

Child Safeguarding Policy

Policy Adopted by Charity Trustees on: 09.03.2016

Policy Last Reviewed on: 24.01.2024

Policy Due for Review on: 24.01.2025

Introduction

This document sets out the ACE Cardiff Child Safeguarding Policy and it should be read by volunteers who work in The Learning Club and by all staff. Safeguarding of the children who use our services is an integral part of the policy and practice of ACE Cardiff in its work and contact with children. That Safeguarding takes two forms – firstly ensuring that the buildings where our sessions are held (or the location of activities) are safe and secondly that the children are protected from abuse. ACE Cardiff will not tolerate abuse of a child by any member of staff or volunteer. We also regard it our duty to bring any sign of abuse of a child that may have occurred outside of our learning sessions to the notice of appropriate persons, be that the child's family or social services.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The current ACE Cardiff Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Helen Edgeworth

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Policy Statement

ACE Cardiff takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to our care.

ACE staff and volunteers will protect children by:

- Following ACE Cardiff's procedures and guidelines on working safely with children and young adults. This applies both to ensuring the safety of the place where the

session is held as well as protecting children from abuse (as defined in the Volunteer Handbook, Staff Handbook, Risk Assessments and Child Protection Guidelines & Procedures)

- Adopting the stance that abuse of any kind will not be tolerated, and that the welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- Implementing the anti-bullying policy (EM018) when necessary, as bullying of any kind is wholly unacceptable.
- Ensuring parents, children and young people are aware of the contents of ACE Cardiff's child protection policies and procedures, so that they feel safe and protected. A copy will be made available to parents and children upon request.
- Recognising that all children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or disability. Staff and volunteers are fully aware of the contents of ACE Cardiff's Equal Opportunities Policy and must follow its guidelines at all times.
- Informing relevant agencies, such as NSPCC, the police and Social Services, about any concerns we may have about a child's safety (the procedure for doing this is defined in the Child Protection Guidelines & Procedures document). Parents and children will be involved in the sharing of such information, if appropriate.
- Following the procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff, volunteers, and committee members, as laid out in the Equal Opportunities Policy (EM006).
- Undergoing regular training (as defined in our Volunteer Policy, EM022) to ensure that they are fully able to handle a situation in which a child may disclose abuse, or in which they suspect a child is being abused, either by a co-worker (an employee, volunteer, or member), at home or by their peers.
- Ensuring that all volunteers working with children have completed an Enhanced DBS check and have presented a DBS certificate within an appropriate period of time (as defined in our Volunteer Policy EM022) proving they are safe to be in the presence of young people.

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- When working with children in specific environments such as our venues or trips, ensuring we follow safety guidelines as described in the Health and Safety Policy (EM008).
- Ensuring a safe environment for online delivery of sessions. See the Volunteer Policy (EM022) for more information on how sessions are monitored.

Supervision

Children being left alone with an adult should be avoided during delivery of activities for the safety of children and adults involved. Where it is preferable to work with a child away from the main group (e.g. one-to-one reading) this should happen either in the same room or accompanied by another adult in a separate room. Any activities that can't facilitate this should be avoided.

In situations where it is necessary for a child to be removed from the session (if they're ill or being disruptive) they should be taken to a public area with other people present. At Grangetown Hub this is the main library area and for Cardiff and Vale College, the large foyer on the ground floor.

In venues where the toilets are in a separate room then a single adult can accompany children to the door to supervise their behaviour but shouldn't go into the bathroom area with them unless there is need, such as a concern about behaviour.

ACE aims to have a ratio of no more than 3 children per adult. This isn't always possible due to volunteers being unavailable, but sessions should never take place with more than 8 children per adult in the room or if only one adult is available.

Responding To Allegations or Suspicions

Whilst there is no legal requirement for anyone working in ACE Cardiff, in paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not the abuse of a child has taken place, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities (see the document PR001 Child Protection Guidelines & Procedures').

ACE Cardiff assures all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concerns that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child. Where there is a complaint made, there may be three types of investigation:

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- A criminal investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The result of the police investigation may well influence any disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Confidentiality

Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all children. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The tutor of the session in question
- The Volunteer Manager
- The Chair of the Organisation
- The carers/family of the child
- Social services/Police

Information must be stored in a secure place with limited access to the designated people, in line with data protection.

Online Monitoring

In a response to the Coronavirus pandemic, ACE Cardiff introduced online learning sessions for the children in April 2020. These introduced potential new safeguarding risks as groups are now divided into "breakout rooms" (separate, virtual rooms) to allow for quieter and focused communication, something that previously would have taken place within the same room at our face-to-face sessions. With volunteers being left alone for periods of time, this introduces a potential safeguarding risk in the form of the volunteer possibly saying or acting inappropriately in the presence of the child while unmonitored. While this is a different risk to volunteers being left physically alone with children - as the child has the ability to remove themselves from the situation should risks arise - it should still be mitigated.

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As “online” volunteers may be hired without any face-to-face contact when this isn’t possible (such as during a lockdown), volunteers will be more closely monitored in their interactions within the session and as with in-person sessions, should not be left alone (in a virtual sense) with children until their DBS certificate is received.

It will be standard practice for tutors or a present staff member to “drop in” on these breakout rooms of all volunteers to check on progress. This can serve both to check on the success of the pairings but also from a safeguarding perspective to make the volunteers aware that they may be interrupted at any moment and therefore reduce the risk of any harmful activities taking place.

Further Reading

ACE Cardiff has a number of other documents which define how the Child Protection Policy is carried out. Volunteers who work in The Learning Club and all staff must at least know how to get a copy of these documents and are encouraged to read them.

The Learning Club - Information for Volunteers

- Anti-Bullying Policy EM018
- Child Protection Guidelines & Procedures PR001
- Equal Opportunities Policy EM006
- Health and Safety Policy EM008
- Staff Handbook QMSRES018
- TLC Volunteer Handbook QMSRES017
- Volunteer Policy EM022

Revision Record - Issue Number	Summary of Changes	Date	Owner
V1.0	New Document	9/3/16	GP
V2.0	Misc changes	1/12/20	JL
V2.1	Moved Online Monitoring section from Volunteer Policy	23/11/23	JL