

Elephant and Castle Child Care Centre Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Statement of intent

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. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single child protection policy, therefore this document must be used in conjunction with our other nursery policies and procedures.

The Elephant and Castle Child Care Centre will work with children, parents/carers, 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 and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

Methods

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image.
- 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.
- Always listen to children.

Our setting has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of Donna Taylor at the earliest opportunity.

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017
Children Act 1989 and 2004
Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
Childcare Act 2006
Keeping children safe in education 2016

Practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff will often be the first people to sense that there is a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide about abuse. The nursery has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society.

This statement lays out the procedure that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of all children in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents/carers and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. All staff will work as part of a multi-agency team where needed in the best interests of the child.

The nursery aims to:

- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff.
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- Ensure that all staff is trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedure, 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 i.e. bullying, discriminatory behaviour.
- Ensure that all staff is familiar and updated regularly with child protection issues and procedures.
- Ensure parents/carers are fully aware of child protection policies and procedure when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Keep the children at the centre of all we do.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents/carers where appropriate.

Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

Contact telephone numbers

Ofsted - 03001231231

Local Authority Designated Officer – 01603 223473

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – 03448008020

Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) - 03448008021

Non-emergency police – 101

Government helpline for extremism concerns - 02073407264

Types of abuse

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 sign 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.

Physical abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff has 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 recorded and discussed with a team member.

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 recorded and discussed with Donna Taylor.

Procedure:

- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into nursery or occur during the day, will be recorded as soon as noticed by the team member.
- The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest opportunity.
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records.
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be notified.

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 England. 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 well as physiological concerns. If you have concerns about a child relating to this area, you should contact 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 including physical illness e.g. through poisoning, starvation, and 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.

Sexual abuse

Action needs to be taken under this heading if a team member has witness 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 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. 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 to a potential abuser 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 stated later in this document under 'recording abuse suspicions' 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 Safeguarding Lead Practitioner (SLP).
- The matter will be referred to MASH in the local authority.

Emotional abuse

Action should be taken under this heading if a team member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse 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/carer 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 SLP.
- The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer.

- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records.
- The Family Support Process (FSP) may need to be completed.
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the LADO.

Neglect

Action should be taken under this heading if the team member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child e.g. 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 unkept, wearing clothes that are too small, especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them, arriving at the setting in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent/carer. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent/carer is withholding food or not providing enough for the 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/carer.
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records.
- A FSP may need to be completed.
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the LADO will be notified.

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/carers or staff.
- Repeated injuries.
- Unaddressed illness or injuries.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 defines CSE as "a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not

always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.”

We will be aware of the possibility of CSE and the signs and symptoms this may manifest as. If we have concerns we will follow the same procedure as for other concerns and we will record and refer as appropriate.

Looked after children

As part of our safeguarding practice we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this we ask that we are informed of:

- The legal status of the child (whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order).
- Contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those parental responsibility).
- The child’s care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.
- The details of the child’s social worker and any other support agencies involved.
- Any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question.

Monitoring children’s attendance

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents we are required to monitor children’s attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern.

Parents should please inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be called into the nursery on the day so the nursery management are able to account for a child’s absence.

This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children, but enable children’s attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record, supported by the designated SLP of any observation or disclosure and 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 injuries or marks seen.
- Exact observation of an incident including any other witnesses.
- Name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time and the names of any other person present at the time.
- Any discussion held with the parents/carers where deemed appropriate.

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the SLP, 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 it is vital details are recorded down accurately.

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the LADO and Ofsted and or a FSP needs to be initiated. 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 with the LADO and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make comments either publicly or in private about a parent/carer or staff supposed or actual behaviour.

Staffing and volunteering

It is the policy of the nursery to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. The nursery will therefore not allow an adult to be left alone with a child who has not received their DBS.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviour of abuse and abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery.

We have a named person within the setting that takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinates child protection and welfare issues. The nursery SLP undertakes specific training and receives regular updates to development within this field.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Practitioner at the setting is Donna Taylor. The Deputy is Natalie Goddard.

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of 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 to challenge incorrect information.
- All DBS checks will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the suitability of the adults caring for the children.
- All staff members must complete an annual declaration form.
- We abide by Ofsted requirement in respect of references and suitability checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the nursery or has access to the children.

- We ensure we receive at least two written references before a new member of staff commences employment with us.
- All students will have DBS conducted on them before their placement commences.
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting 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 contractors/external workers will be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use.
- All staff has access to a whistle blowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner.
- All staff will receive regular supervision meeting where opportunities will be made available to discuss child protection training and any needs for future support.
- The deployment of staff within the setting 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 placed into action to ensure the safety of the child and adult.

Informing parents/carers

Parents/Carers are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents/carers are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the LSCB does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent/carer or family member is the likely abuser, or where a child may be endangered by the disclosure. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents/carers.

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquires and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the LSCB.

Support to families

- The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers within the setting.
- The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquires are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents/Carers and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgemental 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/carers or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate under the 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 or volunteers of the nursery

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, we will follow the HM Government guidance in 'Working together to safeguard children'.

The allegation should be reported to the SLP. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to the most senior person on duty or the owner instead.

The LADO and the LSCB will then be informed immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

- The LADO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance.
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LADO, LSCB, Ofsted) to determine how this will be handled.
- The nursery will follow all instructions from the LADO, LSCB, Ofsted and asks all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required.
- Support will be provided to all these involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice.
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation.
- All enquires/external investigations will be documented and kept in a locked file.
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated.
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisation (police) and result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. The setting is also required to notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority to ensure their records are updated.
- 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 setting and the parents/carers.

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. 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 actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child.

e-Safety

Our setting is aware of the growth of internet use and the advantages this can bring. However, it is also aware of the dangers and strives to support children, staff and families in using the internet safely.

Within the nursery we do this by:

- Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware on all devices and updating them regularly.
- Using approved devices to record/photograph in the setting.
- Never emailing personal or financial information.
- Reporting emails with inappropriate content to the internet watch foundation.
- Ensuring content blockers and filters are on our computers, laptops and any mobile devices.
- Ensuring children are supervised using internet devices.

This policy was adopted in March 2006 and will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary.

Reviewed and amended, March 2007. Amended, November 2007. Amended, January 2009. Reviewed and amended, May 2011. Amended, May 2012.

Reviewed and amended, April 2013. Reviewed April 2014.

Reviewed and amended, April 2015. Reviewed and amended, September 2015.

Reviewed and amended Aug 16. Reviewed and amended July 17.

Reviewed Jan 2018. Reviewed and amended, Nov 2018.