

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Wisbech APG fully recognises the responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with children and direct work with families, APG staff and volunteers have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and in referring them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.

This policy sets out how the APG complies with its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who attend the APG.

There are four main elements to this policy:

- 1 PREVENTION** through the support offered to children and the creation and maintenance of a whole setting protective ethos.
- 2 PROCEDURES** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- 3 SUPPORTING CHILDREN** who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others.
- 4 PROMOTING A PROTECTIVE ETHOS.** Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid working at the APG, including volunteers. Concerned parents may also contact the APG's DSL/s for Child Protection.

1. PREVENTION

We recognise that healthy self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

The APG will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are actively listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

2. PROCEDURES

We will follow Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)* procedures, which can be accessed online: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/scb/> (www.cambslscb.org.uk). The APG has regard for Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and What to Do if You are Worried a Child is being Abused 2015 (Department for Education).

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) for Child Protection in the APG are:

Lead Playworker: Violet Loveridge

Deputy Lead Playworker: Rachel Conroy

Playworker: Caroline Benbow

The APG will:

- Ensure a trained DSL is always available (during set hours) for staff in the setting to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure this training is updated every two years and in addition to the formal training DSLs will refresh their knowledge and skills e.g., bulletins, meetings or further reading at least annually.
- Recognise the importance of the role of the DSL and ensure she/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties.
- Ensure there are contingency arrangements should the DSL not be available (another DSL will be on site or available for staff to contact).
- Ensure that the DSL has access to Social Care at the Local Authority for 'what if' conversations. The Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) is also available.
- Ensure that the DSL has access to the Education Child Protection Service Advice Line.

The Role of APG Staff and the Management

All staff, committee members and volunteers will undertake appropriate safeguarding training at induction and receive regular updates on safeguarding (at least annually).

The APG will ensure that all staff attend basic child protection training every three years at a minimum. Training made available must enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond to these in a timely and appropriate way.

These may include:

- Significant changes in children's behaviour.
- Deterioration in children's general well-being.
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of abuse or neglect.
- Children's comments which give cause for concern.
- Pattern of absences or frequent absences.
- Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the APG for example in the child's home.
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with the children.

Liaison with Other Agencies

The APG will:

- Work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all children.
- Cooperate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups.
- Notify the relevant Social Care unit immediately if there is an unexplained absence of a child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan or if there is any change in

circumstances to a child subject to a Child Protection Plan.

Record Keeping

The APG will keep clear detailed written records of concern about children's welfare using the 'Log of Concern Form' (noting the date, event and action taken). The APG will ensure all records are kept secure and in a locked location. Parents do not have an automatic right to access child welfare records and consideration will be given as to what the consequences of information sharing might be. Unless it would place the child at risk of significant harm, parents will be informed that a Log of Concern Form has been completed, where it will be stored and what will happen to it when the child no longer attends the setting.

When applicable (for the APG), when a child about whom there have been child welfare concerns (whether subject to a child protection plan or not) leaves the setting or transfers to a setting, the child's welfare file will be transferred to the receiving setting or setting using the following protocol:

- The file will be marked 'confidential, addressee only' and sent to the Designated Person, if known, of the receiving setting. The file will be delivered by hand if possible; otherwise sent by delivery that can be tracked and signed for.
- The APG will contact the receiving setting by telephone to make them aware that there is a child welfare file and, once sent, ask them to confirm as soon as possible that they have received the file. The setting will keep a record that the file has been received in order to be able to identify its location.
- Parents will be made aware that the child welfare records will be transferred, unless this would place the child at risk of acute harm.
- The APG will not keep a copy of the transferred records but will keep a record of the current file location and date the file was transferred.
- All actions and decisions will be led by what is considered to be in the best interests of the child.
- If individual child welfare files cannot be transferred for any reason, the setting will archive them for 25 years from the child's date of birth.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

APG staff and volunteers will ensure confidentiality and that relevant and proportionate information is shared appropriately. The APG works within the guidelines set out in Information Sharing and Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners 2015 (Department of Education).

The DSL may disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share relevant and proportionate information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

If a child discloses information that may indicate that they are at risk of abuse or neglect, the staff member will be clear that they cannot promise to keep information a secret. The staff member will be honest with the child and explain that it will be necessary to tell someone else in order to help them and keep them safe. See page 15, 16 on Confidentiality and Information sharing policy for more details. Please also see page 17 and 18 on our Documentation policy as to how information is recorded.

Communication with Parents

The APG will:

- Undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances may put the child at further risk of harm. If in any doubt staff will seek advice from Social Care as required.
- Ensure that all parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the APG and staff for safeguarding and child protection by ensuring that they receive a copy of the policy when the child membership is completed. A copy of the Policy will also be on display in the APG.
- Record on the Log of Concern Form what discussions have taken place with parents and if a decision was made not to discuss the matter with parents, the reason why not.
- Particular circumstances where parents may not be informed include disclosure of sexual abuse, or physical abuse where the child has an injury.

3. SUPPORTING CHILDREN

We recognise that children who are abused or witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and trust those around them.

We recognise that some children may adopt inappropriate or abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The APG will endeavour to support the child through:

- Activities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The APG ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and values people.
- A behaviour policy aimed at supporting all children. All staff will agree on a consistent approach which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the child's sense of self-worth. The APG will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred
- Liaison with other agencies which support the child such as Social Care, and the Locality Teams.
- A commitment to develop partnerships with parents.
- Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse/violence, mental health or substance misuse may be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.
- Monitoring the children's welfare, keeping records and seeking advice or making referral to other agencies e.g., Social Care, when necessary.

Children of Substance Misusing Parents/Carers

Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with Significant Harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

When the APG receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedures. This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- Use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children.
- Children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g., customers or dealers.
- The effects of alcohol leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour.
- Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance.
- Disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency.
- Unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment.
- Drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: Psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

The APG recognises that where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young person will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships. Where there are concerns regarding Domestic Abuse, the APG will seek advice from the relevant agencies and follow child protection procedures.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Additional Needs

Statistically, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are most vulnerable to abuse. APG staff who support children with SEND will use their knowledge of the individual child to ensure that signs and indicators of abuse are recognised and acted upon quickly and sensitively.

Children who have difficulty with expressive language may be particularly vulnerable to abuse so APG staff will be alert to changes in behaviour and other possible signs of abuse.

Staff supervision will be vigilant to create a protective ethos around the child.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This can include sexual bullying, being coerced to send sexual images, sexual assault and teenage relationship abuse. There are clear links with sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.

This form of abuse will not be tolerated, and victims will be appropriately supported. Any indication that a child has suffered from peer-on-peer abuse will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy.

Consideration will always need to be given to the welfare of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) in these situations.

Prevention of Radicalisation, Extremism and Terrorism

The following is a definition from the Home Office Prevent Duty page regarding extremism and terrorism:

“Extremism and terrorism are sometimes used interchangeably. Both pose a threat to people but they have very distinct definitions.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Examples of Extremist ideologies

Extreme right-wing ideology

We define extreme right-wing ideology as the active or vocal support of ideologies that advocate discrimination or violence against minority groups. The 3 subcategories of extreme right-wing related ideologies are:

- cultural nationalists - they believe western culture is under threat from perceived mass migration, and they typically promote anti-Muslim hatred and anti-Establishment conspiracy theories
- white/(ethno-) nationalists - they argue that the white race faces an existential threat from demographic change, which they often claim is orchestrated by Jews, and they often advocate for the repatriation or forced deportation of people who are not white
- white supremacists - they believe people who are not white are biologically inferior, frequently call for violence against them, and often call for the replacement of western governments with Neo-Nazi or fascist regimes

Islamist extremist ideology

Islamist extremist ideology includes the uncompromising belief that people cannot be both Muslim and British, and that Muslims living in the UK should not participate in democracy.

Islamist extremists specifically attack the principles of civic participation and social cohesion. These extremists have grievances to which terrorist organisations then claim to have a solution.

What turns any type of extremism into terrorism, is the belief in using violence to further your cause.”

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. The setting is clear that this exploitation and

radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

The Counterterrorism and Security Act, 2015 places a duty on authorities 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. APG staff are made aware of this duty.

If any member of staff has concerns that a child or young person or adult may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the Designated Person who will seek the appropriate advice and make a Prevent referral if required.

Child Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is when someone has gained control over, or ownership of, another person and is using this power to exploit them. It involved the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of men, women or children using force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means in order to exploit them.

Someone is a victim of modern slavery if they have experienced any of the following:

- are forced to work because of physical or verbal threats
- are owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental, emotional, sexual or physical abuse, or the threat of such abuse
- are dehumanised, treated as a commodity, or bought and sold as 'property'
- being held captive, have restrictions placed on their freedom or being moved against their will

Child trafficking is when children are recruited and moved to be exploited, forced to work or sold.

Children are trafficked for all sorts of reasons, including child sexual exploitation, forced labour, criminal activity (such as pick pocketing or transporting drugs), benefit fraud, forced marriage or domestic servitude (such as cleaning, cooking and childcare).

Boys and girls of all ages can be victims of trafficking. Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Trafficked children experience multiple forms of abuse. Physical, sexual and emotional violence are often used to control victims of trafficking. Children are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected.

Identifying a child who has been trafficked is difficult as they are intentionally hidden and isolated from the services and communities who can identify and protect them.

Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious, but could include:

- rarely leaving the house
- having no time to play
- living apart from family or having limited social contact with friends, family and the community
- appearing unfamiliar with a neighbourhood
- being seen in inappropriate places (for example factories or brothels)
- being unsure of where they live
- having their movements controlled or being unable to travel on their own
- living somewhere inappropriate, like a work address or dirty, cramped, unhygienic or overcrowded accommodation, including caravans, sheds, tents or outbuildings
- lacking personal items
- consistently wearing the same clothes
- often being moved by others between specific locations (for example to and from work) – this may happen at unusual times such as very early in the day or at night
- being unable or reluctant to give details such as where they live

- fearful or withdrawn behaviour, or efforts made to disguise this
- being involved in gang activity
- being involved in the consumption, sale or trafficking of drugs
- having their communication controlled by another – may act as though instructed by, or dependent upon, someone else
- tattoos or other marks indicating ownership
- physical or psychological abuse, ill health, exhaustion or injury – may look unkempt and malnourished
- reluctance to seek help, avoidance of strangers, being fearful or hostile towards authorities
- providing a prepared story if questioned or struggling to recall experiences
- inconsistent accounts of their experiences

This is not an exhaustive list. The warning signs presented by children and young people who are being exploited will present differently for each individual.

Children may find it hard to understand that what's happening is abuse – especially if they have been groomed. A victim of grooming may believe they are in a relationship with their abuser and be unaware that they are being exploited.

They also may not understand that child trafficking is abuse and that they have done nothing wrong. They might think they played a part in their abuse or that they're guilty of breaking the law if they have been forced in to criminal activity.

If the APG suspects Child Trafficking and Modern slavery, they are to call 999 if it is an emergency or ring 101 if not an emergency. A Log of Concern will also need to be completed and a referral to Children's Social Care.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

According to the Home Office, Child criminal exploitation is defined as:

“Child criminal exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.”

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes for instance, children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

If CCE is suspected, the APG will complete a Log of Concern and make a referral to Social Care. If the child or young person is over 13 years of age, they will be approached and asked if they would be willing for the APG to complete a SAFE referral. If no consent is given, no SAFE referral will be made as consent is required by the young person or parent.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, drugs, alcohol, gifts or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming.

If CSE is suspected, the APG will complete a Log of Concern form and make a referral to Social Care.

County Lines

County lines is when criminals from larger cities expand their drug networks to other areas of the country – usually rural and suburban areas.

The crime is called county lines because dealers use dedicated mobile phone ‘lines’ to supply drugs. These criminals often exploit vulnerable adults to move and store drugs and money and regularly use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

County lines activity can still be exploitation even if it appears consensual. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Vulnerable adults who use drugs, are in financial difficulty or have mental health problems are at greatest risk of being exploited by county lines gangs. These adults are groomed through offers of ‘free’ drugs, causing them to accumulate debts which can only be paid off by participating in county lines activities (also known as debt bondage).

Sometimes drug dealers will take over the home of a vulnerable person – this is known as cuckooing.

Common signs that someone is being exploited include those listed below. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and that warning signs will show themselves differently in each person. It is important to explore all concerns over someone’s behaviour and personal circumstances and to consider whether they could be signs of exploitation

- becoming more secretive, aggressive or violent
- meeting with unfamiliar people
- persistently going missing – someone may go missing from their home or local area when they are trafficking drugs along ‘deal lines’
- leaving home without explanation or staying out unusually late
- loss of interest in school, college or work and decline in performance
- suspicion of physical assault or unexplained injuries – including ‘DIY injuries’, (knife and puncture wounds) which are signs of punishment for drug-related debts
- using language relating to drug dealing, violence or gangs
- carrying a weapon.
- associating with a gang
- becoming isolated from peers and social networks
- having a friendship or relationship with someone who appears older or controlling
- using drugs, especially if their drug use has increased
- unexplained acquisition of money, drugs or mobile phones.

The APG will report any concerns of County Lines to the police on 999 if it is an emergency or to 101. A referral will also be made to Children’s Social Care.

Cuckooing

This is when professional criminals target a person’s home (often belonging to a vulnerable person) so that the property can be used for drug dealing (including [county lines](#)). These properties – also called ‘trap houses’ or ‘safe houses’ – may be used for short periods of time before operations move elsewhere. During this time the person may experience intimidation, violence and abuse.

Cuckooing often takes place in multi-occupancy or social housing properties, but can happen anywhere.

The following signs could be an indication of cuckooing:

- an increase in the number of coming and goings
- new vehicles outside the property, or frequent use of taxis or hire cars
- increase in anti-social behaviour in and around the property

- disengagement with support services
- new unidentified persons in the property
- sparse furnishings / possessions
- the property falling into disrepair

As with County Lines, cuckooing will be reported the same way (see above).

Missing Children

APG is an open access site and therefore it is not always easy to detect if a child is a missing person. If a child is at the APG during school hours then staff will try to establish which school the child is from, and ring the school. If it is established that the child is a missing person, then a phone call to the police either 999 in emergency or 101. A Log of Concern will be completed as well.

Children and Young People Displaying Harmful Sexual Behaviour

‘Sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child, young person or adult’. (Hackett 2014 Children and Young People with Harmful Sexual Behaviours)

The current definition of [Sexual Abuse](#) in Working Together to Safeguard Children is also relevant as it recognises that abuse can be perpetrated by children as well as adults. ...Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. (Working Together 2018).

There are no diagnostic indicators in personal or family functioning that indicate a pre-disposition towards sexual offending, although the following have been found to be indicators of young people who sexually offend:

- Attachment disorders – poor nurturing and parental guidance;
- Domestic violence and abuse;
- Previous sexual victimisation – a younger age at the onset of the abuse is more likely to lead to sexualised behaviour;
- Social rejection and loneliness;
- Poor empathy skills.

Many of these factors exist alongside typical family environments where other forms of abuse are present. There is a significant minority of young people who display this behaviour who have a level of learning need – up to 40% in some studies. Their needs must be carefully assessed as some assessment tools are not suitable. Also, the intervention may need to be extended and involve a high degree of coordination between agencies.

It is important to be aware that behaviours may present themselves in young people when there has been a family history of sexual abuse and that young people may themselves be both a victim and perpetrator.

It can be useful to think of sexual behaviour as a range or continuum from those behaviours that are developmentally and socially accepted to those that are violently abusive (see [Children and Young People with Harmful Sexual Behaviours \(Research in Practice\)](#)).

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board have developed a tool to support professionals working with children and young people by helping them to identify and respond appropriately to sexual behaviours.

The tool categorises the sexual behaviours of young people and is designed to help professionals:

- Make decisions about safeguarding children and young people
- Assess and respond appropriately to sexual behaviour in children and young people
- Understand healthy sexual development and distinguish it from harmful behaviour

By categorising sexual behaviours, professionals across different agencies can work to the same standardised criteria when making decisions and can protect children and young people with a unified approach.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Child Sexual Behaviour Assessment Tool can be found at the following link <https://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Child-Sexual-Behaviour-Assessment-Tool.pdf>

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board have produced a virtual briefing (Sway) on using our local child sexual behaviour assessment tool which can be found at the following

link <https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/home/covid-19/e-learning-during-covid-19/using-our-local-child-sexual-behaviour-assessment-tool/>

The APG is committed to safeguarding all children and young people who use the playground. Any child or young person displaying harmful sexual behaviour will have a Log of Concern made and attached to a referral made to Children's Social Care.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is carried out on children between the ages of 0–15, depending on the community in which they live. FGM is extremely harmful and has short- and long-term effects on physical and psychological health.

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries, including the UK.

The APG takes these concerns seriously and staff will be made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. There is statutory duty for professionals in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under-18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. (Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation, April 2016).

Where there is a concern about a child in relation to FGM the APG will contact children's social care. If the concerns are based on more concrete evidence, i.e., the young person says this is going to happen to them or that it has happened to them or a sister, the setting will report this to the police.

Contextual Safeguarding

According to the NSPCC website, 2019, Contextual safeguarding recognises that as young people grow and develop, they are influenced by a range of environments and people outside of their family. For example, in schools, college, local community, in peer groups or online. Children and Young People may encounter risk in any of these environments. Sometimes the different contexts are inter-related and can mean exposure to multiple risks. Contextual safeguarding looks at how professionals can best understand these risks, engage with children and young people and help them to keep safe.

The APG's safeguarding policies and procedures outline the steps to keeping children and young people safe from harm. The APG understands that their setting is a 'context' for many children and young people who visit but that risks may not be from the immediate environment. Playworker staff work alongside children and young people and are always on the alert for any causes for concern either through observation or conversations with children and young people. Any genuine cause for concern will be logged via our Log of Concern forms and actioned by the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Online Safety

It is important that children and young people receive consistent messages about the safe use of technology and are able to recognise and manage the risks posed in both the real and the virtual world.

Terms such as 'e-safety', 'online', 'communication technologies' and 'digital technologies' refer to all fixed and mobile technologies that adults and children may encounter, now and in the future, which allow them access to content and communications that could raise issues or pose risks to their well-being.

The issues can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

Best practice:

- Whole setting approach – staff recognise and are aware of e-safety issues and the management team make online safety a priority.
- Policies – online safety policies and procedures are in place and implemented.
- Monitoring and evaluation – risk assessment is taken seriously and used to promote online safety. There are appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to protect children from harmful online material.
- Management of Personal Data – data is managed securely and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.)

4. PROMOTING A PROTECTIVE ETHOS

The APG will create an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk, and they are listened to. This will be achieved in the following ways:

- All staff, including the DSLs, are trained regularly to ensure skills and knowledge are up to date.
- Staff know how to respond to child protection concerns.
- Contribution to an inter-agency approach to child protection by working effectively and supportively with other agencies.
- Raising children's awareness and actively promoting self-esteem building, so that children have a range of strategies and contacts to ensure their safety.
- Using personal safety programmes, such as Protective Behaviours, NSPCC PANTS campaign and the Early Years' Service 'Children's Safety Matters' training and resources.

- Working with parents to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to the welfare of the children.
- Ensuring the relevant policies are in place, i.e., the use of mobile phones and cameras, behaviour management, intimate care, whistleblowing, social networking.
- Being vigilant to the inappropriate behaviour of staff or adults working with children and ensuring that all staff and volunteers know the allegations procedure and relevant contacts.
- Staff acting as positive role models to children and young people.
- Ensuring staff are aware of the need to maintain appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with children and parents/carers.

Preventing unsuitable people from working with children

The APG has a duty to ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements for their role. The APG will follow safer recruitment practices including verifying qualifications and ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken. The setting will not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, to have unsupervised contact with children.

Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).

The following members of staff/committee have undertaken Safer Recruitment training:

Violet Loveridge, Lead Playworker

Rachel Conroy, Deputy Lead Playworker

Disqualification By Association (DBA) - The setting has a responsibility to ensure staff are suitable to work with children and not disqualified. All staff will need to declare (using the setting DBA declaration form) if they live in the same household as someone who is disqualified.

The setting will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the setting and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant agencies, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and included in references where applicable.

For further information, refer to the setting's safer recruitment policy.

5. WHISTLEBLOWING

The APG has a separate whistle-blowing policy which aims to help and protect both staff and children by:

- Preventing a problem getting worse.
- Safeguarding children and young people.
- Reducing the potential risks to others.

The earlier a concern is raised, the easier and sooner it is possible for the setting to take

action.

The responsibility for expressing concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour rests with all staff and volunteers.

6. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST ADULTS WHO WORK OR VOLUNTEER IN THE SETTING

If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer, the following action will be taken (as per the 'Allegations of Abuse against Adults who Work or Volunteer in a Childcare Setting' flowchart and guidance):

- The APG will ensure the immediate safety of the children.
- The APG will not start to investigate and will immediately contact the Early Years Safeguarding Manager (if the Early Years Safeguarding Manager is not contactable, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted direct).
- The Early Years Safeguarding Manager will discuss the case with the LADO, who will decide if it could be a child protection case.
- If the LADO decides the matter is a child protection case, external/internal agencies (e.g., police) will be informed by the LADO and the setting will act upon the advice given to ensure that any investigation is not jeopardised.
- It may be necessary for the employer to suspend the alleged perpetrator. Suspension is a neutral act to allow a thorough and fair investigation.
- If it is agreed that the matter is not a child protection case, the APG will investigate the matter and feedback the outcome of the investigation to the Early Years Safeguarding Manager.

7. MANAGEMENT CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The APG fully recognises their responsibilities with regard to child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We will:

- Monitor the setting's child protection policy and practice and champion good practice in relation to child protection and safeguarding.
- Ensure that this policy is **annually** reviewed in conjunction with the setting's Designated Person/s.

8. PROCEDURES OF REPORTING SECONDHAND INFORMATION OF ALLEGED OR SEX OFFENDERS

In the event of a member of the public expressing concerns to staff members of alleged sex offenders if the alleged appear or enter Wisbech Adventure Playground this must be recorded by calling (999) not (101) and logged according to normal procedures.

9. ADOPTION AND ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy was reviewed on: 10/03/17

Diane Fenner

This policy was reviewed on: 14/03/17

Jacqui White

This policy was reviewed on: 17/01/22

Violet Loveridge

This policy was reviewed and amended on: 13/07/23 Violet Loveridge & Rachel Conroy

Useful contacts:

Education Child Protection Service Advice Line	01223 703800
Emergency Duty Team (out of hours)	01733 234724
Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre (Social Care)	0345 045 5203
8am-5.30pm (Mon-Thu)	
8am-4.30pm (Fri)	
Early Years Safeguarding Manager (Gemma Hope)	01223 714760
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01223 727967
Police – non-emergency and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	101

***LSCBs** bring together representatives of each of the main agencies and professionals responsible for helping to protect children from abuse and neglect in a given area. The LSCB is a multi-agency forum set up to agree how the different services and professional groups should cooperate to safeguard children in that area, and for making sure arrangements work effectively to bring about good outcomes for children.

Reviewed: 04/07/24	Violet Loveridge	Lead Playworker
Next Review: 04/07/25		