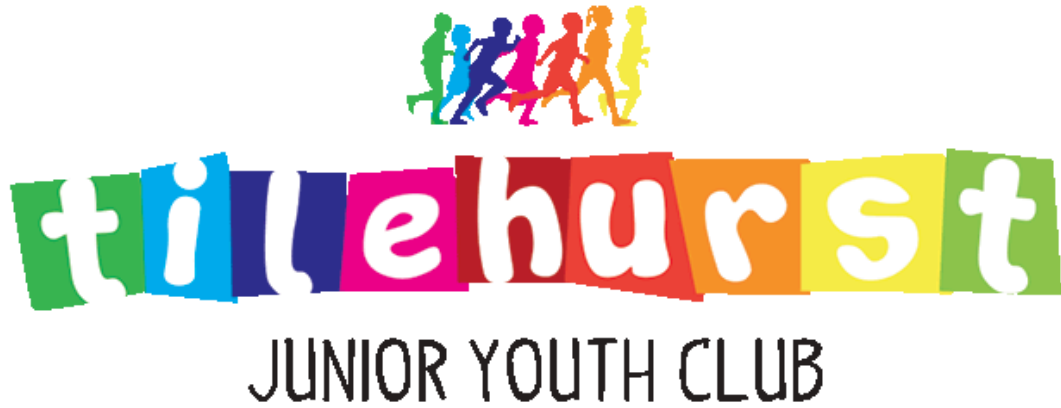




Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This policy adopts key guidance from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'.

Signed on 10/11/2025 by:

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background.

Dennis Morgan, Club Coordinator

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature in blue ink on a light-colored background.

Julia Lavender, Treasurer (on behalf of the Committee)

Next Review Due: November 2026

Statement of Intent

Tilehurst Junior Youth Club is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional welfare of every child receiving their services.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Tilehurst Junior Youth Club including the board of trustees, paid staff and volunteers.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other difficulties.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Providing effective support and training for our staff and volunteers
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made before appointment
- Building a safeguarding culture where everyone treats each other with respect and is comfortable about sharing concerns.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. All staff should consider what is in the best interests of the child (anyone under the age of 18).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. All staff should be able to recognise signs of abuse and neglect as defined below and know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff should know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and local authority children's social care if applicable.

Training

Staff will undergo formal safeguarding and child protection training at induction and refresh their formal training every 3 years. In addition, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually or as required by new legislation.

The designated safeguarding lead and their deputy attend formal designated safeguarding training every two years.

Abuse and Neglect

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect (see below). Knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect. Children are at risk of abuse from adults and other children online as well as face to face.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (FII).

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children
- The limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (e.g. domestic abuse)
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Causing children to feel frightened or in danger frequently,
- The exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching the outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. This includes:

- Neglect during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse
- The parent's or carer's failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Not ensuring adequate supervision
- Not ensuring access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Safeguarding Issues

Personal Electronic Devices

Aside from potential safeguarding issues, the reasoning for the below guideline is that Tilehurst Junior Youth Club has found that the effect of banning the use of mobile phones encourages children to engage more with each other and the activities offered at the club.

Tilehurst Junior Youth Club recognises that parents/carers in the community feel the need for their children to have access to a mobile phone for communication with home. To that end, the club has adopted the following mobile phone best use policy:

- Children are allowed to bring mobile phones to the club but they must not be used and kept out of sight
- If a child needs to use their phone, e.g. to make a call, they should approach an adult volunteer and they will be allowed to use the designated area (office)
- If a parent/carer needs to contact their child, they should call the club coordinator
- Any child found using or known to have used their phone will have the phone confiscated until the end of the club night
- If any videos or pictures have been taken, parents/carers will be asked to delete those from their child's phone

Where a mobile phone is brought to the club, it is entirely at the child's and parents'/carers' own risk. Tilehurst Junior Youth Club accepts no liability for the loss, theft or damage of any phone or electronic device brought to the club.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Children can abuse other children, often referred to as child-on-child abuse and includes but is not limited to:

- Bullying including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, etc.
- Sexual violence such as rape and sexual assault
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Downplaying certain behaviours as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group manipulates or deceives a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants.

CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals.

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact and non-contact activities such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

Some of the following can be indicators of both CCE and CSE where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Honour-based Abuse (HBA)

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including **female genital mutilation (FGM)** and **forced marriage**, and practices such as breast ironing.

All forms of HBA are abuse regardless of the motivation. If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Indicators that a child may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- the socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society
- the child coming from a community known to adopt FGM

- any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM
- any girl withdrawn from PSHE.

Indicators that FGM may take place soon include:

- when a female family elder is visiting from a country of origin
- a girl confiding that she is to have a 'special procedure' or a ceremony to 'become a woman'
- girl requesting help if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk
- a girl, or her family member, talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where FGM is prevalent

All staff will be vigilant to the signs that FGM has already taken place so that help can be offered, enquiries can be made to protect others, and criminal investigations can begin.

Indicators that FGM may have already taken place include the child:

- having difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- spending long periods of time away from an activity with bladder or menstrual problems
- being reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

It is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideologies and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral.

What staff should do if they have concerns about a child

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately** and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). Staff should not assume somebody else will take action.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Dennis Morgan

Email: tilehurstjuniorclub@yahoo.co.uk

Phone: 07733 112 291

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Julia Lavender

If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should make a referral through the CSPoA as outlined below. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as soon as possible.

Information sharing: DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

How to respond to a disclosure from a child:

- **Never promise to keep a secret**, tell the child that you will need to pass this on
- Listen and be supportive, avoid questioning the child
- Do not stop a child who is freely recalling events but do not push them to tell you more
- Reassure the child that they are not at fault and are being taken seriously
- Speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) **immediately** after a disclosure and write a detailed account of the conversation using the child's own words
- Using a body map, mark the location(s) and size of any injuries

What the designated safeguarding lead should do

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

When reporting a safeguarding concern in Reading, all referrals go through Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA):

- ➔ If the child is in immediate danger, call 999 first
- ➔ Then phone: 0118 937 3641, Option 1 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) and complete the CSPoA form within 24 hours of doing so
- ➔ Out of hours emergency phone: 01344 351 999

- Link to website/form:
<https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/professionals/report-or-refer-concerns-about-a-child/>
- More detailed information can be found here:
<https://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp/reading/reading-threshold-guidance>

What will the local authority do?

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- The child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- Any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- The child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- There is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989
- Further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

If the above information is not forthcoming or if after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

The escalation process can be located here:

<https://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp/reading/reading-threshold-guidance>

Why is all of this important?

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and local child safeguarding practice reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.

What staff should do if they have an allegation about another staff member

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation of harming or posing a risk of harm to children is made about another member of staff, then this should be referred to the club coordinator, Dennis Morgan. It is the club coordinator's duty to investigate any allegation notifying the local authority designated officer (LADO) if required.

Where there is a concern/allegation about the club coordinator, this should be referred to the management committee: committee.tjyc@gmail.com

In a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the club coordinator and/or management committee, it should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO):

- Lead LADO for Reading: Sue Darby
- Phone: 0118 937 2684
- Email: LADO@brighterfuturesforchildren.org
- Link to website/form:
<https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/for-parents-carers/schools/allegations-against-people-in-a-position-of-trust/>

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the club's safeguarding provision and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the club coordinator and management committee.