

HARPOLE DAY NURSERY

Safeguarding Children Policy

Statement of intent

Our nursery will 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 and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

Aims

Our aims are to:

- create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
- help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- 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 and 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.

Harpole day nursery has a clear commitment to safeguarding 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, in the first instance and then owner at the earliest opportunity.

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1984
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Children (NI) Order
- The Children (Scotland) Order
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002, Education Act 2002

- Every Child Matters: Change for Children
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006 (DCSF, DoH, HO)
- The Assessment Framework for Children in Need and their Families 2000 (DoH DCSF, HO)
- Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Northamptonshire

Practitioners have a duty to safeguard 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 procedures 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.

All staff will be familiar with their own responsibilities to act swiftly upon any suspicions or concerns they may have about any child or member of staff at the nursery. The nursery will follow the procedures set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB's) Guidance (England) and as such will seek advice on all steps taken subsequently. The nursery has a duty to report any suspicions around abuse to the local authority who have an obligation to investigate such matters.

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the LSCB (N) guidelines.
- We have a copy of the LSCB Guidelines available for staff and parents to see.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) without delay, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of any allegations.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the nursery 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.

Staff must not make comment either publicly or in private about a parent's supposed or actual behaviour. Staff must raise any concerns initially with the manager. The manager will then discuss the matter with the registered person and appropriate action will be considered. Staff responsibilities do not include

investigating the suspected abuse. However, the staff will keep accurate records of their observations, signed and dated, and of anything said to them by the child or others in connection with the suspected abuse. This information will be kept in a locked cabinet.

Training

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the nursery 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 nursery. Staff are aware how important it is always important to listen to children and we create within the nursery 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.

Strict confidentiality will be observed at all times. All our staff will receive training on the protection of children from abuse. 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 enhanced CRB check clearance. This procedure will be updated with the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). From summer 2010 all new staff recruited to work with children will be required to be registered with the ISA. As a nursery we will not be able to legally employ new staff unless they are ISA registered, (England and Wales). Further information is available at www.isa.gov.org.uk

Staff who do not have an up to date enhanced CRB check will not be allowed unsupervised access to a child and will not be allowed to change nappies (whether supervised or not) until an enhanced CRB returns clear. They will not be allowed access the child's records, personal or development, and will not be allowed to take children's photographs until these checks are returned clear.

All staff will have an enhanced CRB check and this will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the ongoing suitability of all staff caring for the children

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 are alert to the signs and understand what is meant by safeguarding and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed including by other children i.e. bullying.
- ensure that all staff are familiar with safeguarding issues and procedures
- ensure parents are fully aware of safeguarding policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and kept informed of all updates when they occur

- regularly review and update this policy.

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.

Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgemental manner whilst investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child.

Contact telephone numbers

- Ofsted - 08456 404040
- LSBC Unit - 01604 654040
- Police Child Protection Unit - 01933 304450 (24 hours)
- Local authority social services numbers:
Referral and Assessment teams (open Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm)
 - Northampton: 01604 411911
 - Wellingborough: 01933 220700
 - Kettering: 01536 313000
 - Daventry: 01327 300567

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team – 01604 626938

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline – 08000 8005000

Types of abuse

Physical abuse

Action will be taken under this heading if staff have 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.

procedure:

- all signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into nursery, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member in the existing injuries book and brought to the manager's attention
- the manager will discuss the incident 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 Safeguarding Children's Board in the local authority will be notified.

Sexual abuse

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have witnessed occasions 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.

procedure:

- the observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report
- the observed instances will be reported to the nursery manager
- the matter will be referred to the Safeguarding Children's Board in the local authority.

Emotional abuse

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have 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.

procedure:

- the concern will be discussed with the manager
- the manager will then discuss the incident with the parent/carer
- such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records
- if there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the Safeguarding Children's Board in the local authority.

Neglect

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

procedure:

- the concern will be discussed with the manager
- the manager will then discuss the incident with the parent/carer
- such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records
- if there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the Safeguarding Children's Board in the local authority will be notified.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.
- The member of staff does not question the child

Staff will make an objective record 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/injuries or marks seen
- 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.
- any discussion held with parent/carer.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file. All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting. It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the LSCB, Social services and Ofsted. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information they have concerns with regard to a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with the LSCB, Social services and Ofsted, in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staffing and volunteering

We have a named person within the nursery that co-ordinates safeguarding and welfare issues. The designated person undertakes specific training and accesses regular updates to develop within this field. This person is responsible for ensuring staff receive up-to-date training and regular access to training.

The named person regarding safeguarding at the nursery is: **Sharon Peach**

- all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns they have about a child.
- 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

- from summer 2010 all new applicants must be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and will have an additional enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure conducted on them
- all enhanced CRB checks will be updated in a regular basis to ensure the suitability of the adults caring for the children
- 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 nursery or has access to the children
- we aim to receive at least two references before a new member of staff commences employment with us
- any staff awaiting CRB clearance and/ or references, do not work with the children unsupervised.
- all students will have enhanced CRB checks conducted on them before their placement starts
- volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- we abide by the Protection of Children Act (1999) 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 safeguarding children 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 still be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
- the layout and deployment of staff within the nursery allows for constant supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar.

Complaints

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the nursery, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the LSCB when investigating any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- 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.
- 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 nursery investigates.
- We allow investigation to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff in the nursery 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.

Allegations against employees of the nursery

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, Ofsted and the LSCB will be informed and this will be investigated. This may result in the nursery disciplinary procedure being followed.

The incident will be dealt with by the manager/registered person:

- a full investigation will be carried out to determine how this will be handled
- if the allegation could possibly interfere with the normal working of the nursery, the member of staff will be allocated to another area, after due consultation with all parties
- the nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff on full pay during an investigation
- all investigations/interviews 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 will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. From October 2009 the nursery will be required to notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to ensure their records are updated.
- counselling will be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the nursery and the parents.

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 LSCB 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.

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 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 nursery
- the nursery 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 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.

Signed on behalf of the nursery:

Date: