

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Our pre-school believes that children have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse, and we are committed to protecting all the children in our care from harm.

The pre-school will appoint 2 members of staff as the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL). This Officer will have suitable experience, training and expertise, and will be responsible for liaising with social services, Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Ofsted in any child protection matter. If the designated person is unavailable, the second DSL must be contacted.

The pre-school's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015
- The Prevent Duty

The pre-school's procedures also comply with other guidance - 'Working Together to Safeguard Children or advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) formerly known as the Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC).

The pre-school is committed to reviewing its Safeguarding Children policy and procedures at regular intervals. The policy and its procedures will be shared with parents/carers during their child's settling in period.

Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much less so. All staff are required to have child protection 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.

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 constitutes sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse: Varying degrees of emotional abuse is 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.

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, such as is likely to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing for a child, 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 child.

The pre-school recognises our duty under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" and to protect children from the risk of radicalization.

Safe Caring

All staff understand the pre-school's child protection procedures and have had appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring. To this end:

- Every effort will be made to avoid instances when members of staff, students, volunteers or parents are left alone with a child other than their own, for their own protection and that of children and young people. There will be 2 adults at all times with children. In an extreme case or emergency where a member of staff is alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff should be informed.
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, students or volunteer, this will be recorded fully in the Incident Record Book.
- Staff will never carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves. Where this is essential, staff will help a child whilst being accompanied by a colleague. Unless a child has a particular need, staff should not accompany children into the toilet. Staff are aware that this and other similar activities could be misconstrued.
- Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.
- All allegations made by a child against a member of staff will be fully and accurately recorded, including any actions taken, in the Incident Record Book. In the event of there being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.

Dealing with Allegations

The pre-school is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection by treating any allegation seriously and sensitively. On discovering an allegation of abuse, the DSL will immediately refer the case to the Designated Officer (DO).

In addition, the following principles will govern any suspected or reported case of abuse:

- Where actual or suspected abuse comes to the attention of staff, they will immediately report this to the manager and the DSL. This includes any allegation about a staff member.

- Staff are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgment and if they suspect abuse has, or is taking place, to report this.
- Full written factual records of all reported incidents will be produced and kept confidential, (in a sealed envelope, locked in a filing cabinet) dated and signed. Accurate information recorded will include:
 - Full details of the alleged incident
 - Details of all the parties involved
 - Any evidence or explanations offered by interested parties
 - Relevant dates, times and locations and any supporting information or evidence from members of staff.
- The pre-school will demonstrate great care in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents of child abuse.
- The manager and the DSL will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidential.
- Staff will ensure that all concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Any children involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured.
- If an allegation of abuse is made against the manager or the DSL, the Registered Person will be informed as soon as possible. They will then assume responsibility for the situation or delegate this role to a senior member of staff.
- Staff are immediately suspended pending further investigation following statutory procedures and an internal investigation will run parallel with an investigation.
- Any member of staff who is dismissed or leaves under investigation for being unsuitable for work with children will be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

In circumstances where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure, the member of staff concerned will:

1. Listen fully to all the child has to say.
2. Make no observable judgement.
3. Ask open questions that encourage the child to speak in their own words.
4. Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone.
5. Make no promises that cannot be kept, such as promising not to tell anybody what they are being told.

Where possible, the pre-school will always respect the wishes of children and young people who do not consent to share confidential information. However, the lack of consent can be overridden in the child's interests, or if the facts of the case are in the public interest.

The pre-school will always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making

decisions to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding factor.

Staff will be made aware of the Department of Health's booklet 'What to do if You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused?', and DfE guidance on 'Working together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' DfE 2013.

Referring Allegations to Child Protection Agencies

If the manager or the DSL has reasonable grounds for believing that a child has been - or is in grave danger of being - subject to abuse, the following procedure will be activated:

- Immediate contact will be made with the Designated Officer (DO) and, in emergencies, the police.
- The manager or the DSL will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice given by the DO and the police.
- At all times, the safety, protection and interests of children concerned will take precedence. The manager and staff will work with and support parents/carers as far as they are legally able.
- The pre-school will assist the DO and the police, as far as it is able, during any investigation of abuse or neglect. This will include disclosing written and verbal information and evidence.
- Ofsted and the Designated Officer will be informed of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, student or volunteer, or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises or during a visit or outing.
- Any member of staff who is dismissed (or resigns) will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Staff Support and Training

The pre-school is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection through the provision of support and training to staff. Therefore, the pre-school will ensure that:

- All staff, students and volunteers are carefully recruited, have verified references and have full and up to date Disclosure and Barring Service checks.
- All staff and volunteers are given a copy of the Safeguarding policy during their induction, and have its implications explained to them.
- All staff and volunteers receive regular training and supervision in child protection issues and are provided with any relevant information and guidance.
- All staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues.

- All staff are provided with supervision and management support commensurate with their responsibilities in relation to child protection, and their requirement to maintain caring and safe relationships with children.
- The pre-school will share information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents/carers and staff.
- All staff are aware of the main indicators of child abuse.
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements in respect to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All students and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the manager immediately. The pre-school will share the concerns with the relevant agencies and involve parents/carers and children appropriately.
- The pre-school will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any investigation into allegations of abuse, consistent with its duties to protect the safety of children and uphold fair processes for staff, students and volunteers.
- All staff have a good understanding of the complaints policy.
- Any member of staff, a student or volunteer under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child, will be subject to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures policy.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the pre-school held on (date) _____

Signed on behalf of the pre-school _____

Signed on behalf of the pre-school _____

To be reviewed: _____