



Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

At Little Den we are committed to the protection and safety of all the children in our care. Our Pre-School 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 PLA Safeguarding Children Policy.

Procedure

Key Commitment 1

The Alliance 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 Lead Practitioner who coordinates child protection issues is Emma Reeves and the Deputy Safeguarding Practitioner is Priya Edwards.
- The Lead Safeguarding Practitioners Role is to:
 - Ensure that the Safeguarding procedures are followed in the Pre-School and attend Lead Practitioner Safeguarding Network Meetings;
 - Ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures;
 - Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided for all staff;
 - Develop effective working partnerships with other agencies and services;
 - Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g. refer to Local Authority Children's Care Department);
 - Liaise with Child Protection teams over suspected cases of abuse;
 - Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked 'strictly confidential';
 - Submit reports to, and attend, Safeguarding Children conferences;
 - Ensure that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as at risk;
 - Provide guidance to parents and children.
 - Provide supervision for all staff.
 - Notify OFSTED about any allegations of serious harm or abuse against a child in the care of the Pre-School.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand and follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and have an up-to-date knowledge of them. We ensure that parents are aware of our policies and procedures.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- 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 DBS 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 Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the Pre-School or has access to the children.
- Explanations will be sought in the case of unexplained gaps in their employment history, or if they have moved rapidly from one job to another.
- Appointments will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the Pre-School is confident that the applicant can safely be trusted with children.
- We record staff qualifications, disclosure reference numbers and date of disclosure.
- We inform staff that they must 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.
- Volunteers and students do not work unsupervised.
- 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 have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Pre-School and the collection of children.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Pre-School so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Children are only photographed or filmed to record their development or participation in an event organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to any visual images we have taken of their child.

Key commitment 2

The Alliance is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents 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).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, their play, unexplained bruising or marks.



- 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 that very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others and actively work to build children's resilience to radicalisation by promoting "Fundamental British Values" in our daily provision. (See separate document)
- Prevent Duty (to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism). Staff have a duty to raise any unusual behaviour/actions/attendance demonstrated by children/families within the Pre-School as a safeguarding concern.
- 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 spiritual 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.
- Staff have a duty to follow Hampshire's Bruising Protocol and report any bruising on 'not independently mobile children'.
- 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.
- 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 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 Pre-School Manager who is acting as the 'Lead Practitioner'. The information is 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. NB 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 detailed procedures and reporting format contained in the PLA's publication 'Child Protection Record for use in Early Years Nursery Schools' when making a referral to children's social care or other appropriate agencies.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or there are signs or signals that give 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:
 - informs Emma (or Priya)
 - listens to the child,
 - offers reassurance and gives assurance that action will be taken;



- does not question the child;
- 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;
 - the 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.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children's Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow steps set down by the LSCB.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team

- The PLA's publication 'Safeguarding Children' contains detailed 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're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015).
- We keep a copy of this document and follow the detailed guidelines given.
- All members of staff are familiar with the Alliance's Safeguarding Children Record and follow the procedures for recording and reporting.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact unless we feel that this may put the child in greater danger.
- 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 Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

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, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers if applicable, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Pre-School and children's social care services to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements that may affect the wellbeing 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 is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegation being made.

- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.
- 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.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the Pre-School, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the Pre-School, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members 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
 - 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 Pre-School, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the Pre-School, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the Pre-School, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the Pre-School, 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 authority's social care department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this. (Contact LADOs Barbara Piddington or Mark Blackwell on 01962 876364)
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management 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.

Disciplinary Action

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the Pre-School because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children or vulnerable groups, can be identified and barred from working with these groups.



Key commitment 3

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

Training

- All staff will be required to attend relevant Safeguarding Training and to keep the qualification up to date. This is reviewed and recorded in staff annual appraisals and supervisions.
- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the Pre-School 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 that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the Pre-School and that we receive training in accordance with that recommended by the LSCB.

Planning

- 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.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children 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.
- We create within the Pre-School 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.

Confidentiality

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



Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our 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 the Pre-School'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 (2004 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Human Rights Act (1999)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976)
- Regulations Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998)

Non Statutory Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG 2015)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)
- 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)
- Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide (HMG 2015)



- Independent Safeguarding Authority www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk

Other useful PLA publications:

- Safeguarding Children (2010)
- Safeguarding Children, Young People and Young Vulnerable Adults (Ofsted 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Setting (Ofsted Sept 2015)

Contacts

- Services for Young Children 01962 876364 child.protection@hants.gov.uk
- Hants direct (Children’s Reception Team) 0300 555 1384
Out of Hours 0300 555 1373
- Children’s Social Care Professional Helpline 01329 225379
child.protection@hants.gov.uk
- OFSTED: 0300 123 1231
- London and South East NSPCC: NSPCC Gillingham Service Centre 01634 564688

This policy was adopted at the meeting of the Management Committee held on:

.....

Signed on behalf of the Little Den Pre School Playgroup:

.....

Print Name:

..... **Position: CHAIRPERSON**