



SAFEGUARDING (CHILD PROTECTION) & WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Holt Under Fives fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding (child protection). Holt Under Fives will create an environment in which children are safe from harm and abuse; in which the welfare of the children is paramount and any suspicion of abuse is responded to promptly and appropriately. We will ensure that all who use and work for Holt Under Fives know that child protection is the responsibility of everyone. The principles regarding work with children and families are found in the **Children Act 1989 and 2004** and the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** (which the Welsh Assembly Government adopted). Statutory guidance on safeguarding children under the **Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014** and with reference to the “**All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008**” and “**Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004**” and **Rights of Children & Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011**, Holt Under Fives will:

- Exclude known abusers
- Prevent abuse by means of good practice
- Respond appropriately to suspicion of abuse
- Keep accurate records
- Liaise with other bodies (eg. SPOA – Single Point of Access)
- Support families
- Offer training
- Recruit and induct staff members with a clear induction programme which includes security checks. Regular volunteers are also security checked

In accordance with guidance issued by the Home Office in July 2015 relating to the Prevent Duty and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Holt Under Fives will respond to any indications that children are being drawn into terrorism or witnessing extremist ideas. Supportive documentation includes: www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf
www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/pdfs/anaw_20140004_en.pdf

Holt Under Fives Safeguarding-Child Protection Officer, Sarah Jones will liaise with appropriate agencies in relation to any concerns regarding this specific safeguarding requirement (see section entitled “Respond Appropriately to Suspicion of Abuse” below). Holt Under Fives have posted contact details of SPOA (Single Point of Access) outside and inside the setting:

T: 01978 292039/Out of hours: 0845 0533116 Email: spoachildren@wrexham.gov.uk.

Exclude Known Abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for posts, both paid and unpaid, within Holt Under Fives, that they will be asked to sign a statement giving details of any convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and to give their permission for checks to be made for any criminal records. Guidelines and procedures will be followed with respect of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and The Protection of Children Act 1999 (a practical guide to the Act for all organisations working with children).

All applicants for work within Holt Under Fives, both paid and unpaid will be interviewed before appointment and asked to provide two references (at least one from someone who has experience of their work with children). All references will be followed up. All appointments, both paid and unpaid, will be subject to probationary period and will not be confirmed unless Holt Under Fives is confident the applicant can be safely entrusted with children (DBS check confirmed with a positive outcome).

Prevent Abuse By Means of Good Practice

- Emphasise good practice by having a safe environment – the doors are locked to prevent unknown from entering the setting. Appropriate adult to child ratios always followed and appropriate insurances in place. Staff and committee members complete documentation regarding Mobile Phone Use, Use of Electronic Equipment, Internet & Social Networking and Confidentiality. At induction all Policies & Practice will be worked through and then in scheduled Staff Meetings.
- Children's rights will be respected and children will be encouraged to talk and to be listened to.
- Children will be made aware that there are adults who can be approached in event of information being disclosed.
- Children will be supervised at all times by an adult who has been successfully DBS checked for the setting.
- Adults who have not been successfully security checked will not take children to the toilet or be left in the room without a member of staff present.
- There are no circumstances in which children will be punished by smacking, slapping or shaking. Neither will humiliating and/or frightening methods of punishment be used.
- Children will not be left alone with visitors to Holt Under Fives.
- Children will only be collected by an authorised adult who's details are held by Holt Under Fives.
- Holt Under Fives will ensure that staff and volunteers have knowledge of and access to All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 and encourage accurate record keeping in relation to any concerns that are raised.
- All policies and procedures are executed by staff and volunteers to ensure the highest levels of care.
- Holt Under Fives will hold regular meetings with all staff and volunteers working in the setting to facilitate the raising of any concerns.
- Accurate records by staff will be kept relating to any child involved in an incident/ accident during sessions, changes in behaviour and action taken where appropriate.
- Children are accompanied at all times by authorised adults when taking part in Holt Under Five's external activities eg. walks, visits, exploration etc. Appropriate adult to child ratios will be adhered to at all times within the setting and during external activities. Risk Assessments are undertaken for each external activity.
- Community activities that Holt Under Fives staff and volunteers take part in are likely to be in conjunction with families (parents/carers in attendance at the event). In the first instance, a member of staff or volunteer will seek out the parent/carer to take the child if they require a toilet trip or have other personal issues. Each event has a supporting risk assessment and staff and volunteers will be clear on duties/responsibilities.

Respond Appropriately to Suspicion of Abuse

Holt Under Fives takes its responsibility to disclose information to relevant supportive organisations in connection with child protection extremely seriously – it is not seen as a betrayal of trust.

- Changes in child's behaviour or injuries will be investigated.
- Concerns relating to words/topics of conversations that suggest a child is witnessing or party to acts relating to terrorism will be investigated.
- Parents will *normally* be the first point of contact (however see All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 if the parents/carers are the ALLEGED perpetrator or witness).
- If a member of staff has grounds for suspecting abuse, these will be discussed and recorded by Sarah Jones (Holt Under Fives – Safeguarding-Child Protection Officer) who will then refer to SPOA and CIW.
- All such suspicions/investigations/referrals will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. These would be HU5s Child Protection Officer, Committee Chairperson and HU5s Registered Person.
- "Suspected abuse of a child MUST BE reported to Social Services or the Police who are the agencies together with the NSPCC with statutory powers to investigate suspected abuse" (All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008).

Keep Accurate Records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour or physical condition, or if there is an injury or the child speaks about an incident, a confidential record should be set up immediately. The record will include (in addition to the child's name, address, age and date), observations of the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation from a member of staff.

Exact words spoken by the child and practitioner (member of staff) should be included, times, dates and signed by that member of staff. The member of staff will not prompt or ask leading questions. The child is not asked to tell the story again.

If a child has spoken to the member of staff, they will then explain what must happen (as is appropriate to the age/understanding of the child) and outline that the information will be shared with people who want to help, only to make things better. The member of staff will immediately pass the written information to Sarah Jones (HU5s Child Protection Officer). Future discussions with parents/carer will be documented.

Such records will be kept confidential and should not be accessible to anyone in Holt Under Fives other than the Holt Under Fives Safeguarding - Child Protection Officer, Registered Person, Committee Chairperson.

Concerns are reported immediately to SPOA and the alleged abuser IS NOT confronted. CIW is notified that a referral has been made and procedures are being followed.

Liaise with Other Bodies

Co-operate as required with relevant agencies (Social Services (SPOA – Single Point of Access), the Police together with the NSPCC) with regard to enquiries and child protection issues.

Contact details as follows:

SPOA – Single Point of Access
(referrals, enquiries and information)
SPOA (Out of Hours)
Police

01978 292039
0845 0533116
999

Spoachildren@wrexham.gov.uk

Support Families

Holt Under Fives will do all in it's power to build a trusting and supportive relationship between families, staff and volunteers.

Where abuse is suspected at home or elsewhere, Holt Under Fives will continue to welcome the child and family whilst investigations proceed.

Holt Under Fives believes the care and safety of the child is paramount and will do all it can to support and work with the child's family.

Offer Training

Holt Under Fives will ensure that all staff and volunteers have knowledge of, and access to All Wales Child Protection Procedures, Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004, Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, statutory guidance on safeguarding children under the Social Services & Well-Being Wales (Act) 2014. Statutory Guidance in relation to the Prevent Duty (July 2015) is referenced to safeguard the children in the care of Holt Under Fives from being drawn into terrorism.

Safeguarding training is organised to enable them to recognise signs of abuse and the format regarding referrals and working with other agencies. This is renewed every 3 years. An additional training evening organised by Early Years at the close of 2018 was attended by staff. It was presented by a company of actors and provided an open, interactive forum in relation to Safeguarding. Other training opportunities with regard to Safeguarding will be accessed when available.

Suspensions Against a Member of Staff or Volunteer – Whistle Blowing

All Holt Under Fives staff and volunteers who work directly with children or have regular contact will have frequent supervision meetings and yearly appraisals. These meetings can be used as a means of protecting children. Good management supervision procedures will be used to promote child protection and give opportunities to staff to voice concerns at early stages. All suspicions should be investigated immediately. Action taken will depend on the severity of the suspicion.

It is important to differentiate between cases involving issues such as poor professional practice (to be dealt with through staff disciplinary procedures) and cases that give rise to child protection concerns which will always be dealt with in line with this policy and guidance in Chapter 8 – Handling Individual Cases (Safeguarding Children Working Together to Safeguard Children under the Children Act 2004.12.3)

Allegations Against a Member of Staff – Whistle Blowing

If an allegation of child abuse is made against a member of staff (reported directly to the Registered Person) it is essential the complaint be investigated immediately and referred. It is also essential that the investigation be dealt with "without discrimination". If the accusation is in relation to child protection, the member of staff should be suspended on full pay until the investigation is complete. If the Safeguarding Child Protection Officer has been approached with an allegation about a member of staff, then they must report to the Registered Person to inform CIW.

It is essential that any allegations of serious harm to a child committed by any person looking after children in Holt Under Fives or by any person living, working or employed on the premises, or any abuse alleged to have taken place on the premises are reported without delay.

Failure by a member of staff to report suspected abuse will result in disciplinary action being taken.

If the allegation is about the Registered Person/Responsible Individual it is the responsibility of Sarah Jones – Safeguarding - Child Protection Officer to inform CIW straight away.

Date	September 2019
Checked	Julie Suckley/Helen Jowett/Sarah Jones/Nicola Lautrete (Registered Person/Playgroup Leader/Playgroup Supervisor/Chairperson)
Date for Review	June 2020