

## Safeguarding Policy

At Enchanted Day Nursery, we promote positive relationships with children and their families, which enables children to feel safe and secure, ensuring their individual needs are met. Therefore, it is our duty of care and responsibility that all efforts are made to safeguard children from potential abuse or actual harm. Children have a right to be cared for and protected and protecting them is everyone's responsibility (Hertfordshire safeguarding children's board). If any person caring for a child within the setting has a cause for concern for their welfare, it is their duty to inform the designated safeguarding officers (Natalie Duncan or Clair Davison) immediately.

### At Enchanted Day Nursery we:

- Ensure children are never placed at risk whilst in our care
- Ensure that staff are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse and that each practitioner has adequate training
- Ensure any person caring or in contact with children in the setting familiarise themselves with our safeguarding and child protection policies.
- Create a safe, fun and caring environment where children can thrive and their needs are met
- Ensure we follow a strict safe recruitment procedure
- Work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children.
- Regularly review and update this policy.

### Statutory Safeguarding Framework

Settings must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and are required to have procedures in place outlining ways in which to respond to safeguarding issues if they believe a child is being abused or at harm of being abused. These procedures must also outline and cover what to do if a staff member is accused or suspected of abuse or harm to a child.

### Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

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

## ***(Working together to safeguard children 2015)***

Due to the many hours of care our practitioners provide at Enchanted Day Nursery, staff will often be the first people to sense there may be an issue regarding a child's welfare or the first point of contact for a child to disclose information regarding abuse. All staff will understand their roles in such situations and will follow our procedures in reporting this information by:

- Remaining calm and reassuring the child as they disclose information
- Refraining from asking leading questions, allowing the child to talk openly
- Do not make promises of confidentiality – as the information will have to be referred on to other professionals
- Grab the nearest pen and paper to record exactly what the child is saying (including the child's name, age of child/DOB, date and time of observation, exact words spoken by child, types of injuries or marks seen, exact observation of any incident including other witnesses, name of the person reporting incident and any other person present at the time)
- Report the discussion to the designated safeguarding officer immediately

It is then the designated officer's role to liaise with other professionals, as well as coordinating action within the nursery. The designated officer receives appropriate training and refreshes this annually.

## **Signs and Symptoms of Abuse**

Our staff undergo regular safeguarding training, to ensure that they are alert to any issues of concern regarding a child's life at home or elsewhere. This training enables staff to identify signs of abuse, so a response can be taken at the earliest opportunity. The four types of abuse and their signs staff are made aware to look out are:

**Physical Abuse** - This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning/scalding, drowning/suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. Signs of physical abuse may involve:

- Bruises in unusual places
- Bite marks
- Fractures/broken bones
- Burns or scalds
- Frequent injuries with no reasonable explanation
- A child being given something to purposefully harm them
- Fearful/flinching behaviour
- Withdrawal from physical contact



**Emotional Abuse** - This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Signs of emotional abuse may involve:

- Delayed language development/sudden speech disorder
- Frightened and withdrawn behaviour
- Low self-esteem and excessive lack of confidence
- Need for approval
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Over reaction if mistake made
- Fear of new situations

**Sexual Abuse** - This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This involves physical contact as well as non-contact activities e.g. involving children in looking at sexual images. Signs of sexual abuse may involve:

- Age-inappropriate knowledge and behaviour
- Unwillingness to undress in front of others – poor trust in adults
- Damage or soreness to genitals or anus
- Change in behaviour – socially withdrawn/aggressive

**Neglect** - This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Signs of neglect may involve:

- The child always being hungry or tired
- The child having poor hygiene
- Developmental milestones being missed without reason
- The child not receiving medical attention when needed
- The child being withdrawn
- Inappropriate clothing

## Female Genital Mutilation

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence (NSPCC), it involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue and hence interferes with the natural function of girls' and women's bodies. Our staff at Enchanted Day Nursery are trained to recognise the signs of FGM, which could vary from:

- prolonged absences
- bleeding
- infections
- pain in sitting/walking
- withdrawn behaviour
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom due to difficulties urinating

The same procedure is in place for reporting FGM, as any other type of abuse.

Practitioners, students or volunteers may find '*what to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners*' helpful.

## Behaviour

At Enchanted Day Nursery we work closely with parents/carers to ensure a consistent approach when dealing with behaviour. We encourage the children to share and respect others, learning to understand and respond to appropriate boundaries positively. Under no circumstance will physical or corporate punishment or threat of these, be used against a child.

## 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.

Parents should please 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.

## Suitable person – (please also see recruitment policy)



Enchanted Day Nursery has effective systems in place to ensure that staff caring for children within the setting are suitable to fulfil their roles. We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory requirements, to ensure a suitable vetting process for all staff, which includes a minimum of two references, a copy of qualifications and form of identity. Before employment, all staff undergo an enhanced DBS (disclosure and barring service) check, where the DBS update service can be used to re-check staff's suitability to work with children. Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or warnings prior to their employment and are informed that any position of employment within the nursery is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. If a member of staff has been dismissed or left the setting first, because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk, it is the managers duty to make a referral to the DBS, to meet their responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

## **Disqualified by Association**

All staff working within Enchanted Day Nursery are given opportunities to declare whether they are living in the same household as another person who is disqualified, prior to their employment. Regular written confirmation of this is obtained and staff are asked to inform management if they are aware of any changes to these circumstances. If a staff member informs us of disqualification against somebody they share residence with, it is our duty to inform Ofsted, providing relevant information within 14 days of receiving the information. We will then seek advice from LADO, which may involve a risk assessment being put into place.

## **Maintaining records and information sharing**

We understand that it is not compulsory to attend sessions at Enchanted Day Nursery, however under our safeguarding responsibilities, we make note of any absences and monitor patterns that may cause concern for the welfare of a child (see Prevent Duty policy). If a child does not attend their session or will be absent for a period of time, we ask the parent/carer to contact the nursery manager on the same day or when convenient, with reasons why. If the child has been absent from their sessions for a period of time with no explanation, the nursery manager will contact the parent/carer with a follow up call.

If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed on the same day the report was made, unless the guidance from the local safeguarding children's board does not allow this e.g. information shared will be harmful to the child's welfare or the parent/carer is the likely abuser. All suspicions and enquiries are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment and service provision (Working together to safeguard children 2015). Any information is shared in line with guidance from the LSCB.

## **Allegations against staff**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, it must be reported to the designated person and no-one else (see whistleblowing policy). If this person is the subject of the allegation, it should be reported to the nursery director or other designated officer. It is then the designated safeguarding officer's decision as to whether the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) must be informed. Note: Allegations can be made by staff, children, parents, other professionals, members of the public.

The LADO must be informed within one working day of any allegation where a member of staff or volunteer has:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

The LADO will provide advice and guidance to the manager of the setting in managing the link with other professionals as required including police, children's services and Ofsted. They will monitor the progress of the case but will not investigate the case.

The designated person will review the information provided and decide whether the allegation meets the thresholds stated above. The LADO referral form may be completed as part of the review process to ascertain if the allegation meets the thresholds, which will provide evidence to support decision-making. Any enquiries/external investigations/interviews that the manager undertakes will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities.

It will then be the designated person's job to contact Ofsted informing them of any allegations that have been received and updating them with any actions taken. If there are founded allegations, they will also need to inform the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) and police, as well as terminating employment. The nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff relating to founded allegations following an inquiry. Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated to the person under investigation.

## **Mobile phones and cameras**

Enchanted Day Nursery implements a strict no-mobile/camera policy. There will be numerous signs to promote this and all visitors and parents to the nursery are asked to respect this procedure and anyone seen with a mobile or camera on the premises will be politely asked to put it away or leave the premises. Staff are not permitted to have their mobile phones on them during working hours and will be asked to keep these locked away in the staff room, out of reach of the children and turned off during their shift.



## Students/volunteers and visitors

Student and volunteers undergo enhanced DBS checks prior to starting their placement with us and are never left unsupervised with the children. They will also undergo induction training before starting at Enchanted Day Nursery, understanding their roles and responsibilities and having access to policies and procedures, including health and safety and safeguarding. Students and volunteers are never used in ratios or to cover staffing within Enchanted Day Nursery. Visitors to the nursery are asked to sign the visitor's book in the main lobby and are supervised by a member of staff throughout their stay in the setting. Staff within the setting must have sufficient use and understanding of English, to ensure they understand instructions and are able to report any concerns to the designated person.

## Contact Information:

Ofsted – 0300 123 1231

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 01992 555420

Children Services – 0300 123 4043

FGM helpline – 0800 028 3550

Please see also the Recognise, Respond and Refer posters displayed around the nursery