



Managing Allegations Against a Child or Young Person Policy

Policy Statement

Pavilion Preschool (Aigburth) CIO is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child in our care. We recognise that children may sometimes display behaviour that causes harm, distress or concern to another child.

We will take all allegations seriously and respond promptly, sensitively and fairly. Our priority will always be to protect children from further harm, ensure that appropriate safeguarding action is taken and provide support to all children involved.

We recognise that a child whose behaviour has caused harm may also have safeguarding needs of their own. We will consider the circumstances, age, stage of development, communication needs and individual experiences of each child when deciding how best to respond.

We will not dismiss harmful behaviour as ordinary childhood behaviour simply because the children involved are young. Equally, we will not label a child as an abuser before the circumstances have been properly considered.

This policy applies to Pavilion Preschool and Pavilion Breakfast and After School Clubs and must be followed by all employees, volunteers, students, trustees and other adults working with children.

Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Protect children from abuse, bullying, intimidation, exploitation and other harmful behaviour by their peers.
- Ensure all allegations and concerns are reported, recorded and acted upon appropriately.
- Provide clear guidance to staff on responding to disclosures and incidents.
- Ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is informed and appropriate referrals are made.



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- Support children who have experienced harm and children whose behaviour has caused concern.
- Promote positive relationships, respect, appropriate boundaries and emotional wellbeing.
- Ensure parents and carers are involved appropriately, without compromising children's safety.
- Work in partnership with children's social care, the police and other relevant professionals when necessary.

What Constitutes an Allegation Against a Child or Young Person?

An allegation is any report or concern that a child or young person may have harmed, abused, threatened, intimidated or behaved inappropriately towards another child.

Examples include:

- Physical aggression, such as hitting, kicking, biting, pushing or causing injury.
- Bullying, intimidation, threats, humiliation or deliberate exclusion.
- Emotional abuse, including repeated insults, controlling behaviour or deliberate attempts to frighten another child.
- Sexual harassment, unwanted touching, coercion or harmful sexual behaviour.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour or sharing sexual images or messages.
- Online bullying, threats or other harmful digital behaviour.
- Racist, homophobic, discriminatory or other abusive conduct.
- Any behaviour that makes another child feel frightened, unsafe, distressed or pressured.

A single incident may constitute a serious safeguarding concern, even if it does not meet the definition of bullying.

Concerns may arise from direct observations, disclosures by children, reports from parents or carers, information from other professionals or information received from outside the setting.



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Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must:

- Remain vigilant to signs of abuse, distress, intimidation or inappropriate behaviour.
- Take all allegations and concerns seriously.
- Act immediately to protect children where necessary.
- Inform the DSL or deputy DSL of concerns without delay.
- Record incidents and disclosures accurately and objectively.
- Maintain confidentiality and share information only with appropriate people.
- Avoid conducting their own investigations or asking leading questions.
- Follow safeguarding procedures and any agreed risk management plans.

Staff must never promise a child that information will be kept secret.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for coordinating the safeguarding response. This includes:

- Assessing the information received and determining immediate safeguarding action.
- Ensuring the safety and welfare of all children involved.
- Making referrals to children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies when required.
- Seeking advice from the local authority safeguarding team where appropriate.
- Ensuring parents and carers are informed when it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Maintaining accurate and secure safeguarding records.
- Coordinating risk assessments, support plans and ongoing monitoring.
- Recording decisions, actions, advice received and the reasons for decisions.
- Liaising with relevant agencies and following agreed safeguarding plans.



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If the DSL is unavailable, the deputy DSL must act. Staff must not delay an urgent referral because the DSL or deputy DSL is absent.

Responding to an Allegation or Incident

When an allegation is made or an incident is witnessed, staff must follow these procedures.

Make the Situation Safe

Staff must immediately take reasonable steps to protect the children involved.

This may include:

- Stopping the behaviour calmly and firmly.
- Separating children where necessary.
- Ensuring children are appropriately supervised.
- Providing first aid or obtaining medical assistance.
- Preventing further contact where there is an ongoing risk.
- Reassuring children that adults are there to help keep them safe.

Where there is an immediate danger or serious injury, emergency assistance must be sought by calling 999.

Any physical intervention must comply with the setting's Physical Intervention Policy and must be lawful, necessary, proportionate and used only in accordance with applicable guidance.

Listen to the Child

If a child discloses that they have been harmed, staff must:

- Remain calm and listen carefully.
- Allow the child to speak in their own words.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling an adult.
- Avoid expressing shock, disbelief or blame.
- Avoid asking leading questions or repeatedly asking the child to recount events.



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- Explain that the information will need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe.
- Consider the child's age, communication needs and understanding.

Staff must not attempt to investigate the allegation or determine whether it is true. Their responsibility is to listen, safeguard, record and report.

Report the Concern

All allegations must be reported to the DSL or deputy DSL as soon as possible on the same day.

If the concern involves the DSL or deputy DSL, it must be reported through an alternative safeguarding route, such as the local authority children's social care team.

If a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, staff must contact emergency services or children's social care as appropriate without waiting for internal authorisation.

Record the Information

The staff member receiving the allegation or witnessing the incident must complete a factual written record as soon as possible.

The record must include:

- The date, time and location.
- The names of the children and adults involved.
- A factual description of what was seen or reported.
- The child's own words, where applicable.
- Any visible injuries, signs of distress or relevant observations.
- Immediate safeguarding action taken.
- The names of people informed and the times they were informed.
- Any follow-up action required.



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Records must distinguish between facts, direct observations and information reported by others. Staff must not include speculation, assumptions or personal judgements.

Assessing the Allegation

The DSL will consider the information available and determine the appropriate safeguarding response.

The assessment will consider:

- The seriousness and nature of the alleged behaviour.
- The ages and developmental stages of the children.
- Whether the behaviour involved force, threats, coercion or manipulation.
- Whether there is an imbalance of power, age, size, ability or understanding.
- Whether there has been physical injury or emotional distress.
- Whether the behaviour is repeated, escalating or targeted.
- Whether either child has additional needs or communication difficulties.
- Whether there are previous incidents or existing safeguarding concerns.
- Whether either child may be experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Whether external professional advice or intervention is required.

The DSL must record the reasons for decisions and any advice received.

Where the level of concern is unclear, the DSL should seek advice from children's social care or the local safeguarding partnership rather than dismissing the allegation.

Referrals to Children's Social Care and the Police

The DSL will refer concerns to children's social care where a child may be suffering, or be likely to suffer, significant harm, or where an assessment or other intervention from children's social care is required.

The police will be contacted where a crime may have occurred or where police involvement is necessary to protect a child. In emergencies, staff must call 999.



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The setting will cooperate with safeguarding enquiries and follow advice from the relevant agencies.

Staff must not assume that a child is too young for safeguarding intervention. Criminal responsibility and safeguarding responsibilities are separate matters.

Where an external agency does not accept a referral or the response does not adequately address the identified risk, the DSL will seek further advice and use local escalation procedures where appropriate.

Sexualised Behaviour and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Any allegation involving sexualised behaviour, unwanted touching, sexual harassment, coercion, sexual violence or sexual images must be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Staff must immediately inform the DSL and ensure that appropriate protective measures are in place.

The setting will:

- Ensure the children are safe and appropriately supervised.
- Avoid detailed or leading questioning.
- Record disclosures and observations accurately.
- Seek advice from children's social care and the police where appropriate.
- Follow professional advice about contact between the children and any further enquiries.
- Consider the developmental stage, understanding and individual needs of the children involved.

Staff must not automatically dismiss sexualised behaviour as normal exploration. Equally, they must not make assumptions without considering the circumstances.

The setting will not undertake its own investigation into suspected sexual abuse. Any enquiries must be managed by the appropriate safeguarding professionals.



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Supporting the Child Who May Have Been Harmed

Pavilion will prioritise the safety, dignity and emotional wellbeing of the child who may have been harmed.

Support may include:

- Providing reassurance and access to a trusted adult.
- Ensuring appropriate supervision and safe arrangements.
- Making adjustments to activities, routines or the environment.
- Monitoring emotional wellbeing and behaviour.
- Working with parents and carers, where appropriate and safe.
- Seeking additional professional support where required.

The child must not be blamed, shamed or made to feel responsible for what happened.

A written safeguarding plan or risk assessment will be developed where necessary to reduce the risk of further harm.

Supporting the Child Whose Behaviour Has Caused Concern

Pavilion recognises that children whose behaviour has caused concern may also need help, guidance and safeguarding support.

The setting will consider:

- The child's developmental stage and understanding.
- Any communication, emotional regulation or additional needs.
- Whether the child may have experienced abuse, neglect or other harmful experiences.
- Appropriate teaching about boundaries, respect and safe relationships.
- Positive behaviour support and strategies to prevent recurrence.
- Advice from parents, carers and relevant professionals, where appropriate.



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The setting will respond in a proportionate and non-discriminatory way. Children will not be subjected to humiliating, degrading or inappropriate punishment.

Where there is an ongoing risk to other children, additional supervision, changes to activities or other proportionate protective arrangements may be necessary.

Any changes to attendance arrangements must be considered carefully, with children's welfare, safeguarding advice and relevant policies taken into account.

Informing Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will normally be informed when an allegation involving their child has been assessed and an appropriate response has been agreed.

However, the DSL may delay informing parents or carers if doing so could:

- Place a child at increased risk of harm.
- Compromise a police investigation or safeguarding enquiry.
- Lead to intimidation, retaliation or interference with evidence.
- Conflict with advice from children's social care or another relevant agency.

Communication must be factual, sensitive and confidential. The setting will not disclose unnecessary personal information about another child.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to work in partnership with the setting to support children's safety and wellbeing.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information relating to allegations must be shared only with people who need it to safeguard children or carry out their professional responsibilities.

All records will be stored securely in accordance with the setting's safeguarding, data protection and records retention procedures.



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Relevant information may be shared with children's social care, the police, health professionals and other agencies where necessary and lawful for safeguarding purposes.

Staff must not discuss allegations with unauthorised colleagues, other parents or members of the community. Information must not be shared through personal messaging accounts or social media.

Confidentiality must never prevent appropriate action to protect a child.

Risk Assessments and Ongoing Monitoring

Following an incident, the DSL and manager will consider whether a written risk assessment or safeguarding plan is required.

This may include:

- Supervision arrangements.
- Safe use of indoor and outdoor areas.
- Activities and transitions.
- Contact between the children involved.
- Staff responsibilities and deployment.
- Support for the children during Preschool or BASC sessions.
- Communication with parents and carers.
- Actions recommended by external agencies.
- Review dates and arrangements for monitoring.

Risk assessments must be reviewed regularly and updated if circumstances change or further concerns arise.



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Equality, Inclusion and Additional Needs

All children will be treated fairly, respectfully and without discrimination.

Staff will consider the individual needs of children, including disabilities, speech and language difficulties, developmental differences and additional support needs.

These factors may help explain a child's behaviour and inform the support required, but they must not be used to dismiss harmful behaviour or overlook another child's safety.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate, and advice will be sought from relevant professionals when necessary.

Allegations Against Adults

This policy concerns allegations against a child or young person.

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff, volunteer, student, trustee or another adult working with children, the setting's separate Managing Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers and Other Adults Policy must be followed.

Where the allegation meets the relevant threshold, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be contacted in accordance with local procedures.

If the concern involves the DSL or manager, an alternative reporting route must be used.

Record Keeping and Retention

All allegations, disclosures, decisions, referrals and actions must be documented accurately and stored securely.

Records must include the rationale for decisions, advice received, actions taken and any required follow-up.



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Records will be retained in accordance with the setting's records retention schedule, applicable legal requirements and safeguarding advice. Records must not be destroyed while a safeguarding investigation, referral or legal process is ongoing.

Access will be restricted to authorised individuals who require the information for safeguarding or another lawful purpose.

Training and Implementation

All staff and volunteers will be made aware of this policy during induction and through safeguarding training and ongoing supervision.

The DSL will ensure that staff understand:

- How to recognise child-on-child abuse.
- How to respond to disclosures.
- How to record and report concerns.
- When to seek external safeguarding advice.
- The importance of confidentiality and appropriate information sharing.
- How to support children who have experienced harm and children whose behaviour has caused concern.

Staff must know how to contact the DSL, deputy DSL and relevant safeguarding agencies.

Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This policy must be read alongside the setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Physical Intervention Policy and Managing Allegations Against Adults Policy.

Relevant legislation and guidance include:

- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.
- Childcare Act 2006.



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- Equality Act 2010.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*.
- The current *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework* for group and school-based providers.
- Local safeguarding partnership procedures and referral guidance.

The policy will be applied in accordance with current statutory requirements and local safeguarding arrangements.

Local Safeguarding Contacts

The following details must be completed and kept up to date.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Suzanne MacGregor

Deputy DSL: Delyth Corry

CASS: 0151 459 2606

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

Catherine Ballans 07716702 034

Paula Trubshaw 07841 727 309

Local Safeguarding Partnership: <https://liverpoolscp.org.uk/>

Emergency services: 999

Police non-emergency: 101

Staff must know where to find these details and how to make a referral if the DSL is unavailable or implicated in a concern.



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This policy was adopted in October 2025.
It will be reviewed annually or as and as when required.
Last updated: 13.10.26

Signed by Chair of Trustees:

Signed by Operations Manager: