

# Pegasus Playscheme Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure Policy & Health & Safety

## Introduction

Pegasus Playscheme is dedicated to ensuring that all children in our care are completely protected from harm, both in terms of their safety and their peace of mind. We believe that every child has the right to be free from the fear and reality of abuse, and we are committed to always safeguarding their wellbeing.

## Understanding Vulnerabilities

It is essential to be mindful that certain children and families may face heightened vulnerabilities due to factors such as age, disability, or gender. Younger children may be less able to express their concerns or recognise inappropriate behaviour, which increases their risk. Children with disabilities may encounter additional communication difficulties or depend more heavily on adults, making disclosure of abuse more challenging. Gender can also influence vulnerability, as societal stereotypes may lead to boys or girls being less likely to report specific types of abuse. Furthermore, families may face obstacles like language barriers, cultural beliefs, or distrust of authorities, which can hinder their ability to seek help. Recognising these vulnerabilities enables staff to take a more sensitive, proactive approach to safeguarding all children.

## Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Pegasus Playscheme will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Scarlet Clark, who has suitable experience, training, and expertise. The DSL is responsible for liaising with social services, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), and Ofsted regarding any child protection matters.

## Compliance with Legislation

Pegasus Playscheme's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and guidance from the LSCB, formerly known as the Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC). We are committed to regularly reviewing our Safeguarding Children/Child Protection policy and procedures, and these will be shared with parents and carers via our website.

## Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse can take many forms, some obvious and others less so. All staff have received child protection training and remain vigilant for signs and evidence of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, as well as neglect.

Child on child abuse, also referred to as peer-on-peer abuse, occurs when one child causes harm to another, whether physically, emotionally, or sexually. Staff must be alert to behaviours such as bullying, inappropriate sexualised activity, or coercion between children, as these can sometimes be overlooked or mistaken for normal childhood interactions. It is important to recognise that child on child abuse may manifest in subtle ways, including online harassment, exclusion, or manipulation, and that all disclosures or concerns should be taken seriously and addressed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

- **Physical Abuse:** Includes hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating, or any other physical harm. Deliberately causing ill health is also considered physical abuse.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, whether or not, the child is aware. This includes both physical contact (penetrative or non-penetrative acts) and exposure to pornographic material or inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Involves persistent or severe emotional mistreatment or torture that causes, or may cause, significant adverse effects on a child's emotional stability. This includes making a child feel worthless, unloved, inadequate, unnecessarily frightened, or vulnerable.
- **Neglect:** The ongoing failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, or psychological needs, which may severely impact their health, development, or emotional wellbeing. This includes not providing adequate food, shelter, clothing, protection from harm, or emotional support.

## Staff Support and Training

Pegasus Playscheme is committed to fulfilling its child protection responsibilities by supporting and training staff effectively. The following measures are in place:

- All staff are carefully recruited, with verified references and up-to-date Criminal Record Bureau (DBS) checks. Individuals awaiting DBS clearance will not be left alone with children.
- Volunteers and helpers are never left alone with a child.
- All staff and volunteers receive a copy of the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection policy during their training, with its implications clearly explained.

- Staff are provided with supervision and management support appropriate to their child protection responsibilities and their duty to maintain caring, safe relationships with children.
- All staff are aware of the main indicators of child abuse.
- Staff are also trained to recognise online safety risks as part of their safeguarding responsibilities. This includes being alert to potential dangers posed by digital communication, such as cyberbullying, inappropriate contact from adults, and exposure to unsuitable material. Staff educate children on safe internet usage and monitor digital activities within the setting, ensuring protective measures are in place to minimise online risks.
- Staff understand their statutory obligations regarding the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the correct procedures to follow. Students and volunteers must report any such incidents to the Manager.
- Pegasus will act appropriately following the findings of any investigation into allegations of abuse, ensuring child safety and fair processes for staff, volunteers, and committee members.
- Any staff, volunteer, or committee member under investigation for alleged child abuse will be subject to Staff Disciplinary Procedures.

## The 7 Golden Rules of Safeguarding

In line with best practice for safeguarding and information sharing, Pegasus Playscheme upholds the following Golden Rules:

1. **Be Open & Honest:** Be transparent with individuals about what information will be shared and why, unless doing so would put a child or vulnerable adult at risk.
2. **Seek Advice:** If in doubt, consult with designated safeguarding leads or relevant authorities before sharing information.
3. **Share with Consent (where possible):** Obtain consent to share information wherever it is appropriate and safe to do so but always prioritise safety over consent if there is a risk of harm.
4. **Consider Safety & Wellbeing:** Always keep the safety and wellbeing of the child or vulnerable adult at the forefront when making decisions about sharing information.
5. **Ensure Sharing is Necessary, Proportionate, Relevant, Accurate, Timely & Secure:** Only share information that is essential, ensure it is handled securely, and that it is shared promptly and accurately with those who need to know.
6. **Keep a Record:** Document what information has been shared, with whom, and for what purpose, maintaining clear and secure records.
7. **Welfare is Paramount:** The fundamental principle is that the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult takes precedence, and data protection laws (such as GDPR) are not a barrier to sharing information where safeguarding is at stake.

Pegasus Playscheme ensures these rules are embedded in all safeguarding practices, reinforcing that protecting children and vulnerable adults is always the highest priority.

## Legislative Framework

Pegasus Playscheme's approach to child protection is aligned with the requirements of the Working Together to Safeguard Children (WTSC) 2023 legislation. This statutory guidance sets out the responsibilities of all organisations working with children to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Pegasus ensures that its policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with WTSC 2023, maintaining clear lines of accountability and robust safeguarding practices. Staff are trained to understand the latest legislative obligations, including information sharing protocols and multi-agency cooperation, which are integral to effective child protection under the 2023 framework. Additionally, Pegasus promotes a culture of vigilance and transparency, recognising the shared duty to safeguard every child in line with national standards.

## Safe Caring Practices

All staff are trained in Pegasus Playscheme's child protection procedures and the principles of safe caring. Key practices include:

- Efforts are made to avoid or minimise situations where staff are left alone with a child. If this occurs, the door should be kept open and another staff member notified and nearby.
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with staff or a volunteer, it will be fully recorded in the Incident Record Book.
- Staff do not perform personal tasks for children that they can do themselves. When assistance is necessary, staff are accompanied by a colleague. Unless a child has needs, staff do not accompany children into the toilet, recognising such activities could be misconstrued.
- Staff are mindful of how and where they touch children, considering age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact is always avoided.
- All allegations made by a child against a staff member are fully recorded, including actions taken, in the Incident Record Book. Witnesses to incidents should sign the records to confirm their account.

## Whistleblowing Procedures

Pegasus Playscheme is committed to maintaining an open culture where staff, volunteers, and committee members feel confident to raise concerns about the safety and welfare of children, or about the conduct of any adult within the organisation. Whistleblowing refers to the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or risks of harm,

including concerns about child protection, that may not have been properly addressed through normal channels.

All individuals are encouraged to report concerns promptly, even if they are unsure whether the matter qualifies as whistleblowing. Such concerns should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, if the concern involves the DSL, with the Registered Person or a senior member of the committee. Reports can be made verbally or in writing and will be handled sensitively and in confidence, in line with statutory guidance and Pegasus Playscheme's safeguarding policies.

No individual will suffer any detriment or retaliation for raising a concern in good faith. Pegasus Playscheme will ensure that all whistleblowing disclosures are taken seriously, investigated appropriately, and that the person raising the concern is kept informed of progress where possible, while maintaining necessary confidentiality.

Further information about whistleblowing procedures, including external routes for raising concerns (such as contacting the local authority or Ofsted), is available to all staff and volunteers. Training on whistleblowing is provided as part of Pegasus Playscheme's induction and ongoing safeguarding training.

## Process for Recording Concerns and Referrals

When a concern or referral arises regarding the safety or welfare of a child, staff must promptly record all relevant details in the Incident Record Book. This includes the nature of the concern, names of those involved, the date, time, and location of the incident, and any observations or disclosures made by the child. Where possible, direct quotes should be documented to ensure accuracy. Staff should also note any action taken, including who the concern was reported to and any immediate steps taken to safeguard the child. Witnesses to the incident should sign the record to confirm their account.

## Storing Records

All records relating to concerns, referrals, and allegations are treated as confidential and are stored securely. Written records are kept by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (S.C) in a locked and restricted-access location, ensuring only authorised personnel can access them. Each entry is clearly dated and signed by the staff member making the record, and by any witnesses. Records are retained in accordance with statutory requirements and Pegasus Playscheme's safeguarding policy, ensuring they are available for future reference if required by statutory agencies or during any investigation. Confidentiality is paramount, and information is only shared on a need-to-know basis.

## Dealing with Allegations

Pegasus Playscheme treats every allegation seriously and with sensitivity. We do not conduct our own investigations into suspected child abuse incidents. Upon discovering an allegation, the DSL immediately refers the case to statutory child protection agencies.

- Staff report actual or suspected abuse to the DSL (S.C.) or acting manager (N.G) as soon as possible.
- Staff are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgement and report suspected abuse.
- Full written records are maintained, including details of the alleged incident, parties involved, evidence or explanations provided, dates, times, locations, and supporting information. Care is taken to distinguish between fact and opinion in all records.
- The DSL ensures records are dated, signed, and kept confidential.
- If the DSL is the subject of an allegation, the Registered Person is informed promptly and will assume or delegate responsibility.
- All concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Children involved in alleged incidents are offered comfort and reassurance.

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure, the staff member will:

- Listen attentively to everything the child has to say.
- Refrain from making observable judgements.
- Ask open questions to encourage the child to speak in their own words.
- Ensure the child is safe, comfortable, and not left alone.
- Avoid making promises that cannot be kept, such as promising confidentiality.

Pegasus will respect the wishes of children and young people who do not consent to share confidential information wherever possible, except where overriding public interest or concerns about significant harm are present. The safety and welfare of the child or young person will always be the primary consideration. Staff are regularly updated on the latest guidelines for keeping children safe from harm.

## Referring Allegations to Child Protection Agencies

If the manager or the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a child has been or is at grave risk of abuse, the following steps are taken:

- Contact is made with the local social services department at the earliest opportunity.

- The manager or Officer shares information about the allegation and related incidents in accordance with advice from social services and the police.
- At all times, the safety and interests of the children are paramount. The manager and staff support parents and carers as legally permissible.
- Pegasus assists social services and the police during any investigation, providing written and verbal information and evidence as required.
- Ofsted is informed of any allegations of abuse involving staff, children, volunteers, or abuse alleged to have occurred on the premises or during external activities.

## Health & Safety Lead

**The Health & Safety Lead Sue Clark 07980699931** is responsible for ensuring that all policies and procedures related to safeguarding and child protection are fully integrated with health and safety practices. This includes conducting regular risk assessments, maintaining a safe environment, and ensuring all staff are trained to recognise and respond to potential hazards. The Health & Safety Lead works closely with the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Officer to ensure the well-being of every child is prioritised, and any health and safety concerns are swiftly addressed and reported in line with statutory requirements.

All staff are encouraged to carry out regular health and safety inspections as part of their ongoing responsibility to maintain a safe environment. By proactively identifying and addressing potential hazards, everyone contributes to the overall wellbeing of children, colleagues, and visitors.

## Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency, Pegasus has established clear procedures to ensure the safety and welfare of all children, staff, and visitors. All staff members are trained to follow evacuation routes and assembly points as outlined in the site's emergency plan. Regular fire drills and emergency response training are conducted to ensure everyone is familiar with the necessary actions to take during incidents such as fire, severe weather, or other critical situations.

Emergency contact details are displayed prominently throughout the premises, and first aid kits are readily accessible in key locations. In the case of an incident, staff will remain calm, provide reassurance, and prioritise the safe evacuation or shelter of children according to the nature of the emergency. Any significant incidents are reported to the relevant authorities and recorded in accordance with statutory guidelines.

## Occupational Health and Maintenance of Safe Working Practice and Equipment

Pegasus is committed to promoting occupational health and ensuring that all staff and volunteers work in a safe and supportive environment. Regular health checks and risk assessments are conducted to identify any potential hazards associated with the workplace, and measures are put in place to mitigate risks. Staff are encouraged to report any health or safety concerns promptly to ensure early intervention and support.

All equipment and resources used on site are maintained to the highest standards. Regular inspections and maintenance schedules are implemented to ensure that all machinery, play equipment, and facilities remain safe and fit for purpose. Any faults or defects are reported immediately and addressed without delay, with equipment taken out of use, if necessary, until repairs are completed. Staff receive training on the safe use of equipment and are reminded of their responsibility to always adhere to safe working practices.

To meet the above obligations, Pegasus has established robust arrangements that include comprehensive staff training programmes, regular review and updating of policies, and clear lines of communication for reporting concerns. All staff and volunteers undergo safeguarding and health and safety induction sessions upon joining, with ongoing refresher courses scheduled throughout the year. Dedicated leads are appointed for both safeguarding and health and safety, ensuring accountability and expertise in each area.

Additionally, Pegasus maintains detailed records of all risk assessments, incident reports, and maintenance checks, which are regularly audited to ensure compliance with statutory requirements. Collaboration with external agencies, such as local authorities and Ofsted, is actively maintained to ensure best practice standards are upheld and that any incidents or concerns are addressed swiftly and appropriately. These arrangements collectively ensure a safe, supportive, and responsive environment for children, staff, and visitors alike.

## Responsibilities of Employees and Escalation Process

All employees at Pegasus are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of health, safety, and safeguarding within their roles. This includes consistently adhering to established policies and procedures, actively participating in required training, and remaining vigilant in identifying and reporting any potential risks or incidents. Staff are expected to promptly communicate any concerns regarding health, safety, or the welfare of children to their line manager or the designated Health & Safety Lead. In addition, employees must ensure that any equipment used is operated safely and report faults immediately.

Pegasus has a clearly defined escalation process to ensure that all concerns are managed effectively and in a timely manner. In the first instance, staff should report issues to their immediate supervisor or the relevant lead (e.g., Health & Safety Lead or Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Officer). If the concern is not resolved or is of a serious nature, it must be escalated to senior management. For incidents requiring urgent attention or involving statutory breaches, the issue will be referred directly to external authorities such as local safeguarding boards or regulatory bodies. All steps in the escalation process are documented to ensure accountability and transparency.

## Risk Assessments

Pegasus recognises that thorough and ongoing risk assessments are fundamental to maintaining a safe environment for all children, staff, and visitors. Risk assessments are conducted regularly across all areas of operation, including indoor and outdoor spaces, equipment, and activities. These assessments are used to identify potential hazards, evaluate the likelihood and severity of risks, and implement effective control measures to reduce or eliminate those risks.

Staff are trained to carry out risk assessments and are encouraged to be proactive in identifying new or emerging risks as they arise. All significant findings from risk assessments are documented and shared with relevant team members. Where necessary, action plans are created to address identified risks, and follow-up reviews are undertaken to ensure that control measures remain effective. Risk assessments are also reviewed and updated in response to changes in legislation, guidance, or the operational environment.

By embedding risk assessment into everyday practice, Pegasus ensures a culture of safety and vigilance, supporting the wellbeing of everyone on site and demonstrating due diligence in meeting statutory requirements.

Full risk assessments are shared with all staff and volunteers to ensure everyone is fully informed of potential hazards and the measures in place to mitigate them. This transparent approach enables all team members to contribute proactively to maintaining a safe and healthy environment, as well as fostering a culture of collective responsibility.

This policy has been checked by the Pegasus Committee and Social Impact Gateway in January 2026. It will be reviewed yearly or as and when guidelines change.

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