



## **Safeguarding Policy**

At Edu-Fun we work with children, parents, schools and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form. Here at Edu-Fun we promote acceptance and tolerance of all beliefs and cultures, abilities and difficulties, race, gender, sexuality and lifestyles.

### **Legal framework and definition of safeguarding**

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- Keeping children safe in education 2021
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Prevent Duty for England and Wales 2021
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- The residing council's Threshold Guidance

### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:**

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

*(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2018').*

### **Policy intention**

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of every child who walks into our workshops. As such we believe we have a duty to the children to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as the DSL of the school we are working at, where the child attends, the local authority services for children's social care, health professionals or the police.

### **Edu-Fun aims to:**

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do
- Ensure staff are trained right from induction to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable or isolated families and children
- Ensure staff understand how to recognise early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures.
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the local authority Safeguarding Service of which the child resides.
- Make any referrals relating to extremism to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk whilst attending an Edu-Fun workshop.
- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children or visiting a setting, including reporting such allegations to the School DSL, Ofsted and other relevant authorities
- Ensure parents and schools, and/or the responsible adult booking the child onto the workshop, are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they book.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance

We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions.

## **Types of abuse and particular procedures followed**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children. What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (*advice for practitioners*) 2015. The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

### **Indicators of child abuse**

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

- Low self-esteem
- Wetting and soiling
- Recurrent nightmares
- Aggressive behaviour
- Withdrawing communication
- Habitual body rocking
- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness towards strangers
- Excessive clinginess
- Persistently seeking attention.

We are aware that child on child abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way as we do for adults abusing children and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area.

## **Physical abuse**

These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face. Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.

## **Female genital mutilation**

This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups. Symptoms may include genital bleeding, painful genital areas, acute urinary retention, urinary infection, wound infection, septicaemia, incontinence, vaginal and pelvic infections with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder as well as physiological concerns. There is a mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

## **Fabricated illness**

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness, e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

If a parent or carer informs Edu-Fun that a child has any medical conditions before they attend a workshop or a new condition during their time attending workshops, Edu-Fun has a right to ask for proof of the condition, such as a letter from the doctors explaining the child's condition. If a parent or carer refuses to provide such information, Edu-Fun may contact Social Services, at the risk of the condition being fabricated or a result of abuse. E.g. seizures

## **Sexual abuse**

Action needs to be taken if the staff member has witnessed an occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may also display emotional symptoms or have physical injuries caused by sexual abuse.

## **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

Edu-Fun are aware of the possibility of CSE and the signs and symptoms this may manifest as. If we have concerns we will follow the same procedures as for other concerns and we will record and refer as appropriate.

## **Neglect**

Action will be taken if Edu-Fun has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold, starvation, persistently arriving at workshops unwashed or in dirty/ill-fitting clothing or failure to seek medical treatment, when required, on behalf of the child), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

## **Child on Child Abuse**

Child on child abuse includes, but is not limited to: Physical and sexual abuse, Sexual harassment and violence, Emotional harm, On and offline bullying, Teenage relationship abuse, Grooming children for sexual and criminal exploitation. Child on child abuse can happen within a setting, away from the setting or online.

Of course, if the children involved are both members of the workshop, Edu-Fun will consider whether it is necessary to exclude one or both children from the workshops until the matter has been resolved. Please see "Positive Behaviour Policy" and "Exclusion Policy".

## **Honour-based Abuse**

Honour-based abuse is an incident that has been or may be committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family, and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour. Honour-based crimes include: Violence, Threats of violence, Intimidation coercion or abuse, Psychological abuse, Physical abuse, Sexual abuse, Financial abuse, Emotional abuse, Attempted murder, Manslaughter, Procuring an abortion, Encouraging or assisting suicide, Conspiracy to murder, Conspiracy to commit a variety of assaults.

## **County Lines**

County lines is the organised criminal distribution of drugs from the big cities into smaller towns and rural areas using children and vulnerable people. The national picture on county lines continues to develop but there are recorded cases of: children as young as 12 years old being exploited or moved by gangs to courier drugs out of their local area; 15-16 years is the most common age range. The use of social media to make initial contact with children and young people. Class A drug users being targeted so that gangs can takeover their homes (known as 'cuckooing').

Gangs are known to target vulnerable children and adults; some of the factors that heighten a person's vulnerability include: having prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse, lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example) , social isolation or social difficulties, economic vulnerability, homelessness or insecure accommodation status, connections with other people involved in gangs, having a physical or learning disability, having mental health or substance misuse issues; being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories) being excluded from mainstream education, in particular, attending a Pupil Referral Unit.

Some potential indicators: persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area; unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones, excessive receipt of texts / phone calls and/or having multiple handsets, relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups, leaving home / care without explanation, suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries, parental concerns, carrying weapons, significant decline in school results / performance, gang association or isolation from peers or social networks, self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

## **Substance Misuse**

Parents' dependent alcohol and drug use can negatively impact on children's physical and emotional wellbeing, their development and their safety.

Substance misuse is just one form of risk-taking behaviour, and can be a sign that young people are dealing with adversity, trauma, and/or experimenting with their identities.

## **Parental Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse is described as an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence, in the majority of cases by a partner or ex-partner, but also by a family member or carer.

Parental Domestic Abuse can have as much impact on a child as it does on the parent.

### **Reporting Procedures**

Edu-Fun have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns and suspicions of abuse.

#### **Procedure:**

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing the procedure below will be followed:

- The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report
- The matter will be referred to the local authority children's social care team in which the child resides, the DSL at the school the child attends (if observed at a school workshop), Ofsted, the Police, or any other agency that is necessary to involve.

### **Confidentiality**

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the local authority and/or police.

Our company has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of Edu-Fun at the earliest opportunity.

## **Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures**

Edu-Fun will make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by Samantha Porter. This record should include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of any incident including any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records will be signed by the person reporting this dated and kept in a separate confidential file. Some children's details may not be available, such as DOB/home address. This may arise from school organised workshops. In these instances, as much information as possible will be completed on the form and all information passed onto school DSL. School DSL will be asked to sign the handover of information.

### **Contact telephone numbers:**

Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership – Family Connect **01952 385385**

Shropshire Safeguarding First Point of Contact (FPOC) **03456789021**

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board **01785 277394**

Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Board **0300 123 5022**

Cheshire West Safeguarding Partnership **0151 337 4614**

Safeguarding children in Powys **01597 827666**

*(Any concerns about children should be reported to their local safeguarding provision in which they reside. For example, for children living in Telford and Wrekin, concerns should be reported to Family Connect on 01952 385385)*

Ofsted **0300 123 1231**

Non-emergency police **101**

Police emergency **999**

Government helpline for extremism concerns **020 7340 7264**



