



Safeguarding Policy – Active Stars (West Sussex)

1. Statement of Intent

Active Stars is committed to building and maintaining a strong **culture of safety** in which all children are protected from abuse, harm, neglect, exploitation and radicalisation. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and underpins all aspects of our provision.

We recognise that children may be vulnerable to harm both **inside and outside of the setting**, including **online**, and that safeguarding issues are often complex and overlapping. We are committed to acting in the **best interests of the child at all times**.

This policy applies to all early years, wraparound care and holiday provision operated by Active Stars.

2. Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy has been written in line with the requirements of:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (2025)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE – current version)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (local safeguarding arrangements)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)

This policy should be read alongside our: - Safer Recruitment Policy - Behaviour Policy - Online Safety Policy - Whistleblowing Policy - Staff Code of Conduct

3. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Active Stars ensures that a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is available at all times when the provision is operating.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): William Drury

Deputy DSL: Matthew Moore

The DSL is responsible for:

- Overseeing safeguarding and child protection practice
- Supporting staff with safeguarding concerns
- Liaising with Children's Social Care, the Police, Ofsted and other agencies
- Ensuring safeguarding records are accurate, secure and up to date

All staff:

- Have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Know how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns
- Must report concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL

4. Definition of Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

5. Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Child abuse, neglect and exploitation may be carried out by adults or other children and may occur inside or outside the home.

Types of abuse include:

Physical abuse: Causing physical harm through actions such as hitting, shaking, burning or poisoning.

Emotional abuse: Persistent emotional maltreatment that harms a child's emotional development.

Sexual abuse: Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including online abuse.

Neglect: Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs.

Domestic abuse: Psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse within the home.

6. Recognising Signs of Abuse and Neglect

Staff may become aware of safeguarding concerns through:

- Changes in a child's behaviour or presentation
- Deterioration in a child's emotional wellbeing
- Unexplained injuries
- Concerning comments or disclosures
- Concerns about abuse occurring outside the setting, including FGM or domestic abuse
- Inappropriate behaviour by adults or other children

7. Responding to Disclosures or Concerns

If a child discloses abuse or harm, staff will:

- Listen calmly and carefully
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing
- Avoid asking leading questions
- Explain that the information must be shared to keep them safe
- Record the concern immediately

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSL **without delay**.

8. Recording and Reporting Concerns

All concerns are recorded using a **Safeguarding Concern Record**, which includes:

- Date and time of the concern or disclosure
- Child's name and date of birth
- A factual account using the child's own words where possible
- Name, role and signature of the staff member recording the concern

The DSL will:

- Decide on the appropriate course of action
- Refer concerns to Children's Social Care where required
- Follow up referrals in writing within 48 hours

Staff may contact Children's Social Care directly if they believe appropriate action has not been taken.

9. Child-on-Child Abuse

Active Stars recognises that children can abuse other children. This includes physical abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, bullying, online abuse and exploitation.

Child-on-child abuse is never dismissed as normal behaviour and is managed in line with this safeguarding policy.

10. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a criminal offence and a form of child abuse.

Where staff know that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18, or observe physical signs indicating FGM, they will:

- Report the matter to the police via 101 (mandatory reporting duty)
- Inform the DSL immediately
- Make a referral to Children's Social Care

11. Extremism and Radicalisation (Prevent Duty)

Active Stars fulfils its duty to protect children from radicalisation.

Concerns about extremism or radicalisation are recorded and referred to the DSL, who will seek advice from appropriate agencies, including Prevent or the Police.

12. Online Safety

Active Stars recognises that online safety is a key safeguarding issue. Children may be exposed to risk through online content, contact and conduct.

Online safeguarding concerns are managed in line with this policy and our Online Safety procedures.

13. Allegations Against Staff (Managing Allegations)

An allegation is any information that suggests a member of staff may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

All allegations must be reported immediately to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day
- Notify Ofsted where required
- Follow advice from the LADO regarding next steps, including suspension if necessary

Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be made where appropriate.

14. Whistleblowing

All staff have a duty to raise concerns about unsafe practice or the conduct of colleagues.

Concerns may be raised with:

- The DSL or Deputy DSL
- Senior leadership
- External whistleblowing routes, including the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

Staff will be supported and protected when raising concerns in good faith.

15. Training and Awareness

Active Stars ensures that:

- The DSL and Deputy DSL receive appropriate safeguarding and Prevent training
- All staff receive safeguarding training at least every two years, with annual updates
- Safeguarding is a standing agenda item in staff meetings
- Safer recruitment procedures are followed at all times

16. Key Contacts

West Sussex Integrated Front Door (Children's Social Care): 01403 229900

Out of Hours: 0330 222 6664

LADO: 0330 222 6450 | LADO@westsussex.gov.uk

Police: 101 or 999

Anti-terrorist Hotline: 0800 789 321

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Policy Review and Governance

This policy has been written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (2025) and relevant Department for Education guidance for wraparound care and holiday provision, and reflects current safeguarding and welfare requirements.

This policy applies to all early years, wraparound care, and holiday provision operated by the provider.

Reviewed: February 2026

Next review due: February 2027

Approved by: Director / Registered Provider