

PLAY MONTGOMERYSHIRE

Registered Charity No 1000016

POLICY – CHILD PROTECTION

Who abuses children?

Children are abused in many different settings, in the home, in hospital, in playgroups and playschemes, anywhere; by relatives, family, friends, professionals, strangers and other children. Many abusers were, and still may be, victims of abuse themselves. All allegations of abuse should be taken seriously, children rarely make false allegations, although it does occur. A code of conduct needs to protect both the children and adults.

Principles of child protection

- The child's welfare is paramount
- All action for Child Protection will follow Social Services Guidelines
- All children, regardless of age, culture, ability, gender, language, race, religion and sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- Anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered a child for this policy.
- Clear police and DSS List 99 checks for adults working with children are a requirement of Play Montgomeryshire
- All senior members of staff at each play facility must have undergone recognised child protection training

Categories of abuse:

- Physical** - Physical hurting or injuring a child, hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting or using unnecessary excessive force. Also includes giving children alcohol, unnecessary drugs, attempting to poison, suffocate or drown.
Symptoms may show in the form of bruising, burns, fractures, internal injuries and brain damage, or even death. Injuries may be suspect if non accidental, unexplained, untreated, recurring or in areas of the body injuries would be unlikely.
- Emotional** - Failure to give love and affection, repetitive threats, taunts, shouting, sarcasm, over critical.
Symptoms – Lose confidence and self esteem, and become nervous and withdrawn, angry, disturbed behaviour, may commit suicide.

- Sexual** - Carried out by males and females to meet their own sexual need, may include intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling, exposing, pornography.
Symptoms – Inappropriate sexual awareness and explicit behaviour, behaviour difficulties, physical damage to genitals, withdrawn, aggressive, low self worth, self blame, unable to form personal relationships, or form inappropriate relationships.
- Neglect** - Basic needs of food, clothing, warmth and medical care unmet, also being left alone too young and failure to give love and attention.
Symptoms – Hungry, dirty, slow development, social inadequacy. Children with disabilities are more at risk because they may not be able to defend themselves, or communicate what's happening. With the correct response people can recover from the experience of abuse.

If abuse is suspected, or a child indicates abuse:

- React calmly, and reassure others (including the child who has disclosed)
- Write a full report, keep investigation minimal, listen and avoid questioning.
- The report should be drawn up by the person suspecting the abuse and their next senior uninvolved, person; or contact Social Services or police for advice, and keep safe and confidential to the reportee and immediate Senior Line Manager.
- Report immediately to Social Services, (01686 627006/01938 552017) or the Police (01686 625704 Lynne Humphreys) through the line manager if available.

Code of Good Contact when working with children:

- It is the moral and legal responsibility of every adult to protect children from abuse, to take all reasonable steps to protect them from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment, and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- To maintain a high standard of professionalism and good practice, and to protect both children and staff
- It is wise to always be publicly open when working with children, to avoid being alone with children or unobserved. When involved in manual handling or personal care, ensure others, especially parents, know what you are doing and why.
- Never engage in sexual games with children, be sexually suggestive or encourage sexual language. Discourage inappropriate touching, or carrying out personal care the child can do for themselves. Never take a child alone in a car, or home unsupervised, without the parents or another professional's knowledge.
- Challenge, record and act upon any (possibly false) allegations.
- Work in partnership with the children's parents or carers whenever possible, except when the parents are the cause of the suspicion.

Recording Information:

Be it a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, or a false allegation or incident the following should apply:

- Name, address, age of all parties involved
- Dates, times and place of incidents
- Nature of abuse, allegation or incident, and reasons for suspicion
- Description of any injuries, symptoms or child’s disclosure
- Need for any medical treatment

These records need to be kept confidentially by the nominated person responsible for Child Protection at the setting. The only other party who may have access to them are Social Services.

Reporting Abuse :

In the event of an allegation or suspicion being raised regarding the treatment of a child we will follow the below procedure;

The child’s behaviour or appearance causes you to suspect abuse

Record the details and inform your nominated person responsible for Child Protection

Does the nominated person feel that there is an increase for concern?

Contact Social Services on :

In working hours (8.30 am – 4.45pm)
 North Wales 01686 617520
 (Montgomeryshire including Rhayader, Presteigne & Knighton)

Out of Working Hours 01267 222020

The Care & Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) 01597 829319 should also be contacted with regard to any Child Protection Issues raised at the schemes.

This Policy is to be reviewed annually.

Accepted at the meeting dated / /

Signed.....Chairperson

I have read the above Policy, and agree to abide by it.

Signed.....Date.....