



## Safeguarding Children & Child Protection Policy

CIW: 03007900126

Local Safeguarding Referral Team: 0800 3284432.

Emergency Team

Duty Officer : 01633 656656      Police - 999

Wales Safeguarding Procedures App

Government helpline for extremism concerns 020 7340 7264

Regional Safeguarding Children Board 01633 656656.

Local Authority Children's Social Care Team 01633 656656.

# Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

At Little Oaks, we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. The new guidelines, Wales Safeguarding Procedures, standardises practices across Wales and between agencies and sectors. The procedures set out the essential roles and responsibilities for anyone working with adults and children who are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.

## Legal framework and definition of safeguarding

- The Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014
- Working Together Guidance
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children and adults from abuse and neglect
- Preventing impairment of their health or development ensuring that they receive safe and effective care.

## Our Policy Intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment which supports children to develop a positive self-image
- Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities.
- Always listen to children
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need

- Share information with other agencies as appropriate or as may be required.

The nursery is aware that abuse does occur in our society, and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care, we are providing, staff may often be the first people to identify that there may be a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we have a duty to the children, parents, and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care, health professionals or the police. All staff will work with other agencies including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed, in the best interests of the child.

The nursery aims to:

- Keep the child at the cent of all we do
- Ensure staff are trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour
- Ensure staff understand how to identify early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child share information and seek the help that the child may need
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures
- Make any referrals online and in a timely way, make any referrals relating to extremism to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate.
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest.
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff
- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children, or living or working on the nursery premises including reporting such allegations to via the safeguarding app.

- Ensure parents are fully aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Southeast Wales Safeguarding Children Board.

We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort, and sensitive interactions. We will devise activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group.

### **Contact telephone numbers**

CIW 0300 7900 126

Regional Safeguarding Children Board 01633 656656.

Local Authority children's social care team 01633 656656.

Non-emergency police 101

**Police 999**

Government helpline for extremism concerns 020 7340 7264

NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline 0800 028 0285

NSPCC Childline 0800 1111

### **Types of abuse and particular procedures followed**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution, or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child, or children.

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

### **Indicators of child abuse**

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

## **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the nursery manager or Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator (DSCO). This record should include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of any incident including any other witnesses
- Name of the person to whom any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the supervisor, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse, it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly, and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately.

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be logged online via the app and discussed with the CIW. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about a parent's or staff's supposed or actual behaviour.

## **Physical abuse**

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries - these should also be logged and discussed with the nursery manager.

Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the nursery manager.

### **Female genital mutilation**

This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups and there is now more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in the UK including its effect on the child and any other siblings involved. For those nurseries caring for older children in their out of school facility this may be an area of abuse you could come across. Symptoms may include bleeding, painful areas, acute urinary retention, urinary infection, wound infection, septicaemia, incontinence, vaginal and pelvic infections, with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder as physiological concerns. If you have concerns about a child in this area, you should contact the children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse.

### **Fabricated illness**

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

### **Procedure:**

- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into nursery or occur during time at the nursery, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member
- The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity, where felt appropriate
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury, this information will be logged via the online app.

## **Sexual abuse**

Action needs to be taken if the staff member has witnessed occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes.

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge, and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse, they may be experiencing, the procedure below will be followed.

### **Procedure:**

- The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report
- The observed instances will be reported to the nursery manager
- The matter will be referred to the local authority children's social care team
- A sensitive and confidential discussion will be held with the parents/carers of any other children party to inappropriate play.

## **Emotional abuse**

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there is an effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill-treatment or rejection.

This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

**Procedure:**

- The concern should be discussed with the registered person.
- The concern will be discussed with the parent
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred via the online app.

**Neglect**

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation and failure to seek medical treatment when required on behalf of the child), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at nursery. They may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

**Procedure:**

- The concern will be discussed with the parent
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances this information will be logged via the online app.



## **Staffing and volunteering**

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We only allow an adult who is employed by the nursery to care for children and who has an enhanced check with barring list check (children) from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to be left alone with children. We do not allow volunteers to be alone with children or any other adult who may be present in the nursery regardless of whether or not they have a DBS certificate.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery. During induction staff will be given information regarding the safeguarding online app encouraged to download it and the contact details for the CIW to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

If the staff feel that a safeguarding concern is not being taken seriously within the setting, we encourage them to use the app to highlight the issue in order to protect the children in their care.

We have a named person within the nursery that takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinates child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator (DSCO). The nursery DSCO undertakes specific training, including level 2 Safeguarding Lead training and receives regular updates to developments within this field.

For best practice and to ensure cover at all times we have a deputy designated lead in place. This enables safeguarding to stay high on our priorities at all times.

The Designated Safeguarding/child protection Co-ordinator (DSCO) at the nursery is: Julie Joosten

The deputy Designated Safeguarding/Child Protection Co-ordinator (DSCO) at the nursery is: Elizabeth Fletcher

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all children
- Applicants for posts within the nursery are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed.

Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and are given guidance to challenge any incorrect information

- We give staff members/volunteers and students regular opportunities to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life such as whether anyone they live with in a household has committed an offence or been involved in an incident that means they are disqualified from working with children
- This information is also stated within every contract for members of staff, of which they must sign 2 copies, one for the employer, one to retain their own records
- We request DBS checks on a 3 yearly basis or we use the DBS update service to recheck staff's criminal history and suitability to work with children on the same basis and with the individuals consent
- We abide by the requirements of the National Minimum Standards and any CIW guidance in respect of obtaining references and suitability checks for staff, students and volunteers, to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers working in the setting are suitable to do so
- We ensure we receive at least two written references before a new member of staff commences employment with us
- All students will have enhanced DBS checks with barring list check (children) conducted on them before their placement starts
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- We abide by the requirements of the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures in respect of any person who is disqualified from providing childcare, is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern by complying with the duty to refer that individual to the DBS
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the nursery and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the nursery, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- All visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
- All staff have access to and comply with the Whistleblowing Policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner to named person Julie Joosten, the Duty Officer at Newport Borough or to a CIW representative
- All staff attend regular supervision meetings where opportunities are made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any need for further support

- The deployment of staff within the nursery allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

### **Informing parents**

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the LSCB/police does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser, or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents. We are aware of the new legislation concerning smacking and will raise our concerns with parents, if the issue arises.

### **Confidentiality**

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the LSCB.

### **Support to families**

The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships among families, staff, students and volunteers within the nursery.

The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child.

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate in line with guidance of the LSCB with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

### **Employees, students or volunteers of the nursery or any other person living or working on the nursery premises**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who lives or works on the nursery premises, regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below.

This will include when a member of staff is alleged to have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

The allegation should be reported to Julie Joosten. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to Liz Fletcher instead or ring the Duty Officer at Newport borough for advice.

A referral via the online app will be logged immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

- The Duty Officer will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
  - A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (Local Authority Officer, CIW, Regional Safeguarding Children's Board) to determine how this will be handled
  - The nursery will follow all instructions and advise and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
  - Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with support and advice
  - The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
  - All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
  - Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated
  - Founded allegations will result in the termination of employment. CIW will be notified immediately of this decision. The nursery will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for barring consideration
  - All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary re-investigation
  - The nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- Counselling will be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the nursery and the parents.

### **Extremism - the Prevent Duty**

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police (In Prevent priority areas the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support).

This may be a cause for concern relating to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team (or other persons in the setting) or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child in their care.

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