

Bitsi — Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Bitsi · St Mary's for All, 4 Auchingramont Road, Hamilton ML3 6JT · BitsiScotland@gmail.com · 07590 453 803 · bitsi.co.uk

Version 1.0 — 9 July 2026

1. Our commitment

Bitsi is a coding and robotics club for children aged 6–12 (P3–S2+) in Hamilton, Lanarkshire. The welfare of every child who attends is our first priority. Every child has the right to learn, create and have fun in an environment where they are safe, included and listened to, regardless of ability, background or additional support needs.

This policy applies to all Bitsi activities — weekly classes, holiday camps, parties and visits — and to everyone who works or volunteers with us.

2. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is **Jasmine, Club Lead**. Any concern about a child's welfare, however small, should be raised with the DSL without delay:

- Email: BitsiScotland@gmail.com
- Phone: 07590 453 803

If a concern involves the DSL, it should be reported directly to South Lanarkshire Council Social Work Resources or Police Scotland (see section 10).

3. Safe recruitment and staffing

- All instructors are members of the PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) scheme, administered by Disclosure Scotland, before working with children.
- Classes are led by fully qualified teachers with classroom experience.
- All instructors receive child protection and safeguarding training, refreshed regularly. Lead instructors are first aid trained.
- References are taken up for all new staff and volunteers, and no adult who has not been vetted is ever left alone with children.

4. Supervision and ratios

- Groups are capped at a maximum of 10 children, with two instructors per session.
- A register is taken at the start of every session and children are supervised at all times, including toilet breaks (children are escorted to, not into, facilities).
- Our venue, St Mary's for All, is fully accessible with appropriate facilities.

5. Arrival and collection

- Parents/carers should drop off no more than 5 minutes before the session starts and collect within 5 minutes of it ending.

- Children are only released to the adults named at booking. Please tell us in advance if someone different is collecting.
- If a child is not collected, we will phone the contacts provided. Two instructors will remain with the child at all times. If we cannot reach anyone within a reasonable time, we will follow local authority guidance and may contact Social Work Resources.

6. Online safety

- All devices are supplied, configured and supervised by Bitsi — children do not need their own accounts or devices.
- We use age-appropriate, education-focused platforms (e.g. Scratch, micro:bit, Minecraft Education) and trusted, safe platforms for AI activities.
- Children are taught safe, kind online behaviour as part of every activity, and internet use is supervised.

7. Photography and media

- Photos or videos of children are only taken with written parental consent, gathered at booking, and only on Bitsi devices.
- We never publish a child's full name alongside their image, and consent can be withdrawn at any time by contacting us.

8. Inclusion and additional support needs

We believe every child should have the chance to create, learn and feel like they belong. We tailor sessions to the children who attend and chat with parents before and after sessions to understand what works best for each child. Concerns are never a barrier to attending — talk to us and we will do our best to make it work.

9. Recognising and responding to concerns

Abuse can be physical, emotional or sexual, and includes neglect and online harm. Signs may include unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour, things a child says, or disclosures made during sessions.

If a child tells us something concerning, we will:

- Listen calmly, take it seriously and reassure the child it is not their fault.
- Never promise secrecy — we explain we may need to tell someone whose job is to help.
- Ask only enough to understand; we do not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Record what was said, in the child's own words, as soon as possible, with date and time.
- Report to the DSL the same day.

10. Reporting concerns

Where a child may be at risk, the DSL will contact:

- **South Lanarkshire Council Social Work Resources** (or the emergency social work service out of hours);
- **Police Scotland** on 101, or **999** if a child is in immediate danger.

Parents/carers can also seek advice from Children 1st Parentline (08000 28 22 33) or the NSPCC helpline (0808 800 5000).

11. Allegations against staff

Any allegation against an instructor or volunteer will be taken seriously, recorded and referred promptly to Social Work Resources and/or Police Scotland. The person concerned will not work with children while the matter is looked into, and we will cooperate fully with any investigation, including our duty to make referrals to Disclosure Scotland where relevant.

12. Confidentiality and record keeping

Safeguarding information is shared only with those who need it to protect the child, stored securely, and retained in line with legal requirements and our Privacy Policy.

13. First aid and accidents

Lead instructors are first aid trained and a first aid kit is available at every session. Accidents are recorded and parents/carers are always informed at collection (or immediately by phone if significant).

14. Review

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the Club Lead, and sooner if guidance or circumstances change.