

Athena Activities Limited is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse and harm.

Athena Activities Limited will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur. Athena Activities Limited child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Athena Activities Limited Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSL) are Robert Anderson, Rosemary Saunders, Joanna Norton and Debbie Edwards. The DLS coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (eg LADO, MASH, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Ofsted).

Forms of 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, showing sexual images. This also includes child sexual exploitation and female genitalia mutilation. See below for more detail.
- **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
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members 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.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM refers to the practice, which is traditional in some cultures, of partially or totally removing the external genitalia of females for non-medical reasons. This is illegal in the UK and considered child abuse, more specifically sexual abuse. FGM is not affiliated with any religion and is not supported by religion. FGM is considered a hidden crime.

Signs of FGM:

- have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- talk about a secret procedure that they are not allowed to talk about
- unexpected visit from an elderly female family member

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. Children may be tricked into thinking they are in a loving relationship and that the relationship is consensual. This may also involve drugs or alcohol. CSE is considered a hidden crime and can also happen online and in gangs.

Signs of CSE:

- Overtly sexual behaviour
- Be intimidated and fearful of particular situations
- Involvement with gangs
- Association with other young children who have been known to be involved in CSE
- Spend time at places of concern (hotels, brothels)
- Not knowing where they are because they have been moved around the country
- Going missing from home, care, or education

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
- Inform we will not to keep secrets
- 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 incident straightaway. 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 Athena Activities Limited is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.

Logging an incident

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure will be recorded on the **Logging a Concern** form as soon as possible after the event. Forms will be kept at reception within the colour-coded blank forms folder. The record should include:

- Date of the disclosure or of the incident 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 Athena Activities Limited DSL who will decide whether they need to contact Social Care or make a referral. All referrals to Social Care will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.

If any member of staff thinks that the incident has not been adequately dealt with, they may contact Social Care themselves.

Private Fostering

If a child under the age of 16 (or aged 18 if disabled) is living in a private arrangement with someone who is not their parent, step-parent, grandparent, aunt/uncle or adult sibling, for 28 days or more then local authority must be notified. This is likely to be a private fostering arrangement.

Prevent Duty

This refers to the duty to prevent and protect children from the risk of radicalisation. From 1st July 2015, it became law that all school and childcare providers engage in prevent duty. In order to protect children in the care of CSD staff must be alert to any reasons for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. Directors, managers and assistant managers should all undergo specific training for this. If any concerns are raised, they should be reported to the designated people on site. All precautions should be taken to ensure children have no access to materials involving radicalisation including internet access.

British Values

British values refer to the values installed in early years, these are the rule of law, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, democracy and individual liberty. These should be taught and followed throughout camp.

Allegations against staff

- For allegations against staff, please see **whistleblowing policy**.

Selection and Recruitment of Staff

Recruitment must take place in accordance with the CSD Safer Recruitment Policy.

For those posts involving regular or close contact with children, the preferred candidate requires satisfactory completion of the following prior to commencement in post:

- Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check.
- Professional Register check (if applicable).
- Confirmation of identity through official documents, particularly if they are married or have otherwise changed their name.
- Verification of authenticity of qualifications.
- Verification of employment and professional references for most recent employer.

Promoting awareness among staff

Athena Activities Limited promotes awareness of child abuse issues through its staff training. Athena Activities Limited ensures that:

- Its designated DSL has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- All staff have a copy of this Safeguarding Children policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse
- Staff are familiar with the Safeguarding File which is kept at reception on the Athena Activities Limited folder trolley.
- Staff are familiar with the 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' flowchart
- Its procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018).
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

Safe Caring

All staff understand Athena Activities Limited child protection procedures and have had appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring. To this end:

- Every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when members of staff, students or volunteers are left alone with a child. If staff are alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff should be informed.
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, students or volunteer, this will be recorded fully in the Incident Record Book.
- Staff will never carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves. Where this is essential, staff will help a child whilst being accompanied by a colleague. Unless a child has a particular need, staff should not accompany children into the toilet. Staff are aware that this and other similar activities could be misconstrued.
- Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.
- All allegations made by a child against a member of staff will be fully recorded, including any actions taken, in the Incident Record Book. In the event of there being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.

Use of mobile phones and cameras - Refer to separate Mobile Phone policy.

Who to contact

If you have any concerns at all, your designated safeguarding officer should be the first point of contact. For CSD these are Rosemary Saunders or Robert Anderson, Joanna Norton or Debbie Edwards. Rosemary Saunders should be informed of all concerns.

If you feel like any of the children in your care are 'unsafe' or you have any concerns about this safeguarding policy, then the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be contacted immediately.

Contact numbers

MASH: 0300 1263000 – email MASH@nctrust.co.uk

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): 07831 123193 or 07850854309 or 01604 362993

LADO email ladoconsultations@nctrust.co.uk

LADO Out of Hours team: 01604 837999

LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board): 0300 126 7000

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Police: 101/999 in emergencies

NSPCC: 0808 800 500