

# Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

## Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

## Aims

Our preschool wants to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children are at the centre of everything that we do.

We aim to:

- Create an environment in our pre-school which welcomes, encourages and stimulates children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background, which encourages each child to fulfil their potential.
- help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships with their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- enable children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches; and
- work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.

## Liaison with other bodies

We work within the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (PDSCP) guidelines, and 'What to do if you think a child is being abused' book, published for use in settings in Poole. A copy of these guidelines is held in the preschool for staff to use and parents to see.

The Government document Every Child Matters tells us: The PDSCP is responsible for:

- Developing police and practise in relation to Safeguarding in the Borough of Poole
- seeking to ensure arrangements are in place to safeguard children in the area
- Promoting awareness of safeguarding issues and
- Providing services which support children and families. Phone: 01202 735046 (Poole Social Care HUB)
- It is the duty of the police to investigate criminal offences, and they will work jointly with Social services when investigating abuse on children and in families.
- The safety and welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority, working in partnership with other public organisations, Every Child matters, (2007 page:41)
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of children.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the preschool and social services to work well together.
- Records of the local NSPCC contacts are also kept.
- If a report is to be made to the authorities, we act within the PDSCP guidance in deciding whether we must

inform the child's parents at the same time.

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the preschool 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.

### **Staffing, Students and Volunteers**

In safeguarding children we will always adhere to government guidelines of adult to child ratio's. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Lorraine Rees and contingency arrangements are that the deputy Louise Stapleton will implement the safeguarding procedure in the absence of the DSL

The role of the DSL is to make the decision to contact the social care duty officer and liaise with them if an issue is thought to be child protection. The DSL will ensure all documentation is completed, Incident forms, disclosure forms, she will contact Ofsted if necessary, work with police, duty officer, health visitor, and the family and child to help support any case that is brought forward. The DSL will keep up to date on changes in law and practise in safeguarding children and will be responsible for annual in-house training to all staff on the settings safeguarding Procedures, phone numbers and updating all safeguarding documentation.

We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the preschool or has access to the children.

DBS checked members of staff will ensure that they are not putting themselves or the children in their care in a compromising position by assisting children with intimate care only when there are two members of staff present

Volunteers and students will never be left alone with a child and will always be shadowed by a DBS checked member of staff. Permanent volunteers will be DBS checked by the police

We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.

We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the preschool.

We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the preschool so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

In agreement with the EYFS curriculum guidance, page 15, the Lantern Playgroup will run a key person system. Each child in the setting will be assigned a Key-person (permanent staff member) who will help to give assurance to the child helping them to feel safe and cared for and building a relationship with parents/carers. The key person will liaise with parents/carers to ensure that the child's needs are being met appropriately and that records of development and progress are shared with parents/carers and other professionals as necessary.

The Lantern Preschool follows the Canford Parish safer recruitment process which adheres to government recruitment guidelines.

The Lantern Preschool abides by the protection of Children act 1999, [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)

**All visitors to the preschool are referred to our visitor's policy and requested to sign in and out of the setting.**

## **Visitor or intruder on the premises**

The safety and security of the premises is maintained at all time and staff are vigilant in areas that pose a risk, such as shared premises. A risk assessment is completed to ensure that unauthorised visitors cannot gain access.

**Visitors with legitimate business** - generally a visitor will have made a prior appointment

- On arrival, they are asked to verify their identity and confirm who they are visiting.
- Staff will ask them to sign in and explain the procedures for the use of mobile phones and emergency evacuation.
- Visitors (including visiting VIPs) are never left alone with the children at any time.
- Visitors to the setting are monitored and asked to leave immediately should their behaviour give cause for concern.

## **Intruder**

An intruder is an individual who has not followed visitor procedures and has no legitimate business to be in the setting; he or she may or may not be a hazard to the setting.

- An individual who appears to have no business in the setting will be asked for their name and purpose for being there.
- The staff member identifies any risk posed by the intruder.
- The staff member ensures the individual follows the procedure for visitors.
- The setting manager is immediately informed of the incident and takes necessary action to safeguard children.
- If there are concerns for the safety of children, staff evacuate them to a safe place in the building and contact police. In some circumstance this could lead to 'terrorist threat/lock-down' of the setting and will be managed by the responding emergency service .
- The designated person informs their designated officer of the situation at the first opportunity.
- In the case of a serious breach where there was a perceived or actual threat to the safety of the children, the manager/designated person completes Confidential safeguarding incident report form and copies in their line manager on the day of the incident. The owners/trustees/committee ensure a robust organisational response and ensure that learning is shared.

## **Curriculum**

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our foundation stage curriculum, so that children can develop understanding of why and how to keep safe. Including stranger danger, and visits from local police and ambulance services.
- We create within the preschool a culture of value and respect for the individual.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is appropriate for the ages and stages of our children.
- We aim to create within the pre-school a culture of respect and value for the individual and will ensure that this is carried out in a way that is appropriate for the ages and safe of the children, and is modelled by the adults in the setting

## **Complaints**

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the preschool, which may include an allegation of abuse. Refer to the Pre-school's Complaints Policy.

We follow the guidance of the PDSCP when investigating any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child and inform Ofsted of any such complaints so they can be investigated.

## **Whistleblowing**

Staff are encouraged to speak to the DSL if they have any concerns/ allegations about another member of staff. If that member of staff should be the DSL then they should go to the Chair of the committee.

We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.

**PDSCP Local Authority (LADO) contact number is 01202 456744.**

**Ofsted Whistleblowing Hotline: 0300 1233155**

## **Disciplinary Action**

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the preschool or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. We also inform Ofsted, [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) and the PDSCP Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) John McGlaughlin. 01202 714677

## **Training**

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the preschool to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs -and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that, they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the preschool.

PEHA training is for multi and inter agency working, equipping people to work effectively with those from other agencies, and ensuring employees are aware of how to recognise and respond to a safeguarding concern. It

is the Lantern preschool's responsibility to recognise resources and support for inter agency training, including applying for funding from the Local Authority.

All training in safeguarding and promoting welfare of children aims to create an ethos that:

- Values working collaboratively
- Respects diversity
- Promotes equality
- Is child centred

Promotes the participation of children and families in the process

### **Suitable premises**

The Lantern Preschool aims to have a welcoming, warm, safe environment for children to learn and develop in, ensuring that our premises are suitable for children who have disabilities, and reflect ethnic, cultural, and social diversity. We commit to making risk assessments regularly. EYFS 2007, p17

### **Responding to suspicions of abuse**

We acknowledge that abuse of children can take four different forms:

#### **Physical abuse**

May involve; hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

#### **Emotional abuse:**

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Refer to the Playgroup's bullying policy, and Child Protection training notes

**Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.**

#### **Sexual abuse/ Child Sexual Exploitation CSE**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical contact with a child or young person, and non-contact, such as the production of and watching of on-line images, and sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way.

Female Genital Mutilation FGM . We do not condone this practice and look for signs of behaviours of parents or children where it may occur and report any suspicions.

## **Neglect**

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to involve serious impairment to a child's health and development. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's emotional needs.

When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour, or in their play. This will be often be noticed through observations, and knowledge, of the key person, about the child.

Where a child shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive', or neglect, we will refer to the BCP area child protection committee. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where children's play gives cause for concern, the preschool investigates.

We allow investigations to be carried out with sensitivity, staff in the preschool takes care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

## **Allegations of abuse against a member of staff**

If a complaint or allegation is made about a member of staff that questions the safety of children in their care the staff member will be suspended immediately and an investigation will follow as set out in our complaints policy. We will work with the police and PDSCP , LADO to ensure the safety and care of the children. Any allegation against a member of staff must be reported to the Borough of Poole LADO who will offer further guidance and support. (John McGlaughlin) We will support the family and staff member during any investigation and find a way or working together.

## **Disclosures**

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, or staff witnesses something that might raise child protection concerns, they:

- Take the child seriously, however young or confused they are
- Offer assurance to the child
- Keeps calm, will not show distress
- Does not promise confidentiality
- Will not ask questions or stop the child's talking
- Will give assurance the she/he will take action in a way that the child understands
- offers reassurance to the child;
- **Listens to the child;** and
- Gives reassurance that she or he will take action.
- Will not jump to conclusions, or make promises they cannot keep

- Will inform the setting child protection officer of the disclosure, and immediately complete a disclosure/ incident form with facts only.

The member of staff does not question the child

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

Staff makes a record of:

- The child's name;
- The child's address;
- Child's date of birth
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- The exact words spoken by the child;
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time;
- The names of any other person present at the time.
- Is the parent aware of the referral?

Records will be shared with Social Services, and police where necessary, and will be kept safe in a box file in the pre-school locked cupboard, with which the manager and deputy have a key.

### **Informing Parents**

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 local PDSCP does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

The Poole area child protection committee duty officer will take the lead and inform what to do if the child is still in playgroup care. The playgroup staff will work with and adhere to the PDSCP advice.

### **Confidentiality**

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership and in line with the GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and Working Together 2018.

### **Support to families**

The preschool takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.

- The preschool continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
- 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 under the guidance of the PDSCP.
- With the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

## **Legal framework**

### *Primary legislation*

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- The Children Act (2004 s11)
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018

### *Secondary legislation*

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2009)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Care Act (2014)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

## **Further guidance**

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2018)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG, 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2008)
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2018)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check)
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings, (Ofsted, 2016)