



**Salisbury District Council**

**Child Protection Policy for Staff  
and Partner Organisations**

**September 2003**

**“Along with other agencies Salisbury District Council has a legal and moral duty to create and maintain the safest possible environment for children and young people to enjoy sports, arts and other recreational, social and leisure pursuits provided directly by the council or in partnership with other agencies and/or community voluntary sector organisations.”**

**Objectives:**

- To ensure that all staff and volunteers (legally responsible adults) working with children are carefully selected, understand and accept responsibility for the safety of children and young people in their care.
- To raise awareness of child protection issues amongst community voluntary groups, clubs and organisations that offer recreational activities in Salisbury and South Wiltshire.
- To ensure that the child's welfare is of paramount importance, regardless of age, gender, ability or race, when planning, organising, advising on and delivering children's activities.
- To respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and to ensure confidential information is restricted to the appropriate external agencies.
- To raise the awareness of relevant staff, partner organisations and volunteers of child protection issues through the provision of training.
- To monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis.
- To ensure that the principles of this policy are adopted by all our partner organisations, contractors, and community voluntary groups in receipt of council grant-aid, through the adoption of this policy or their own organisation's policy, which meets the same level of determination with regard to child safety.

**Legislation:**

The Police Act 1997 makes it a criminal offence for an employer not to check an employee working with children and/or to knowingly give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with children.

The Criminal Records Bureau Disclosures Service was established in 2002 to enable employers, contractors and community voluntary groups to make

thorough recruitment checks, particularly for positions that involve regular contact with children.

### **What is a Child?**

In law, a child is defined as up to and including the age of 18 in The Children Act, 1989. Extensions of this exist for children who are disabled and for those in local authority care settings.

### **Recruitment:**

Staff and volunteer recruitment procedures will include a Disclosure check for all personnel with substantive access to children and should always include self-declaration and the use of references.

A Disclosure check is a document containing information held by the police and government departments. It is obtained from the Disclosure service of the Criminal Records Bureau and helps employers and voluntary organisations make safer recruitment decisions.

All staff working with children, and those that have 'access' to children on a regular basis should be vetted and required to hold a Disclosure Certificate at the relevant level. This group of staff should also attend a training course - usual duration three hours

Staff who come into contact with children should attend the training course but vetting will not be required

Breach of this policy and it's guidance may lead to disciplinary action

### **Creating a Safe Environment:**

- Staff and volunteers working with children should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, coaching and use of equipment.
- Staff and volunteers working with children should carefully plan activity sessions with care and safety of children as their primary concern including the use of appropriate activities that are not unnecessarily rough or demanding.
- Wherever possible, staff and volunteers should avoid being alone with a child, including offering lifts or taking children to their own home.

- Staff and volunteers should only train children in a non-intrusive manner and should encourage children to be responsible for getting themselves ready, such as getting themselves changed before and after activities.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

This list is not comprehensive and staff and volunteers may be asked to undertake other duties deemed necessary to fulfil their role.

- All staff and volunteers are required to complete a 'Disclosure of Background' form under the terms of the Children's Act 1989.
  - Staff and volunteers planning sessions should comply with the standards set by their appropriate professional body, e.g. Sport National Governing Body, National Arts Council.
  - Staff and volunteers must give due regard to issues of safety at all times.
  - All accidents involving staff and volunteers or participants should be recorded in the organisation's accident book immediately or as soon as practicably possible.
  - Staff and volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment.
  - Staff and volunteers are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the appropriate people.
- IT IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS TO TRY AND DEAL WITH SUSPECTED ABUSE.**
- Staff, or the volunteer in charge, will be expected to keep an attendance register for all organised sessions.
  - Staff, or the volunteer in charge, should have access to any parent consent/emergency consent forms for all children taking part in the organised sessions and this information should be treated as confidential and is governed by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.
  - Staff, or the volunteer in charge, should ensure that their work session start and end on time.
  - Staff and volunteers are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fair play, trust and ethics throughout the session and course of their activities.
  - Management Boards should ensure that their staff, volunteers and contractors are adequately insured, to protect against claims of

negligence, through their organisation or their own personal insurance if acting as a self employed agent.

### **Responding to Signs of Abuse:**

- This is a very emotive subject, which is often ignored. Though it is a difficult subject to deal with it is important that all staff and volunteers should be aware of their responsibilities if child abuse is suspected.

**It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to deal with suspected abuse but it is their responsibility to report concerns in line with guidance on reporting child abuse.**

- If a child reveals that they are being abused staff and volunteers should reassure them, tell them that they are right to tell you - **do not promise to keep it a secret as it is your responsibility to inform others**. You may find that these suspicions back up other recorded incidents.

### **Signs of Child Abuse:**

- These are signs which could alert staff and volunteers to the fact that a child might be being abused and could include: -
  - Unexplained bruising and injuries
  - Sexually explicit language and actions
  - Sudden changes in behaviour
  - Something a child has said
  - A change observed over a long period of time e.g. losing weight or being increasingly dirty or unkempt.

If a child displays these signs it does not necessarily mean that they are being abused. Similarly there may not be any signs; you may just feel something is wrong. If you are worried, it is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse but it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it by reporting it appropriately.

### **Types of Abuse:**

#### **Neglect:**

The actual or likely persistent and significant neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of

care, resulting in the significant impairment of a child's health or development.

Neglect in recreational or social activities might occur if staff and/or volunteers fail to ensure that children, in their care, are safely protected or exposed to undue risk, cold or injury.

**Sexual Abuse:**

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The involvement of children or adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, they violate social taboos of family roles and as such are illegal.

Recreational and social situations may involve physical contact (e.g. supporting and guiding children) and could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations occur if adults misuse their power over children.

**Physical Abuse:**

Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

In recreational activities this might occur where the nature and intensity of activities exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

**Emotional Abuse:**

The actual or likely persistent or significantly emotional ill treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment but emotional abuse is where it is the main or only form of abuse.

Emotional abuse in recreational or social activities might also include situations where parents, staff or volunteers subject children to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

**What should you do if a child tells you that they are being abused?**

**Always:**

- Stay calm - ensure the child is safe and feels safe.
- Accept what you have been told.

- Reassure the child and stress that they are not to blame.
- Tell the child that you will offer support but you will have to pass the information on.
- Make a note as soon as possible after the event detailing what you and the child discussed.

**Never:**

- Rush into details that may be inappropriate.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Take sole responsibility - consult someone else so that you can protect the child and gain support for yourself.

**General Guidance.**

This guidance is vital, as it will protect staff and volunteers from allegations of abuse.

**It does not make sense to:-**

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Take children alone in a car or on a journey, however short.
- Take children to your home.

Where occasions arise where it is unavoidable that these things do happen, they should be done with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation and/or the children's parents.

**You should never:-**

- Engage in rough physical activities including horseplay - apart from structured activities.
- Engage in sexually proactive activities.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child even in fun.
- Let an allegation a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.

If you do have to do things of a personal nature for children (take to toilet, support, give lifts) particularly if they are very young or children

with disabilities then you should obtain the full consent of their parents. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed as soon, as is practicable.

**Photography:**

Appropriate rules need to be set in line with the service being provided, for example there is no photography allowed at the council's swimming pools. Formal permission should be obtained for the use of any images, whether of a child, young person or adult as these are classed as personal information and, as such, are governed by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Named Person:**

Children and parents should have a 'named person' to whom they may report any worries or concerns. The contact names and telephone numbers for 'named people' should be visibly displayed, for instance on posters.

**Staffing (or Volunteer) ratios:**

In youth work practices the ratio of legally responsible adults to children tends to be 1.8 regardless of age, other guidance suggests 1.10 for older children. It is recommended that there is a minimum of two staff with legal responsibility present at all times for children under eight years old.

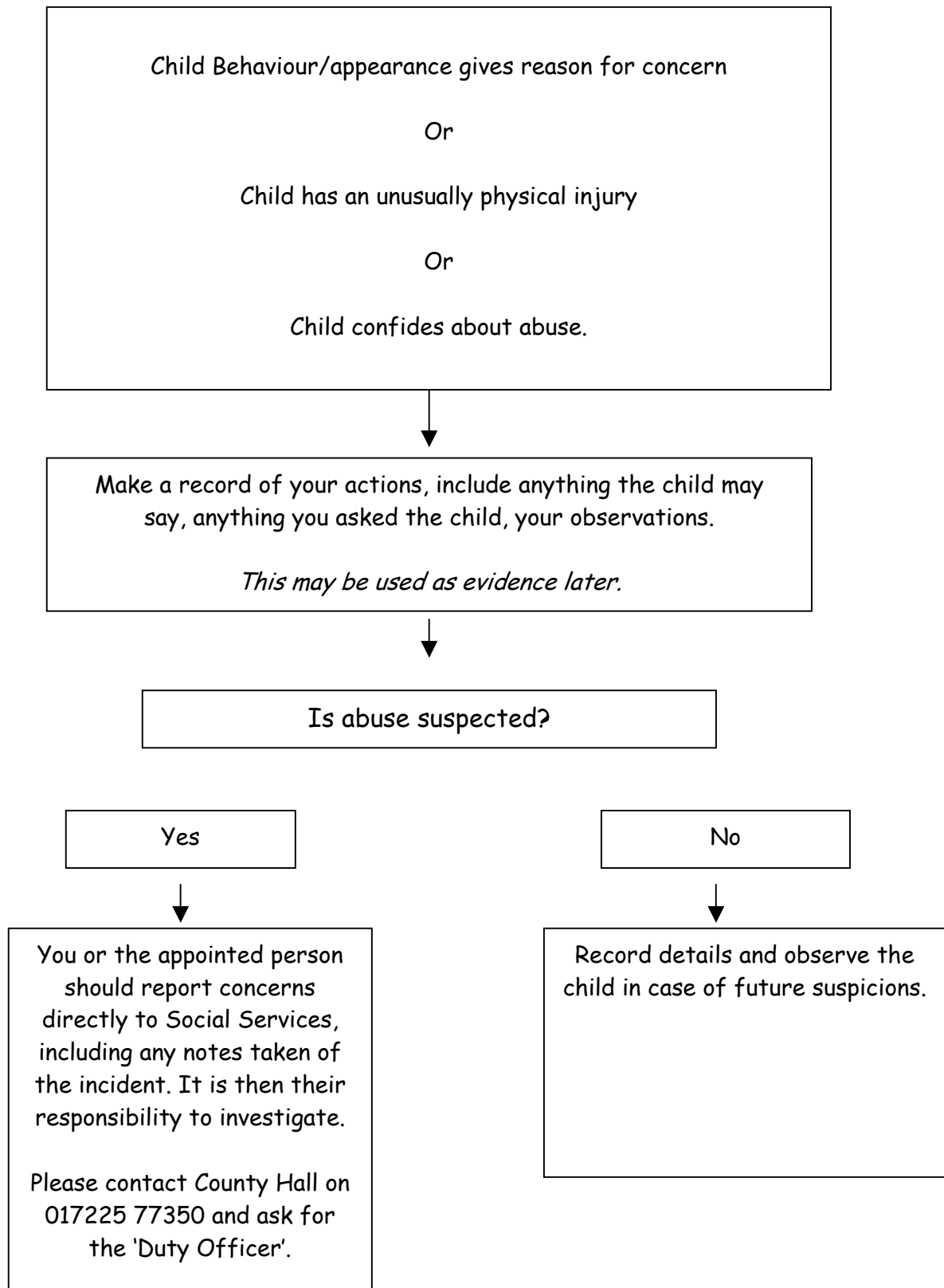
**Sources of Further Information:**

- The Department of Health web-site [www.doh.gov.uk](http://www.doh.gov.uk) contains a practical guide to the law relating to child protection, specially The Protection of Children Act 1999.
- The booklet '**Safe from Harm**': Code of Practice for safeguarding the welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales' is also available from the Home Office web-site [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk) .
- For England and Wales, the **Criminal Records Bureau** are providing a regulated 'one stop' service of records checks from information provided by Police, Department of Health and Department of Education and Skills. Further details can be found on their web-sire [www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk)

- All local authorities have an **Area Child Protection Committee**, (ACPC). This is the key inter-agency forum for child protection, comprising representatives from all the relevant statutory organisations and representing the voluntary sector.
- **NSPCC**. A registered charity established to prevent cruelty to children. Help line for concerns about a child's welfare. 0808 800 5000, web-site [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- **Keeping Arts Safe**, protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in arts activities - Arts Council England.
- **Protecting Children** - a guide for sportspeople published by Coachwise, telephone 0113 201 5555 or [www.1st4sport.com](http://www.1st4sport.com)
- **What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused** (Department of Health 2003) - [www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/index.htm](http://www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/index.htm)
- **"No Secrets"** (Department of Health and Home Office 2000)
- **Wiltshire & Swindon Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures & Guidance**

September 2003

## Reporting procedure for suspected cases of child abuse - example



**DO NOT INVESTIGATE - REPORT**

**Child Protection - Incident Record Form**

**Your Name:**

**Your Position:**

**Child's Name:**

**Child's Address:**

**Parents/carer names and address (if different from above)**

**Child's date of birth:**

**Date and time of any incident:**

**Your observations:**

**Exactly what the child said and what you said:**

*(Remember do not lead the child - record actual details. Continue on separate sheet/s if necessary.)*

**Action taken so far:**

**External agencies contacted** *(date and time)*

**Police/Social Services**

**Yes/No**

**If yes - which**

**Name and contact number:**

**Details of advice received:**

**Management Body,**  
*SUH, Governing Body.*

**If yes - which**

**Name and contact number.**

**Details of advice received:**

**Child Protection Incident Record Form:**

**Child's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have the parents been informed that contact is going to be made with social services.**

**Yes**

**No**

***NB: parents should always be informed unless to do so could place the child at risk of further harm, please seek advice of this point from the duty social worker if you are uncertain.***

**Signature:**

**Print Name:**

**Date:**

Please remember to maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis - do not discuss this incident with anyone other than your manager or those who need to know. Please take advice on this point from your manager if you are uncertain.

A copy of this report should be sent to:

**Name:**

**Position:**

**Address:**

(To be completed accordingly to service/organisation)



# Child Protection Policy

Salisbury District Council is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people to enjoy sports, arts and other recreational, social and leisure pursuits provided directly by the council or in partnership with other agencies and/or community voluntary sector organisations.

I confirm that I have read the policy, understand my responsibilities and confirm that I will adhere to the objectives and guidance there outlined.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Training details

Date of training \_\_\_\_\_

Level \_\_\_\_\_