

## **SAFEGUARDING**

### **Purpose**

We work with children, parents, 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, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

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. In our setting we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation, and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the nursery's other policies and guidance's.

### **Legal Framework and Definition of Safeguarding**

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2016
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

### **Policy**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### **To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:**

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- 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
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- Help children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion and role modelling
- Always listen to children
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help, they need
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.

The nursery is aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff may often be the first people to identify that there may be a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse, or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care, health professionals or the police. All staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed.

The nursery aims to:

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do
- Ensure staff are trained **right from induction** to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, 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 through bullying or discriminatory behaviour**
- **Be aware** of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable or isolated families and children
- Ensure staff understand how to **recognise** early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child, **share information** and **seek the help** that the child may need
- Ensure that all staff are **familiar and updated regularly with child protection training** and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures, including through regular safeguarding refreshers and updates
- Make any child protection **referrals in a timely way**, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the **Local Safeguarding Partners**
- Make any referrals relating to **extremism** to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate
- Ensure that **information is shared only with those people who need to know** in order to protect the child and act in their best interest
- Keep the setting safe online using appropriate filters, checks and safeguards, monitoring access always
- Ensure that children are **never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff**
- **Identify** changes in staff behaviour
- **Take any appropriate action** relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children or living or working on the nursery premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities
- **Ensure** parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Local Safeguarding Partners.

We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. We will devise activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group and support them to learn how to keep themselves safe.

### **Contact telephone numbers**

Local authority children's social care team [*Dependant on location*]

Local authority Designated Officer (LADO) [*Dependant on location*]

Ofsted **0300 123 1231**

Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) Mash Team [*Dependant on location*]

Locality and Community Support Service [*Dependant on location*]

Non-emergency police **101**

Government helpline for extremism concerns **020 7340 7264**

### **Types of Abuse and particular procedures to be followed**

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.

All staff must be aware of the main categories of abuse and can refer to [Guidance for Recognising Signs and Symptoms of Abuse \(QT G35\)](#) – types of abuse for more detail

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Female Genital Mutilation

The signs 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.

### **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 or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

We are aware that peer on peer abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional

abuse, or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way as we do for adults abusing children and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area.

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

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, using a [Cause for Concern form \(QT F37\)](#) supported by the nursery manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead. This record should 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 any injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of any incident including any concerns reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the Manager/DSL, 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 can talk openly, and disclosure is not forced, or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately.

## **Reporting a concern**

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the local authority children's social care team and Ofsted, and/or an Early Help Assessment (EHA) needs to be initiated. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have regarding a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with the local authority children's social care, police, and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children. It is important to follow the Local Authorities process and notify the Area Manager / Head of Quality.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent or member of staff.

## **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.

It is the responsibility of the Manager or DSL should a child not attend a session to make contact with the parents, if the absence continues over several days and we have not had a response and there is cause for concern then it is our responsibility to contact Local Safeguarding Partners.

Parents should 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 enables children's attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe.

## Staffing, volunteering and training

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We only allow an adult who is employed by the nursery to care for children and who has an enhanced clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to be left alone with children. We do not allow volunteers to be alone with children or any other adult who may be present in the nursery regardless of whether or not they have a DBS clearance.

All staff will attend initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery. During induction staff will be given contact details for the LCSS (Locality and Community Support Service), the local authority children's services team, the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

We have named persons within the setting who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinate child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). There is always at least one designated person on duty or contactable during all opening hours of the setting.

These designated persons will receive comprehensive training at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year.

The nursery DSL will liaise with the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) and the local authority children's social care team, and undertake specific training, including a child protection training course and regular updates to developments within this field. They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge update of all staff on the team.

For best practice and to always ensure cover, we have two/three designated leads in place. This enables safeguarding to always stay high on our priorities.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) at the nursery are: **[insert names]**.

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all 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
- We give staff members, volunteers and students regular opportunities to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life that means they are disqualified from working with children
- This information is also stated within every member of staff's contract
- We request DBS checks, and we use the DBS update service to re-check staff's criminal history and suitability to work with children on a regular basis.

- We abide by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and suitability checks for staff, students and volunteers, to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers working in the setting are suitable to do so
- We ensure we receive at least two written references for every new employee.
- All students will have an enhanced DBS check.
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2016 in respect of any person who is disqualified from providing childcare, 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 nursery 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 visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
- As a staff team we will be fully aware of how to safeguard the whole nursery environment and be aware of potential dangers on the nursery boundaries such as drones, Pokémon hotspots, strangers lingering. We will ensure the children always remain safe
- All staff have access to and comply with the whistleblowing 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 meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any needs for further support
- The deployment of staff within the nursery 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 put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

## Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. 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 LSP/ local authority children's social care team/police does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

## Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the LSP.

## Support to families

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

The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child.

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 in line with guidance of the LSP 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.

### **Allegations made against employees, students or volunteers of the nursery or any other person working on the nursery premises**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who lives or works on the nursery premises regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below.

The allegation should be reported to the senior manager on duty. If this person is the subject of the allegation, then this should be reported to the Area Manager/Operations Manager and/or the DSL instead.

The Locality and Community Support Service (LCSS), Ofsted and the LSP (LADO) will then be informed immediately for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

- The LCSS will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LCSS, Ofsted, LSP, LADO) to determine how this will be handled
- The nursery will follow all instructions from the LCSS, Ofsted, LSP, LADO and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LCSS support and advice
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police, and will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. The nursery will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated
- All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
- 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 nursery and the parents.

### **Extremism – the Prevent Duty**

Under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police (In Prevent priority areas the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support). Please see [Prevent Duty Policy \(QT P06\)](#).

### **Safe care and practice**

We believe that all children need to feel safe, secure and happy. This involves nursery staff being responsive to children's needs, whilst maintaining professionalism. This includes giving children cuddles and changing children's nappies or clothes.

To promote good practice and to minimise the risk of allegations we have the following guidelines:

- Although we recognise it is appropriate to cuddle children, we give cuddles only when sought by children needing comfort to support their emotional development. Staff are advised to do this in view of other children and practitioners, whenever possible. We recognise that there may be occasions where it is appropriate for this to happen away from others, such as when a child is ill. In these circumstances, staff are advised to leave the door open. It is the duty of all staff and the manager to ensure that children are appropriately comforted and to monitor practice
- When changing children's nappies or soiled/wet clothing, we leave the doors open, where appropriate
- We discourage inappropriate behaviour such as over tickling, over boisterous play or inappropriate questions such as asking children to tell them they love them, and we advise staff to report any such observed practice
- Staff are respectful of each other and the children and families in the nursery and do not use inappropriate language or behaviour, including during breaks
- All staff are aware of the whistleblowing procedures and the manager carries out random checks throughout the day to ensure safe practices.

If a parent or member of staff has concerns or questions about safe care and practice procedures or behaviour they consider as inappropriate, including between staff members, they are urged to see the manager at the earliest opportunity. Management will challenge inappropriate behaviour in line with the supervision/ disciplinary or whistleblowing procedures. If the concern relates to the manager and/or nursery owner, then parents should contact Ofsted (***insert contact number***) or the local authority children's social care team (***insert contact number***)

Our nursery 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 the Nursery Manager or DSL at the earliest opportunity.

## Associated Documents

- [SEND Policy \(QT P22\)](#)
- [Confidentiality Policy \(QT P12\)](#)
- [Prevent Duty Policy \(QT P06\)](#)
- [Safer Recruitment and Suitability of Staff Policy \(QT P02\)](#)
- [Recognising Signs and Symptoms of Abuse guidance \(QT G35\)](#)
- [Cause for Concern Form \(QT F37\)](#)