

CHARLTON TOY LIBRARY SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Last reviewed: April 2023
Reviewed by: John Stephens (Chair of Trustees)
Next review due: March 2024

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL):

Vicky Thomas, Toy Library Co-ordinator – for the Stay and Play Sessions

info@charltontoylibrary.org.uk, 020 8319 0055

Sharon Jay, Outreach worker – Deputy Safeguarding Lead for the Outreach Programme

**SharonJ@charltontoylibrary.org.uk.
020 8319 0055**

Senior Board Level Safeguarding Lead

John Stephens (Chair of Trustees)

Johns@charltontoylibrary.org.uk, 020 8319055

Charlton Toy Library (CTL) is committed to the protection of children in its premises and will always act with their interests being paramount. 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. Charlton Toy Library will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in Charlton Toy Library through adherence to their **Safeguarding** guidelines. A child is understood as a person under the age of 18. CTL adopts the guidelines and procedures on safeguarding as laid down in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children **2018**'.

All staff and volunteers must be aware of the **Safeguarding** Policy and Procedures and **act in accordance**. Definitions of harm are attached as an appendix.

Aims

- **To make clear** the responsibilities of all staff and volunteers with regard to **keeping children safe**.
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the criteria for the identification of children at risk.
- To be clear about the steps that should be taken should there be any concerns about a child.
- To ensure that all **safeguarding** issues are recorded, kept confidential and kept in a secure place.
- To provide appropriate training and support to enable staff and volunteers to deal with **safeguarding** issues effectively.

Lines of responsibility

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage **during** involvement with children and families, in all cases it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the child / children, i.e.:

- If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999)
 - If the child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via a Police Protection Order.
1. All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to be aware of possible signs/symptoms of abuse as outlined in Appendix 1 below and to report any concerns to Sharon Jay, Outreach worker or Vicky Thomas, Toy Library Co-ordinator.
 2. The Outreach Worker or Toy Library Co-ordinator, where appropriate, will encourage the parent or carer to discuss concerns. This will involve:
 - Reacting calmly
 - Keeping responses short, simple, slow and gentle
 - Not stopping a parent or carer who is talking freely about what has happened
 - Observing and listening but not asking for more information
 - Telling the parent / carer what will happen next and being honest

Concerns must not be discussed with parents / carers in the following circumstances:

- Where sexual abuse is suspected
 - Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected
 - Where fictitious illness by proxy (also known as Munchhausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected
 - Where contacting parents / carers would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.
3. Any concerns will be discussed by the reporting member of staff or volunteer and both named members of staff on the same day as the concerns are raised. A contemporaneous written note will be made the same day of: what was said, who was present, anything else that happens after the discussion with the parent / carer and before they are seen by social services or the police. Details will be recorded in an appropriate file that is marked confidential, placed in a locked filing cabinet and is the responsibility of both named staff.
 4. Should the child be in IMMEDIATE danger, call the police 999, as described above.
 5. If the concerns are considered to be of a serious nature and show signs that a child or unborn baby has suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect or is likely to suffer significant harm in the future. they

must be reported within not longer than one working day to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 020 8921 3172. Referrals or other communications via secure email: initial.response@royalgreenwich.gov.uk. Office hours, Monday – Thursday 9am – 5.30pm, Friday 9 – 4.30pm. Referrals outside office hours are handled by the Out of Hours Social Worker on 020 8854 8888.

6. Record all discussions and actions the same day.
7. Any incidents must be reported to the Chair of the Management Committee by Vicky Thomas or Sharon Jay, Designated Safeguarding Staff and discussed at the next Committee Meeting.
8. Any concerns that staff have regarding colleagues must be reported immediately to any member of the Management Committee. (Management Committee details are held in the Staff Handbook) and or the DSS. If the concern/complaint directly affects a member of staff or a volunteer working with the children, he/she will be suspended from any further contact with Charlton Toy Library until such time as the matter has been dealt with and a final decision has been reached by the Chair and Management Committee of Charlton Toy Library. This possibly will also include the following
 - Referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
 - Referral to DBS
 - Referral to the Police if the case is of a serious enough nature.

Staff and Volunteers (Working procedures)

All staff and volunteers who have access to children will undertake a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure check every three years. This responsibility lies with the Toy Library Co-ordinator. Relevant paperwork must be recorded on file with the date of the most recent check.

At least two staff or volunteers must be present at all times when working with children.

All staff and volunteers have a duty to report any concerns they may have and to be alert to potential indicators of risk.

All staff and volunteers are reminded of CTL'S policy of confidentiality with regard to children and their families.

If in doubt ask advice from social services (bearing in mind the policy of confidentiality.)

Recruitment and appointment of workers and volunteers

We will aim to ensure as far as is possible that anyone, paid or voluntary, who seeks to work with children and young people at the Charlton Toy Library is thoroughly vetted for suitability.

In recruiting and appointing workers we will be responsible for the following:

- All applicants should apply in writing and their application will cover their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience.
- We will always send a copy of our safeguarding policy to all applicants.
- All applicants need to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable to work with children. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) requires that people applying for positions which give them “substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis” to children under the age of 18 must declare all previous convictions which are then subject to police checks. They can then only be offered a job subject to a successful police check. They are also required to declare any pending case against them. It is important that our applicant in this particular category understands that all information will be dealt with confidentially and will not be used against them unfairly.
- We will ask for photographic evidence to confirm the identity of the applicant e.g. their passport
- We will always interview our candidates; ask for two references and a police check.
- We will request to see documentation of any qualifications detailed by the applicant
- We will have at least two people from our organisation on the interview panel.
- We will request two written references from people who are not family members or friends and who have knowledge of the applicant’s experience of working with children. We will ask the referee to also comment on their suitability for working with children. We will also try and follow up written references with a telephone call.
- The same principles apply to young people who have been involved with Charlton Toy Library and have become volunteers.

We will ensure that our successful applicant obtains an Enhanced DBS Disclosure Check from the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS). They will need to show this before we will confirm them in post. The applicant will also need to get a co-signature from a registered body.

In recruiting and appointing volunteers we will be responsible for the following:

- All volunteers must complete a volunteer application form
- All volunteers must pass an Enhanced DBS Disclosure Check
- All volunteers will be subject to a one month probationary period
- All volunteers will be required to submit the names of two referees for CTL to contact. These referees must not be family members.
- All volunteers will at all times be supervised by either CTL staff or committee members

Supervision of activities

Before any activity starts, the Designated Person shall ensure that adequate **safeguarding** procedures are in place.

We will aim to protect children from abuse and our team members from false allegations by adopting the following guidelines:

- Each parent will fill out a members form for each child/young person attending the project and will supply proof of address.
- We will keep a register of all children attending our activities and include arrival and departure times.
- We will keep a daily diary or signing in book for all adults on the premises (paid staff members, volunteers, parents and visitors)
- Our team members will record any unusual events on the accident/incident form or in the daily diary if not confidential
- **Unless there are exceptional circumstances staff and volunteers should avoid being alone with a child**
- All team members should treat all children and young people with dignity and respect in their attitude, language and actions.

Use of Mobile phones / social networking sites and communication to children and young people

- All staff must communicate to children and young people in an appropriate manner.
- **Where staff have a pre-existing social relationship with a family who are Toy Library members they must inform a trustee.**
- No mobile phone numbers or E mail addresses should be taken and stored on devices belonging to a member of staff.
- Staff must not use social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter to communicate with children and young people on CTL programmes. If a young person tries to establish a relationship with a member of staff this request must be denied and the Safeguarding Officer informed so that they can liaise with that child's / young person's parents / carers.

Photographic Policy

- CTL will not allow photos or videos to be taken of children or young people unless there is specific parental / carer written consent.
- Parents and carers and the children and young people will be informed of the use of the images as well and where possible be given copies of these.
- No personal cameras / phones etc. may be used to record such images.
- When the image is used CTL will not identify the name of the child / young person.

Codes of Conduct

- All staff are expected to follow a code of conduct, found in the Staff Handbook) which sets out their working practices and parameters of their responsibilities and engagement.
- Parents / carers and children and young people are also expected to follow a code of conduct when at The Toy Library, setting out their responsibilities and expected standards of behaviour.

Appendix 1

This notice is to be displayed prominently in the play area at the Toy Library:

Please help us keep children safe!



Keeping children safe at Charlton Toy Library is our number one priority, and it is everyone's responsibility to help us, whether you are a parent, carer, staff member or volunteer.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD'S SAFETY OR WELL-BEING WHILE YOU ARE AT CHARLTON TOY LIBRARY:

- **Speak to a member of the Toy Library staff:**
 - Vicky Thomas (CTL Co-ordinator), 020 8319 0055 or VickyT@charltontoylibrary.org.uk
 - Sharon Jay (CTL Outreach Co-ordinator) SharonJ@charltontoylibrary.org.uk
 - You can also speak to one of our volunteers
- **Or you can email, John Stephens, Charlton Toy Library Chair of Trustees:** JohnS@charltontoylibrary.org.uk
- **Alternatively you can contact Royal Borough of Greenwich Children's Services emergency duty team** on 020 8854 8888 or the referral team: 020 8921 3172, or email mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

If a child is in imminent danger:
Contact the police: 101 (or 999 in an emergency)

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE BEHAVIOUR OF AN ADULT WHILE YOU ARE AT CHARLTON TOY LIBRARY:

- Speak to one or more of the people or agencies listed above

Charlton Toy Library is a Registered Charity, No. 285099

Appendix 2

Definitions of abuse

These definitions are based on those from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (Department of Health, Home office, Department for Education and Employment, 1999)

Physical abuse

- Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing harm to a child.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described as factitious illness, fabricated or induced illness in children or "Munchausen Syndrome by proxy" after the person who first identified this situation.
- A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.
- Physical abuse, as well as being the result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional abuse

- Emotional abuse is 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 making a child feel or believe they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of the other person.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may also involve causing children to feel frequently frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex, or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.
- Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

Neglect

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or a carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child home alone or the failure to ensure that a child gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any time. These four definitions do not minimise other forms of maltreatment.

Note

Recent guidance notes other sources of stress for children and families, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, the mental illness of a parent or carer, or drug and alcohol misuse. These may have a negative impact on a child's health and development and may be noticed by an organisation caring for a child. If it is felt that a child's well-being is adversely affected by any of these areas, the same procedures should be followed.

2. Recognising and Responding to Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

Physical signs of abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games
- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect-under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home

Emotional signs of abuse

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include;

- A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a child puts on weight in other circumstances e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care
- Sudden speech disorders
- Persistent tiredness
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Obsessions or phobias

- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Being unable to play
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour

Sexual Abuse

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as over-eating or anorexia
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they can not tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way with adults

Neglect

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

GREENWICH LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO):

Tel.: 020 8921 3930

Email: childrens-LADO@royalgreenwich.gov.uk OR

LADO@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.cjsm.net