



Safeguarding Children Policy

Aim: To create in our pre-school, an environment where children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

'All those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work, including practitioners who do not have a specific role in relation to safeguarding children, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.'

Linked policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with our online safety, recruitment and retention, data handling, health and safety, behaviour management and whistle blowing policies.

Designated safeguarding officers

Our designated safeguarding officers are Paula Stone, Harriet Sharp, Sharon Crook and Sarah Emerton for our nursery and Sharon Parrot for our Redhills setting. Contact details are available in the setting. It is the responsibility of the DSOs to ensure that all safeguarding issues raised in the setting are effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency. They are also responsible for arranging the whole settings safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with children and young people in our setting. The DSOs also attend child protection case conferences, reviews, core groups where it concerns a child at our setting

Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Our safeguarding children policy and procedures are in line with the South West Child Protection Procedures which can be found on the website www.swcpp.org.uk. This regional site links to The Devon Children and Families Partnership which has up to date procedures, examples of best practice and government guidelines.

Staff Training

Paula, Sarah, Harriet, Sharon and Sharon have all received level 3 training in Safeguarding and this is updated every three years. It is a requirement that all staff at the Exwick Ark undertake level 2 child protection training as part of their induction and it is updated every three years. The induction of staff and volunteers includes expectations of their conduct regarding safeguarding. All staff will discuss and be given a copy of the child protection policy before starting employment at The Exwick Ark. Staff review this policy annually. Staff are also given a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Part 1 September 2016. Our safeguarding officers also complete tackling domestic violence and abuse training.

The main forms of abuse are:

Physical abuse – Where a child is physically hurt, injured or killed. This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It also includes giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol and attempted suffocation and



drowning. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child. In some cases excessive force may be used when feeding or changing a child's nappy which is classed as physical abuse.

Sexual abuse – Where children (girls and boys) are sexually abused by adults or other children who use them to meet their own sexual needs. This might be sexual intercourse, and also includes fondling, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and exposing children to pornographic material – including videos.

Neglect – Where parents or carers fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children to have food, clothes, warmth and medical care. Leaving children alone and unsupervised is also an example of neglect. Parents refusing to give love and affection to their children is an example of emotional neglect. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Emotional abuse – Where constant lack of love and affection, or threats, verbal attacks, taunting and shouting can lead to a loss of self esteem, making a child nervous and withdrawn. It may involve serious bullying causing children to feel frightened or in danger.

Signs of abuse;

You may notice emotional or social behaviour that is abnormal or unusual for a child. There may be changes in the standards of health in a young child. All types of abuse can impact on a child's health and can lead to impairment or developmental delay. Neglect can also show physically as poor standards of cleanliness, physical care or hygiene, infection and infestation. Frequent bruises, grazes and injuries particularly to the fleshy parts of the body can be signs of physical abuse. No one sign (unless it is overwhelmingly obvious) is likely to make you absolutely sure that a child is being abused. More than one explanation is possible and you must be careful not to jump to conclusions but the possibility that abuse has taken place should be considered.

Preventing Radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is seen as part of our wider safeguarding duties. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values including; democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. There is no single way to identify an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many ways. Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. During home visits we may gain information which may lead us to be concerned about an individual being at risk. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.



Prevent

Educational establishments are subject to a 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. This duty is known as the prevent duty. It includes the 4 key themes of risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies.

Channel

Channel is a programme which focusses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation. If we consider an individual is at risk of radicalisation we will make a referral to channel.

Child protection procedure.

If a child makes a disclosure or is suspected of suffering abuse, staff will follow our child protection procedure.

Confidential Records.

Confidential records will be kept separately from the day to day developmental records kept on individual children. Each record will be on a separate sheet of paper to ensure confidentiality. Our safeguarding files have correct and up to date data in line with the DSCB guidance and model safeguarding file. Samples of these forms are kept in safeguarding file. Confidential records will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, which only the managers will have access to. When a member of staff has reason to make a confidential record they will hand the record to a manager to file on their behalf. They will not divulge anything about the work they are doing other than to a DSO. Records that are relevant to a child protection matter may have to be disclosed to the police, solicitors or courts if required by civil or criminal proceedings. For more guidance on information sharing and confidentiality refer to the document 'What to do if you're Worried a Child is being Abused' (DCSF).

When a child leaves us we will pass on a chronology to the next school but keep the detailed notes in our file until the child is 25 years old. Records of bullying, harassment and racial incidents will be kept by our setting until the child is 25 years old. Records of concerns that we have followed up but do not generate issues are destroyed when the child leaves our setting. Incident records such as violent outbursts against a member of staff or child should be passed to the receiving school.

Allegations against a member of staff including where the allegation is unfounded will be kept until retirement age or 10 years from the date of allegation whichever is longer.

Preventing abuse in the pre-school.

As a nursery we have regard to the information contained within the DFES document Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (DFES 2006). Harri Sharp has attended Safer Recruitment training. Our recruitment and retention policy details



our procedure for ensuring that only adults suitable to work with children are employed at The Exwick Ark in a voluntary or paid capacity. This policy complies with local and national guidance.

Employees

All prospective employees will be asked to complete an application form, an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and to provide two references. The application form will ask for information about previous convictions, charges or cautions relating to any offences and will explain that this post is exempt from the rehabilitation of offenders act 1974. Any gaps in employment history should be explained. Applicants will also be asked to disclose if any member of their household has been excluded from working with children. References will be taken up before the interview whenever possible.

All prospective employees will be given an interview. The panel will have at least one person trained in child protection issues. Our child protection policy will be discussed with the applicant and their responsibilities made clear.

All employees will be asked to complete a six month probationary period, the employment will not be confirmed beyond this point unless the managers are confident that the new employee can be safely entrusted with children.

All employees will have an annual appraisal and termly supervision sessions with training and support when concerns are raised.

Regular Volunteers will be asked to complete an application form, make a DBS application and provide references. They will be asked to complete an induction process and have an interview with the Management.

When a DBS Disclosure is applied for it is recorded in the Staff File and then the Number of the disclosure and date received are recorded then the disclosure is destroyed. Students from the College or University have a DBS disclosure done through Exeter College or University. They bring in their disclosure original and we note the number and date of issue.

Whistle-Blowing

Whistle-blowing is the term used when an employee raises concerns about practice and procedures in their work place. This can apply to early years settings where a member of staff has serious concerns about how a safeguarding issue has been dealt with, for example, a practitioner may express concerns about a child's welfare on several occasions and no action has been taken by management. This might occur when another member of staff is guilty of misconduct towards a child or children and expressions of concern are dismissed and not taken seriously. If a member of staff finds themselves in this situation they should contact Ofsted on their whistle-blowing hotline 0300 123 3155 mon-fri 8am-6pm. In the case of suspected abuse everyone has the right to make a referral to local statutory children's services, social services or the



police. However, it must be stressed that the first steps are to share concerns with the manager/safeguarding children's officer who has a duty to respond.

Safe practice in the nursery

All visitors to the setting will be asked the purpose of their visit and for an identity card if appropriate before they are admitted. All visitors will be asked to sign our visitor's book and to wear a visitor's badge. Visitors will not be allowed unsupervised access to children.

Visitors, staff and students are informed that they may not use their mobile phone whilst they

Our visitor's book will be monitored once a term by Harriet to ensure that regular visitors are identified. People who are visiting for more than 5 sessions a year will be asked to complete a DBS application. This excludes members of the Devon County Council or professionals from beyond the setting e.g. Portage Inclusion Workers.

Parents are encouraged to stay and see how their children are treated in the pre-school Open, honest and transparent communication between staff and parents is encouraged.

Only staff which have been certified as being a fit person to work with young children are to be in sole charge of children. This includes taking children to the toilet.

The door to the toilets should always be propped open so that staff and children are visible by those in the main playroom.

The playroom will be arranged so as to enable supervision of each child at all times.

Children's confidence and self esteem will be developed to enable them, if necessary, to protect themselves and to reject inappropriate advances from adults.

Children will be taught about basic child protection issues as part of our curriculum.

Child protection Procedure

Responding to disclosure;

A child who is being abused may feel that they can talk to a pre-school worker, particularly their key worker who they will have built up a close relationship with. If a child indicates that they want to talk to you should;

- Rearrange you activities with other staff and take the child aside for a quiet conversation if appropriate.
- Offer comfort and reassurance if the child needs it.
- Use language appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Show them that you are taking what they have said seriously.
- Tell them that they are not to blame.
- Tell them that you are there to help them and that they can trust you.
- Reassure them that they are right to tell you and that you will take action, such as telling Paula or Harri.
- Allow the child to do the talking and to finish what they are saying.



- Tell the child what you are going to do next.
- Refer the matter to our designated child protection officers.
- Record the conversation as soon as possible afterwards, using the child's own words where ever possible, also record what you said in reply, when the child said it, what was happening immediately before the disclosure, date and times of the events and when you made the record. Using an Incident Form may be helpful in remembering to record set data, such as child's full name, Date of Birth, Date of disclosure etc.

You should not;

- Postpone or delay the opportunity to talk.
- Ask leading questions.
- Allow your own feelings (anger, shock, pity etc.) to surface.
- Make false promises (that you will keep the secret, for example)
- Interpret what you have been told, just record it.

If you suspect abuse has taken place you should;

- Realize that your concerns could be significant and should be passed on.
- Tell the designated child protection officers.
- Check with the child's parents *to see if they can explain any bruises or marks which you find suspicious, or to find out whether they have noticed any changes in their child's behaviour. Do not suggest a suspicion of abuse. MASH can offer advice on specific situations and whether parents should be told or not.
- Ensure that your concerns are recorded in our confidential records file, in the filing cabinet.
- If the suspicions in any way involve one of the child protection officers, the suspicions should be referred to the other. If the suspicions in any way implicate both officers then the report should be made directly to MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub).
- Suspicions should not be discussed in detail with anyone other than those nominated above. You may seek advise from a peer without disclosing which child you are referring to

*unless you have good reason to suspect a child may be at greater risk by telling the parent/carer your concerns.

If there is a concern about a child, the child protection officer will contact The MASH and seek their advice about the way forward on their Consultation Enquiries numbers 01392 388361/388297/388296. Alternatively, they may contact the local Senior District Co-ordinator or Registration Officer for advice or guidance on a safeguarding issue. The Senior District Co-ordinator for Exeter is Nikki Phillips and can be contacted on 01392 385394. The NSPCC Helpline (tel. 0808 8005000), is also able to offer advice and guidance on child protection issues. If they need to make an immediate referral they should contact MASH directly on 03451 551071. The out of hours Emergency Duty Service number is 0845 6000 388. In the case of an allegation they should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01392 384964 The child protection offer should notify Ofsted of any referrals on 0300 1231231. The Children's Directorate/ Social Workers telephone number is 01392 384444



The child protection officer, in consultation with The MASH, will agree what, if any, information should be shared with parents, when this should happen and who will do it.

If the MASH consider the child is at risk of or has experienced significant harm they will initiate an investigation under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

When a child is referred to the MASH by telephone we will follow up our referral within 48 hours using the standard referral form available from the Devon .gov.uk website. The email address for MASH is mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk.

Where a child or family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency there should be an interagency assessment. In Devon this is carried out through a Devon Assessment Framework (DAF). This assessment should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be required through a statutory assessment. The DAF should be carried out by a lead professional who could be a teacher SENCO, family support worker or health visitor.

Allegations against a member of staff.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff the information should be passed to another child protection officer. If the allegation is against 1 officer it should be made to the other. The child protection officer will ask the person making the allegation to make a signed and dated written record of their concerns, observations or the information received. It is important to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity whilst the allegation is being considered or investigated. Staff should not:

- attempt to deal with the situation themselves
- make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish the seriousness of the behaviour.
- Keep information to themselves or promise confidentiality.
- Take any action that may undermine any future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents or carers.

The child protection officer should

- Get written details of the allegation, signed and dated by the person reporting it and then countersign and date the record.
- Collate information and personal details held about the children, parents/ carers, siblings of the victim, the person against whom the allegation has been made and any known witnesses.
- Contact the local authority designated officer at the children and young people's directorate within one day of receiving the allegation.
- Inform the person making the allegation what they will do.



- Ensure that the alleged perpetrator is informed of the allegation as soon as possible after informing the local authority designated officer. They should explain to them how the enquiry will be conducted and possible outcomes e.g. disciplinary action or dismissal together with sources of support and advice.
 - Inform Ofsted of any concern or allegation made against a member of staff.
- The child protection officer should not;
- Take any action that might undermine any future disciplinary procedure or investigation.
 - Automatically suspend or dismiss staff without taking further advice.
 - Inform parents or carers of the children until advised to do so by the local authority designated officer other than in an emergency situation, such as when a child has been injured and needs medical attention.

Documentation

The Be on the safe side poster and MASH information for parents leaflet is available in the parent area for parents to see.

The What to do if you are worried a child is being abused leaflet, Working together to safeguard children, Golden rules for multi agency working and seven golden rules for information sharing leaflets are kept with this policy in our safeguarding file and operational plan.

Teaching

Opportunities to teach children about keeping themselves safe through our topics are identified in our long term planning. Staff also take opportunities that are presented to teach children regularly about issues regarding their safety.

Policy updated by staff: March 2018

Signed: