



ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF - POLICY

Unfortunately, child abuse does occasionally take place in day care settings, so we have introduced this separate policy to remind staff of the measures that can be taken to reduce the risk of any allegations being made against them or another member of staff. It also contains the procedure, which will be undertaken if an allegation is made against a member of staff. This complies with both Ofsted and Children's Social Services.

Protecting yourself from allegations of abuse

- If a child sustains an injury whilst in our care we will record it in the accident book as soon as possible. When the child is collected we will inform whoever picks the child up about the injury and ensure that they also sign the accident book.
- If a child arrives with an injury sustained elsewhere we will ask for an explanation and ask them to fill out our yellow body map form which is then filed in our safeguarding folder. A tick chart at the front of the safeguarding folder will also be completed by the member of staff. This tick chart shows at a glance how many incidents have been recorded over a period of time.
- We ensure that all staff safeguarding training is up to date and certificates held in their folders.
- We will ensure that all parents understand our role and responsibility in child protection.
- No physical sanctions will be used within pre-school and we ensure that all staff are aware and comply with this rule.
- We will avoid situations where an adult is left alone in a room with a child. If this does occur we will make sure that the door is left open and other people are around.
- We will avoid engaging in rough physical play with children as this may be misconstrued and could cause accidental injury to a child.
- We avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
- We will take references, including one from the candidate's last employer, and will always question any gaps in employment history when recruiting new members of staff.
- We will encourage an open door ethos, to enable staff to talk to our Supervisor if they have any concerns about the conduct of any of their colleagues.

Procedure to follow if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff

- If anyone makes an allegation of abuse against a member of staff our Preschool Supervisor/designated officer will be informed immediately and will consult with the Children's Safeguards Unit at Kent County Council prior to any action being taken. The Children's Safeguards Unit will advise on whether the allegation crosses the 'significant harm' threshold that would require referral to Children's Social Services/Police for investigation under child protection procedures – S.47 Children's Act 1989. This consultation and reporting mechanism is additional to the requirement to notify Ofsted of a serious incident.

The Education Safeguarding Team (Early Years) West Kent is **Robyn Windibank**. Tel. 03000 412284, Mob. 07540 677200, Address. 30 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4AE.

- The Preschool Supervisor will complete the attached form for recording allegations or complaints made against staff.
- The allegation will not be discussed with the member of staff concerned unless Social Services advise for this to be done.
- **All staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt – consult.**
- If Social Services and/or the police decide to carry out an investigation it may be possible that Ofsted will advise us to suspend the member of staff whilst enquiries are carried out. The Preschool may also invoke its disciplinary procedure.
- We will not carry out an investigation ourselves **unless** Social Services and the Police decide it is not appropriate for them to do so. We understand that Ofsted may wish to undertake further investigations.

Suspension

Suspension should always be considered where there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm or the allegation warrants investigation by the police or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. The following factors may also be considered: the seriousness and plausibility of an allegation, the risk of harm to other children at the pre-school, the possibility of tampering with evidence and the interests of the member of staff concerned and the pre-school.

Staff against whom an allegation is made will not be automatically suspended. Alternatives to suspension may be discussed. Alternatives might include paid leave of absence, mutual agreement to refrain from work, alternative duties or removal from contact with the child.

The Trustees alone have the authority to suspend a member of staff. Suspension is a neutral act, not a disciplinary sanction and will be on full pay. Suspension may be considered at any stage of an investigation.

The welfare of the child is paramount.

Guidance for managers completing the checklist for handling and recording allegations or complaints of abuse made against a member of staff regarding a child/children in their care

- Record the name and position of the member of staff against whom the allegation or complaint has been made.
- Verbal complaints should be backed up in writing by the complainant if appropriate; some may require immediate action that does not allow time for this to happen.
- It is important to identify who made the complaint and whether it was received first hand or is a concern that is passed on from somebody else. If this is the case it is better that you receive the information first hand. If a parent, carer or a member of staff makes a complaint against the manager it must be passed immediately to the deputy.
- Record the full name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The address recorded should be the address at which the child lives with the main carer.
- If there are one or more alleged incidents be specific as possible about dates that they are alleged to have happened.

CHECKLIST – for handling and recording allegations or complaints of abuse made against a member of staff regarding a child/children in their care

1.	Name and position of staff who is the subject of allegations/complaint	
2.	Is the complaint written or verbal?	
3.	Complaint made by:	
4.	What is the complainant's relationship to the child?	
5.	Name of child	
6.	Age and date of birth of child	
7.	Parent's/carer's name (s) and address	
8.	Date/s of alleged incident/s	
9.	Did the child attend or was the child seen on this/these date/s	
10.	Nature of complaint (if received in writing refer to guidance)	
11.	Other relevant information (continue on a separate sheet if needed)	
12.	Social services contact at (date and time)	
13.	Ofsted informed at (date and time)	
14.	Further actions advised by Social Services Department and Ofsted:	
Your name		
Your position		
Signature		
Today's date and time		

