

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Dover Bouncy Tots is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and fun environment for all children. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to protect them from harm, abuse, and neglect.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors involved with our soft play sessions.

2. DEFINITIONS

- Child: Any person under the age of 18.
- Safeguarding: Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, and ensuring they grow up in safe circumstances.
- Child protection: The action taken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.

3. OUR COMMITMENT:

- Provide a safe physical environment for children.
- Ensure staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Respond appropriately and promptly to safeguarding concerns.
- Work in partnership with parents, carers, and relevant agencies where needed.

4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be appointed.
 - Name: BREEZE HANDLEY
 - Contact details: 07392831222
 - breeze.handley@yahoo.com

The DSL is responsible for receiving, acting and recording on safeguarding concerns. Liaising with external agencies where appropriate.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Being alert to signs of abuse or neglect.
- Following this policy and reporting concerns immediately.
- Treating all children with respect and dignity.

5. SAFER WORKING PRACTICES

To keep children safe, we will:

- Avoid situations where staff or volunteers are alone with a child wherever possible.
- Use physical contact only when necessary for safety or care (e.g. preventing injury), and in an appropriate manner.

6. Supervision and Parental Responsibility

- Parents/carers remain responsible for their children during soft play sessions unless otherwise clearly stated.
- Staff are responsible for maintaining a safe environment but do not replace parental supervision.
- Clear rules for safe play will be displayed and explained.

7. RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE

Staff and volunteers should be aware of possible indicators of abuse, including:

- Unexplained injuries or repeated accidents.
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawal, aggression, fearfulness).
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour.
- Neglect, poor hygiene, or unmet basic needs.

These signs do not necessarily mean abuse but should be taken seriously.

8. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS OR DISCLOSURES

If a child discloses abuse or a concern is suspected:

- Listen calmly and take the child seriously.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing.
- Report the concern immediately to the DSL.

The DSL will decide on the appropriate next steps, which may include contacting safeguarding services or the police.

9. RECORDING & CONFIDENTIALITY

- All safeguarding concerns will be recorded in writing, signed, and dated.
- Records will be stored securely and only shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Confidentiality will be maintained unless disclosure is necessary to protect a child.

10. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Any allegation or concern about a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to the DSL (or to an appropriate external authority if the DSL is involved).

Suspension or temporary removal from duties may be considered while investigations are carried out.

11. RECRUITMENT & TRAINING

- Staff and volunteers will be recruited following safer recruitment practices.
- Relevant background checks (e.g. DBS or local equivalent) will be completed where required.
- Safeguarding training will be provided and refreshed regularly.

12. HEALTH & SAFETY ENVIRONMENT

- Equipment will be checked regularly and maintained to a safe standard.
- Any hazards or accidents will be recorded and addressed promptly.
- First aid provision will be available during sessions.

13. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation or guidance and/or an incident highlights the need for review.

Date of next review: 30/01/2027