

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Policy Statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on three key commitments.

Purpose & aims

The purpose of the safeguarding policy is to provide a secure framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those children who attend our nursery. The policy aims to ensure that:

- Our children are safe and protected from harm
- Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children to feel safe and adopt safe practices
- Staff, children, visitors, volunteers and parents are aware of the expected behaviours and the nursery's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our children

Ethos

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. In 2003 the Government published the *Every Child Matters* Green Paper alongside a formal response to the report into the death of Victoria Climbié. The Green Paper set out five outcomes that are key to children and young people's wellbeing:

- be healthy;
- stay safe
- enjoy & achieve
- make a positive contribution; and
- achieve economic wellbeing

The five outcomes are universal ambitions for every child and young person, whatever their background or circumstances. Improving outcomes for all children and young people underpins all development and practice within our nursery.

Safeguarding is considered everyone's responsibility and as such our nursery aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their Five Every Child Matters outcomes.

We recognise the contribution it can make in ensuring that all children who attend feel that they will be listened to and appropriate action will be taken. We continue to work towards establishing effective partnerships with other agencies and seeking to establish effective working relationships with parents,

carers and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities through the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum that will help to equip our children with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills.

Responsibilities & expectations

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that there is an effective safeguarding policy in place and that safeguarding procedures are embedded into practice. Policies and procedures are monitored by the manager and safeguarding officer and the policy is reviewed annually.

All staff and volunteers are DBS checked as part of the induction process to ensure that they are safe to work with children and the nursery has procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against members of staff or volunteers.

The nursery has an appointed Safeguarding Officer who has lead responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues. Our Lead Practitioner Safeguarding Officer is the **Manager**. In the absence of the Manager the nominated Safeguarding Officer is **Deputy Manager/ Supervisor**.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer to:

- ensure that all safeguarding issues raised in the nursery are effectively responded to, recorded & referred to the appropriate agency
- arrange the whole nursery's safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with children in our nursery
- ensure that the whole nursery's safeguarding training takes place at least every three years
- attend all child protection case conferences, reviews, core groups or meetings which concern a child at our nursery
- contribute to multi-agency discussions which concern a child at our nursery

All child protection concerns will be acted on **immediately** and any concerns that a child may be at risk or is suffering abuse should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

Our safeguarding policy is made available to all parents when their child starts at the nursery and a copy of the policy is stored in the Operational Plan for parents to view on request. We are also able to arrange for our policy to be made available to parents whose first language is not English, on request.

Accidents at home

If a child arrives at nursery with a notable injury that has occurred at home, an 'Accident at home' form must be completed. This records the nature of the injury & the parent's explanation for how the injury has occurred. These forms are then stored in the 'Accidents at home' file which is held in the office.

All bruising in non-mobile babies must be recorded on an 'Accidents at home' form & the duty manager should be informed.

Recognising concerns, signs & indicators of abuse

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. For our nursery it includes such things as child safety, bullying, racist abuse and harassment, visits, intimate care & internet safety.

It is important to know the indicators of abuse and to be alert to the need to consult further. The lists provided are not exhaustive.

Physical abuse

This can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, kicking, scalding, burning, drowning or suffocating. It can also result when a parent or carer deliberately causes the ill health of a child in order to seek attention through fabricated or induced illness.

Indicators of physical abuse can include:

- Unexplained injuries or burns
(These may be found in areas such as the shoulders, ears, eyes, mouth, chest, back, cheeks, hands, buttocks, thighs, arms or genitals)
- Aggression towards themselves or others
- Fear of physical contact
- Bald patches of hair
- Refusal to undress or show areas of the body

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is where a child's need for love, security, recognition and praise is not met. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of someone else such as Domestic Violence or Domestic Abuse.

A parent, carer or authority figure is considered emotionally abusive when they are consistently hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining toward a child or other family member. It can also occur when children are prevented from having social contact with others or if inappropriate expectations are placed upon them.

Indicators of emotional abuse can include:

- Excessively clingy or attention seeking
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism
- Withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please
- Eating disorders or self-harm

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical contact both penetrative or non-penetrative, or viewing pornographic material including through the use of the internet.

Indicators of sexual abuse include:

- Allegations or disclosures
- Genital soreness
- Injuries to the thighs or genitals
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour including words, play or drawing
- Sexually transmitted diseases

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which can significantly harm their health and development. Neglect can include inadequate supervision (being left alone for long periods of time); lack of stimulation, social contact or education; lack of appropriate food or shelter; lack of appropriate clothing for conditions and/or lack of appropriate medical attention and treatment when necessary.

What to do if you are concerned

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person it is important that you:

- Stay calm & listen carefully
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else
- Do not promise to keep what they have told you secret
- Inform the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible
- Where appropriate the safeguarding officer will speak to the child's parents. Under most circumstances we would discuss any concerns about a child with the parents. However, if we believed that to do this would increase the risk of harm to a child then we would obviously not do it. We would make a record of the discussion (see appendix 1)
- Make a hand-written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which you must sign, date and record your position using the nursery safeguarding record log forms

Recording Concerns

All child protection concerns need to be acted on **immediately**. If you are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you must tell the Safeguarding Designated Officer.

Chronology sheet and Internal Child Protection Record (see appendix 2) is a way of informing Managers (Child Protection Nominated Officers) that practitioners have concerns about a child. The form enables the practitioners to be clear about their reason for highlighting their concerns.

Once complete the form should be kept in a confidential family file and any record of a referral to another organisation, or referral within the Early Years Setting must be recorded on the Children's Social Care Referral Form (see appendix 3)

Safer Working Practice

The vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for pupils in their care.

However, it is recognised that in this area of work tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them. Allegations may be malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are adults who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children. It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard pupils and ensure that the adults working with them are safe to do so.

The Guidance for Safer Working Practice has been published to provide clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts. The document is made available to all members of staff and they are required to read the document on indication.

Managing allegations against members of staff or volunteers

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers that are working or may come into contact with children and young children whilst in our nursery. Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. They can be made by children and young people or other concerned adults.

Allegations are made for a variety of reasons:

- Abuse has actually taken place
- Something has happened to the child that reminds them of a previous event - the child is unable to recognise that the situation and people are different; children can misinterpret your language or your actions

- Some children recognise that allegations can be powerful and if they are angry with you about something can make an allegation as a way of hitting out
- An allegation can be a way of seeking attention

A whistle blowing policy is in place in the event that an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust whether they be members of staff or volunteers. This policy is made clear to all members of staff & advises staff of the procedure they should follow in the event of an incident of this nature occurring.

(For further information about allegations against a member of staff please see the Whistle blowing policy)

The Safeguarding Officer or Proprietor will need to discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the nature of the allegations in order for the appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion depending on the allegations being made.

The Manager/Proprietor will need to:

- Refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately and follow up using a LADO Allegations Notification form within 48 hours. Consider safeguarding arrangements for the young child or young person to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser.
- Contact the parents or carers of the child/young person if advised to do so by the LADO
- Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation
- Advise Ofsted of allegation
- Ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed including whether suspending a member of staff from work until the outcome of any investigation is deemed necessary
- Act on any decision made in any strategy meeting
- Advise the Independent Safeguarding Authority where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations being founded

Staff Training

All members of staff and volunteers will have access to safeguarding training at least every three years conducted by the Local Authority. We also, as part of our staff induction procedure, issue information in relation to our Safeguarding Policy and any policy related to safeguarding and promoting our children's welfare as well as providing a set of safeguarding questions which are held in each member of staff's personal file.

Our Safeguarding Officer & deputy officers will undertake further safeguarding training on a two yearly basis. This will update staff awareness and understanding of the impact of the wide agenda of safeguarding issues.

Notification of Significant Event (see appendix)

The manager or person in charge will ensure that all significant events that are potentially life threatening are immediately notified on the day of the incident to Theresa.moore@lancashire.gov.uk and the Early Years Safeguarding Officer Catherine.isherwood@lancashire.gov.uk who will collate a full response and notify the LSCB.

A significant event notification is required in the following circumstances:

- Abuse or neglect of a child where the child has:
 - *died;
 - *been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way agencies have worked together to safeguard the child.
- Incidents which are **potentially life threatening**:
 - *Where a child has been seriously harmed following a violent/sexual assault perpetrated by another child or an adult;
 - *Serious drug, alcohol or substance abuse;
 - *Self harm;
 - *Serious accident or illness;
- Placement of a child under a section of the mental health act;
- A very serious criminal offence involving a child;
- A child placed in secure accommodation under welfare grounds;
- A child looked after by LCC who has been missing for over 24 hours.

Safeguarding Disabled Children

Disabled children have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and to achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes as non-disabled children.

Disabled children do however require additional action. This is because they experience greater risks and 'created vulnerability' as a result of negative attitudes about disabled children and unequal access to services and resources and because they may have additional needs linking to physical, sensory, cognitive and/or communication impairment. (*Safeguarding Children, DCSF, July 2009*)

Townley House Nursery will ensure that any disabled children attending the nursery are listened and responded to appropriately where they have concerns regarding abuse. In order to do this we will ensure that our staff and volunteers receive the relevant training to raise awareness and have access to specialist staff in the event they have concerns regarding abuse of a child.

Mobile Phones and cameras

Parents/carers are asked not to use mobile phones or cameras whilst on the nursery premises.

Staff may only use mobile phones in the official designated area (Office and Staff Room).

Only nursery cameras can be used to document children's development strictly no use of personal cameras or mobile phones is permitted

Nursery mobile phones (without cameras) should be taken on outings
(See Mobile and Media incorporating cameras policy, Outings policy)

Prevent Duty

What is the Prevent Duty?

From 1 July 2015 all schools, registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

In order for schools and childcare providers to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and childcare providers' wider safeguarding duties.

Schools and childcare providers can also build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views.

What do we do to support the Prevent Duty?

Risk assessment

Staff complete Prevent awareness training as part of their induction to give them a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people vulnerable to radicalisation and case studies illustrating types of intervention that may be appropriate.

Working in partnership

The nursery safeguarding policies and procedures take into account the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LCSB) policies and procedures. The LCSB publish threshold guidance indicating when a child or young person might be referred for support.

Practitioners work in close partnership with families which enables them to be in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. Nominated Officers are able to assist and advise families who raise concerns about radicalisation and are able to point them to the right support mechanisms.

Staff training

All staff complete Prevent awareness training as part of their induction to equip them with the tools to identify children and families at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

What to do if a practitioner has a concern

Follow the normal nursery safeguarding procedures as documented within this policy.

The nominated Safeguarding Officer may also contact the local police force or dial 101. Here concerns can be discussed and information can be given about next steps, support and advice.

The Department for Education has a dedicated telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable staff to raise concerns regarding extremism directly. Concerns can also be raised by email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Please note this helpline is not intended for use in emergency situations, in which the normal emergency procedures should be followed.

Related Nursery Policies

'...safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as child health and safety and bullying... and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children...providing first aid, nursery security, drugs and substance misuse, etc.

There may also be other safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area or population.'

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES 2007

This policy will cross reference to related nursery policies and other procedures:

Promoting positive behaviour policy

Documentation policy

Health & safety policy

Inclusion policy

Outings policy

Whistle-blowing procedure

Policy for employing staff

Medicine policy

Hygiene policy

Accident, Emergencies & Illness
policy

Confidentiality policy

Uncollected child policy

Student policy

Fire procedure

Missing child procedure

Mobile phone and media policy

Arrival and departure of children
policy

Nappy changing policy

Policy on handling pets

Allergy policy

Legislation relating to this policy:

Children Act 1989, 2004

Education Act 1996, 2002 (Section 175)

School Standards & Framework act 1998

Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance DfES 2007

Every Child Matters

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2008

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010

Prevent Duty 2015

Manuals kept in nursery:

Working together to Safeguard Children 2018

Child Protection Policies and Procedures (LCSB)

Guidance to Safer Working Practice (2009)

Legal Framework

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2018)
- What to do you're worried a child is being abused (HMG 2006)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A guide for practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008)