

We believe that the welfare, safety and protection of all children is paramount. To achieve this we will 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 (please refer to our equal opportunities policy Ref: 7 for further information). Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single child protection policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the other nursery policies and procedures.

Legal framework and definition of safeguarding

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- Keeping children safe in education 2021
- Data Protection Act 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015.

We aim to create a safe, secure and caring environment for all children by working in partnership with, parents/carers, other interested adults and the local community.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, for the sake of 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').

We recognise the need to be sensitive to all involved in any child protection issue, in particular the need to discuss concerns on a 'need to know' basis in order to maintain confidentiality.

Policy intention

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 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
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP).
- 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
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff
- 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 (see professional abuse policy Ref:2)
- 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 Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP).

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.

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Coventry Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 024 76788555

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 024 7683 2222

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 024 76975483

Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership: 02476 975477

Coventry Early Years Team: 02476 975451

West Midlands Police Switchboard: 0345 113 5000 or call 101

Local Police Child Abuse Investigation Team: 024 7653 9044

Government helpline for extremism concerns: 020 7340 7264

The nursery will maintain contact with Ofsted over any Child Protection issues. Ofsted can be contacted at the address and telephone number identified below:

**Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD**

0300 123 1231

Designated Person:

There will be a named staff member responsible for Safeguarding Children. This person will be identified to the staff, parents and visitors by displaying their name on the parent information board.

The Designated Safeguarding Leaders (DSL) at the setting are:

Sam Squires, Dawn Ablitt and Karen Thorne

The Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure that:

- They complete appropriate training (at least every 2 years) and keep up to date with any changes in legislation
- 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
- 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 regular students (over 16 years of age) 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 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 agency workers and regular visitors who spend time with the children will have an enhanced DBS checked and the manager will request this before allowing them access to the nursery. All visitors/contractors will still be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use (and mobile phones are kept securely in the Manager's office; not carried on their person) (see mobile phone policy Ref: policy no.23)
- All staff have access to a professional abuse policy (ref: policy no. 2) which covers whistleblowing and 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 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 such as whether anyone they live with in a household has committed an offence or been involved in an incident that means they are disqualified from working with children.
- 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 placed into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.
- All new staff, including any temporary staff, through their induction are made aware of the reporting process and their responsibilities in reporting any concerns. They will be made aware that they are responsible for liaising with the Children's Social Care/CSPC should they have any concerns. (see professional abuse policy ref: 2)
- All three of our management team are trained to be Designated Safeguarding Leads and at least one of them is always present/contactable during nursery opening hours.
- Staff knowledge in this area is monitored and updated

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the Nursery to ensure they have up to date knowledge and a greater understanding of child protection issues
- The Nursery Proprietor is kept fully updated on any concerns raised

Key Person

We operate a Key Person system, which assigns an individual member of staff to each child at the earliest opportunity following the child's enrolment into the Nursery.

It is the Key Person's role to:

- Encourage children to develop a positive self-image, by ensuring equality of access to opportunities that develop their independence
- Listen to and value what children say and do
- Encourage children to have the confidence to speak out, which enables them to build autonomy as well as the ability to resist inappropriate approaches
- Encourage children to be independent by providing opportunities that allow them to make choices and decisions whether or not to take part in all activities. In this way children are given opportunity to question the relevance and appropriateness of activities, which they can apply in other situations
- Work closely with families and the children, linking Nursery to home, which enables the development of sustainable relationships between the child, their peers, family and other adults. Families will be encouraged to work effectively with the Nursery to understand our commitment to the safety and well being of the children in our care
- Ensure they or any other person concerned for the child's welfare listen to the child, provide comfort and reassurance and report the concerns to the designated Safeguarding co-ordinator or the Nursery Manager
- Allow investigations to be carried out with sensitivity. Nursery Staff will never question children and pay careful attention to not making assumptions, drawing to conclusions or influencing the outcome of any investigation

Parents/Carers and Families

We recognise the value of working in partnership with parents/carers, to provide a safe and secure environment for children. To demonstrate our commitment to this we will ensure that:

- All parents/carers, including those with parental responsibility and interested adults will be made aware of our policy on Safeguarding Children during their initial enrolment.
- All parents are informed within their contract that we as an organisation working with children are obliged by law to report any suspicions of child abuse during their initial induction to the Nursery
- Any confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child
- 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 CSCP/ 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.

- The Nursery will take every step to build trusting and supportive relationships with families. We will endeavour to ensure they are made a part of any Child Protection Procedure to include CAF meetings and Core Group Meetings. The Nursery will continue to welcome families whilst investigations are being made.

Types of abuse

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.

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.

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 nursery manager or room leader.

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 nursery manager

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 nursery or occur during time at the nursery, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member
- The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury, the local authority multi agency safeguarding hub (MASH) will be notified in line with procedures set out by the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP).

Sexual abuse

Action needs to be taken under this heading if the staff member has witnessed occasion(s) 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 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 DSL
- The matter will be referred to the Local Authority MASH team.

Emotional abuse

Action should be taken under this heading 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 manager/room supervisor/DSL (as appropriate)
- The concern will be discussed with the parent
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records
- A Common Assessment Framework (CAF) may need to be completed
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to MASH.

Neglect

Action should be taken under this heading 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 and starvation and 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 nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness 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 nursery. 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
- A CAF may need to be completed

- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the matter will be referred to Children's Social Care.

The signs and symptoms of abuse listed above are not exhaustive. Where staff have a concern about the welfare of a child, they must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead so that guidance can be sought, and a referral made if necessary. Any individual who has concerns can also raise these directly with social care.

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Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record (supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)) of any observation or disclosure and include:

- Child's name
- 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 injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of an incident including any other witnesses
- 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 the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the 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 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 it is vital details are logged down accurately.

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with MASH and Ofsted, and/or a CAF needs to be initiated. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with the CSCP, the 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 a parent's or staff's supposed or actual behaviour.

Staff Guidance

All staff are expected to behave in a professional manner, particularly regarding the maintenance of confidentiality at all times. Confidential information should only be shared with external agencies and professionals where it is considered to be necessary, in order to protect children.

Staff are expected to act in an appropriate way towards children and adults, treating them with the same respect and dignity that they would expect to be treated themselves.

All individuals, children, and adults, should be spoken to in an appropriate manner. It is unacceptable for shouting or inappropriate comments to be made about any individual.

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 (policy ref: 37)

Our nursery 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 nursery we do this by:

- Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software on all devices and updating them regularly
- Never emailing personal or financial information
- Reporting emails with inappropriate content to the internet watch foundation (IWF www.iwf.org.uk/)
- Ensuring content blockers and filters are on our computers, laptops and any mobile devices
- Ensuring children are supervised using internet devices
- Talking to children about 'stranger danger' and deciding who is a stranger and who is not, comparing people in real life situations to online 'friends'
- When using Skype and FaceTime (where applicable) discussing with the children what they would do if someone they did not know tried to contact them