



Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL): Child Protection Policy 2020



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1. Policy Statement

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) is fully committed to and totally acknowledges its duty of care towards children and young people who take part in its charitable events and other activities which would include community events, social inclusion projects, legacy projects within the communities in which we work. These commitments also extend to young people supported by Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL)'s provision of training and educational opportunities within those same communities.

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, taking all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) equally acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Paid staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and which respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

We recognise that: -

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount and is a primary consideration in all activities in which they may be involved
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy is: -

- To ensure the provision of protection for the children and young people who are involved in Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL)'s activities, including the children of adult members or users.
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.
- This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and seasonal workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL).

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by: -

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting the rights wishes and feelings of the young people with whom we may be working
- Taking all reasonable practical steps to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional harm

- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

In implementing this child protection policy, Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) will: -

- Communicate to all workers their legal and moral responsibility to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- Ensure that all workers have undertaken basic child protection training and confirm with individual workers their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's named person for child protection.
- Ensure that the named person has undertaken basic training (as above) as a minimum and understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Policy and/or Children's Social Care)
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
- Provide opportunities for all workers to further develop their skills and knowledge, particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
- Facilitate opportunities for children and young people to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues in connection with the activities provided by Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) and to have access to the organizations complaints procedure
- Facilitate the involvement of parents or carers or other relevant third parties in the work of the organization and to make child protection policies and procedures available to them.
- Endeavour to keep up to date with developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
- All Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) Trustees, as well as those working in activities supported by the Foundation / Charity in so far as is practicable will ensure that those individuals have been subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Check
- Trustees and employees will have attended as a minimum a Level 2 in Basic Child Protection Awareness and will encourage all adults associated with Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) to work towards being formally accredited with a Level 3 Certificate in Child Protection Practice.

2. Child protection systems and procedures

All organisations have a duty of care for the children for whom they provide activities or services. Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) is committed to practices that protect children from harm and treat them with respect. At the same time Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) will protect its staff from the risk of unfounded allegations.

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) will seek to implement its policy on child protection by:-

- Ensuring that all staff who have regular, direct and unsupervised contact with children are carefully selected, including an enhanced check with the Criminal Records Bureau, at least two written references, and are trained and accredited where necessary,
- Ensuring that all our contractors who have regular, direct and unsupervised contact with children have effective policies and procedures in place on child protection.
- Ensuring that organisations that apply for support for programmes that include children (funding or premises) have effective policies and procedures in place on child protection.
- Giving all the parties involved, e.g. parents and the general public, information about what they can expect from Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) in relation to protecting and safeguarding children.
- Ensuring that there is a clear complaint procedure in place that can be used if there are any concerns.
- Sharing information about concerns with appropriate agencies that need to know and involving parents/carers and children appropriately.

2.1 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of the policy a child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

For the purposes of the policy a member of staff covers employees including casuals and volunteers, work experience placements and trainees.

2.2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff regardless of whether or not they have regular contact with children.

2.3 PROCEDURES

These procedures seek to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities when working with children. The aims of these procedures are to ensure that staff: -

- Recognise the signs of child abuse and what appropriate course of action should be taken in the circumstances
- Understand the potential risk to themselves and ensure that good practice is adhered to at all times (code of good practice)

- Recognise signs of improper behaviour from other staff and report it to the Monitoring Officer at the earliest opportunity.

2.4 UNDERSTANDING WHAT CONSTITUTES CHILD ABUSE

The Children Act 1989 defines four main forms of child abuse:

2.4.1 Physical abuse

This may involve actions such as hitting, shaking and burning as well as giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison. Physical abuse, as well as being a deliberate act, can be caused by an omission or failure to act to protect.

2.4.2 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is a persistent lack of love and affection. A child may be constantly verbally abused, threatened, ignored or taunted. Other forms of emotional abuse include excessive overprotection and unrealistic pressure to succeed. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of children although it may occur alone.

2.4.3 Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of or consents to what is happening. It may also involve non-contact activities such as showing pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

2.4.4 Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. These needs include adequate food and warm clothing and also medical care. Neglect may include children being left alone.

2.5 RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

This is not always easy and it is not the responsibility of members of staff to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, or if a child is at significant risk. However staff do have a responsibility to report promptly if they have any concerns. Indications that a child is being abused include: -

Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruises, cuts and burns particularly if situated on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries

- Injuries for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- Fear of parents or carers being approached about such injuries
- Reluctance to get changed or e.g. wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Flinching when touched or approached
- A failure to grow and thrive
- Difficulties in making friends
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour
- Fear of being left with a specific person
- Sexually explicit behaviour
- Sudden loss of hair

This list is by no means definitive and it is important to remember that many children will exhibit some of these indicators at some time and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. It is crucial that members of staff realise that this is only a process of observation and that at no point should they actively seek out abuse or an abuser. The member of staff's responsibility is to ensure that if they have concerns about the welfare of a child they must report it and never assume that others will do it.

2.6 RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS AND SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

For all types of responses it is vitally important to carefully record the details of an allegation or an incident regardless of whether or not the concerns are later shared with a statutory agency.

An accurate record should be made of: -

- The date and time of the incident and/or disclosure
- The parties who were involved
- What was said and done by whom
- The full name of the person reporting and to whom reported

Where appropriate: -

- Any action taken by Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL)
- Reasons why there was no referral to a statutory agency.

2.7 RESPONDING TO A CHILD MAKING AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF/CONTRACTOR

Staff must: -

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Find an appropriate, early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared. Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child to continue at their own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer (i.e. leading questions).
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Following the record keeping advice above.
- Relay this information to the Monitoring Officer at the earliest opportunity.

2.8 RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS THAT ANOTHER MEMBER OF STAFF MAY BE ABUSING A CHILD OR NOT FOLLOWING THE CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Any member of staff who suspects that a colleague may be abusing children should act on their suspicions. These suspicions should be recorded and reported to the Monitoring Officer at the earliest opportunity.

If the matter relates to poor practice the disciplinary/capability procedure will be followed.



If it relates to child abuse the matter will be referred by the Monitoring Officer to Social Services who may involve the Police and the member of staff will be suspended pending the outcome of an internal investigation into the allegations.

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) acknowledges that this is an extremely sensitive issue for staff and everyone working on its behalf. Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a child.

2.9 IF A PARENT OR A CARER MAKES AN ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE BY A MEMBER OF STAFF

These allegations should be recorded and reported to the Monitoring Officer at the earliest opportunity.

These should **not** be processed through the normal complaint procedure.

If a serious incident should occur outside normal working hours the member of staff should contact the relevant local Supervisor and ask for details of the Monitoring Officer and in their absence the deputy Monitoring Officer.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

The legal principle that the welfare of the child is paramount means that the consideration of confidentiality that might apply to other situations within the Council should not be allowed to override the right of the child to be protected from harm.

However, where possible every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for and by all concerned when an allegation is made and whilst it is being investigated. Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) will seek to balance protecting children from harm whilst protecting its staff from the risk of unfounded allegations.

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) understands and will comply with its statutory duties as defined in the Data Protection Act 2003.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Monitoring Officer at Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) will be responsible for dealing with all allegations and suspicions of child abuse concerning a member of staff.

In effect this post will be Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL)'s Community Development manager who is Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL)'s designated child protection officer.

4.1 THE MONITORING OFFICER WILL: -

- Receive and record information from members of staff, children, parents or carers.
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- Consult initially with Social Services to test out any uncertainties.
- Make a formal referral to a statutory agency without delay, if necessary.
- The Monitoring Officer will not decide if a child has been abused. This is the task of Social Services, which has the legal responsibility.
- The Monitoring Officer should be aware of the local child protection network, the role of the Area Child Protection Committee and the existence of local child protection procedures.
- The Monitoring Officer will also be responsible for dealing with any enquiries from the media if an incident or allegation of child abuse arises. All staff should be clear that any media enquiries are to be directed to the Monitoring Officer and under no circumstances should any other response be given.

4.2 RECRUITMENT

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL)'s recruitment policies and procedures are established to protect and prevent access to children and young people from those who would do them harm.

All volunteers and staff including temporary personnel and helpers are subject to a careful and rigorous selection and vetting process with the following elements: -

- Completion of an application form and checking of their identify by sight of a passport or driving licence – that is photographic ID.
- References
- An interview conducted by at least two individuals
- The satisfactory explanation of gaps or inconsistencies in employment histories
- Completion of a CRB check – see 4.3 below
- No unsupervised access to children or young people until (e) received.
- An appropriate induction and issue of "Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) Child Protection Code of Good Practice"
- Completion of or working towards Level 2 Basic Child Protection Awareness
- A probationary review

4.3 VETTING

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) Trustees, will ensure that all the Trustees as well as those working in activities supported by the Foundation / Charity in so far as is practicable will have been subject to an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Check within the previous 12 months. This will check police criminal records, the Protection of Children Act List and List 99 (those disqualified from working with children and young people)

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) is registered with Complete Background Screening Ltd, an umbrella body, who will complete these CRB checks on our behalf.



5. TRAINING

All staff who regularly have direct and unsupervised contact with children will have training to raise their awareness of child protection issues at their induction and at regular intervals throughout their employment at the Council. The basic requirement will be completion of the Basic Child Protection Awareness Level 2.

Trustees and employees will have attained as a minimum a Level 2 in Basic Child Protection Awareness and will encourage all adults associated with the TAKSAL Foundation / Charity to work towards being formally accredited with a Level 3 Certificate in Child Protection Practice.



6. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis and at least annually by the Trustees of Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL), having due regard to confidentiality issues.

7. RECORD KEEPING

When a child protection concern arises, a full record of what is said and/or has been observed and any action taken must be kept. Such records should be kept in a locked cabinet and access limited to:

- The person who completed the form
- The nominated Child Protection Monitoring Officer
- The project leader or manager

This record may be shown to the police or social services and may be used in court. The permission of the social services or police should be obtained before showing the report to the parent or carer. [See Appendix)



8. IF THERE IS AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE NOT CONCERNING A MEMBER OF STAFF

The matter should be recorded and discussed with the Monitoring Officer at the earliest convenience.



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9. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- *TAKSAL's Health and Safety Policy*
- *Data Protection Act 2003*
- *TAKSAL's CRB Policy*
- *TAKSAL's Disciplinary and Capability Procedures*
- *TAKSAL's Statement on Bullying and Harassment*
- *TAKSAL's Code of Good Practice – Child Protection*



10. APPENDICES

1. Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) Child Protection Code of Good Practice
2. Legislative framework

APPENDIX 1

Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) Child Protection Code of Good Practice and Behaviour for Trustees, Staff and Volunteers

(to be provided to all involved with Take a Knife, Save a Life (TAKSAL) in the delivery of its stated aims)

To help prevent abuse occurring and false allegations arising the following basic guidelines will help safeguard both children and staff.

You must: -

- Treat all children involved with the Council's activities or services with dignity and respect
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour e.g. bullying and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse
- Be identifiable and wear a name badge at all times
- Supervise children at all times and abide by the staff to child ratios when undertaking any activities. For instance: Staff should be aware of the following staff/children ratios when undertaking any activities:
- Children under 2 1 member of staff to 3 children
- Children aged 3-8 years 1 member of staff to 8 children
- Children over 8 years 1 member of staff to 10 children

For activities involving swimming: -

- No child under 8 should be unsupervised
- For the under 8's the ratio should be one member of staff/carer to 2 children
- Members of staff for this purpose do not include lifeguards

You must not: -

- Spend unreasonable amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Take a child alone into a room with the door closed, unless there is an overriding reason to do so
- Children should only be taken alone in a vehicle in an emergency or with parental consent. If possible the child must be in the back seat of the vehicle
- Take children to your home.
- Enter a house when a child is on their own
- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay
- Engage in sexually provocative games
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allow children who use inappropriate language to go unchallenged
- Let the allegations a child makes be ignored or go unrecorded



- Do things of an intimate nature for children without the full understanding and consent of the parents or carers

There may be exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to restrain a child to prevent them from damaging themselves or others. Only the minimum reasonable force necessary may be used. As well as informing the parents/carer as soon as possible, all incidents of physical restraint must be recorded on an incident form and submitted to the Monitoring Officer at the earliest opportunity.



APPENDIX 2

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards, which are designed to ensure that children are protected from harm.

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Police Act 1997
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (particularly the exemptions)
- The Criminal Records Bureau