

## Safeguarding Children Policy

### 1. Introduction

We aim to safeguard the welfare of children participating in Thornccliffe Bowling Club activities. In order to give children protection from potential and actual abuse it is important that all concerned have a basic understanding of the issues involved and that procedures are in place that are understandable and easy to implement by anyone providing a service to children at Thornccliffe Bowling Club.

Thornccliffe Bowling Club is committed to creating an environment that enables children to learn, develop and express themselves in a safe, understanding and encouraging environment. Parents trust us to look after their children, to care for them, to give encouragement and keep them safe. We need to ensure that we honour their trust.

Thornccliffe Bowling Club's Safeguarding Children's Policy arises from the following principles:

- The child's welfare is the first consideration.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender or ethnic origin have a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

### 2. Background

Child abuse is a difficult issue and presents challenges to all that provide services for children, and many people feel uncomfortable with the subject. It is not easily recognisable and individuals often fear reading too much into a situation. Many children experience minor accidents causing injuries, but there may be occasions where you are concerned over the nature and frequency of injury.

This document contains information on some of the signs that may give cause for concern. This document is based on the principle that:

**“It is **not** your responsibility as members of Thornccliffe Bowling Club to decide whether or not child abuse is occurring, but **it is your responsibility** to act on those concerns and do something about it.”**

### 3. What is Child Abuse?

**Do not ever think you could never be placed in the position of reporting child abuse.**

The generic term 'child abuse' is used to describe various ways in which children are harmed or mistreated. There are many different ways in which children can be harmed, all with a common factor that the child feels under-valued and worthless.

Abuse can happen anywhere, but research indicates that the perpetrators of such abuse are likely to be known and trusted by the child.

#### **4. Types of Abuse.**

- **Physical Abuse**

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms or deliberately induces illness in a child.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- **Emotional Abuse**

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- Telling a child they are worthless, unloved or inadequate.
- Valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child.
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning.
- A child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- Serious bullying.
- Causing a child to frequently feel frightened or in danger.
- Exploitation or corruption of a child.

- **Neglect**

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur:

- During pregnancy as a result of substance abuse.
- Failure to provide adequate food and clothing.
- Failure to provide shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment.
- Failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger.
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

- **Discriminatory Abuse**

Discriminatory abuse includes racist, religious and sexist abuse, plus abuse based on a person's disability.

## **5. Effects and Indications of Abuse**

The effects of child abuse can be devastating, especially if children are left unprotected or do not have the support to cope with that abuse.

### **Indications that a child may be abused include:**

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury the explanation for which seems inconsistent.
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her.
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or emotions such as becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexual explicit behaviour, sexually explicit talk inappropriate to the child's age.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Uncharacteristic eating disorders, depression and suicide attempts.
- The child may become withdrawn, introverted and depressed and have low self-esteem and lack of confidence.

## **6. What should you do if you suspect abuse is taking place?**

If any member of an organisation is concerned that abuse may occur or as occurred they must refer the matter immediately to the Safeguarding Children Champion who will decide whether or not to report the matter further. If it is felt that further investigation is necessary in order to protect the child, the matter must be referred to Social Care. Professionals can contact Social Care for advice re-concerns without giving personal details.

In the event of referral to Social Care, copies of all relevant correspondence, notes of dialogue, diagrams of any injury witnessed must be passed to the co-ordinator for filing.

It is very important that any concerns on a child's safety are logged. A sample logging form is attached.

All reports relating to Safeguarding Children should be completed in black ink and stored securely.