



Registered Charity No.: 1155711

## **Safeguarding Children Child Protection Policy**

### **Aim**

Our Pre-School's prime responsibility is the welfare and wellbeing of all children in our care. We are committed to:

- Building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.
- Responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur.
- Promoting awareness of child abuse issues through our training.
- Complying with the local child protection procedures approved by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) and making sure that all adults working with and looking after children are able to put the procedures into practice.

### **Building a 'Culture of Safety' and Promoting Awareness**

#### *Designated Safeguarding Lead*

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who co-ordinates child protection issues is Wendy Pearch. Our deputy DSL is Hayley Dawson. Our DSL has attended modules one and two of the Safeguarding Children Foundation Training, Signs of Safety and New to Role training and will update this regularly as required. The Deputy DSL will support the DSL to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.

The role and responsibilities of the DSL are:

- To liaise with the Local Authority and other agencies with regard to child protection issues.
- To ensure the Pre-School meets the safeguarding and welfare requirements (Section 3, Statutory Framework for the EYFS).
- To ensure policies are up to date and in line with Surrey Area Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) guidance and procedures.
- To collate information when there are concerns about a child.
- To provide advice, support and guidance on an on-going basis to the staff team.
- To ensure that there is an adequate e-safety policy in place.

### **The Prevent Duty**

We are aware that, to be effective and lawful, we must meet specific legal duties including those arising from the Prevent Duty. This sets out the need for 'British/Fundamental Values' to help everyone live in safe and welcoming communities where they feel they belong. These British Values are defined as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty and mutual respect
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

We will ensure that we share these values and that they are understood and applied by all staff, volunteers and, where appropriate, parents. We will ensure that:

- We focus on children's personal, social and emotional development, ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children, value other's views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.
- We are alert to harmful behaviours by influential adults in the child's life. This may include discriminatory and/or extremist discussions between parents, family and/or staff members.
- We take action when we observe behaviour of concern.
- We are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified.
- We assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism and work in partnership with local partners such as the police, Prevent Co-Ordinators and the LSCB to take account of local risks, respond appropriately and make referrals if necessary if there are any concerns.

### **Staffing and Volunteering**

- Applicants for posts within the Pre-School are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service before posts can be confirmed to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the Pre-School or has access to the children. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- The Pre-School asks all members of staff to subscribe to the update service once their DBS has been received or renewed (the cost of this is reimbursed by Pre-School). The DBS can then be checked by Pre-School at any time.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including the criminal records disclosure reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it.
- All staff and volunteers are informed 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).
- All staff and volunteers are required to notify the Manager or Committee Chair immediately if anyone in their household (including family members, lodgers, partners etc.) has any relevant convictions, court orders, reprimands and warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision or have had orders made in relation to care of their children. Staff sign a declaration during every supervision and complete a Staff Suitability Self-Declaration Form annually.
- We ensure that safeguarding children and child protection are covered in our induction for staff and volunteers and are reviewed at staff meetings. We make staff aware that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken.

- All staff are required to attend safeguarding children training every three years. This ensures that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse (including domestic abuse), sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We access the Surrey Area Safeguarding Children Board Manual of Child Protection procedures online at [www.surreyscb.procedures.org.uk](http://www.surreyscb.procedures.org.uk) and make sure that all adults working with and looking after children are able to put the procedures into practice.
- Staff have regular supervision sessions with the DSL / Deputy DSL, to foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which includes the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.
- We ensure that we have a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff are given this at induction and, when updated, are issued with an electronic copy.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the Pre-School.
- We have a duty of care to be contactable during times when the Pre-School is closed e.g. during holidays. Our DSL/Deputy DSL will take the Pre-School mobile phone home during holidays and our administrator will still be contactable via email.
- We have a Whistleblowing Policy, which all staff are required to read and sign. Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the DSL, Manager, Committee Chair or relevant agency. Whistleblowing is acknowledged as an important aspect of safeguarding where staff, volunteers and students are encouraged to share genuine concerns.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act 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 notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- We have security measures in place to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Pre-School, and so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Pre-School.
- Volunteers will not work with children unsupervised. This includes volunteer visitors and any paid visitors.
- All staff are required to comply with our Code of Conduct which provides clear guidelines, including relationships with Pre-School families and social networking.

### **Planning for Safeguarding**

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one to one situation without being visible to others.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided (see Staffing and Employment Policy).
- Staff will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. Only staff who have been registered as 'a suitable person' (i.e. their enhanced DBS disclosure has been received) will take children to the toilet.

- Staff, volunteers and visitors must leave their mobile phones in the office at all times. Staff are only allowed to use their mobile phone during the lunch time period and this should be done inside the office. Staff should not use their personal mobile phone to contact parents, except in the event of an emergency. Staff are not permitted to use their mobile phones to take images, video or audio of any child attending the Pre-School.
- Staff may only photograph children using the Pre-School devices. Images are not taken in the toilet/changing area (see Photographic Images of Children policy).
- The Accident book is reviewed by the Manager at the end of each term and the Health and Safety Rep on the Management Committee annually, or more often if considered necessary.

### **Early Years Curriculum**

- We introduce key elements of safeguarding children into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe. We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.
- We create within our Pre-School a culture of value and respect for individuals having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background, thereby encouraging children to develop a positive self-image. We ensure that it is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.
- We promote the right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches. We help them to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- We work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

### **How We Respond to Concerns**

#### *Responding to suspicions of abuse*

- We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" (HMG 2015).
- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms; physical, emotional (including domestic abuse), sexual and neglect. When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through
  - Significant changes in their behaviour;
  - Deterioration in their general well-being;
  - Their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say
  - 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 Pre-School

- We consider factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care department.
- 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 or children, such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation that may affect, or may have affected, children attending our Pre-School.
- 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 may be 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.
- The DSL must inform the Deputy DSL at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern. However, this should not delay any referrals being made to the children's social worker services, the LADO, Ofsted or Riddor.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedure below: -
  - The member of staff will use an Incident/Occurrence form to make a dated record of the details of the concern at the earliest opportunity, including dates, time and location of disclosure and any potential witnesses. The member of staff discusses what to do with the DSL. The information is stored confidentially in the AM or PM Incident Folder under the individual child's name. If there is a concern about a child we will normally share these concerns with parents/carers. However, if sharing these concerns puts the child at risk of significant or further harm we will seek advice from the Surrey Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). If a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made by the DSL in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral the staff are aware that, because safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, that they can make a referral themselves.
  - Staff must remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so they should not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate themselves.
  - All suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Surrey Area Safeguarding Children Committee.

### *Disclosures*

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

- Offers reassurance to the child.
- Takes the disclosure seriously.
- Listens to the child.

- Gives reassurance that she or he will take action and they are unable to keep it a secret.
- Reassures the child that they are not at fault.

The member of staff does not question the child or ask leading questions. The member of staff must not make promises that they cannot keep, jump to conclusions, speculate or accuse anybody.

*Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures*

Staff use an Incident/Occurrence form to make a record of:

- The child's name and the age of the child.
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure.
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure.
- The exact words spoken by the child as far as possible.
- 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 Incident/Occurrence forms are signed and dated and will be kept in the AM or PM Incident Folder under the individual child's name and will not be accessible to people other than the DSL, deputy DSL, Manager, Chair and other members of staff as appropriate.

The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity, and within one working day.

*Informing parents; parents are normally the first point of contact*

If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, the child's parents or legal guardian are informed by the Pre-School's DSL at the same time as the report is made, unless the guidance of the Surrey Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 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 a suspect in the alleged abuse, and then the investigating officers will inform parents.

If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk the designated person should seek advice from children's social services about whether or not to advise parents beforehand and should record and follow the advice given.

*Referring a child*

If we are not sure whether we should refer a child, advice can be sought from the Surrey Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by calling 0300 470 9100. If a referral is required, the information is recorded on the MASH online referral form and emailed to the team.

Mash responds to initial enquiries about children, young people and adults. MASH is based at Guildford Police Station and combines Children's Service social workers, Adult's Service social workers and health and police staff.

If it is an emergency and / or a child is at immediate risk of significant harm the Police should be contacted.

**MASH 0300 470 9100 (Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm)**

**Out of hours contact details 01483 517898 (Emergency Duty Team)**

After a referral by telephone, the following will be applied:

- Referrals must be confirmed in writing within 48 hours using the Multi-Agency Referral Form, including a body map where appropriate. To ensure that the latest form is used, we

download it from: [www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding), then click on 'guidance for professionals'.

- If a referral is made to MASH, we act within the Surrey Area Safeguarding Children Board guidelines in deciding whether we should inform the child's parents at the same time.
- MASH will contact us to inform us of action they have taken, and we can refer back to them if necessary. If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the Surrey Area Safeguarding Children Board escalation process.

#### *Allegations against staff*

- We ensure that all parents and staff know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the Pre-School, which may include an allegation of abuse (see our Complaints Policy).
- We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working with or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). We will also inform Ofsted of any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. This will be done at the earliest opportunity, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- We will ensure that we maintain on-going contact and work with Ofsted and individual social workers within the Child Assessment Team. The DSL will also attend Child Protection Conferences, Core/Looked-After Meetings and court proceedings and provide written reports. The Pre-School will also liaise with other professionals; health visitor, doctor, clinical and educational psychologists and therapists and implement an Individual Education Plan/Behaviour Management Plan if appropriate.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteers or any other person working on the premises 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 respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident on an Incident/Occurrence form which is filed in the staff member's individual folder. A copy of the Incident/Occurrence form is placed in the AM or PM Incident Folder under the name of the individual child. If a member of staff makes a disclosure about another member of staff, a copy of the Incident/Occurrence form is filed in both staff folders. If a parent/carer makes a disclosure, the Incident/Occurrence form is filed under the child's name in the AM or PM Incident Folder. If the allegation relates to the Manager, or the DSL, then the Committee Chair must be informed.
- If there is an allegation against a member of staff, we inform Surrey County Council's Local Authority Child Protection Designated Officer (LADO) on:

0300 123 1610 (select option 4 – safeguarding children unit, then select option 3 – LADO) or  
0300 123 1650 (select option 3)

or by

E-mail: [LADO@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@surreycc.gov.uk) or secure email: [LADO@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk)

- If there is an allegation against a member of staff, then the Manager will speak to the member of staff and explain that the allegations will be investigated. It is the Manager's

responsibility to gather information where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, not the DSL. The Manager will need to work in collaboration with the LADO.

- It is the Committee Chair's responsibility to gather information and deal with the investigation, if the allegation is against the Manager or the DSL. The Committee Chair will need to work in collaboration with the LADO.
- If there are more allegations after speaking to the Surrey County Council LADO, or if more advice is needed then the Early Years and Childcare Service's named person for allegations against adults working with children can be contacted on 01372 833826.
- Ofsted must be informed as soon as reasonably possible and submit a written report at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. If this requirement is not met and there is not a reasonable excuse, then an offence has been committed. To report an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer to Ofsted telephone 0300 1234 666.
- We follow the guidance of the Surrey Area Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child. We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social service department to investigate.
- When the Committee, Manager and social care team agree that it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff will be suspended on full pay 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.
- The LADO should normally be informed before the child's parents, as informing parents could impede the disciplinary or investigative process. However, if there is a reason for parents to know sooner, such as a child needing medical treatment or being harmed, then the parents should be informed first.
- The member of staff should be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the process. If the member of staff has been suspended, they should be kept up to date about events in the workplace, by the Manager or Committee Chair. The member of staff should not contact or be contacted by members of the Pre-School team, as this may impede the investigative process.
- The member of staff should be kept informed of progress, outcome and implications of any disciplinary or related process.
- If we dismiss or remove a member of staff/volunteer from working at our Pre-School because they have engaged in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), so that individuals who pose a threat to children can be identified and barred from working with these groups. If the member of staff resigns during an investigation or before they are dismissed, we must still inform the DBS.

#### *Support to Families*

- The Pre-School believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- The Pre-School makes clear to parents its role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local social services department. A copy of our Safeguarding Children Policy is available in the Parent Information Folder and on our website.

- The Pre-School continues 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 the Pre-School's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the 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 our Confidentiality and Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Surrey Area Safeguarding Children Board.

**This policy has been adopted by St Martin's Pre-School Committee:**

Date:	12 <sup>th</sup> June 2018
Signed:	
Role of signatory:	Committee Chair