# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Launchpad STEM Ltd
Review Date: 01.09.2025
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Adam Hill

## 1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Launchpad STEM Ltd protects children and young people who take part in our after-school clubs, workshops and events.

## 2. Definitions

Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring that children grow up in safe and effective care
- Taking actions to enable children to have the best outcomes

Child protection is the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone who is under the age of 18 years.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff, freelancers and volunteers at Launchpad STEM Ltd

The term 'team' is used throughout this policy to refer to all adults who are working on behalf of Launchpad STEM Ltd.

## 4. Our Commitment

We are committed to:

- Ensuring children are safe, happy and respected
- Responding promptly to concerns or allegations
- Working with parents, schools and safeguarding authorities where needed

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

The DSL has overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding but we acknowledge that these are everyone's responsibility.

The DSL will ensure that this policy is read, understood and implemented fully by all members of the team.

The DSL will brief team members regarding any updates made to legislation or procedures relating to child protection and safeguarding.

We recognise the joint responsibility we have with external agencies. In order to ensure a safe and supportive environment, we can work and consult with:

- Local Authority Social Workers
- CAMHs
- Police
- YOT
- LA SEND team
- Prevent
- Schools
- Youth Advocacy Services

This list is not exhaustive.

## 6. Recognising Abuse

Physical abuse – hitting, shaking, etc.
Possible signs:

- Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly
- Untreated or inadequately treated injuries
- Injuries to parts of the body where accidents are unlikely
- Bruising that looks like hand or finger marks
- Cigarette burns

- Human bites

Emotional abuse – bullying, belittling, etc.
Possible signs:

- Delayed physical development
- Habit disorder (sucking, rocking, etc.)
- Antisocial or destructive behaviour
- Behavioural extremes
- Self-harm

Sexual abuse – inappropriate touching, exposure, etc.
Possible signs:

- Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital or anal area
- Genital discharge or urinary tract infections
- Stomach pain or discomfort
- Use of sexually explicit language inappropriate for their age
- Reference to a special adult or secret friendship

Neglect – failure to meet basic needs, etc.
Possible signs:

- Abandonment
- Unattended medical needs
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Consistent hunger
- Inadequate nutrition
- Extreme loneliness or need for affection

If you're unsure whether something is abuse, always report it to the DSL.

# 7. Preventing Violent Extremism

Staff at Launchpad STEM Ltd are aware of the need to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorism known as the Prevent Duty. The DSL will contact the Prevent Coordinator should there be concerns about a child’s potential links with radicalisation or extremism.

## 8. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Girls of any age are at risk from the tradition of the removal or partial removal of female genitalia. It is illegal in the UK. Everyone is responsible for following up on concerns through the FGM helpline (08000283550) or through email (fgmhelp@nspcc.org).

## 9. Code of Conduct

All team members must:

- Treat children with respect at all times
- Avoid being alone with a child where possible
- Never use physical punishment
- Never engage in inappropriate conversations or behaviour
- Report any concerns immediately to the DSL.

## 10. Reporting Concerns

It is not the responsibility of team members to investigate matters or determine truth. However, we all have a responsibility to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind.

If you are worried about a child or someone's behaviour:

1. Report it to the DSL immediately (Adam Hill, 07752057449)
2. If a child is in immediate danger, call emergency services on 999 (UK)
3. The DSL will follow up with local safeguarding procedures

If a concern or allegation relates to the DSL, team members should report it to a member of the senior leadership team at the school/centre being used. If this is not possible, contact the local safeguarding authority or the NSPCC (UK) at 0808 800 5000.

If a child discloses that he or she is being abused in some way, staff should follow this guidance:

- Do not promise to keep secrets
- Let the child know you may need to share their concern with someone who can help
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Only ask questions when necessary for clarification
- Allow the child to speak freely - do not put words in their mouth
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Inform the DSL without delay

Dealing with a disclosure can be stressful and unsettling - talk to the DSL about support that is available to you if needed.

## 11. Managing Allegations

Whilst we acknowledge that allegations may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge that they may be founded and shall therefore treat all allegations with respect and follow up according to agreed procedures.

## 12. Safer Recruitment and Training

- All team members will be appropriately vetted (e.g. DBS check in the UK)
- All team members will receive basic safeguarding training relevant to their role
- All team members will be issued the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy during induction
- If team members are unsure about any matters relating to child protection and safeguarding, they should always speak to the DSL
- The DSL should always be available to discuss matters relating to child protection and safeguarding

In exceptional circumstances when the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team at the school/centre being used. If this is not possible, contact the local safeguarding authority or the NSPCC (UK) at 0808 800 5000.

## 13. Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

All concerns will be recorded clearly, kept securely by the DSL and shared only with relevant safeguarding professionals.

## 14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if needed.

Signed:

Adam Hill
Founder and Director, Launchpad STEM Ltd