

Safeguarding Children Policy

It is the Nursery's aim to ensure that all the children who come here receive the highest level of care, provision and education. This is only achievable if children are kept safe from harm. Therefore, safeguarding the welfare of children is part of our core business.

What is Safeguarding?

The Nursery adopts the definition used in the Children Act 2004¹ and the Department for Education (DCSF (now DfE)) guidance document *Working together to safeguard children (2010)*², which focuses on safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare. This can be summarised as protecting children from harm by others and providing them with safe and effective care.

Aims and Objectives

- Ensure that appropriate measures and practices are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and respond to immediate concerns, bringing matter requiring attention to the relevant authorities.
- All Early Years Educators are required to complete a Safeguarding Training Course, supplemented by regular refreshers in house. Early Years Educators are therefore expected to have a good understanding of safeguarding concerns, including potential abuse and neglect of children. At whatever level we identify risks, we will highlight them and seek to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to safeguard the children concerned.
- We will ensure that all Nursery employees maintain a proper focus on safeguarding children and that this is reflected both in sound individual practice and in our internal policies and guidance.
- Create an environment that encourages children to develop a positive self image regardless of race, religion, culture, sexuality, disability, gender or background, where everyone feels valued.
- Help children establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and other adults.
- We hope to support children in developing a sense of autonomy and independence as well as community.

The Nursery's Responsibilities

The Nursery does not investigate individual child protection cases or referrals, therefore all Early Years Educators need to follow the procedures to ensure that all allegations or suspicions of abuse

¹ *The Children Act 2004*; www.dcsf.gov.uk/childrenactreport/

² *Working together to safeguard children*, DfE, 2010;

www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/workingtogether/workingtogethertosafeguardchildren/.

or significant harm to any child are reported to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. We will share all relevant information with the respective statutory child protection agencies (children's services and/or police) without delay and within agreed protocols.

The Nursery will ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities to work jointly with others to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Methods

The nursery aims to safeguard child in a variety of ways.

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the nursery are clearly informed that positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and all job offers are subject to enhanced DBS applications.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements with regard to references and DBS checks, to ensure that no disqualified or unfit person works at the nursery or has access to children.
- All Early Years Educators and volunteers are required to read and sign in agreement to the policies and procedures of the nursery, including the Safeguarding Children Policy and Confidentiality Policy.
- Volunteers never work unsupervised.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Nursery. Visitors are never left unsupervised.
- Any marks on children in suspicious places will be recorded and the LSCB will be notified to seek advice on the suitable next step.
- We have enhanced security on our entrances and exits, as well as CCTV throughout the building. We ensure that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to any children.
- We seek out regular training opportunities for all Early Years Educators and volunteers in the nursery to ensure that they are up to date with safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- The free flow nature and physical layout of the nursery permits constant adult supervision.
- We introduce key elements of child protection into the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, so that children can develop an understanding of how and why they need to keep safe.
- We handle complaints as a first priority and ensure that parents and carers are aware of the complaints procedures within the nursery.
- The Nursery works hard to build trusting and supportive relationships with the families of our children. With the proviso that the care and safety of the child are paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family at all times.

- Staff are trained to be alert and to report any changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection to the LSCB.
- We provide in-house training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

The Legislative Context

Working together to safeguard children (DCSF (now DfE), 2015) sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, in accordance with the Children Act 1989³ and the Children Act 2004. These Acts are the primary legislation from which *Working together to safeguard children* derives its legislative basis. Guidance can also be sought from the document *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused*⁴, which is particularly helpful for Early Years Practitioners and volunteers. The Nursery also has regard to the Prevent Duty 2015, which aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and to keep children safe from associated dangers. The Safeguarding Representative has oversight of the Prevent Duty at the Nursery.

Safeguarding Representative

The Nursery has an appointed Safeguarding Representative, who is accountable to the Manager and Nursery Owner. They are responsible for:

- Coordinating the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and associated staff training/briefings.
- Monitoring compliance with the policy.
- Ensuring that procedures, advice and guidance work effectively and are revised as needed.
- Reporting to the Manager on matters relating to safeguarding.
- Giving highest priority to children's welfare.
- Recognising, identifying and responding to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children.
- Responding appropriately to allegations against staff, other adults and themselves.
- Being alert to the risks which abusers, or potential abusers, may pose.
- Contributing as necessary to all stages of the Nursery's safeguarding and protection processes.

³ The Children Act 1989; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

⁴ <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/dfes-04320-2006>

Procedures for responding to specific child protection concerns about children at risk of significant harm

Early Years Educators at The Nursery may encounter child protection concerns. Such concerns may be brought to our attention by:

- The child themselves,
- Alleged by others,
- Through direct activity and observation.

Concern may be about the behaviour of a:

- Early Years Educator,
- Peer,
- Family member,
- Child, young person or adult in the community.

The concern could relate to action or inaction, be about a current situation or past events and may be about allegations or disclosures of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect or a combination of one or more of these categories. If you have reason for concern, all members of staff must respond in accordance with the following procedure:

Immediate action to take if you observe abuse taking place

An observation of abuse can take on a number of forms and should always give cause for concern.

If you witness an inappropriate interaction, you should proceed to intervene, so long as it does not put the child or yourself at undue risk. Inform the perpetrator of your concerns and ask them to stop what they are doing immediately and ensure they move to an area that is away from children. You shouldn't leave the child alone, so ask another responsible adult to care for the child and then proceed to inform the Manager of your concerns immediately.

It is vital that you take notes of what you have seen or heard as soon as possible. This note should be dated, signed and given to the Safeguarding Representative. On the note you should write:

- What you saw.
- Who said what.
- What action you took.
- The date, time and place.
- Your name, the name of the child and the perpetrator

Immediate action to take if you receive an allegation of possible significant harm to a child

- Focus on what you are being told or have just seen. Responding to suspicion of abuse takes immediately priority.
- Do not promise confidentiality or agree to 'keep it a secret'. Express support and reassurance to the child that you will take action.
- Don't ask leading questions e.g. How did they hurt you? But ask open questions like 'Can you tell me what happened?'
- Ask only what you need to know for you to decide whether abuse may have taken place.
- Inform the Manager immediately.

Next Steps

Once the Manager has been informed of the situation, it is unlikely that you will hear anything further about the matter, but rest assured that your actions may have protected a child from suffering or continuing to suffer. It falls to the Manager and/or Safeguarding Representative to proceed with matter.

It is now the role of the Manager/Safeguarding Representative to decide whether the allegation or suspicion indicates that a child or young person may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm ('significant harm' is the trigger for children's social care services and/or subsequent police enquiries). In most instances, the Manager will contact the child's parents and inform them of the situation and if a subsequent referral has been made, unless they strongly feel that the child will be put at additional risk by doing this. The Manager will then proceed to contact the relevant authorities as required.

Remember, whether or not you personally believe what is said, the benefit of the doubt must always be in favour of making the report. You do not personally have to believe the concern to be true to make a referral. This assessment is for children's services and/or the police to make.

If you are unsatisfied with how you feel that Manager/Safeguarding Representative has handled the situation, you are entitled to contact the Local Safeguarding Children's Authority directly and express your concerns. Their contact details appear at the close of this document.

Allegations about an Early Years Practitioner

Where concerns are reported about any Early Years Practitioners, they will be immediately passed to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The responsible officer will liaise with the setting management in all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against children,

- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates she/he is unsuitable to work with children.

These nominated persons will coordinate a decision and any actions to be taken, including a referral to children's social care services/police and any subsequent action by Ofsted. It also falls to them to inform Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. If allegation or concerns are regarding the manager, contact should be made with the assistant manager who will approach the LSCB directly.

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children's Board guidelines which are available for Early Years Educators and parents to see.
- We notify our registration authority Ofsted of any incidents, accidents or changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of children.
- We have an up to date list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of relevant authorities to ensure that it is easy for the nursery and social services to work well together.
- We notify the Prevent Co-ordinator for any concerns about extremism or radicalist behaviour.

Emergency Contact Details

If you are concerned about a child's welfare, please contact:

MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

Email: mash@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

When emailing, please ensure your email contains the details of:

- The child's full name
- Date of birth
- Parents names
- Address
- Contact Number
- Start date at the nursery, and which sessions they attend.

Multi Agency Safeguarding (MASH):

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
4th Floor, County Hall County Hall North (Parkside)

Chart Way
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1XH
Email: mash@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

During office hours on the number below:
Telephone: 01403 229900

The out of office hours (5pm – 8am weekdays) and 24-hour emergency number on weekends and bank holidays number is 0330 222 6664

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

LADO – Lindsey Tunbridge – Lindsey.Tunbridge-Adams@westsussex.gov.uk

Assistant LADO: Anne Richards

Phone number: 0330 222 3339

Address: Safeguarding in Education and Allegations Management Team, Room 24, Durban House, Durban Road, Bognor Regis, PO22 9RE.

West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board Call: 0330 222 4908 Email: lscb@westsussex.gov.uk

The contact details for Ofsted (our registration body) are:

Ofsted National Business
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester, M1 2WD
0300 123 1231

Ofsted also has a dedicated hotline for those working with young children to report concerns about practices and procedures for the safeguarding of children when they feel they cannot approach management. The contact details for this are:

0300 123 3155
whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Emergency Out of Hours Services:

GP: 03000 242424

Dentist:03000 242548