

# **Little Explorers**

## **1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection**

(including managing allegations of abuse against staff)

### **Policy statement.**

Our Setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

### **Procedures**

We carry the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Alliance Safeguarding Children policy.

#### **Key commitment 1**

Little Explorers is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

## Staff and volunteers..

- Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is:.....
- Our designated officer ( a member of management) who oversees this work is:.....

We ensure all staff are trained to understand our Safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.

All staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.

Applicants for posts with in the setting 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 criminal records Bureau before posts can be confirmed.

Where applications are rejected because of obtaining information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and challenge any incorrect information.

We abide by Ofsted requirements in respects of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.

At Little Explorers no Volunteers work unsupervised.

We Record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:

- the criminal records disclosure reference number;
- the date it was obtained
- name of who obtained it.

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 abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.

We have procedures in place to record visitors to the setting.

We take security steps to ensure we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

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

## Key commitment 2

Little Explorers is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incident or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down 'what to do if you're worried about a child is being abused'

### 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 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 (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 drug and alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parents learning disability.

We Little Explorers 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 of 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 may be victims of child trafficking. While this is less likely to affect young children in our care, we maybe come aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.

Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us maybe affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below 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 a member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person' the information is stored in the child's personal file.

We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department M.A.S.H team (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub ) and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases this may mean the Police or another agency identified by M.A.S.H.

We take care not to influence the outcome through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of the children.

We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the children's 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 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 only done where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

### **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 that observes signs and signals which are 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 staff member will;

- Listen to the child, offer reassurance and gives assurance that he or she will take action;

- does not question the child

- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes; date and time 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 the time and date; and the name of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidential

The Member staff acting as the designated person is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.

Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board

### **Informing Parents**

Parents are normally the first port of contact. We discuss any concerns with the parent to gain their view of events, unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.

We inform parents when we make record of concerns on their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion with them regarding a concern.

If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time the referral will be made, except where 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 likely to be the abuser. In these cases the social worker will inform the parents.

### **Liaison with other agencies**

We work with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.

We have the current version of 'What to do if you're worried about a child being abused' available for parents and staff and ensure that all staff are familiar with what they have to do if they have concerns.

We have procedures in place for contacting the Local authority regarding any child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and children's social care to work together.

We notify the registration authority (OSFTED) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to ofsted are made as soon as reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

Contact details for the Local Society for the prevention of cruelty to children are also kept.

### **Allegations against a staff member.**

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour and actions of staff members or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include allegations of abuse.

We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of staff or any other person working with the children, which includes;

- inappropriate sexual comments
- excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.

Little Explorers 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 anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Designated officer (LADO) to investigate Rosian Rafferty or Pat Molloy on 0161 603 4503

We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures have been 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 management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the directors/manager will suspend the member of staff, 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 staff, as well as the children and families throughout the process.

### **Disciplinary action**

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused for concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups) can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

### **Key commitment 3**

Little Explorers is committed to Promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young people, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

## **Training**

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse , sexual abuse and neglect and they are aware of the Local authority guidelines for making referrals.

We ensure that designated persons 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 any concerns they may have about the provision.

## **Planning**

The layout of the rooms allow for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one to one situation without being visible to others.

## **Curriculum**

We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of children , so that they may grow to be strong,

resilient and listened to and so they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe

We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, language spoken at home, cultural and social background.

We ensure that this is carried out developmentally appropriate for the children.

### **Confidentiality**

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared with only those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Board.

### **Support to Families**

We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.

We make it clear to parents our 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 children's social care team. We will continue to welcome the child and the family while 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 into relation to the setting's 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.

## **Legal Framework**

### Primary legislation

Children Act (1989)

protection of Children Act (1999)

Data Protection Act(1998)

The Children Act (Every Child Matters)

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

### Secondary Legislation

Sexual offences Act (2003)

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

Equalities Act (2010)

Data Protection Act (1998)

### Further guidance

What to do if you're worried about a child being abused (March 2015).

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Explorers Nursery held on 30/04/15

Date to be Reviewed 30/04/16

signed on behalf.....

Role of signatory.....

## 1.3 Looked After Children

### Policy statement

Little Explorers Nursery are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity to all children and their families. All staff in our provision are committed to doing all they can to enable 'Looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Children become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most looked after children will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with relatives or even been placed back in their home with their natural parent(s).

We recognise children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical , emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their social well-being. Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers that work outside the home; however, there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who work outside the

home; however when there are instances where this does occur Little Explorers Nursery maintains it is not appropriate for a looked after child to be placed in a day care setting in addition to a foster placement.

We place the emphasis on promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on two important concepts, attachment and resilience. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives, as the foundation of resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and enable the development of positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made among them.

## **Principles**

The term 'looked after child' denotes a child current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.

We do not offer placements for children who have just been placed into care they must have secured a close attachment to the carer before we offer placement , where a child who has attended our setting before being placed into care and is being cared for by a local foster carer , we shall continue to offer the placement for the child.

The designated person for the looked after child is the designated child protection co-ordinator.

Every child is allocated a key person as they start and this is no different for a looked after child, the designated person makes sure the key person has all the relevant information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.

The designated person or the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensure the appropriate information is gained and shared.

The setting recognises the role of the local authority children's social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with the regard to the birth parents or foster carer's role in relation to the setting, without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.

At the start of the setting there is a professionals meeting to determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care-plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This care plan is reviewed on a regular basis.

The care plan needs to consider issues for the child such as:

1. their emotional needs
2. how many emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed.

3. their sense of self, culture, language(s) and identity-and how this is to be supported;
- 4.their need for sociability and friendship
- 5.their interest and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
- 6.how many special needs will be supported

In addition the care plan will also consider:

how information will be shared with the foster carer and the local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored:

- what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for the supervised contact.
- what written reports are required.

The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same amount of time as any other child, with the foster carer taking place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important 'proximity' stage is followed until it is clearly visible that the child has formed a sufficient relationship with his/her key person for them to act as a 'secure base' to allow gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without cause further stress or anxiety to the child.

In the first two weeks after the settling in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.

Further observations about communication , interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation stage prime and specific areas of learning and development.

Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.

if the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker in according to the setting safeguarding children procedure.

Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.

The transition to school will be handled sensitively . The designated person and/or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parent(s)

For further guidance

Guidance on the education of children and young people in public care (dfce 2000)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Explorers Nursery.

Held on 5/5/2015

Review date 5/5/2016

signed on behalf.....

Name of signatory.....

Role of signatory.....



