

Advice for parents on choosing safe activities for their children

Solihull Family
Information Service

Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Partnership aims to ensure local organisations work effectively together to safeguard Solihull's children and young people and protect them from harm.

Many children attend activities such as drama, music, sports or play schemes and enjoy these in safety. Parents will want to feel confident their child is being left in safe hands and that groups and organisation have safety measures in place.

Below is a series of questions parents can ask, with guidance about what would be acceptable responses.

Who is in charge of keeping children safe?

There should be a named individual who supervises staff and volunteers and is trained to act appropriately if there are concerns about a child.

Do staff and volunteers get any basic child protection training?

All those working with children should have basic training in child protection and health and safety.

Are the staff and volunteers suitable to work with children?

All staff and volunteers should go through a proper recruitment process which includes interviews, references and police checks.

Is there a written code of behaviour?

All organisations should have a written code of behaviour which outlines good practice when working with children. Bullying, shouting, racism and sexism are not acceptable.

How can you or your child voice concern?

Organisations should tell you where to go and what to do if you, or your child, have any worries including if your child is being bullied or hurt by others.

Does the organisation have a health and safety policy?

Find out if there is a leader qualified in first aid, if there is a first aid box, and if the premises have passed fire regulations.

What are the arrangements when children go on outings?

You should be informed of arrangements including the transport there and back for every outing, no matter how long or short, and your consent should be requested.

Does the organisation have an internet safety policy?

If the organisation allows children to access the internet, find out what guidelines or filtering software they have in place for safe surfing.

Solihull Family Information Service

Call: 0800 389 8667

Email: familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk

Web: www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo



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What happens if children have special needs?

If children are very young, or have a disability, there should be clear guidelines on feeding, toilet, and administering any medication.

What should you be wary of?

- Activities where parents are discouraged from staying to watch or becoming involved;
- Behaviour or activities that encourage rough play, sexual innuendo or humiliating punishments;
- Individuals who take charge and operate independently of organisational guidelines;
- Individuals who show favouritism or personally reward specific children;
- Encouragement of inappropriate physical contact;
- Poor communication and lack of parental involvement, leaving you feeling uneasy;
- Children who drop out or stop going for no apparent reason;
- Invitation for children to spend time alone with staff or volunteers (or to visit their homes).

Most community groups should be happy to reassure parents that they are doing everything to keep their children safe. But if you cannot get the answers you want contact for advice:

Solihull Family Information Service **0800 389 8667 or**
The NSPCC's Child Protection helpline **0808 800 5000**

What to do if you have specific concerns

If you have specific concerns about a person who is working with or in a position of trust with children or young people, you should discuss these with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO service is based at:
Child Protection and Review Unit
Bluebell Centre
Chelmsley Wood
B37 5TN
B37 5EX (Sat Nav)
LADO referrals: should be made via Telephone: 0121 788 4310

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Where to get advice if running a group

If anyone running a group needs advice about safeguarding and child protection this is available on this website and by contacting the NSPCC by email saferchildren@nspcc.org.uk or phone 0871 990 3200.

Contact the Family Information Service if you want to find out more about childcare funding which is available for some 2 year olds and free early education funding for 3 & 4 year olds.

Solihull Family Information Service offers impartial information relating to Childcare, activities and support services. We are here help, if you need to contact us our details are below:

Phone number: 0800 389 8667

Email: familyinfo@solihull.gov.uk

Website: www.solihull.gov.uk/familyinfo

Would you like to know what's happening in Solihull for children and families? Then join our Parent's Network for regular information at www.solihull.gov.uk/parentsnetwork

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