- Children will be escorted to the toilets and colleagues will remain outside the door to assist if help is requested.

### ***Children in years 3-6***

- All children will ask to use the toilet facilities.
- Colleagues will monitor numbers and ensure children return to their play in the appropriate location.
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## **Prevent Duty**

Drop & Dash recognises their duty to prevent children and families being drawn into terrorist or extremist behaviour and employ the following methods:

- Follows the guidance in the government document 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015'
- Colleagues have access to Prevent training
- We value all children and their families equally
- We promote the development of positive attitudes and behaviours to all people, whether they are different from or similar to themselves
- We have a commitment to challenging prejudice
- Report any concerns about children, colleagues or families to the relevant authorities

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact your local Social care Team (contact information is on display in all our clubs) or the police direct, or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Child line on 0800 1111.

## **Related Policies and Information**

Mobile Phone Policy

Social networking Policy