

Child Protection

Our nursery will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form. Our group wants to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children. We intend to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

To this end we will:

- 1 create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- 2 encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- 3 provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- 4 ensure the layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, such as going to the toilet, the door is left ajar
- 5 always listen to children

Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff will often be the first people to sense that there is a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide about abuse. The nursery has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society. This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or neglect.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and wellbeing of all children in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents/carers and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention.

All staff will be familiar with their own responsibilities to act swiftly upon any suspicions or concerns that they may have about any child or member of staff at the nursery. The nursery will follow the procedures set out in the Full Day Care Standards and Local ACPC (Area Child Protection Committee) Guidance and as such will seek advice on all steps taken subsequently. The nursery has a duty to report any suspicions around abuse to the local authority who have an obligation to investigate such matters.

Staff must not make comment either publicly or in private about a parent or carer's supposed or actual behaviour. Staff must raise any concerns initially with the principal who will consider the appropriate action. If the principal is unavailable staff should raise concerns with the manager, who will pass this onto the principal at the earliest opportunity. Staff responsibilities do not include investigating the suspected abuse. However, the staff will keep accurate records of their observations, signed and dated, and of anything said to them by the child or others in connection with the suspected abuse. This information will be kept in the locked filing cabinet in the office.

It is always important to listen to children. Strict confidentiality will be observed at all times. All our staff will receive training on the protection of children from abuse. It is the policy of the nursery to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. The nursery will therefore not allow an adult to be left alone with a child who has not received their CRB check clearance.

The nursery aims to:

- 1 ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff
- 2 ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times
- 3 ensure that all staff are familiar with child protection issues and procedures
- 4 regularly review and update this policy

Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

Parents/carers and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgemental manner whilst investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child.

Contact telephone numbers

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| 1 Ofsted | 08456 404040/45 |
| 2 Local ACPC Unit | 01622 696366 |
| 3 Local authority social services | Children & Families Duty Team –
Maidstone – 01622 691640 |

Types of abuse

Physical Abuse

Action will be taken under this heading if staff have reason to believe there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning; where there is

definite knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Procedure

- 1 Any sign of a mark or injury to a child when they come into nursery should be recorded and the principal informed
- 2 The incident will be discussed by the principal with the parent/carer
- 3 Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records
- 4 If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury, the principal will notify the Child Protection Unit of the local authority

Sexual Abuse

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have witnessed occasions where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.

Procedure

- 1 The observed instances will be reported to the principal, or the manager who will pass this information to the principal
- 2 The matter will be referred to the local authority

Emotional Abuse

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

Procedure

- 1 The concern should be reported to the principal, or to the manager who will then pass this onto the principal
- 2 The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer by the principal
- 3 Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records
- 4 If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the local authority

Neglect

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Procedure

- 5 The concern should be reported to the principal, or to the manager who will then pass this onto the principal
- 6 The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer by the principal
- 7 Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such records
- 8 If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the local authority

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff will make an objective record of any observation or disclosure and include:

- 1 Child's name
- 2 Child's address
- 3 Age of child and date of birth
- 4 Date and time of the observation or disclosure
- 5 Exact words spoken by the child or behaviour observed
- 6 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 a separate confidential file in the locked filing cabinet in the office. All members of staff know the procedure for recording and reporting. It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the ACPC and Ofsted. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information they have concerns with regard to a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with ACPC and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Designated staff will attend child protection training.

Staffing and volunteering

We have a named person within the nursery that co-ordinates child protection issues. The designated person undertakes specific training and accesses regular updates to developments within this field. We will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognise the signs of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

The named person regarding child protection at the nursery is Darrell King.

- 1 We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children

- 2 Applicants for posts within nursery are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks 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 applicants for work within the group, whether paid or voluntary, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least one reference. All such references will be followed up. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.
- 3 We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the nursery and has access to the children
- 4 The group works in accordance with Ofsted requirements for all appointments, both paid and voluntary, which are subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the group is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with the children and once the obligatory 'fit person' checks have been satisfactorily completed
- 5 Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- 6 Adults are not left alone for long periods with individual children or small groups
- 7 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 lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern
- 8 We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to nursery and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the nursery, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- 9 The development of staff within the nursery allows for constant

supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the group, the door will be left ajar

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. 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 ACPC 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.

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 ACPC.

Support to families

- 1 The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers within the nursery
- 2 The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation
- 3 Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate under the guidance of the ACPC
- 4 With the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family

Employees of the nursery

If an allegation is made against a member of staff Ofsted and the local authority child protection unit will be informed and investigated. This may result in the nursery disciplinary procedure being followed.

The incident will be dealt with by the registered person:

- 1 A full investigation will be carried out to determine how this will be handled
- 2 If the allegation could possibly interfere with the normal working of the nursery, either the member of staff or the child will be allocated to another area, after due consultation with all parties
- 3 The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff on full pay during an investigation
- 4 All investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office
- 5 Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated
- 6 Founded allegations will be passed onto the relevant organisation (police) and will result in the immediate termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision
- 7 Counselling will be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the nursery and the parents/carers