

The Nursery on the Green

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

Aims and Objectives

- To provide a trusting, caring atmosphere whereby children feel safe and secure and can confide in members of staff
- Staff to be vigilant and act quickly and confidentially reporting any concerns to Sarah to who will follow Local Authority Procedures
- To support members of staff when they raise their concerns
- To ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of the nursery staff
- To ensure that confidentiality is always maintained
- To ensure that all staff are familiar with Safeguarding issues and procedures
- To regularly review and update this policy

The role of the Designated Person for Safeguarding

Sarah Rees-Williams is the designated person for safeguarding within the nursery, in her absence Anneli Sweet will be responsible.

The role includes the following responsibilities:

- To work with parents and carers for the protection of children
- To ensure that the Nursery staff are aware of procedures
- To be available for discussion with staff on suspected abuse
- To decide on referral to other agencies
- To maintain a system for record keeping and collation of information
- To understand the requirements of record keeping
- To refer concerns and provide information
- To promote good working relationships with other agencies
- To be involved in case conferences
- To attend safeguarding training

The Referral Process

Should any member of staff have concerns for the welfare of any child they will immediately inform their senior. The responsibilities of the Head of Room do not include investigating the suspected abuse. However, the staff will keep accurate records of their observations and of anything said to them by the child or others in connection with the suspected abuse. It is always important to listen to children. Strict confidentiality will always be observed. All our staff will receive training on the protection of children from abuse. It is the policy of the Nursery to provide a secure and safe environment for all children.

All staff share a responsibility for recognising the signs and symptoms of child abuse. It is essential that any concerns are shared with Sarah as soon as possible. Such concerns should be recorded by the reporting member of staff and kept in the confidential file in the office. Staff need to be sensitive to the needs of children when concerns are raised. The protection of children relies on good communication and it is important that any concerns, however trivial, are discussed.

Whenever possible, concerns will initially be discussed with parents or carers. If the explanation given is judged to be plausible, a note of the incident and enquiry will be kept in the Safeguarding file. No further action will be taken.

Parents should be informed in cases of referral but only if it is clear that this will not place the child in more harm. In the case of suspected sexual abuse, the parents must not be told under any circumstances.

Dealing with Allegations

The Nursery on the Green is committed to meet its responsibility in respect of safeguarding children by treating all allegations seriously and sensitively.

It is the responsibility of Sarah to investigate suspected abuse. On discovering an allegation of abuse, Sarah (or Anneli in her absence) will refer the case to the Safeguarding Children's Team of Children Services (Tel: 0208 921 3173) and inform the Early Years Directorate of Ofsted on 08456 404040.

The following principles will take place if the nursery comes across alleged abuse:

- Where actual or suspected abuse is brought to the attention of the staff they must immediately report it to their manager
- Staff are supported and encouraged to trust their professional instincts, if they suspect that abuse has been taking place they should report it
- Full written records of all reported incidents will be written and maintained. Information recorded will include full details of the alleged incident, details of all the parties involved, dates, times and locations and supporting information or evidence from members of staff. The staff will take great care to distinguish between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents
- Sarah will be responsible for getting the written records signed and keeping confidentiality
- Staff will ensure that any allegation is dealt with sensitively and confidentially
- Any child involved in the alleged abuse will be comforted and reassured

Staff Support and Training

The Nursery on the Green is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection by giving its staff training and support. The Nursery on the Green will ensure that:

- All staff, students and volunteers are carefully recruited, have verified references and have full up to date Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks
- All staff and volunteers are given a copy of the safeguarding children policy during their induction and have its implications explained to them
- All staff and volunteers receive regular training in safeguarding children issues and are provided with any relevant information concerning these issues
- All staff are aware of the main indicators of abuse
- All staff are aware of the statutory requirements with regard to disclosure or the discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All staff, students and volunteers are instructed to report any such discovery to Sarah who will in turn report it to Ofsted
- The Nursery will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any investigation into any allegations of abuse
- Any member of staff, student or volunteer under investigation of alleged abuse will be subject to the Nursery on the Green's staff disciplinary procedure

Safe Caring

All the Nursery staff understand the safeguarding children policy and procedures and have appropriate training and guidance in its principles of safe caring. The amount of time staff are alone with a child should be kept to a minimum and the door of the room should always be kept open.

If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, student or volunteer this must be written in the confidential incident book in the safeguarding file. Staff must be aware of how and where they touch children. Unnecessary or inappropriate contact will always be avoided. All allegations made by a member of staff will be recorded, including any actions taken in the incident book: the member of staff should sign to confirm this.

Allegations Against Staff

Ofsted Early Years will be informed of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, student or volunteer, or any abuse allegations that have taken place on the premises or during visits or outings. If an allegation is made against a member of staff the following procedure will be followed:

- Sarah will be alerted immediately, and Anneli in Sarah's absence
- Full written records of the reported abuse will be written and maintained. Information recorded will include full details of the alleged incident, details of

all the parties involved: relevant dates, times and locations and supporting information or evidence from members of staff. The staff will take great care to distinguish between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents

- Sarah will interview the member of staff immediately
- A decision will be made by Sarah, Anneli and another senior member of staff based on the level of the allegation, interviews, and written facts to decide whether the member of staff should be suspended or continue working at the nursery while the investigation is being carried out
- Ofsted will be informed of any allegations made against staff
- Staff will ensure that any allegations are dealt with sensitively and confidentially
- Any children involved in the alleged abuse will be comforted and reassured

Record Keeping

A record of all safeguarding concerns should be kept in a confidential file in the office. Sarah is responsible for completing this record on the same day a concern is raised. All records should be signed and dated. Sarah is also responsible for keeping a record of discussions with parents and carers, referrals to the Safeguarding Children Team in Children's Services and liaising with any other agencies. Sarah is responsible for completing the local Safeguarding Children Team's referral form and for attaching any supporting material.

Involvement of Staff

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies. If a child confides in a member of staff and asks for secrecy it is important that the child is told sensitively of the need to refer. Children should be assured that the matter will be treated confidentially and only shared with those who need to know. Staff should be sensitive to the needs of the child. Children should be afforded opportunities to talk to any chosen member of staff but should not be questioned unnecessarily.

Information received about children and families should only be shared within appropriate professional contexts. Staff should never discuss their concerns in the presence of students, parents or children.

As part of the plan, staff will continue to provide support for the child and family.

Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse can manifest itself in a variety of different ways, some obvious - some not so obvious. All staff receive training and will be vigilant to signs and evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect.

- **Physical Abuse** - This involves hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or any other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child's ill health also constitutes physical abuse.
- **Emotional Abuse** - Varying degrees of emotional abuse are present in virtually all child protection incidents but can also constitute abuse in its own right. Emotional abuse involves persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or torture causing, or likely to cause, severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Such behaviour may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate, or making them feel unnecessarily frightened or vulnerable
- **Sexual Abuse** - This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitute sexual abuse
- **Neglect** - Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, and as such is likely to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter or failing to adequately protect them from physical harm or ill health. Neglect can also manifest itself in a failure to meet the basic emotional needs of a child.

Safeguarding Children Statement

Local authorities have a statutory duty to investigate where they have reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Parents/carers have the responsibility to report injuries their children may sustain outside the nursery and to provide an explanation of how the injury or accident occurred. Nursery staff in all cases will record the incident.

Nursery Staff have a responsibility to record and report any injuries to children, which are not consistent with the explanation given by the parent/carer, or where no explanation is given. The matter must be reported to the manager immediately.

The manager will seek an explanation from the parents/carers and, if there are still concerns, a referral will be made to the Safeguarding Children Team of Children Services and the Ofsted Early Years Directorate.

There should be no delay in reporting the matter. The following information should be passed on:

- Name, address and telephone number of the nursery
- The child's name, date of birth, address and details of the household
- The ethnic origin of the child and their first language

- Information about concerns, alleged abuse/neglect, date and time of incident
- Whether observed by referrer or reported to team by a member of the nursery staff
- Any significant known family history
- Knowledge of any agencies, services or professionals involved with the family

If a member of staff is not satisfied that their line manager has taken appropriate action, they may make a referral themselves in the best interests of the child.

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