

Safeguarding Policy

The *Early Years Foundation Stage Welfare Requirements (Practice Guidance May 2008)* states that the provider must take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, in particular;

An effective **safeguarding children policy and procedure** must be implemented. This must include the procedure to be followed in the event of an **allegation being made against a member of staff.**'

The provider must ensure that **all members of staff understand** the safeguarding policy and procedure

All providers should follow the guidance set out in the publication “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused”. This includes guidance on information sharing and confidentiality

All practitioners should have an **up-to-date understanding of safeguarding children issues** and be able to implement the safeguarding children policy and procedure appropriately. Policies should be **in line with LSCB local guidance and procedures**

Staff should be able to **respond appropriately to**

- significant changes in children's behaviour
- deterioration in their general well-being
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse
- signs of neglect
- comments children make which give cause for concern

All providers must **notify any child protection agency** (usually local children's services or the police) previously identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), **without delay**, of allegations of abuse as above.

Registered providers must **inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises** (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. **A registered provider who without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement commits an offence**

A practitioner must be designated to take **lead responsibility for safeguarding** children within the setting and liaising with local statutory children's services agencies as appropriate. They must also attend a **child protection training course.**'

The **Child Protection Officer** in this setting is;

Name...Suzanne Kennedy

Job title Nursery Officer

Contact telephone number 01207 580006

The **Deputy Child Protection Officer** in this setting is;

Name Chris Proud.

Job title Business Manager

Contact telephone number As above

To discuss safeguarding concerns about the behaviour of the Manager in this setting, contact;

Name Suzanne Kennedy

Job title Nursery Officer

Contact telephone number As above

To **discuss concerns about possible wrongdoing in this setting**, contact the named Senior Officer, nominated in our whistle blowing policy, who is;

Name Suzanne Kennedy

Job title Nursery Officer

Contact telephone number 01207 580006

Who to contact in other organisations about safeguarding concerns

If you are concerned that a child or young person living in is at risk of significant harm, you should make a telephone referral as soon as possible to the **Initial Response Team 03000267979**

Ofsted

To inform Ofsted about harm to a child or abuse committed by any person living, working, or looking after children at a registered setting, phone the general **Ofsted helpline 0300 123 1231**.

Introduction to our setting's safeguarding children policy statement

Our setting keeps the needs and best interests of children at the centre of everything we do. We aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in our care by;

Providing a safe learning environment that builds their confidence and self-esteem;

- Where children's physical safety is protected
- Where children can talk and are listened to
- Where children do not experience bullying, harassment, racism or any other form of discrimination
- Where children's medical and health needs are met

Providing a positive and preventative curriculum that teaches and supports young children;

- To make good choices about healthy, safe lifestyles
- To ask for help if their health or wellbeing is threatened, including their emotional wellbeing

Working in partnership with Parents and carers;

- We are committed to developing and maintaining an honest and open relationship with Parents and carers
- We are committed to involving parents and carers at all stages of a child's care and learning

- Parents and carers understand our setting's safeguarding responsibilities and how we will implement them

Working in an inclusive way that helps every child;

- To feel accepted and included
- To develop confidence and self-esteem and fulfil their potential
- To receive an equal service regardless of their needs and circumstances

Working in an integrated way with other agencies that maximises opportunities for;

- Early identification of additional needs, early intervention and prevention
- Speedy intervention based on multi-agency co-operation
- Common methods of sharing information and assessing need e.g. use of the Common Assessment Framework.

Having up-to-date safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance;

- Based on current national statutory guidance., Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board www.durham-lscb.gov.uk child protection procedures and Early Years Foundation Stage Welfare Requirements
- Easily accessible to all staff and volunteers
- Understood and used by all staff, students and volunteers
- Reviewed annually

Having well trained staff and management who;

- Recognise their individual responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their care
- Receive training and supervision appropriate to their level of responsibility and are clear and confident about what is expected of them
- Ask for, and receive advice and support to act on safeguarding concerns

Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to outline our policy for responding to concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children and young people aged less than 18 years. This policy combined with the associated procedures provides guidance to all staff, students and volunteers who may come across concerns of this nature within the context of their work with us. These include:

- All members of our workforce, including early years practitioners and other staff;
- Students on placement;
- Volunteers;
- Individuals, consultants and agencies contracted by our service.

Definition of safeguarding

Our setting adopts the definition of safeguarding used in the *Children Act 2004* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)*, which focuses on safeguarding and promoting children, including unborn children, and young people's welfare and can be summarised as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

The following procedures relate to protecting children from maltreatment. They set out what to do when responding to specific concerns about the protection of children.

Our setting is clear that we are not the statutory authority for the conduct of enquiries into specific child protection concerns and **we will not investigate** allegations or suspicions of abuse or significant harm to children. We will follow procedures as identified in the “**what to do if you are worried a child is being abused**” document. (A copy of this is available) in line with Durham Local safeguarding children’s board.

Our setting will share all relevant information with the respective statutory child protection agencies (children’s social care services and/or police) without delay.

All staff, students and volunteers working for our setting will have a good understanding of safeguarding and child protection concerns, including the potential abuse and neglect of children and young people, which may come to light in the course of their work. Where a staff member, student or volunteer, at whatever level in the organisation, identifies risks to children, they will highlight them and seek to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to safeguard the children concerned.

We will ensure that all staff, students and volunteers and those who undertake work on our behalf, maintain a proper focus on safeguarding

children and that this is reflected in both sound individual practice and our internal policies and guidance.

All staff, students and volunteers working with children must:

- Give highest priority to children's welfare
- Ask for advice and support to act on safeguarding concerns and take appropriate action
- Access relevant, up-to-date safeguarding and child protection training
- Recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children
- Respond appropriately to disclosure of abuse by a child
- Respond appropriately to allegations against staff, other adults, and against themselves
- Follow whistle blowing procedures to respond to concerns about potential wrongdoing in the setting
- Act appropriately and understand safe practice in carrying out their duties
- Be alert to the risks which abusers, or potential abusers, may pose
- Be aware of the importance of the role of early years services in promoting the welfare of children
- Contribute as necessary to all stages of the setting's safeguarding and protection processes.

Our staff, students and volunteers may become aware of child protection concerns in the course of their work from a number of routes;

- Raised by the child themselves,
- Through direct activity and observation.

- Alleged by others e.g. a member of the public contacting the setting or by a parental complaint.

The concern might relate to:

- What is happening (or has happened) to a child outside the setting e.g. in their own family.
- What is or may be happening (or happened in the past) to a child in our setting

The concerns may be about the behaviour of a:

- Child, young person or adult in the community (for instance a relative or family friend)
- Peer (for instance another child in our setting)
- Member of staff, student or volunteer from our setting
- Member of staff, student or volunteer from another service/setting received or attended by the child

The concern may relate to actions or inaction (for instance insufficient response by a parent in response to illness or injury to a child)

The concern may be about a current situation or past events

The concern may involve allegations or disclosures of;

- physical abuse
- physical neglect
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse or neglect
- a combination of one or more of these categories

Staff and volunteers may receive this information by one or more means, such as through observation, discussion, the review of child records or accident forms, a telephone call, a letter, an email.

Immediate action to take if, as a member of staff, volunteer, or student, you observe injuries or behaviour in a child that could indicate that he/she has suffered abuse, or is likely to suffer significant harm

This could take a number of forms, for instance;

- A child has an unexplained injury, bruise, mark or other signs of possible abuse
 - A child has an injury, bruise or mark and the explanation given for how it was caused is not consistent with the injury
 - There are significant changes in a child's behaviour
 - The child shows signs of significant neglect, including untreated medical conditions
 - The child makes comments that give you cause for concern
-
- Stop other activity and focus on what you are being told. Responding to suspicion of abuse takes immediate priority.
 - Do not promise confidentiality or agree to "keep it a secret". Explain clearly to the person raising the concern about what you expect will happen next. You can assure them that you will only tell those you have to tell to try to get the matter dealt with.

- Give support and reassurance to the person giving you the information, that the matter will be dealt with quickly and appropriately.
- Work at the pace of the person raising the concern. Do not rush them.
- Avoid expressing opinions about what they are telling you
- Use open questions like “Can you tell me what happened?”
- Repeat aloud what the child /adult has said so that they know you are listening and have heard them correctly
- Avoid asking leading questions like “Did he do X to you?” or “How did he hurt the child” Leading questions and anything likely to suggest ideas or interpretations could jeopardise subsequent investigations or criminal proceeding.
- Ask only what you need to know to come to a judgement about whether abuse may have taken place and to gather factual details.
- Take notes of what you have heard or seen and what has been said - if it is not possible to take notes at the time, do so immediately afterwards. Keep the notes taken at the time, without amendment, omission or addition, whatever subsequent reports may be written. The notes should be dated and signed. The notes should cover what you saw, who said what, what action you took, and the details of date, time and location and name of child and perpetrator. (A recording format is available)
- Discuss your concerns with the CPO
- So long as it does not put the child at increased risk, ask the Parent / carer about what you have observed. You can also ask

the child if he/she is old enough. Note what they tell you and how they behave.

When not to discuss your concerns with Parents/caregivers

In the majority of cases it is good practice to be open and honest at the outset with parents and /caregivers about the concerns. There are some situations where it **would not** be appropriate to inform family members prior to referral including where:

- Discussion would put a child at risk of significant harm
- There is evidence to suggest that involving the mother and father/caregivers would impede the police investigation and/or children's social care enquiry
- Sexual abuse is suspected
- To contact mothers and fathers/caregivers would place you or others at risk
- Discussion would place one parent at risk of harm e.g. in cases of domestic abuse
- It is not possible to contact mothers and fathers/caregivers without causing undue delay in making the referral

If the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer is not available;

- Talk to the setting's most senior person on site that day, without delay
- Seek advice about your concerns from the Initial Response Team -
Tel 03000267979
- Education Development Advisor – Kirsty Wilkinson

- In an emergency contact the police 999 or local office

Making a referral

- If the Child Protection Officer (CPO) decides that the allegation or suspicion constitutes a child or young person suffering, or is at risk of, significant harm, he/ she must **make a telephone referral to the Initial Response Team – Tel 03000267979**
- **The initial response team will give guidance as to how you should proceed**
- Following the telephone referral, the CPO must follow up the concerns in writing to the relevant **Children and Families Services Area Office** within **24 hours**.
- If the child or young person has been the **subject of a CAF** (Common Assessment Framework) the CPO should **send a copy**, together with a copy of the multi-agency action plan, with the written confirmation.

Please also refer to our allegations against a member of staff procedure.

Reviewed Oct. 15

