

# Little Fishes Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff and Prevent of Duty (Extremism, Radicalism and British Values)

## **1. Procedures**

- The designated member of staff who co-ordinates child protection issues is Mrs Judith Parish. She is overseen by the Little Fishes Management Committee.
- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures, by having a policy folder available on the notice board in the setting.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of the children.
- Applicants for posts at Little Fishes are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed that “enhanced disclosure” checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service must be carried out 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.
- All permanent applicants for work within the pre-school will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide two references. They will also need to provide confirmation of their right to work in the UK.
- All permanent appointments will be subject to a probationary period of half a term and will not be confirmed unless the pre-school is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with the children.
- At Little Fishes, we abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Disclosure and Barring Service checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at Little Fishes or has access to the children.
- Volunteers and students do not work unsupervised.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children, whether received before or during their employment with us.
- We record information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
  - The Disclosure and Barring Service reference number (or CRB)
  - The date the disclosure was obtained; and
  - Details of who obtained it.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We record the details of visitors to the setting using Envoy on the iPad. We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. The front door remains locked during the session, with the key easily accessible to staff, but not children. The garden gates are kept bolted and the outside area is always supervised, when there are

children outside. When children arrive or leave, there is a member of staff on duty at the door to prevent children leaving unaccompanied and unauthorised people entering the premises.

- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.

## **2. Responding to suspicions of abuse**

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through
  - significant changes in behaviour;
  - deterioration in their general well-being;
  - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
  - changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play;
  - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
  - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or maybe victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- We actively protect children and teach them to value British Values by recognising and valuing the universal uniqueness of all individuals and we are mindful to instil learning and resilience to protect children against the development of extremist and radicalised thinking and behaviour.
- Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the manager / acting manager. This information is then stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases, this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children. We use the strategy TED (Tell, Explain, Describe)
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- When making a referral to children's social care or other appropriate agencies, we use the detailed procedures and reporting format contained in "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – summary" booklet by DfES publications.

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

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, that member of staff:
  - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action; (The child will be helped to understand that they are valued and respected and not at fault or blame.)
  - does not question the child; Use TED (Tell, Explain, Describe)
  - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
    - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
    - the exact words spoken by the child, as far as possible;
    - describing objectively the child's behaviour/ appearance without comment, judgement, interpretation or speculation;
    - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time;
    - the names of any other person present at the time;
    - the name, age and address of the child.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in a confidential safeguarding file which is kept secure and confidential with restricted access for authorised personnel only – the pre-school Manager and Management Committee.
- We adhere to the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulations for recording and sharing concerns.

### **Making a referral to the local authority social care team**

- The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication Safeguarding Children contains procedures for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral. This is based on 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006-updated 2015).
- We keep a copy of this document alongside procedures set down by our Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **3. Informing parents**

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents where we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral is made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.
- If parents are unable to allay any legitimate anxieties that the pre-school may have then these matters will be notified to Social services.
- In exceptional circumstances, as outlined above, Social Services will be the first point of reference or in cases where the pre-school consider the child to be in danger or at risk of harm the police will be called for immediate assistance.

### **4. Liaison with other agencies**

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues. See paragraph 12 for Contact Numbers. In an emergency, this enables Little Fishes and social services to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of the children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff as soon as reasonably possible, but within 14 days. Tel: 0300 123 1231
- The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) may be contacted on  
NSPCC helpline: 0800 800 5000 [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)  
Childline: 0800 1111
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social care department, we act within the area's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

### **5. Allegations against staff**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within Little Fishes, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within Little Fishes has abused a child, which includes:
  - inappropriate sexual comments
  - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities or inappropriate sharing of images.

- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place. We do this by first recording the details of any such alleged incident. This is carried out immediately by the /Manager or whoever the Manager has appointed in charge in her absence. If the allegation is made against the pre-school Manager the Chairperson or a suitably appointed committee member will be required to immediately record details of the allegation.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social care department to investigate. To report a concern of this nature, contact

Barbara Piddington

Tel: 01962 876364

Email: [Barbara.piddington@hants.gov.uk](mailto:Barbara.piddington@hants.gov.uk)

The Safeguarding Unit  
 Children's Services Department  
 Clarendon House  
 Monarch Way  
 Winchester  
 SO22 5PW

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/contact-cs/childrens-services-allegations.htm>

- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted Tel: 0300 123 1231 and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the Manager and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the Manager will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

## 6. Disciplinary action

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the DBS disclosure service.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

DBS customer services PO Box 3961, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 4HF

Email: [customerservices@dbb.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@dbb.gsi.gov.uk)

DBS helpline: 03000 200 190

## **7. Training**

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure the designated person receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.
- Qualified DBS disclosed members of our pre-school are the only members of staff allowed to take a child to the toilet. No adult, other than appointed individuals, will be allowed either to take a child to the toilet or to be left alone with them.
- Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and learning ways to express their own feelings. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist/reject inappropriate approaches.

## **8. Planning**

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. Where possible, no child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

## **9. Curriculum**

We introduce the key elements of keeping safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children,

- so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- Within Little Fishes, we create a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

## **10. Confidentiality**

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff/key person and Manager

- Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

## **11. Support to families**

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents Little Fishes role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.

- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to Little Fishes designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

## 12. Contact Numbers

If you think a child might be in danger, contact Hampshire Social Services as soon as possible. To report a concern, use the inter agency referral form (IARF). For urgent enquiries phone the Professionals Line.

**Professionals Line:** 01329 225379 A direct line to Social workers 8.30am – 5.00pm.

**For Parents and carers:** contact Hantsdirect on 0300 555 1384 (8.30am – 5.00pm) or email [childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk)

At all other times (all through the night, at weekends and over Bank Holidays), contact the **out of hours Emergency Service** on 0300 555 1373 If this line is engaged leave name and number on answer phone and they will call back as quickly as possible.

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Text: 88858 / Tel:0808 800 5000

OFSTED: 0300 123 1231; [enquires@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquires@ofsted.gov.uk)

## 13. Legal Framework

### Primary legislation

- ♣ The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)
- ♣ Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2015)
- ♣ Safeguarding: Ofsted Inspections and Safeguarding from (Sept. 2015)
- ♣ Information Sharing (2015)
- ♣ What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015)
- ♣ Children Act (1989 s47)
- ♣ Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)
- ♣ Protection of Children Act (1999)
- ♣ The Children Act (2004)
- ♣ Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- ♣ Human Right Act (1998)

## **Secondary legislation**

- ♣ Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- ♣ Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- ♣ Equalities Act (2010)
- ♣ Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
- ♣ Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (amendment) Act 2012

## **Further Guidance**

- ♣ Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG 2010-under revision 2012-updated 2015)
- ♣ What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006-updated 2015)
- ♣ Every Child Matters – Green Paper (2003)
- ♣ Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- ♣ The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- ♣ Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- ♣ Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- ♣ Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003)
- ♣ Adoption and Children’s Act (2002)
- ♣ Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008-updated 2015)
- ♣ Independent Safeguarding Authority: [www.isa.gov.org.uk](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk).
- ♣ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. UK (1991).

## **Useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publication**

- ♣ Safeguarding Children (2010)

## **Useful resources and websites**

What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused – summary and poster available to download from: <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFES-043202006>

South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Group [www.online-procedures.co.uk/swcpp/](http://www.online-procedures.co.uk/swcpp/) Ofsted [www.ofsted.gov.uk/](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/) Whistleblowing hotline [www.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-us/whistleblower-hotline](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-us/whistleblower-hotline)  
Safe Network [www.safenetwork.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx)

*This policy is reviewed and updated (if necessary) every September at a meeting of Little Fishes Nursery School.*