



SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION & WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Policy

We believe that the welfare, safety and protection of all children is paramount. To achieve this we will follow the booklet, 'What To Do If You Are Worried a Child Is Being Abused' and with the local Safeguarding Children Board guidance, as specified in the children act 2010. Copies of all this information will be displayed in the office.

We are committed to ensuring that the management team and all staff are aware of their responsibilities to every individual child in being aware of possible signs of abuse or neglect, as well as being familiar with what to do if concerned about a child's safety, by providing appropriate training and support.

We will ensure that parents, carers or any other parties with parental responsibility are fully informed of our policy and procedure at induction, and have full access to our policies at all times.

We aim to create a safe, secure and caring environment for all children by working in partnership with, parents/carers, other interested adults and the local community.

Any 'injuries' observed on a child at arrival at the Centre will be recorded on the Existing Injury Form and the parents/carers will be asked about the circumstance that the injury was received. We recognise that in the main such injuries are liable to have appropriate explanation. The parent/carer will be asked to sign the form to indicate that they have been informed of this.

We recognise the need to be sensitive to all involved in any child protection issue, in particular the need to discuss concerns on a need to know basis, in order to maintain confidentiality.

Aim

To ensure that children are:

- Protected from any harm, abuse or neglect
- Have access to and receive adequate support from an integrated multi-agency approach should any form of harm, abuse or neglect come to light.

To ensure that staff are:

- Aware of their responsibilities in regard to safeguarding children
- Adequately trained and knowledgeable of possible signs and symptoms of abuse of children at risk
- Adequately trained and knowledgeable in the procedures to be followed if they have any concerns



- Alert to the possibility of abuse within the Centre

To ensure the parents/carers are;

- Informed of our commitment to the protection of children
- Informed of our policy and procedures that will be followed where there is concern about the safety of the child.

To give regard to:

Every Child Matters 2004
The Children Act 1989/2004/2010
Human Rights Act 1989
Data Protection Act 1989
The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
The Protection of Children Act 1999
The United Nations Convention On the Rights of the Child- UNCRC
The Rehabilitation of offenders Act 1974
The Childcare Act 2007 and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

To be committed to:

Working within a multi-agency approach
Working with and in support of the local Safeguarding children board (LSCB)
The Early Years Development & Child Care Partnership (EYDCP)

Procedure

Designated person

There will be a named staff member responsible for child protection. This person will be identified to the staff, parents and visitors by displaying their name on the parent information board. The person with designated responsibility for child protection at the Centre is: **KIM BUCKINGHAM, Centre Manager**

The designated person will:

- Complete appropriate child protection training and keep up to date with any changes in legislation
- Make sure that all new staff, including any temporary staff, are aware of reporting process and their responsibilities in reporting any concerns they may have through the induction process
- Is responsible for liaising with local child protections agencies as per “Making Children Safer – Child Protection” document (NCC)
- Ensure that one other staff member is appointed to deputise in their absence and are adequately trained to enable them to implement child protection procedures in accordance with “Making Children Safer – Child Protection” document (NCC) document
- Make sure that staff knowledge in this area is monitored and updated
- Seek training opportunities for all adults involved in the Centre to ensure they have up to date knowledge and a greater understanding of child protection issues



- To ensure that the chair of the committee is kept fully updated on any concerns raised.

Recruitment and selection

- All applicants, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed to establish their suitability to work with children. If successful they will be offered the post pending a satisfactory enhanced disclosure. References will be sought prior to interview in line with our Safer Recruitment policy
- All applicants will be informed that all positions in the Centre are exempt from the rehabilitation of offenders act 1974
- Gaps in employment will be checked at interview and an explanation sought.
- Staff will not be left unsupervised until the appropriate checks and references are in place
- All new staff and volunteers will be made aware of the safeguarding children policy during their induction in the first week of employment
- All appointments both paid and voluntary will be subject to a probationary period

Security

All visitors will report to the office and asked to sign the visitor's book. All visitors including, contractors will be accompanied at all times whilst on the premises. We have a coded key pad to the children's area, which visitors will not be given, to ensure the safety of the children. All staff are required to wear name badges.

Laptop Removal/Camera/Mobile Phone Use

Mobile Phones are not permitted in the rooms or any area where children are present. Staff must lock all mobile phones in lockers. A weekly check will be undertaken to ensure that mobile phones are not in rooms, and a spot check of lockers will be made periodically. This will be recorded in the weekly log.

Cameras used for the purposes of recording children's learning journeys and displays will be checked weekly by the Business Manager or Centre Manager in her absence, on a different day each week, for any inappropriate images. Record of the check will be recorded in the camera log book. Images will be deleted each week by the Room Leaders.

Laptop's will not under normal circumstances be removed from the building, unless it is deemed necessary to the business (i.e. for offsite meeting). If they are to be removed from the building they will be signed out in the camera, mobile phone and laptop log, and checked as thoroughly as possible for any inappropriate images. On return the laptop will be signed back in. Laptops must only be signed out of the business by the Business, Centre or Deputy Managers.

If any inappropriate images are found on cameras or mobile phones, then the Directors of the Committee will be informed as well as the Police and Ofsted, and the equipment seized. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES is there to be any investigation in to any accusation made against any individual working or volunteering in the Centre until Ofsted, the police or social services have been informed and have confirmed



that this process can begin.

Any electronic equipment that is permitted into the setting during holiday clubs, such as hand held consoles, must have cameras taped up, and must be checked in and out of the setting by a member of the Management Team.

Accusations against staff

- No staff will be left alone for a long period with individual children or with small groups
- All staff should avoid placing themselves in situations that may lead to allegations being made against them
- If an accusation or allegation of child abuse is made against a member of staff, volunteer or student abuse, the individual may be suspended pending further investigation or, based on the judgement of the Centre manager in consultation with the Responsible Person and the Committee Directors, have a temporary change of duties. Social services, Ofsted and the police will be informed prior to initiating any internal investigation. Where external authorities initiate an investigation into an allegation, our own investigation will run in parallel to, but without jeopardy to, any official enquiries. Disciplinary action may be taken independent of any outcome.
- Where an accusation or allegation is made against the Centre manager, the Responsible Person, and the Directors of the Committee must be notified immediately
- Ofsted must be informed immediately of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, volunteer or other individuals using or working within the Centre. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES is there to be any investigation in to any accusation made against any individual working or volunteering in the Centre until Ofsted, the police or social services have been informed and have confirmed that this process can begin.

'Whistle Blowing'

It is acknowledged that there may be times where the staff 'witness' an incident, action or event that may give them cause for concern. We are committed to the safety and security of all children at all times whilst in our care equally, we are committed to the safety and security of all staff at all times whilst in the Centre. Therefore we recognise the issues and concerns in regard to reporting concerns regarding the care and welfare of the children in the Centre consideration to the above.

- All staff are required to share any concerns in regard to any staff practices that compromise the safety of the child to designated child protection representative (manager)
- Failure to notify the designated child protection representative (manager) of any concerns regarding any incidents, events or practice by individual staff will result in referral to safeguarding children's team, Ofsted and the police along with the staff member under investigation, where this becomes known, for investigation. Where external authorities are conducting their own enquiries, our own investigation will run in parallel without jeopardy to any official enquiries



- Any staff member who discloses a concern will be given assurance of confidentiality as far as practically possible, without jeopardy to any investigations by external authorities or our own investigation
- Any staff member expressing a concern about their safety following a disclosure will be given all necessary support to enable them to continue in their role with security safely.

Existing Injuries

Any injuries noted when a child arrives at the Centre will be recorded on an 'Existing Injury Form', which records the details of the injury plus any explanation given by the parent/carer. This must be signed by the parent to confirm the details. This form should then be stored in each child's confidential file in the Centre office.

Where any concerns are raised about a child, the designated child protection representative (Manager) must record these on a child incident record with as much information as possible, which then must be stored in each child's confidential file. The designated child protection representative (manager) is responsible for ensuring that any information is kept confidential, including ensuring that staff are only informed on a 'need to know'.

Key person

We operate a Key person system, which assigns an individual member of staff to each child at the earliest opportunity following the child's enrolment into the Centre.

It is the key Persons role to:

- Help encourage children to develop a positive self-image, by ensuring equality of access to opportunities that develop their independences
- Listen to and value what children say and do
- Encourage children to have the confidence to speak out, which enables them to build autonomy as well as the ability to resist inappropriate approaches
- Encourage children to be independent by providing opportunities that allow them to make choices and decisions whether or not to take part in all activities. In this way children are given opportunity to question the relevance and appropriateness of activities, which they can apply in their situations
- Work closely with families and the children, linking Centre to home, which enables the development of sustainable relationships between the child, their peers, family and other adults. The family will be encouraged to work effectively with the Centre to understand our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of the children in our care
- Ensure they or any other person concerned for the child's welfare listen to the child, provide comfort and reassurance and report the concerns to the designated child protection representative (Centre Manager)
- Allow investigations to be carried out with sensitivity. Centre staff will never question children and pay careful attention to not making assumptions, drawing to conclusions or influencing the outcome of the investigation

Parents/carers and families



We recognise and value of the working in partnership with parents/carers, to provide a safe and secure environment for children. To demonstrate our commitment to this we will ensure that:

- All parents/carers, including those with parental responsibility and interested adults will be made aware of our policy on safeguarding children during their initial enrolment.
- All parents are informed that we as an organisation working with children, are obliged by law to report any suspicions of child abuse during their initial induction to the centre
- Confidential records kept records kept on a child will be shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child subject to our confidentiality policy and access to records policy
- Parents are the first point of contact and are informed if a record of abuse or suspicion occurs, **except where there is extenuating evidence that the child is in of immediate protection.** Under these circumstances the Centre manager or supervisors will contact the duty social worker with the child's home address seeking advice as if to inform the parents
- The centre will take every step to build trusting and supportive relationships with families. They will endeavour to ensure they are made part of any child protection procedure to include, children in need meetings and Core Group Meetings. The centre will continue to welcome families whilst investigations are being made.

Procedure for reporting an accusation against a member of staff

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer by another individual or through our 'whistle blowing' system, the designated person (Centre manager) will record this on the centre complaint form, and will decide on the appropriate action to be taken. This will involve decisions being made on:

- Who should be informed e.g. Ofsted, Police, Duty social worker, parent, or Committee
- What action should be taken with regard to the member of staff e.g. suspension
- The process to be followed i.e. whether to initiate an immediate investigation and by whom or to report to external authorities and commence investigation and by whom or to report to external authorities and commence investigation in parallel
- How to ensure confidentiality is maintained
- Where an allegation is made against the Centre Manager, the Responsible Person on the Committee must be informed immediately, who will complete the complaint form and contact Ofsted to inform them of the allegations

Procedure if you are concerned about a child abused

- Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical appearance, or condition the designated child protection representative (Centre Manager) must be notified immediately so that appropriate action can be taken
- The key person or any member of staff that has a concern about a child's safety will inform the designated child protection representative (Centre Manager) who is responsible for completing the child incident record and deciding any further action required. This will be stored in the child's confidential file



The incident record will include:

- The child's name, address, and date of birth
- The date and time of the concern raised
- The details of the concern
- Any record of comments made by the child or conversations with adults or children
- The name of the person raising the concern
- The name of any other persons who share the concern
- Signatures and counter signature

Where there is a clear indication that abuse may have occurred either through suspicions or disclosures the same records will be put into action. The designated child protection representative (Centre Manager) will contact the Responsible Person on the Committee immediately to share concerns. The Centre Manager will contact Ofsted and the safe guarding children's team. Parents will be formed of the situation by the designated child protection representative (Centre Manager) supported by the Deputy along with the Responsible Person in their absence. It will be made clear to them that we are governed by legislation to inform the safeguarding children's team of this matter. Sensitively will be used when informing parents of such serious issues. Where the designated child protection representative (Centre Manger) feels that the child is in immediate danger of significant harm they will inform the police, if there is no immediate danger to the child then LADO (Local Authority Designated will) at the Safe guarding Children's team in Northamptonshire County Council must be contacted. Where there is a need to contact the safeguarding children's team the incident report form should be completed prior to contact as these are the details that the duty social worker will request. This will be followed up in writing within 48 hours along with a copy of the incident record.

Any concerns must be raised with local safe guarding children's team who can be contacted at the address and telephone numbers identified below:

Northampton Safeguarding Children's Team LADO **0300 1261000**
Email: LADOReferral@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk

Emergency out of hours service after 6:00pm **01604 626938**

The local police can be contacted at the telephone number identified below:

Police
Dial 999

The nursery will maintain contact with Ofsted over any child protection issues. Ofsted can be contacted at the telephone number identified below:

O.F.S.T.E.D
0300 1231231

Staff guidance

All staff expected to behave in a professional manner, particularly with regard to the maintenance of confidentiality at all times. Confidential information should only be



shared with external agencies and professionals where it is considered to be necessary, in order to protect children.

Staff are expected to act in an appropriate way towards children and adults, treating them with the same respect and dignity that they would expect to be treated themselves.

All individuals, children and adults, should be spoken to in an appropriate manner. It is unacceptable for shouting or inappropriate comments to be made about any individual.

It is not easy to identify child abuse and is normally a combination of both social and medical assessment. The signs and symptoms of abuse listed below are not exhaustive, where staff have a concern about the emotional or physical welfare of a child, they must report it to the designated child protection representative (Centre Manager) or in their absence a supervisor so that a referral can be made. Any individual who has concerns can also raise these directly with the safe guarding children's team.

Signs and symptoms

Significant harm can be a result of neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

Neglect

Neglect occurs where a child's basic needs are consistently not met e.g. failure to provide food, warmth, clothing or consistent care. Signs and symptoms may include:

- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing
- Poor hygiene
- Development delay, poor speech and play skills
- A child whose parents persistently fail to seek or follow medical advice
- So cases of 'failure to thrive' have a basis of neglect
- A child whose parents persistently fail to ensure the child's safety
- A child left at home on their own

Physical abuse

It is natural for children to have accidents and in the main the majority of injuries can be reasonably explained. Signs that may arouse suspicion that injuries are not accidental may include:

- Where any explanation is not consistent with the injury or with the stage of the development of the child
- Where there are changes of explanation or no explanation
- Where there is a history of frequently repeated injury
- Where there has been considerable delay in seeking medical advice or no medical advice sought
- Where there are bruises of different ages on the child at any one time, other than on the common sites of accidental injury in a child of that age, such as, shins or



forehead

- Where there are bruises on the buttocks or thighs
- Where there is facial bruising other than on the prominences particularly around the mouth, eyes or ears
- Any bruising in a non-mobile baby, reluctance to move limbs or tenderness of handling
- Where there are unexplained burns, bite marks, severe bruising or any combination of these

Sexual abuse

There are many signs linked to sexual abuse, many of these can also be linked to other problems. It is usual for sexual abuse to be recognised by a single symptom, it is a case of developing a full picture of the child. A child who is being or has been sexually abused does not always display behavioural signs. Indicators of sexual abuse may include:

- Over sexualised behaviour
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge in advance of developmental stages
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Explicitly sexual drawings or play activity
- Compulsive masturbation
- Frequent wetting and soiling once toilet trained
- Recurrent urinary tract infection
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Genital or anal bleeding or lacerations
- Changes in behaviour
- Anxiety during nappy changing or toilets times

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can be incorporated into all forms of abuse i.e. 'grooming', threats. Some children may be very well cared for but be subject to emotional abuse such as constant criticism. Emotional abuse can have two extremes, where there is a continuous withholding of approval and affection, accompanied by severe discipline or extremes, where there is a continuous withholding of approval and affection, accompanied by severe discipline or a total lack of control; or where a child is exploited to fulfill others' emotional needs.

- Have an impaired ability for the enjoyment of play
- Lack curiosity and natural exploratory behaviour
- Be delayed in language development and play skills
- Show eating disturbances or 'failure to grow'