



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY**

The Teston & Wateringbury Preschool's Safeguarding Children Policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by The Children Act 1989 and 2004, The Early Years Foundation Stage, Sections 175 and 176 Education Act 2002 and related guidance including The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (1999), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) and What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2006).

### **Every child has the right to be protected**

### **It is everyone's responsibility to protect children**

#### **Statement of intent**

The prime responsibility of the Pre-school is to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child. We intend to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. We have a duty to take action when required. We have guidelines to assist in deciding whether a child may be at risk of significant harm through:

- Neglect
- Physical Injury
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse.

#### **What is child abuse?**

The Children Act 1989 refers to "Significant Harm" rather than abuse. However, abuse is any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. A child may be abused by parents, other relatives or carers, professionals and other children, and can occur in any family, in any area of society, regardless of social class or geographical location.

Abuse falls into four main categories (The following definitions are from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006):

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or 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 the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or

developmentally inappropriate expectations being include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The leaflet "Child Protection Guidelines for Early Years" which describes signs and symptoms of abuse is available on request.

The staff and members of the Pre-school take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.

As part of the ethos of the Pre-school we are committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern.
- Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties

- Using learning at the setting to provide opportunities for increasing self awareness, self esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that young children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the setting's procedures and lines of communication.
- Monitoring children who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection, keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

This policy is in line with The Kent & Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (2007) (The "Purple Book") and the KSCB and Eligibility & Threshold criteria.

### **What may give cause for concern?**

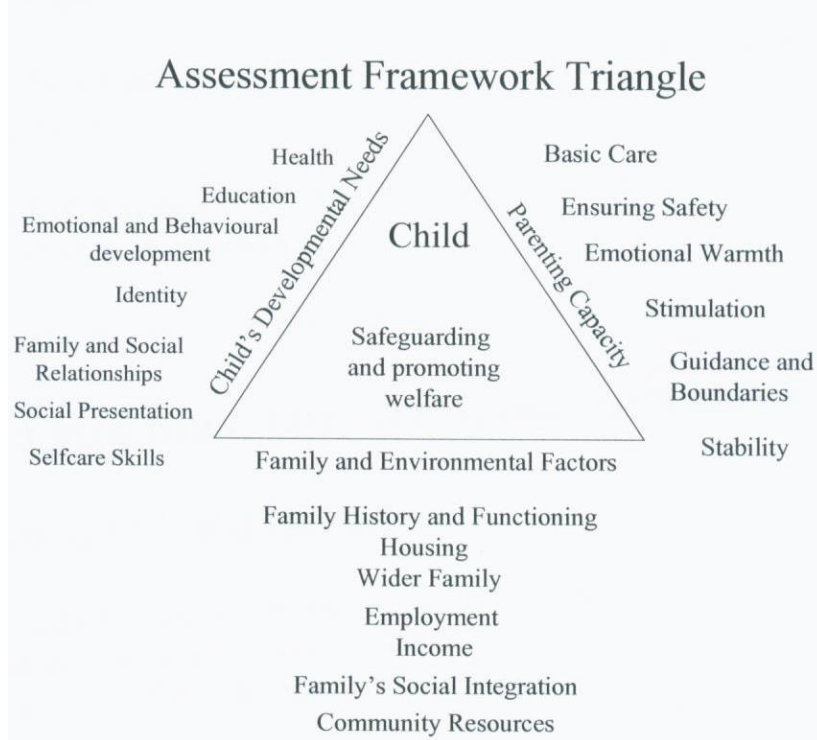
- Bruising on parts of the body which do not usually get bruised accidentally, e.g. around the eyes, behind the ears, back of the legs, stomach, chest, cheek and mouth (especially in a young baby), etc.
- Any bruising or injury to a very young, immobile baby.
- Burns or scalds
- Bite marks
- Any injuries or swellings, which do not have a plausible explanation.
- Bruising or soreness to the genital area.
- Faltering growth, weight loss and slow development.
- Unusual lethargy.
- Any sudden uncharacteristic change in behaviour, e.g. child becomes either very aggressive or withdrawn.
- A child whose play and language indicates a sexual knowledge beyond his/her years.
- A child who flinches away from sudden movement.
- A child who gives over rehearsed answers to explain how his/her injuries were caused.
- An accumulation of a number of minor injuries and/or concerns.
- A child who discloses something which may indicate he/she is being abused.

The designated person who takes lead responsibility for Safeguarding Children within the setting is the **Pre-school Supervisor**. The designated person is responsible for:

- Gathering information or observations and creating a confidential log (including times and dates);
- Meeting with the parent to discuss any concerns;
- Knowing the key people in the health authority – someone to confidentially discuss any concerns or other matters with;
- Informing the Trustees of any concerns and action taken to date. The issue remains confidential. The Supervisor will liaise with local statutory children's services agencies as appropriate without delay if they are concerned that a child may be at risk.
- Keeping The Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Handbook 2007.

## Understanding the child's world

As a Pre-school member of staff, you are familiar with the many factors, which can affect how children learn, how they react, and how they develop. When you are concerned about any child, it is helpful to be familiar with government guidance to help agencies to work together in taking a common approach to assessment and service planning: the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (1999). A child's developmental needs are affected in different ways by the parenting capacity of carers, and by the family and the environmental situation of the child.



## Staff Roles and Responsibilities in Safeguarding Children

Everyone involved in the care of young children has a role to play in their protection. All members of staff at Teston & Watringbury Preschool are in a unique position to observe any changes in a child's behaviour or appearance. If we have any reason to suspect that a child in our care is being abused, or is likely to be abused, we know we have a 'duty of care' to take action on behalf of the child by following this setting's Safeguarding Children Policy.

Staff are also trained to respond appropriately to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

## **Liaison with other bodies**

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) guidelines.
- We have a copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines available for staff and parents to see.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident, accident or serious illness and changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of the 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 an emergency, for the pre-school 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 LSCB guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

## **What to do if we need to take emergency action to protect a child**

On very rare occasions, it may be necessary to act quickly, for example, to protect a child from a drunken or violent parent. In these circumstances it would be appropriate to discuss this with the Pre-school Supervisor who should telephone the police. In the unlikely event of a child being brought to the setting with serious injuries it would be appropriate to discuss this with the Pre-school Supervisor or the person in charge immediately who should telephone for an ambulance.

## **Complaints**

- We display an Ofsted poster informing parents how they can complain about their child's childcare and we include Ofsted contact details in our termly newsletter.
- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or a volunteer's action within the pre-school, which may include an allegation of abuse.

## **Concerns or uncertainties**

There may be occasions when we have concerns about a child which do not appear to justify a referral of suspected child abuse but nonetheless leave us feeling uncomfortable. In these circumstances the designated safeguarding officer (supervisor) will be notified and Central Duty office will be contacted on 03000 411111.

## **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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.

## **Collection Policy**

We have a specific legal requirement to only release children into the care of individuals named by parents. If anyone other than a person that has been named by parents on their registration form is to pick up a child we must have verbal or written permission from the parent naming this individual and using a secure password at the door. A child will not be allowed to leave with a "stranger." **See also UNCOLLECTED CHILD POLICY.**

## **Curriculum**

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our EYFS curriculum, so that children can develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the pre-school 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.

## **Disciplinary Action**

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the pre-school 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.

## **Disclosures**

If a child tells a member of staff something it is important that the staff member responds appropriately:

- Do listen to the child and avoid interrupting except to clarify;
- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way;
- Do not interrogate the child. It is alright to ask for clarification but you should not ask leading questions. Misguided or inappropriate questioning in the first instance can do more harm than good and may contaminate evidence which could be needed in an investigation. The interviewing of children must be undertaken by the trained social workers or police officers;
- Do not make promises to the child about not passing on information – the child needs to know that you have to talk to someone who will be able to help them;
- Record the information as accurately as you can, within one hour, including the timing, setting and those present. As well as what is said. Do not exaggerate or embellish what you have heard in any way;
- Inform the Nursery Group Supervisor.

## **Informing Parents**

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, the parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board 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.

## **Mobile Phones**

All mobile phones are kept in the kitchen for the duration of the session. Any calls must be answered in the kitchen area which is not accessible by the children.

## **Planning**

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door is left ajar.

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

Staff make a record of:

- The child's name
- The child's address
- The age of the child
- The date and time of the observation or 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; and
- The names of any other person present at the time.

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

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

## **Responding to suspicions of abuse**

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour or in their play. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where children's play gives cause for concern, the pre-school investigates.
- We allow investigations to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff in the pre-school take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.
- Where a child shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive' or neglect, we make appropriate referrals.

## **Staff, Volunteers & Visitors**

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the pre-school 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 applicants are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and challenge incorrect information.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the pre-school so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. A poster is displayed reminding visitors that they must report to a member of staff immediately upon arrival and complete the visitors' book. Visitors are accompanied at all times by a member of staff. The visitor must sign out again before leaving the premises.
- All members of the Parental Committee are required to satisfactorily complete appropriate Ofsted Criminal records checks;
- Bank Staff who provide emergency cover during normal staff absences (due to holidays or sickness etc) are also required to satisfactorily complete the appropriate DBS checks;
- Volunteer helpers or students on work placements are never left alone with any of the children.

## **Support to Families**

- The pre-school takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The pre-school continues to welcome the child and 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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- With the view 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.

## **Training**

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the pre-school 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 pre-school.

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

*See separate 'Allegations of abuse against a member of staff Policy'*



All staff must sign to confirm they have read and understood the 'Safeguarding Children Policy' policy:

PRINT STAFF NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE