

Safeguarding policy

Knutz Out of School Club is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation.

The Club will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. The Club's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Herts Safeguarding Children Partnership.

There is a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) available whenever the club is in session. The DSL co-ordinates safeguarding and child protection issues, supports practitioners with safeguarding concerns and liaises with external agencies (e.g. Social Care, Ofsted).

The Club's DSL is Lesley Berry. The Deputy DSL is Sue Vovrosh.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether inside or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health and 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

Child abuse, neglect and exploitation

Child abuse neglect and exploitation is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse, neglect or exploit a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse, neglect and exploitation are listed below.

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Physical abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.
- **Domestic Abuse** is defined by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as being when two people, over 16 who are connected to each, and one is abusive toward the other. Domestic abuse is not specifically a type of child abuse. However, children are recognised as victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear or experience the effects of

abusive behaviour, for example, if a child witnesses domestic abuse perpetrated by one parent against the other.

Signs of child abuse, neglect and exploitation

Signs of possible abuse, neglect and exploitation may include:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- deterioration in a child's general well-being
- unexplained bruising or marks
- comments made by a child which give cause for concern
- reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting e.g. in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to, or is at risk of, female genital mutilation (FGM) or that the child may have witnessed or be living with domestic abuse.
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to speak out
- listen to the child but not question them
- give reassurance that the staff member will take action
- record the incident as soon as possible (see *Logging a concern below*).

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the incident straight away using the **Logging a Concern** form. If a third-party expresses concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they won't, we will explain that the Club is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.

All staff recognise that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, neglected or exploited and/or they may not recognise their experience as harmful. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability or language barriers. They may also feel embarrassed, humiliated or are being threatened. Our staff recognise this and where they have concerns about a child they will raise these with the DSL without delay.

Attendance records are completed each session and the manager should seek explanations for absences wherever practicable. Not having regular face-to-face contact means staff may be less able to recognise child protection concerns and provide appropriate support.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM is an illegal, extremely harmful practice and form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM is therefore dealt with as part of our existing safeguarding procedures. All of our staff receive training in how to recognise when girls are at risk of FGM or may have been subjected to it

If FGM is suspected or disclosed staff will follow the procedure above and will make a report to Children's Social Care directly.

Child-on-child abuse

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Peer-on-peer abuse is taken seriously by staff and will be subject to the same child protection procedures as other forms of abuse. Staff are aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Staff will not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people. The presence of one or more of the following in relationships between children should always trigger concern about the possibility of peer-on-peer abuse:

- Sexual activity (in primary school-aged children) of any kind, including sexting
- One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other(s) (e.g. much older)
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other(s) (e.g. in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength)
- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to ensure compliance or secrecy.

If child-on-child abuse is suspected or disclosed staff will follow the procedure above. Staff will be aware that a child abuser may also be at risk them self.

Extremism and radicalisation

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being

drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation,

including:

- feeling alienated or alone
- seeking a sense of identity or individuality
- suffering from mental health issues such as depression
- desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause
- associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

Signs of radicalisation

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified
- viewing violent extremist material online
- possessing or sharing violent extremist material

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalises, they will record any relevant information or observations on a **Logging a concern** form and refer the matter to the DSL.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE occurs where an individual or a group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child (under 18) into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim wants or needs

for financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator

CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology. *Definition from DfE February: 2017.*

CSE may occur in conjunction with criminal activity. Indicators can include the child being in possession of unexplained 'gifts', problematic or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age.

If a member of staff suspects that a child's behaviour indicates CSE they will record any relevant information or observations on a **Logging a concern** form and refer the matter to the DSL.

Logging a concern

All information about the suspected abuse or peer on peer abuse or disclosure, or concern about radicalisation, will be recorded on the **Logging a concern** form as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern
- date and time at which the record was made
- name and date of birth of the child involved
- a factual report of what happened (use the child's own words if recording a disclosure)
- name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

The record will be given to the Club's DSL who will decide on the appropriate course of action. For concerns about child abuse, the DSL will contact Social Care. The DSL will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Social Care directly.

For minor concerns regarding **radicalisation**, the DSL will contact the Herts Safeguarding Children Partnership or Local Authority Prevent Team. For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the DSL will contact the Police using 999.

Allegations against staff

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded on an Incident record form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The LADO procedure requires the DSL to check if the reporting threshold is met. If so, the allegation must be reported to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and the Club will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If the DSL finds the threshold for reporting is not met, the allegation is considered a low-level concern. The DSL may still refer to the LADO for advice; if so, the Club would follow the advice of the LADO. Otherwise, the incident would be dealt with as a HR matter following Club procedures.
- The DSL is responsible for any necessary reporting of allegations to Ofsted
- If appropriate the Club will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Promoting awareness among staff

The Club promotes awareness of child abuse and the risk of radicalisation through its staff training. The Club ensures that:

- the DSL and Deputies have relevant experience and receive appropriate training in safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, and is aware of the Channel Programme and how to access it
- The DSL and Deputies receive DSL training, in line with Annex C of Keeping children safe in education (2024), which is refreshed every two years
- Managers and DSL are expected to read part 1 and annex A of Keeping children safe in education (2024) (2025 from September 2025)
- The DSL receives Safer Recruiting training and safer recruitment practices are followed for all new staff

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- all staff receive safeguarding training in line with current requirements (two yearly)
- all staff have a copy of this Safeguarding policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect or radicalisation
- all staff are aware of their statutory duties regarding the disclosure or discovery of child abuse, and concerns about radicalisation
- Safeguarding is on the agenda at all staff meetings
- all staff receive basic training in the Prevent Duty
- staff are familiar with the club Safeguarding File which is in the top drawer of the club filing cabinet.
- The Club's procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)' and staff are familiar with the guidance in 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)'.

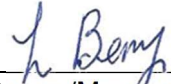
Use of mobile phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of children with their and their parents' permission. Only the club camera or tablet will be used to take photographs of children at the Club. No staff members, children or visitors may use their mobile phones or other devices, such as smart watches, to take photographs at the Club. Visitors, including children's parents and guardians are not permitted to use their mobile phones while at the setting. For more details see our **Mobile Phone, Tablet Computers and Wearable Technology policy**.

Contact numbers

DSL Lesley Berry	07762 05308 lesley@knutzclub.co.uk
Deputy DSL Sue Vovrosh	07908 353041 (during session time)
Children Services:	0300 123 4043 (also for out of hours)
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer):	0300 123 4043 or 01992 588757
Herts Safeguarding Children Partnership:	0300 123 4043 or 01992 588757 admin.hscb@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Local Authority Prevent Team:	prevent@herts.pnn.police.uk
Police:	101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)
Anti-terrorist hotline:	0800 789 321
NSPCC:	0808 800 5000
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice line:	0800 028 0285
Ofsted:	0300 123 1231

Policy adopted by	Knutz Out of School Club
Version updated	July 2025
Due for review	January 2026

Signed: 
Owner/Manager

Written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Safeguarding policies and procedures [3.4-3.6] and Suitable People [3.8-3.15]