



Safeguarding Policy

Ethos of Policy

Sensory Kids aims to provide an environment in which children and adults feel safe, secure and cared for, the purpose of this policy is to provide the staff and parents with guidelines and support on the subject of child abuse and how they can act to assist in the protection of children and adults in the setting.

The policy aims to ensure that all members of staff are informed about child abuse, the forms that it can take, signs and symptoms of possible abuse and the steps that they can take in recognising and preventing child abuse.

This policy is underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

In 1991 the UK Government signed an international agreement, written by the United Nations, which recognises and protects certain rights given to children and young people in the UK which states in Article 19: Protection from Abuse and Neglect.

States parties should take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse whilst in the care of parents, legal guardian or any other person who has the care of the child.

Such protective measures should, as appropriate include effective procedures for the establishment of social programme to provide the necessary support for the child and those who have the care of the child, as well as other forms for prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of incidences of child maltreatment described heretofore, and as appropriate for judicial involvement.

What is Child Abuse?

Child Abuse is the term used to describe ways in which children are intentionally or inadvertently harmed or placed at risk of harm, usually by adults, and often by people that they trust.

Categories of Abuse

- **Physical Injury:** This is defined as any injury inflicted or knowingly not prevented by any person having custody or care of a child. Physical abuse is often defined by injuries that cannot be explained by the normal play activities of a child and is defined as hitting or hurting a child on purpose.
- **Neglect:** This is defined as the wilful failure to meet the basic needs of a child, for example, not clothing, feeding or caring for a child adequately and leaving them without adequate supervision.
- **Emotional Abuse:** This is defined as any abuse or torment which would have an effect on the mental health and wellbeing of a child. Most commonly emotional abuse is categorised as shouting at a child, making a child feel worthless, exposing a child to inappropriate and never punishment and inconsistency of behaviour towards a child.
- **Sexual Abuse:** This is defined as the exploitation of children in order to meet the demands of adults or other children. Sexual abuse may include involvement of children in masturbation, involvement of children in pornographic activity, including taking pornographic photographs and involving children in watching or viewing pornographic materials, involvement of children in sexual activity, including; rape, sodomy, oral sex and sexual intercourse with a child, even with their consent.
- **Bullying:** Bullying is defined as any form of abuse on a child which is inflicted upon them by their peers, this abuse can be subtle, including, teasing, being ignored or left out, being pushed or pulled about, or having money or possessions taken.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** This is defined as where individual groups takes advantage of an imbalanced or power of coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or younger person under the age of 18 into sexual activity. Power of imbalance: perpetrators of CSR use a power imbalance to exploit children and young people. This may. Arise from a range of factors including:

- Age
- Gender
- Sexual identity
- Cognitive ability
- Physical strength
- Status
- Access to economic or other resources (Department of Education, 2017)

Grooming and coercion

Sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people have often been groomed into trusting their abuser and may not understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser and be too scared to tell anyone what's happening because they don't want to get them into trouble. They may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship.

Recognition of Child Abuse

It is not in the remit of members of staff at Sensory Kids to identify the specific category of abuse that a child may be experiencing but rather to highlight any causes for concern to the appropriate person and organisations.

The following list although not exhaustive may be indicative of some of the signs and symptoms of child abuse, it should be noted that some children may display some of these signs in times of stress; it does not necessarily mean that they are being abused.

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

1. Injuries to the child that is not consistent with the normal play activities of a child, either in position or type.
2. Inconsistent or unreasonable explanation of an injury by a child, parent or carer
3. Inconsistent or inappropriate behaviour such as sexually explicit remarks or mood swings, uncharacteristically quiet/aggressive and severe tantrums.
4. Becoming isolated socially
5. Overeating, loss of appetite, weight loss, weight gain.
6. Inappropriately dressed or ill-kept and/or dirty
7. Self-inflicting injury
8. Open distrust of, or discomfort with, parent or carer
9. Delayed social development, poor language and speech
10. Low self esteem
11. General indicators of abuse, though often typical of sexual abuse
12. Recurring Abdominal Pain
13. Reluctance to go home
14. Flinching when approached or touched
15. Recurring headaches
16. Recording and Reporting of an Incident – Suspicious of Abuse
17. All staff should be aware that any incidents must be recorded. It is also very important for staff to communicate about matters of this kind.

Reporting Process

If a member of staff suspects that a child is under threat, there are a number of steps that must be taken.

1. Inform Kathryn Davidson the Child Protection Officer responsible for Child Protection in the setting.
2. Record your concerns and give them to the manager or the person responsible for child protection for the setting, records of suspicions must include the following information:
3. The nature of the suspicion
4. Details of any injury
5. Times, dates and any other relevant information
6. Dates, times and names of other adults involved with the child who may substantiate the suspicion
7. The manager or person in charge will then determine the situation and refer the case to Social Services or the PSNI.
8. Disclosure of Abuse
9. Overall responsibility is taken from our governing body which is our committee.

If a child discloses to you that they have been abused, the member of staff should:

1. Inform Kathryn Davidson the Child Protection Officer responsible for Child Protection in the setting
2. Listen to the child and note down what they say to you in their own words. It is important at this stage that you do not interrupt the child and you do not ask questions.
3. Report the disclosure to the manager or person responsible for child protection in the setting
4. The project manager will then contact the relevant agency or the police who will investigate the disclosure.
5. If the manager or member of staff dealing with the situation at the time thinks that the case is serious enough to involve Social Work Children and Families immediately please contact the relevant social work children and family's office for the area or contact social work out of hours service. If it is felt that the child is in immediate danger the co-ordinator or member of staff should contact the police.
6. It should be noted that if a member of staff is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be as discrete as possible and inform the manager as soon as possible. In addition to this if a member of staff observes another member of staff harming a child, they should report this to the project co-ordinator who will act according to The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
7. In addition to this if the manager is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be discrete and contact the correct authorities such as the Social Work Department or the Police.
8. Sensory Kids recognises that it can be a traumatic experience for a member of staff to be witness to a child's disclosure of abuse; therefore, all staff will be offered information on counselling services to help them through this time.

If a child discloses to you that they have been abused, the member of staff should:

1. Inform the child that in order to help them you have to tell your line manager, the member of staff should tell the child who this person is **Kathryn Davidson Child Protection Officer and Youth Worker** then reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you what has been going on.
2. Listen to the child and note down what they say to you in their own words. It is important at this stage that you do not interrupt the child and you do not ask questions.
3. Report the disclosure to the manager or person responsible for child protection in the setting.
4. Kathryn Davidson Child Protection Officer and Youth Worker will then contact the relevant agency or the PSNI who will investigate the disclosure.
5. If the manager or member of staff dealing with the situation at the time thinks that the case is serious enough to involve Social Services immediately please contact the relevant social work children and family's office for the area or contact social work out of hours service. If it is felt that the child is in immediate danger, then **Kathryn Davidson** will contact the PSNI.
6. It should be noted that if a member of staff is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be as discrete as possible and inform the manager as soon as possible. In addition to this if a member of staff observes another member of staff harming a child, they should report this to **Kathryn Davidson the Child Protection Officer** who will act according to The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
7. In addition to this if the manager is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be discrete and contact the correct authorities such as the Social Services or the PSNI.
8. Sensory Kids recognises that it can be a traumatic experience for a member of staff to be witness to a child's disclosure of abuse; therefore, all staff will be offered information on counselling services to help them through this time.

Responding to a Child who confides in you

- Stay Calm
- Do not make promises you cannot keep
- Offer reassurance and support
- Immediately tell your manager
- Record the facts and discussion in the child's own words and give a copy to your manager
- Do not take control of the situation yourself
- Maintain confidentiality
- Keep records
- Talk to the right people

- All parents should be aware that members of staff attend regular child protection training in order that we keep your children safe from harm.
- Sensory Kids has a duty to report any suspicions of abuse and neglect.
- Sensory Kids supports the Protection of Children. The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and as such all members of staff are required to abide by the code of conduct as detailed below.

Vetting Procedure

See enclosed Safe Recruitment Policy Appendix II Recruitment Policy

All staff/volunteers who are appointed to positions in Sensory Kids are vetted/supervised in accordance with relevant legislation, are aware of Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and given copies of these policies. All staff/volunteers receive basic child protection awareness training and annual refresher training.

- We inform candidates of our commitment to safeguarding those in our care.
- We carefully plan our recruitment process timeline. This will ensure that we have enough time to thoroughly vet each candidate.
- We will explain that applicants will have to undergo strict vetting procedures before appointment. This will be noted in our recruitment process that all checks will be carried out.
- We carry out pre-employment/volunteer checks. This includes an ACCESSNI check
- qualification checks, reference checks and identity checks.
- Ensuring staff members/volunteers are appropriately trained for their duties.

Code of Conduct For all staff/volunteers

All staff/volunteers in Sensory Kids are expected to adhere to a strict Code of Conduct that prioritizes the safety, well-being, and rights of young people. This includes treating all young people with dignity and respect, maintaining professional boundaries, and adhering to safeguarding policies. The code emphasises the importance of creating a safe and inclusive environment, promoting positive relationships, and advocating for young people's needs.

Core Principles and Values:

- **Equality and Respect:**

Youth workers must treat all young people equally, showing no favouritism and respecting their individual needs and differences.

- **Professional Boundaries:**

Maintaining clear boundaries in relationships with young people is crucial to prevent exploitation or abuse.

- **Confidentiality:**

Youth workers must respect the privacy of young people and handle personal information responsibly.

- **Safeguarding:**

Prioritizing the safety and well-being of young people is paramount. This includes adhering to safeguarding policies, procedures, and reporting concerns of suspected abuse.

- **Inclusivity and Anti-Oppression:**

Youth work should be inclusive and accessible to all young people, regardless of background or circumstances.

- **Advocacy:**

Youth workers should advocate for young people, challenging inequalities and supporting them to become active citizens.

Specific Behaviours:

- **Setting an Example:**
Youth workers should model positive behaviours and attitudes that they wish to see in young people.
- **Safe Environments:**
Ensuring a safe and secure environment for all activities and programs is essential.
- **Open and Honest Communication:**
Maintaining open and honest communication with young people, colleagues, and supervisors is vital.
- **Appropriate Interactions:**
Youth workers should be mindful of their interactions with young people, ensuring they are supportive, caring, and appropriate.
- **Reporting Concerns:**
Youth workers have a responsibility to report any concerns about the safety or well-being of a young person.
Additional Considerations:
- **Working in Communities:**
Youth workers should be aware of the specific needs of young people within their community and work to address them.
- **Confidentiality:**
Information shared by young people should be treated with confidentiality, except where there is a risk of harm.
- **Professional Development:**
Youth workers should continuously seek to improve their skills and knowledge to provide effective support to young people.
- **Adhering to Legislation:**
Youth workers must be aware of and comply with relevant legislation, such as the Children (NI) Order 1995, and the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008.
By adhering to these principles and guidelines, all workers/volunteers in Sensory Kids can create a positive and supportive environment where young people can thrive and reach their full potential.

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the child/young person as a primary consideration. Staff/volunteers must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the child/young person in their charge must be above reproach.

Preventative Practice

Preventative safeguarding practice involves actions and strategies to minimize the risk of harm to vulnerable individuals. This includes promoting safety, well-being, and rights, and reducing opportunities for abuse or neglect. Key aspects involve raising awareness, providing training, implementing robust policies and procedures, and fostering a culture of safety within organizations and communities.

1. Raising Awareness and Education:

- **Staff and Volunteer Training:**
Providing training on recognizing signs of abuse and neglect, understanding safeguarding policies, and knowing how to respond to concerns is crucial.
- **Individual Awareness:**
Empowering individuals with knowledge about their rights, how to identify potential risks, and how to seek help when needed is vital.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:**
Raising awareness among the general public about safeguarding issues can help create a safer environment for everyone.

2. Developing Robust Policies and Procedures:

- **Clear Policies:**

Establish comprehensive safeguarding policies that outline procedures for reporting, responding to concerns, and managing allegations.

- **Safe Recruitment:**

Implement thorough recruitment procedures to minimize the risk of harm from individuals working or volunteering with vulnerable groups.

- **Codes of Conduct:**

Develop and enforce clear codes of conduct for staff and volunteers, outlining expected behaviours and professional boundaries.

3. Promoting a Culture of Safety:

- **Person-Centred Approach:**

Place the individual at the centre of all safeguarding efforts, empowering them to make choices and manage risks.

- **Open Communication:**

Foster an environment where individuals feel comfortable reporting concerns and where communication is clear and effective.

- **Multi-Agency Working:**

Encourage collaboration and information sharing between different agencies and organizations involved in safeguarding.

- **Regular Risk Assessments:**

Conduct regular risk assessments to identify and address potential hazards and vulnerabilities.

4. Specific Examples:

- **Supporting Self-Advocacy:**

Help individuals develop the skills and confidence to speak up for themselves and advocate for their needs.

- **Community Engagement:**

Involve communities in safeguarding efforts, fostering a sense of collective responsibility.

- **Digital Safety:**

Provide guidance on safe use of digital technologies and social media, particularly for children and young people.

- **Accessibility:**

Ensure that information and resources about safeguarding are accessible to all, including those with disabilities or language barriers.

If a member of staff suspects that a child is under threat, there are a number of steps that must be taken:

1. Inform **Kathryn Davidson** the **Child Protection Officer and Youth Worker** responsible for Child Protection in the setting.
2. Record your concerns and give them to the manager or the person responsible for child protection for the setting, records of suspicions must include the following information:
3. The nature of the suspicion
4. Details of any injury
5. Times, dates and any other relevant information
6. Dates, times and names of other adults involved with the child who may substantiate the suspicion
7. The manager or person in charge will then determine the situation and refer the case to Social Services or the PSNI also our own management committee for Sensory Kids will have overall responsibility for management.
8. Disclosure of Abuse

Reporting Process

If a child discloses to you that they have been abused, the member of staff should:

- 1 Inform the child that in order to help them you have to tell your line manager; the member of staff should tell the child who this person is Kathryn Davidson the Child Protection Officer and Youth Worker and reassure the child that they can trust them and that they have done the right thing in telling you what has been going on.
- 2 Listen to the child and note down what they say to you in their own words. It is important at this stage that you do not interrupt the child and you do not ask questions.
- 3 Report the disclosure to the manager or person responsible for child protection in the setting (Kathryn Davidson Child Protection Officer)
- 4 The project manager will then contact the relevant agency or the police who will investigate the disclosure.
- 5 If the manager or member of staff dealing with the situation at the time thinks that the case is serious enough to involve Social Work Children and Families immediately please contact the relevant social work children and family's office for the area or contact social work out of hours service. If it is felt that the child is in immediate danger the co-ordinator or member of staff should contact the police.
- 6 It should be noted that if a member of staff is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be as discrete as possible and inform the manager as soon as possible. In addition to this if a member of staff observes another member of staff harming a child, they should report this to the project co-ordinator who will act according to The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- 7 In addition to this if the manager is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be discrete and contact the correct authorities such as the Social Work Department or the Police.
- 8 Sensory Kids recognises that it can be a traumatic experience for a member of staff to be witness to a child's disclosure of abuse; therefore, all staff will be offered information on counselling services to help them through this time.

Parental Complaint

See enclosed Complaints Procedure. Appendix I

How a Parent can make a Complaint

- We aim to work closely with parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern, they can talk to **Kathryn Davidson the Child Protection Officer and Youth Worker** responsible for Child Protection in the setting who will offer advice, guidance, action regarding any Child Protection or Safeguarding concerns. If they are still concerned, they may talk to the Chairperson of Sensory Kids. At any time, a parent may talk to the PSNI Public Protection Unit.

The Sensory Kids have a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. The child protection policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies including:

Promoting and Sustaining Positive Behaviour

- Anti-Bullying Policy (Revised in light of Anti-Bullying Act 2016)
- Special Educational Needs
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education

- Use of Mobile Phones/Cameras

Sensory Kids promotes safeguarding by the protection of the health, well-being, and rights of vulnerable child/young person. Our primary aim is to protect children/young people from harm by providing anti-bullying programmes, teamwork, build confidence and self-esteem

Specific Issues

Some activities may present additional challenges and risks, such as cinema outings, shopping and outside activities such as games, football and messy play will make safeguarding more complex. Therefore, we ask the parent/carer to remain as their volunteer and assist in toileting and hygiene needs.

In instances like cinema outings, shopping and outside activities such as games, football and messy play we will risk assess the event/area and ask all parents to stay with their child/young person as all have disabilities and will need personal care.

Kathryn Davidson the Child Protection Officer and Youth Worker will be appointed for all outside activities. Kathryn Davidson holds responsibility for supervising and conducting the residential/outside activities and it is Kathryn Davidson who carries out the risk assessments who is adequately trained to assess risk. She will carry out a pre-trip visit. The risk assessment will take into account both health and safety issues and child protection issues.

Kathryn Davidson will identify the dangers: which are general, and which are site specific.

- Identify who may be at risk.
- Is it suitable for children/young people with a disability?
- Consider the likelihood of the risk materialising, and its severity. Put precautions in place.
- Record everything and identify control measures.
- Visits to outdoor pursuits, residential where she will check that the centre has its own health and safety policies and advice in place and ensure that the centre's staff are suitably qualified.
- Ensure equipment for activities are both suitable and safe.
- Assess any likely difficulties that might be encountered in the event of an emergency.

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General Information on Child Protection

Child Protection involves several agencies working together, these include; Local Authority Social Work Departments, Police and Childcare organisations.

In order to maintain the levels of protection, all persons working with children must have an AccessNI criminal record check through www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni-criminal-record-checks and have completed an application process, interview and have 2 references.

Safe Recruitment

Outline of policy

see Appendix I

As a member of YouthAction NI we AccessNI checks under their umbrella of Safe Recruitment.

All staff/volunteers who are appointed to positions in Sensory Kids are vetted/supervised in accordance with relevant legislation, are aware of Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and given copies of

these policies. All staff/volunteers receive basic child protection awareness training and annual refresher training.

- We inform candidates of our commitment to safeguarding those in our care.
- We carefully plan our recruitment process timeline. This will ensure that we have enough time to thoroughly vet each candidate.
- We will explain that applicants will have to undergo strict vetting procedures before appointment. This will be noted in our recruitment process that all checks will be carried out.
- We carry out pre-employment/volunteer checks. This includes DBS checks, qualification checks, reference checks and identity checks.
- Ensuring staff members/volunteers are appropriately trained for their duties.

Code of Conduct For all staff/volunteers

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the child/young person as a primary consideration. Staff/volunteers must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the child/young person in their charge must be above reproach

YouthAction NI has a comprehensive child protection policy and a commitment to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people involved in their programs. They emphasize preventative measures, early intervention, and robust procedures for responding to concerns of potential harm. This includes Keeping Safe training, AccessNI vetting for staff and volunteers, and designated officers for child protection.

Key aspects of YouthAction NI's Child Protection Policy:

Commitment to Safeguarding:

YouthAction NI prioritizes the safety and well-being of all children and young people participating in their programs, striving to protect them from harm and exploitation.

- **Preventative Measures:**

Their policy includes preventative activities aimed at enabling children and young people to grow up safely and securely, with their development and well-being supported.

- **Early Intervention:**

They emphasize the importance of early intervention to address potential needs and concerns before they escalate.

- **Keeping Safe Training:**

YouthAction NI provides Keeping Safe training to their members, ensuring that staff and volunteers are equipped to recognize and respond to safeguarding issues.

- **AccessNI Vetting:**

All staff and volunteers undergo AccessNI vetting to ensure suitability for working with children and young people.

- **Designated Officers:**

They have designated officers for child protection, including a Designated Officer/Adult Safeguarding Champion, a Deputy Designated Officer/Appointed Person (for Adults), and a Safeguarding Board member.

- **Responding to Concerns:**

The policy outlines procedures for responding to concerns of potential harm, including reporting to relevant authorities and following established protocols.

- **Collaboration:**

YouthAction NI collaborates with other organizations and agencies to promote safe and effective services for children and families.

- **Vision:**

YouthAction Northern Ireland aims for a future where all children and young people are protected, respected, supported, and have opportunities to thrive.

- **Focus on Prevention and Protection:**

They also focus on promoting public awareness of the need to safeguard children, supporting prevention and early intervention approaches, and recognizing and responding to childcare concerns.

All Members of Staff Should:

- Help to develop an ethos where everyone matters and are treated with equality, and respect and dignity.
- Always put the care, welfare and safety needs of a child/adult first.
- Respect all right to be involved in making choices and decisions which directly affect them.
- Listen attentively to any ideas and views a child wants to share with you.
- Respect a child's/adult culture (for example, their faith and beliefs)
- Respect a child's/adult right to privacy and personal space.
- Respond sensitively to children who seem anxious about participating in certain activities
- Speak to a member of staff immediately if you suspect that a child is experiencing bullying or harassment.
- Be aware of the vulnerability of some groups of children to being isolated and hurt.
- Ensure that when you are working with children you are at least within sight or hearing of other adults.
- Listen carefully when a child/adult 'tells you' (sometimes through drawings and behaviour as well as words) that they are being harmed and report what you have discovered immediately to your line manager.
- Report immediately any suspicion that a child may be at risk of harm or abuse.
- Never dismiss what a child tells you as lies or exaggeration
- Only restrain a child who is at imminent harm of inflicting harm to themselves or others.
- Never underestimate the contribution that you can make to the development of safe communities for children.

Members of Staff Should Not:

- Exaggerate or trivialise another worker concern about a child or ignore an allegation or suspicion of abuse in the hope that it will either go away or that someone else will deal with it.
- Discuss personal issues about a child or their family with other people except where it concerns the wellbeing of the child.
- Be drawn into derogatory remarks or gestures in front of the children or adult.
- Allow a child or young person to be bullied or harmed by anyone else in the organisation
- Allow children to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Members of Staff Should Never:
 - Engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay
 - Never allow others to or yourself engage in touching a child in a sexually provocative manner
 - Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
 - Engage in rough or physical contact unless it is permitted within the rules of a game or sports activity or conforms to the guidance on appropriate physical restraint
 - Never form inappropriate emotional or physical relationships with children
 - Harass or intimidate a child or worker because of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, socio-economic status or disability
 - Unnecessarily invite or allow children to stay with you at your home. In addition, the member of staff should inform the manager of the setting of the arrangement and follow the child protection policy and the code of conduct as expressed above at all times. Sensory Kids accepts no responsibility for the actions of its employees when they are not within their working hours.

Parental Complaint

Policy Overview

We aim to provide the highest standard of care at Sensory Kids however, we understand that on occasion parents may wish to make either formal or informal complaint. Therefore, this policy outlines our process when handling a complaint about the services offered by Sensory Kids.

In line with our Complaints Policy, Sensory Kids will ensure...

- You will be made aware of the complaint procedure prior to attending the Youth Services.
 - Complaints Policy will be displayed on the Notice Board.
 - That any parental concerns or complaints raised to their child's leaders are reported to Kathryn Davidson the Child Protection Officer.
 - All complaints will be stored in 2 folders within Sensory Kids, a Confidential Complaint Folder and a separate Concerns Folder. Both folders will be stored in a confidential manner.
 - If a parent/carer verbally raises a concern, this will be stored in the Concerns Folder.
- If a parent /carer submits a written complaint, this will be stored in the Confidential Complaint Folder.
- The Confidential Complaint Folder will contain all documentation relating to the complaint, including investigation details and the outcome. This folder will also include a copy the Complaint Register and a copy of the Complaint Log.

Our Complaints procedure is...

1. Parents/carers are encouraged to initially address any concerns to a senior member of staff.
2. In the event of a more significant concern/complaint or if a concern cannot be resolved with senior room staff, parents/carers should address their concerns to Kathryn Davidson, Child Protection Officer who will work with them to resolve the issue.

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Appendix II

Recruitment Policy

Purpose:

- To ensure a fair, transparent, and efficient recruitment process that attracts the best candidates aligned with the charity's mission and values.
- To comply with all relevant anti-discrimination legislation.

Stages of Recruitment:

1. **Job Description & Person Specification:** Develop a clear job description outlining responsibilities, qualifications, and experience required. Create a person specification detailing the ideal candidate's skills, knowledge, and personal qualities.
2. **Advertising & Applications:** Advertise the vacancy on relevant platforms attracting diverse candidates. Encourage applications from all qualified individuals regardless of background.
3. **Shortlisting:** A panel reviews applications against the person specification. Shortlisted candidates are invited for interviews.
4. **Interviews:** A structured interview format is used with pre-determined questions relevant to the role. Consider using a panel interview with at least two interviewers.
5. **Scoring & Selection:** This is where your question comes in (see below for details).
6. **References & Offers:** References are contacted for shortlisted candidates. The chosen candidate receives a formal job offer.
7. **Onboarding:** A comprehensive onboarding process ensures the new employee integrates smoothly.
8. **Key Points:**
9. Diversity & Inclusion: Actively promote diversity and inclusion throughout the process.
10. Communication: Keep candidates informed at each stage of the process.
11. Data Protection: Ensure compliance with data protection regulations when handling applicant information.
12. **Scoring & Selection with a Panel:**

Yes, it's perfectly acceptable to use collective scoring with constructive discussion during the panel interview. Here's how:

13. **Individual Scoring:** Each interviewer can initially score the candidate independently using a pre-determined scoring sheet with clear criteria for each competency or question.
14. **Collective Discussion:** After individual scoring, the panel comes together to discuss each candidate's strengths and weaknesses based on their scores and observations. This allows for a more holistic assessment.
15. **Final Decision:** Based on the collective discussion, the panel reaches a consensus on the most suitable candidate.
16. **Benefits of Collective Scoring:**
 1. **Reduced Bias:** Discussion helps identify and mitigate individual biases.
 2. **Enhanced Decision-Making:** Different perspectives lead to a more comprehensive evaluation.
 3. **Transparency:** All panellists contribute to the final decision.