

Safeguarding Policy

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1.0 Introduction

Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number of statutory functions under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts which make this clear. This includes specific duties in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, regardless of where they are found, under sections 17 and 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Throughout this document where the terms children and young people are used it is intended to refer to both children and vulnerable adults. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

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

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Professionals working with young people are responsible for ensuring that they fulfill their role and responsibilities in a manner consistent with the statutory duties of their employer.

Having safeguards in place within an organization not only protects and promotes the welfare of children but also it enhances the confidence of staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public.

Whilst this policy is regarding safeguarding children staff and volunteers also have a duty to safeguard adults. Information on safeguarding adults can be found here:

<http://www.portsmouthsab.uk/>

2.0 Policy Overview

The Play and Youth Service is committed to safeguarding children. The key points of this are as follows:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- No child or group of children must be treated any less favorably than others in being able to access services which meet their particular needs.
- All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, age, sexuality or religious beliefs.
- All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by staff and volunteers and responded to appropriately. This may require a referral to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board or the Local Designated Officer.
- Play and Youth Services has a commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting.
- All settings will aim to ensure that all young people meet in a safe environment with people they can trust.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Play Policy
- Play and Youth Services still/moving images policy
- Play and Youth Clubs Personal and Professional Boundaries Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Accident Reporting Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Employee's code of conduct
- Induction policy
- Probationary policy
- Internet acceptable use policy
- Information governance
- Data protection policy
- Play and Youth Site Procedures
- Partnership working for play and youth provision

3.0 Policy Statement

PCC Youth and Play Services have a duty of care to safeguard all children involved from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

PCC Youth & Play Services will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved through adherence to the [Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board Procedures and Safeguarding Practice Guidance](#).

This policy applies to all staff, including managers and volunteers. All staff should be made aware of the procedures and practice guidance at induction and through regular training. As such staff should understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and young people. To ensure staff are updated of new information, guidelines and developments; regular training in safeguarding is offered to staff.

4.0 Portsmouth City Council Youth & Play Service Overview

4.1 Youth Service Statement

Portsmouth City Council Youth clubs operate across the city offering specifically but not exclusively to 13 -19 years, often extending this to 11 years and up to 25 years for those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). The clubs and projects offer a wide range of activities ensuring that young people have fun whilst informally learning life skills which aid them whilst making informed social decisions, thus supporting their journey through to adulthood.

4.2 Youth Service Purpose

- To offer all young people a safe warm environment where youth workers deliver high quality informal education to enable young people to make informed choices that will maximise their development to adulthood.
- To support young people in:
 - Being Healthy

- Staying Safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Making a positive contribution
- Economic wellbeing
- To encourage young people to make informed decisions
- To work in collaboration with other agencies to layer the offer and widen the opportunities to young people
- To work in multi-agency collaboration to strategically look at local based issues and the wider arena.
- To manage buildings and facilities for the benefit of all the community.

4.3 Youth Service Scope

The youth service manages 4 youth clubs and 2 projects, offering a 52 week opening. Opening hours vary slightly with local arrangements but are all open 5 nights a week with a Saturday offer. All clubs offer off-site activities. The clubs are open access where by it is voluntary participation, however we do work with young people on a referral from YOT, and offer a NEET sessions throughout the week, all clubs have qualified youth workers to deliver and engage.

4.4 Play Service Statement

The Play service, recognising the value of play and the absence of play opportunities in the general environment, is committed to ensuring that children have access to rich, stimulating environments full of challenge, thereby offering them the opportunity to explore through their freely chosen play, both themselves and the world.

4.5 Play Service Purpose

- To offer all children using the Play Service a rich diversity of play experiences of high quality to enable them to maximise their development to adulthood.
- To use partnership working to maximise the play opportunities / offer for children
- To manage the Buildings and facilities for the benefit of the community

4.6 Play Service Scope

The Play service manages 6 Adventure Playgrounds in Portsmouth (52 week opening, 6 days a week). The Play sites are open access and have a qualified Play leader on site. Opening hours vary slightly with local arrangements but are basically 25 hours a week (term time) 42 hour a week during school holidays. In addition to this some special opening for specialist groups or special events are possible. The prime focus is children/young people of 6-13 years.

5.0 Staffing and Volunteers

5.1 Recruitment of Staff

All staff and volunteers in the play and youth service are required to go through Portsmouth City Council's recruitment process.

Suitable references must be received before being in the workplace.

All staff and volunteers are required to have an up to date DBS check. This is to be renewed at least every 3 years.

Whilst waiting to receive a DBS check, a risk assessment will be carried out. All new staff must work alongside a fully vetted and trained member of staff until the DBS check is completed.

In accordance with guidance a record will be kept of the DBS number, completion date and whether or not the check is satisfactory.

If a DBS check shows a disclosure then the centre manager is required to carry out a risk assessment. This must be signed off by the service managers. This is to be regularly monitored through supervision, induction and probation. Also the renewal date of the DBS may be amended to annually if this is risk assessed as appropriate.

All DBS checks are required to be signed off by two designated safeguarding lead managers.

The Youth and Play Service recruitment process includes:

- Explicit reference to intention to seek enhanced DBS disclosure in job application pack.
- A pre-disclosure form to be filled in requesting disclosure of convictions prior to DBS check.
- A statement in the job description that makes it clear the service has a commitment to safeguarding and protecting children.
- Face to face interviews with pre-planned clear questions.
- Exploration of the candidate's attitude towards children and young people. This to include a specific question regarding safeguarding.
- Questioning how the candidate will manage personal and professional boundaries.
- A question in interview which explicitly asks candidates about criminal convictions, cautions, other legal restrictions or pending cases that might affect their suitability to work with children and young people.
- Checking applicant's identity, qualifications and references provided.
- All new staff and volunteers are required to complete a 6 month probation period.

All newly appointed staff and volunteers to have a structured induction program.

5.2 Volunteers

Volunteers are to attend taster session within the service to see if they are suitable for the role. These sessions must be supervised by a fully vetted member of staff and the member of staff will be in the presence of the volunteer at all times. Following this, if the volunteering is to continue, a full DBS check must be seen by the centre manager before the volunteering commences.

Volunteers are also required to complete an induction process and to attend supervision in the same format staff do.

5.3 Staff Mandatory Training

All staff working within the youth and play service are required to carry out the following training:

Safeguarding	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 3 years
Child Sexual Exploitation	Kwango eLearning	Every 3 years
L2 Food safety in catering	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 3 years
PREVENT	https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/la/screen1	Every 3 years
Information Governance	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 1 year
Health & safety induction	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 3 years
Fire safety	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 3 years
Equality & diversity	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 3 years
Financial rules 1+2 (including cash handling policy)	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 3 years
Anti-fraud, bribery & corruption	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 3 years
First Aid	Via Management Learning Environment	Every 3 years

In addition to this, youth and play site managers, their deputies and all level 2 youth and play workers have to complete 'Working with Vulnerable Children' and 'Child Protection' modules which is bookable through the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children's Board. This is part of their role as designated safeguarding lead.

5.4 Induction and probation

All newly appointed staff and volunteers will take part in a formal induction process.

This process will start with an induction meeting. The whole process will be recorded and the standard templates should be used to ensure compliance with the process.

All staff will take part in a period of assessment to ensure competence in their role.

5.5 Supervision

All staff are required to have regular recorded supervision sessions with their manager. These will usually be monthly however less frequent supervision may be appropriate where for example a post is only 3 hours a week. This will be agreed with the management team as necessary.

Safeguarding issues are to be discussed at every supervision session.

6.0 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Person was specified in the Children Act 2004 and ensured that every organisation had a "named person" for safeguarding children and

young people. Prior to that, the role had frequently been known as the Child Protection Officer.

The responsibilities of the DSL are to:

- Keep their service manager, deputy and team informed of any safeguarding concerns or safeguarding referrals and any safeguarding allegations made against a member of staff. This would be done in line with the Portsmouth City Council policies and procedures and HR support throughout the process.
- Ensure if a referral is required that it is reported through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as soon as possible but must be done within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of possible safeguarding issue.
- Make prompt contact with the police if a criminal offense is suspected or if there is a concern for a child or young person's immediate safety.
- Ensure they complete the 'Manager's Module in Safeguarding Children Training' at least every 3 years.
- Ensure that all members of staff, including newly appointed staff, are aware of the service policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of children.
- Ensure that all members of staff are kept up to date on any changes to the policies and procedures related to the safeguarding of children.
- Ensure that the staff team and volunteers they are directly responsible for receiving regular safeguarding refresher training at least every 3 years.

The responsibilities of the management are to:

- Investigate any allegation of child abuse and/or safeguarding concern involving a member of staff or volunteer, with the support of HR and in line with policies and procedures.
- Inform the LADO of any allegation of safeguarding allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure that all play and youth policies and procedures relating to safeguarding are updated in line with any revised guidelines for child protection from the LSCB.
- Ensure there are effective links with the LADO, PSCB and MASH to ensure best practice.

The DSLs for the service are every site manager and their deputies.

The management DSLs are:

Joan Fisher - Play Service Manager

Joan.fisher@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Amanda Littlefield - Youth Services Manager

Amanda.littlefield@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Rob Neale - Communities Coordinator

rob.neale@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Jo Bennett - Leasehold and Commercial Services Manager

Jo.bennett@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

7.0 Handling Safeguarding Issues

If a member of staff has any safeguarding concerns regarding a child/family, not arising from a disclosure, then they **must** complete a safeguarding record. For example, concerns about a child's poor hygiene, a child always seeming hungry, a child displaying out of character behavior.

Once a safeguarding record has been completed, the member of staff should inform the DSL as soon as possible. Whilst individually these safeguarding records may not require any action to be taken, multiple records on the same child or family, on review, may result in a contact to the MASH using the [inter-agency contact form](#) and in relation to the [PSCB Thresholds Document](#)

If a safeguarding concern is significant and requires immediate action the DSL will immediately contact the MASH and advise the service lead of the action taken.

Where a concern requires monitoring in order to understand if it is a safeguarding issue the following process will be used:

- Youth & play workers complete daily recorded session wash up sheets with a section for safeguarding issues this sheet is used to monitor any issues that arise during sessions.
- Weekly review of session wash up sheets by centre manager with their deputy (as part of their roles as DSLs)
- If required, referral to MASH made. If uncertain advice may be sought from MASH at any point to clarify the decision.
- If referral not required, continue to monitor and evidence.
- Service lead informed of action taken allowing for a review of the decision made.

8.0 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The MASH is multi-agency and brings together services from social care, education, health, police and children's services. The MASH aims to work together to offer families the right support at the right time.

Professionals should use the PSCB Thresholds document to guide their decision making when determining the level of need or risk relating to a child. Wherever possible practitioners should discuss their concerns with their line manager and/or Safeguarding lead or contact MASH for a professional discussion. However this should not delay submitting the form to MASH You should use the IACF when:

1. There is immediate risk of harm to a child and/or a professional believes a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm as a result of the care they are receiving.
2. The child is identified as in need or vulnerable. e.g. A child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority
 - A child whose health or development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired, without the provision of services
 - A child who has a substantial and permanent disability
3. Support is required to access Early Help Support Services and a more coordinated response is required from agencies.

The MASH will accept telephone contacts where there is an immediate risk to a child, but

when they do so, you will be asked to complete the IACF within 24 hours.

If there are concerns that a child is at immediate risk of harm make direct contact with the MASH (or Police 999 in an emergency) and complete this form once the immediate concerns have been addressed.

During Office Hours
0845 671 0271

Out of Hours
0300 555 1373

You should seek to discuss concerns with the family and, where possible seek the family's agreement to making a referral unless this may, either by delay or the behavioral response it prompts or for any other reason, place the child or staff at increased risk of significant harm.

9.0 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works or volunteers with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may harm a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child, behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The LADO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone self-employed and they capture concerns, allegations or offences emanating from outside work.

10.0 Online Safety

The use of information technology is an essential part of all our lives. It is an intrinsic part of the experience of our children and young people, and it is greatly beneficial to all. However, it can present challenges in terms of how we use it responsibly and, if misused either by an adult or young person, can potentially be harmful to them.

The Play and Youth Service will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Supporting and encouraging children using our service to use the opportunities offered by mobile phone technology and the internet in a way that keeps themselves safe and shows respect for others.
- Supporting and encouraging parents/carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online when using their mobile devices and consoles.
- Informing parents and carers of incidents of concerns as appropriate.
- Ensuring that the personal information of staff, volunteers and service users are not published on our website without permission.
- Providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online and the appropriate use of ICT, linking this to the responsibilities laid out in our personal and professional boundaries policy.

11.0 Whistleblowing Policy

Please refer to Portsmouth City Council's whistleblowing policy.

Appendix 1 - Portsmouth City Council Youth and Play Settings

The Youth Service has 6 clubs across the city. The details of which can be found below:

- Brook Club
Somerstown Central
River Street
Southsea
PO5 4EY
- BYAC
Garfield Road
Portsmouth
PO2 7EP
- Portsea Youth Club
John Pounds Centre
23 Queen Street
Portsmouth
PO1 3HN
- Hillside & Wymering Centre
Cheltenham Road
Paulsgrove
Portsmouth
PO6 3PY
- Learning Difficulties and
Disabilities Provision
Charles Dickens Activity Centre
Lake Road
Portsmouth
PO1 4DY
- Rant Music Project
Charles Dickens Activity Centre
Lake Road
Portsmouth
PO1 4DY

The Play Service has 6 adventure playgrounds across the city. The details of which can be found below:

- Stamshaw Adventure Playground
Western Terrace
PO2 8JX
- Somerstown Adventure
Playground
Waterloo Street
Southsea
PO5 4HS
- Portsea Adventure Playground
Aylward Street
Portsmouth
PO1 3PB
- Landport Adventure Playground
Arundel Street
Portsmouth
PO1 1PH
- Buckland Adventure Playground
Malins Road
Portsmouth
PO2 7BA
- Paulsgrove Adventure Playground
Marsden Road
Portsmouth
PO6 4JB