

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Preschool aims to:

Keep the child safe and at the centre of all we do.

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.

Ensure all staff are trained 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.

Ensure staff understand how to identify 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. When a staff member starts with Hound Owls Preschool, Safeguarding will be part of the induction process.

Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trust.

Make any referrals relating to extremism to the police or the Children's reception team 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.

Ensure that children are never placed at risk whilst in the charge of Preschool staff. Rigid recruitment procedures are in place and an enhanced DBS will have to be in place before working at Hound Owls.

Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the Preschool and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.

At Hound Owls Preschool we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children 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.

Legal framework

Children Act 2004, Childcare Act 2006,

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.

Definition of Safeguarding

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.

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2018).

Policy intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct.

Provide a safe and secure environment for all children. and to create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image.

Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.

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.

Share information with other agencies as appropriate.

Contact telephone numbers-

Hampshire children's reception team -0300 555 1384

Local authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Mark Blackwell- 01962 876364

Ofsted 0300 123 1231

Out of Hours children's reception team- 0300 555 1373

Non-emergency police 101

Police- 999

Government helpline for extremism concerns 020 7340 7264

Types of abuse and particular procedures 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. 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.

Some 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.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the Preschool 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 other witnesses

Name of the person to whom any concern was 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/Deputy, 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 is allowed to 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.

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 a referral form needs to be initiated. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. The Preschool 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.

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

Physical abuse

Action needs to be taken 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. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face. Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries. These should also be logged and discussed with the Preschool manager. Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the Preschool Manager. If a child comes into the setting with a scratch/bruise or mark- a previous injury form will be completed and signed by the parent and keyworker.

Female genital mutilation

This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups and there is now more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in England including its effect on the child and any other siblings involved. Symptoms may include bleeding, painful areas, acute urinary retention, urinary infection, wound infection, septicaemia, and incontinence, vaginal and pelvic infections with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder as well as physiological concerns. If you have concerns about a child relating to this area, you should contact children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse.

Fabricated illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical

illness, e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

Procedure:

All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into pre-school or occur during time at the pre-school, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member. The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity, where felt appropriate. Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records

If there are queries regarding the injury, the local authority children's reception team will be notified in line with procedures set out by the Hampshire Safeguarding Children board and children's trust threshold chart.

Sexual abuse

Action needs to be taken if the staff member has witnessed an occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes.

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing the procedure stated later in this document under 'recording abuse suspicions' will be followed.

Procedure:

The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk

The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report

The observed instances will be reported to the Preschool manager or DSL.

The matter will be referred to the local authority children's social care team.

Emotional abuse

Action should be taken if the staff member has 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. This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Procedure:

The concern should be discussed with the Pre-school Manager/DSL

The concern will be discussed with the parent.

Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records.

An Assessment Framework form may need to be completed.

If there are queries regarding the circumstances the matter will be referred to Hampshire children's reception team.

Neglect

Action should be taken if the staff member has 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, starvation or failure to seek medical treatment, when required, on behalf of the child), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive. Signs may include a child persistently arriving at pre-school unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at pre-school in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at pre-school. They may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Procedure:

The concern will be discussed with the parent

Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records

An assessment form may need to be completed

If there are queries regarding the circumstances Hampshire children's reception team will be notified.

Staffing and volunteering-

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We only allow an adult who is employed by the pre-school 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 Preschool regardless of whether or not they have a DBS clearance.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive 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 LADO (local authority designated officer), the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

We have a named person within the preschool who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinates child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer (DSLO). The preschool DSLO liaises with Hampshire children's reception team and the local authority children's social care team, undertakes specific training, including a Designated lead safeguarding training course, and receives regular updates to developments within this field.

Designated safeguarding Lead Officer (DSLO) is: Kirsty Jones, Deputy Designated safeguarding lead officer is Lucy Fisher.

We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all 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

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.

This information is also stated within every member of staff's contract

We request a DBS check on all new members of staff and then sign them up to the DBS update service, this ensures that, with consent, we can regularly check the suitability of all staff to continue working with children. These checks are carried out

by the setting Management. Regular checks will be carried out no more than once per month and no less than 6 monthly. Ad hoc checks may also be carried out.

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 BEFORE a new member of staff commences employment with us. All students will have enhanced DBS checks conducted on them before their placement starts. Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised

We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006 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 preschool and 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.

All visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use.

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, Safeguarding training and any needs for further support.

The deployment of staff within the preschool 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 Hampshire Safeguarding children's board and children's trust threshold chart, 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 Hampshire children reception team and Hampshire safeguarding children's board and children's trust threshold chart.

Support to families

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

The Preschool 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 from the children's reception team 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.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who works on the preschool premises regardless of whether the allegation relates to the preschool 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 DSLO/deputy manager/manager of the other setting instead.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Ofsted and Hampshire children reception team will then be informed immediately for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

The LADO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance.

A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LADO, Ofsted, Hampshire safeguarding board) to determine how this will be handled.

The preschool will follow all instructions from the LADO, Ofsted, Hampshire children's reception team 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 LADO support and advice

The Preschool 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 via Hampshire children's reception 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 preschool 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 Preschool retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry.

Extremism – The Prevent Duty

Under the Counter-Terrorism 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).

This may be a cause for concern relating to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team (or other persons in the setting) or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child in their care.

E-Safety

Our Preschool is aware of the growth of internet use and the advantages this can bring. However, it is also aware of the dangers and strives to support children, staff and families in using the internet safely. Within the Preschool we do this by:

Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software on all devices and updating them regularly.

Using approved devices to record/photograph in the setting and ensuring children are supervised using internet devices.

We will support the children within our care, protect them 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 than the elements cover in this policy and should be used alongside other policies and procedures.

Our Preschool 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 Preschool Managers/DSL registered person at the earliest opportunity.

Guidance from – Hampshire safeguarding children board and children's trust threshold chart.

Policy adopted- January 2018