



mASCot

Autism Support Community
Supporting Local Families

Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy:

mASCot (meaning mASCot parents and any other adults voluntary or paid to help support our children and young people) is committed to building a culture of safety in which children and young people in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation.

mASCot is committed to a policy of safeguarding every environment and context we facilitate for our families, ASC CYP, and their siblings. This involves the following practices:

- Risk assessments in place for all drop-in sessions, activities, trips and outings.
- Clear and explicit ground rules for attending members of respect, support, confidentiality and acceptance.
- Clear and explicit procedure for handling behaviour that is a risk to the safety of other members.
- Ensuring that all activities provided for children/young people are carefully planned and that activities and services are appropriate to the age and needs of the children/young people participating.
- Always having an adult who has been DBS checked present at group activities and ensuring any outside staff, paid or voluntary are checked. No unsupervised access to children/young people will be permitted until this process has been completed.
- Always having an attending adult or adults trained in CP policies and procedures and in First Aid.
- Insurance in place should an accident or injury occur.
- mASCot's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure applies to all children/young people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion. Children/young people will be made aware of the policy in ways that are appropriate to their age, situation or disability.
- If staff or volunteers have any fears, however minor, of any issue that arouses suspicion, they have a duty to raise these concerns to the attention of a Child Protection Officer.
- At least two members of the mASCot board of directors with training and induction to cover basic definitions of child abuse and signs of abuse or radicalisation, and how to respond to allegations or concerns about abuse and what action to take. These two Child Protection Officers will ensure members of all mASCot clubs are aware of what to do if concerns arise.
- Code of conduct for parent/carers attending groups with children/young people at mASCot who are not their own child/children or when the child/children's parent/carers are not present which is:
 - Avoid initiating physical contact
 - Avoid physical expression such as kissing or hugging
 - Avoid intrusive forms of play e.g. tickling or rough and tumble
 - If physical contact is initiated by child/young person cease it as soon as possible without making them feel rejected

- Avoid any physical contact when alone with child/young person

Child Protection Procedures:

Child abuse and neglect

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

Signs of child abuse and neglect

Signs of possible abuse and neglect 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, or that the child may have witnessed 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 an incident* below).

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the matter straightaway 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 will not do so, we will explain that the Club is obliged to, and the incident will be logged accordingly.

Peer-on-peer 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 (e.g. much older)
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (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 peer-on-peer abuse is suspected or disclosed

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

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, e.g.:

- 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 radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations on a **Logging a concern** form and refer the matter to the CPO.

Logging a concern

All information about the suspected 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. If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words
- name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

The record will be given to mASCot's CPO who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about **child abuse**, the CPO will contact Social Care via Front Door for Families (Contacts below). The CPO 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 CPO will contact the B&H Prevent Officer. For more serious concerns the CPO will contact the anti-terrorist hotline. For urgent concerns, the CPO will contact the Police using 999. (All contacts below)

How to respond to abuse or suspected abuse:

If anyone involved with mASCot has concerns that a child may be being abused in any form, they must inform the named Child Protection Officer who are responsible for taking further action.

If a child or young/young person discloses abuse:

DO:

- Treat any allegations seriously and act at all times as if you believe what they are saying
- Tell the child/young person that they were right to tell
- Reassure them that they are not to blame
- Be honest about your position and who you have to tell and why
- Tell the child what you are doing and when, keep them up to date with what is happening
- Take further action – you may be the only person who can stop further abuse
- Write down everything said and record all facts not your opinions
- Seek medical attention if necessary
- Inform parent/carer – unless there is suspicion of their involvement

DON'T:

- Make promises you cannot keep
- Interrogate the child, this is the role of the police or social services
- Cast doubt on what the child is saying, do not interrupt or change the subject
- Say anything that will make the child/young person feel responsible for the abuse
- Do nothing - always report to a Child Protection Representative

Guidelines for making confidential records of Concerns.

When a child protection concern arises, it is essential that somebody records what is said or seen and what action was taken. These records are extremely sensitive and should be kept in a locked place. Access should be limited to only the Child Protection Officer and people directly involved. These records may be shown to the police or Social services and could be used as evidence in Court. If the child/young

person is old enough their permission should be sought before showing it to their parents/Carers.

(See confidential record form)

Childs confidential records

Name of child	
Date of birth	
Address	
Name of parents/carers	
Phone contact numbers	
Childs language/religion/disability	
What was said to have happened	
When and where it occurred	
Who else, if anyone, was involved and how	
What was said by anyone else involved	

Any obvious signs - e.g. bruising or bleeding, change in behaviour etc.	
What the child said and how they described it	
Who has been told what and when	
Whether or not the parents/carers know	
Signature of person who made the record and the child protection rep	
Date of the record	

Use extra pages if more information needs to be recorded.

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 allegation must be reported to the Local Authority 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 appropriate, the Club will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Promoting awareness among staff

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

- the designated CPO has relevant experience and receives appropriate training in safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, and is aware of the Channel Programme and how to access it
- designated person training is refreshed every 3 years
- safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- 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
- all staff receive basic safeguarding training, and safeguarding is a permanent agenda item at all staff meetings
- all staff receive basic training in the Prevent Duty
- the Club's procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)' and staff are familiar with '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 CYP with theirs and their parents' permission.

Taking action

If the Child Protection Officer wishes to seek advice about a referral, or they want to make a referral they should contact the Front Door For Families Team:

Phone: 01273 290400

Email: FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Out-of-hours: 01273 335905 (Emergency Duty Service)

Contact numbers

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): Darrel Clews, Safeguarding Team, Children's Services, Moulsecoomb Hub North Building, Hodshrove Lane,

Phone: 01273 295 643 Email: darrel.clews@brighton-hove.gov.uk

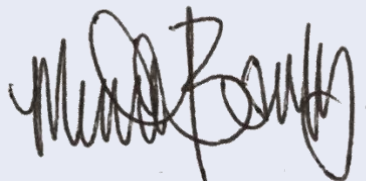
Local Authority Prevent Co-Ordinator: non-emergency police number 101 ext. 550543 or email: channel@sussex.pnn.police.uk

Police: 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)

Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

This policy was adopted by: mASCot	Date: 6th Oct 2020
To be reviewed: Sept 2021	Signed: 

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Child Protection [3.4-3.8] and Suitable People [3.9-3.13].*

