



Safeguarding children policy

Aim: To create in our pre-school, an environment where children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

Local safeguarding children's board

Our safeguarding children policy and procedures are in line with the agreed procedures of the Devon safeguarding children's board which can be found on the south west child protection procedures website www.swcpp.org.uk. This website has up to date procedures, examples of best practice and government guidelines.

Staff Training

Paula Stone, Sarah Emerton and Harriet Sharp have all received training in Safeguarding. Harri attended a 2 day course in Multi Agency Child Protection in March 2007. Sarah attended a course in December 07. Paula attended a 2 day course in Multi Agency Child Protection in December 08. It is a requirement that all staff at the Exwick Ark undertake child protection training. All staff will discuss and be given a copy of the child protection policy before starting employment at The Exwick Ark. Staff regularly will review this policy.

The main forms of abuse are:

Physical abuse – Where a child is physically hurt, injured or killed. This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It also includes giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol and attempted suffocation and drowning. In some cases excessive force may be used when feeding or changing a child's nappy.

Sexual abuse – Where children (girls and boys) are sexually abused by adults or other children who use them to meet their own sexual needs. This might be sexual intercourse, and also includes fondling, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and exposing children to pornographic material – including videos.

Neglect – Where parents or carers fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children to have food, clothes, warmth and medical care. Leaving children alone and unsupervised is also an example of neglect. Parents refusing to give love and affection to their children is an example of emotional neglect.

Emotional abuse – Where constant lack of love and affection, or threats, verbal attacks, taunting and shouting can lead to a loss of self esteem, making a child nervous and withdrawn.

Signs of abuse;

You may notice emotional or social behaviour that is abnormal or unusual for a child. There may be changes in the standards of health in a young child. All types of abuse can impact on a child's health and can lead to impairment or developmental delay.



Neglect can also show physically as poor standards of cleanliness, physical care or hygiene, infection and infestation. Frequent bruises, grazes and injuries particularly to the fleshy parts of the body can be signs of physical abuse. No one sign (unless it is overwhelmingly obvious) is likely to make you absolutely sure that a child is being abused. More than one explanation is possible and you must be careful not to jump to conclusions but the possibility that abuse has taken place should be considered.

Child protection procedure.

If a child makes a disclosure or is suspected of suffering abuse, staff will follow our child protection procedure.

Confidential Records.

Confidential records will be kept separately from the day to day developmental records kept on individual children. Each record will be on a separate sheet of paper to ensure confidentiality. Confidential records will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, which only the managers will have access to. When a member of staff has reason to make a confidential record they will hand the record to a manager to file on their behalf. They will not divulge anything about the work they are doing other than to a manager. Records that are relevant to a child protection matter may have to be disclosed to the police, solicitors or courts if required by civil or criminal proceedings.

Preventing abuse in the pre-school.

As a nursery we have regard to the information contained within the DFES document Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (DFES 2006). Harri Sharp has attended Safer Recruitment training. Our recruitment and retention policy details our procedure for ensuring that only adults suitable to work with children are employed at The Exwick Ark in a voluntary or paid capacity. This policy complies with local and national guidance.

Employees

All prospective employees will be asked to complete an application form, an application to the CRB/ ISA and to provide two references. The application form will ask for information about previous convictions, charges or cautions relating to any offences and will explain that this post is exempt from the rehabilitation of offenders act 1974. Any gaps in employment history should be explained. Applicants will also be asked to disclose if any member of their household has been excluded from working with children. References will be taken up before the interview whenever possible.

All prospective employees will be given an interview. The panel will have at least one person trained in child protection issues. Our child protection policy will be discussed with the applicant and their responsibilities made clear.



All employees will be asked to complete a six month probationary period, the employment will not be confirmed beyond this point unless the managers are confident that the new employee can be safely entrusted with children.

All employees will have an annual appraisal with training and support when concerns are raised.

Regular Volunteers will be asked to complete an application form, make a CRB disclosure application, (ISA registration in future) and provide references. They will be asked to complete an induction process and have an interview with the Management.

When a CRB Disclosure is applied for it is recorded in the Black Staff File and then the Number of the disclosure and date received are recorded then the disclosure is destroyed. Students from the University have a CRB disclosure done through Exeter University. They bring in their disclosure original and we note the number and date of issue.

Safe practice in the pre-school.

All visitors to the pre-school will be asked the purpose of their visit and for an identity card if appropriate before they are admitted. All visitors will be asked to sign our visitor's book and to wear a visitor's badge. Visitors will not be allowed unsupervised access to children.

Our visitors book will be monitored once a term by Harriet to ensure that regular visitors are identified. People who are visiting for more than 5 sessions a year will be asked to complete a CRB form and have an ISA check (or register with the ISA).

Parents are encouraged to stay and see how their children are treated in the pre-school. Open, honest and transparent communication between staff and parents is encouraged.

Only staff which have been certified as being a fit person to work with young children are to be in sole charge of children. This includes taking children to the toilet.

The door to the cloak room should always be propped open so that staff and children are visible by those in the main playroom.

The playroom will be arranged so as to enable supervision of each child at all times.

Children's confidence and self esteem will be developed to enable them, if necessary, to protect themselves and to reject inappropriate advances from adults.

Children will be taught about basic child protection issues as part of our curriculum. Parents will be informed about children's learning in these areas in our annual report to parents.



Child protection Procedure

Responding to disclosure;

A child who is being abused may feel that they can talk to a pre-school worker, particularly their key worker who they will have built up a close relationship with. If a child indicates that they want to talk to you should;

- Rearrange you activities with other staff and take the child aside for a quiet conversation if appropriate.
- Offer comfort and reassurance if the child needs it.
- Use language appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Show them that you are taking what they have said seriously.
- Tell them that they are not to blame.
- Tell them that you are there to help them and that they can trust you.
- Reassure them that they are right to tell you and that you will take action.
- Allow the child to do the talking and to finish what they are saying.
- Tell the child what you are going to do next.
- Refer the matter to Harriet Sharp or Paula Stone, our designated child protection officers.
- Record the conversation as soon as possible afterwards, using the child's own words where ever possible, also record what you said in reply, when the child said it, what was happening immediately before the disclosure, date and times of the events and when you made the record. Using an Incident Form may be helpful in remembering to record set data, such as child's full name, Date of Birth, Date of disclosure etc.

You should not;

- Postpone or delay the opportunity to talk.
- Ask leading questions.
- Allow your own feelings (anger, shock, pity etc.) to surface.
- Make false promises (that you will keep the secret, for example)
- Interpret what you have been told, just record it.

If you suspect abuse has taken place you should;

- Realize that your concerns could be significant and should be passed on.
- Tell Harriet Sharp or Paula Stone who are the designated child protection officers for our pre-school.
- Check with the child's parents *to see if they can explain any bruises or marks which you find suspicious, or to find out whether they have noticed any changes in their child's behaviour. Do not suggest a suspicion of abuse.
- Ensure that your concerns are recorded in our confidential records file, in the filing cabinet.
- If the suspicions in any way involve one of the child protection officers, the suspicions should be referred to the other. If the suspicions in any way implicate both officers then the report should be made directly to The Children's and Young People's Directorate.
- Suspicions should not be discussed in detail with anyone other than those nominated above. You may seek advise from a peer without disclosing which child you are referring to



*unless you have good reason to suspect a child may be at greater risk by telling the parent/carer your concerns.

If there is a concern about a child, the child protection officer will contact The Children's and Young People's Directorate and seek their advice about the way forward. The local The Children's and Young People's Directorate office telephone number, between 9am and 5 pm is; 384444. The out of hours emergency duty team telephone number is 0845 6000388. The NSPCC Helpline (tel. 0800 8005000), is also able to offer advice and guidance on child protection issues

The child protection officer, in consultation with The Children's and Young People's Directorate, will agree what, if any, information should be shared with parents, when this should happen and who will do it.

If the Children's and Young People's Directorate consider the child is at risk of or has experienced significant harm they will initiate an investigation under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

When a child is referred to the children's and young people's directorate by telephone we will follow up our referral in writing within 48 hours.

Allegations against a member of staff.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff the information should be passed to the child protection officer. If the allegation is against 1 officer it should be made to the other. The child protection officer will ask the person making the allegation to make a signed and dated written record of their concerns, observations or the information received. It is important to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity whilst the allegation is being considered or investigated. Staff should not:

- attempt to deal with the situation themselves
- make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish the seriousness of the behaviour.
- Keep information to themselves or promise confidentiality.
- Take any action that may undermine any future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents or carers.

The child protection officer should

- Get written details of the allegation, signed and dated by the person reporting it and then countersign and date the record.
- Collate information and personal details held about the children, parents/ carers, siblings of the victim, the person against whom the allegation has been made and any known witnesses.
- Contact the local authority designated officer at the children and young people's directorate within one day of receiving the allegation.
- Inform the person making the allegation what they will do.



- Ensure that the alleged perpetrator is informed of the allegation as soon as possible after informing the local authority designated officer. They should explain to them how the enquiry will be conducted and possible outcomes e.g. disciplinary action or dismissal together with sources of support and advice.
- Inform Ofsted of any concern or allegation made against a member of staff.

The child protection officer should not;

- Take any action that might undermine any future disciplinary procedure or investigation.
- Automatically suspend or dismiss staff without taking further advice.
- Inform parents or carers of the children until advised to do so by the local authority designated officer other than in an emergency situation, such as when a child has been injured and needs medical attention.

Policy updated by staff: 17/3/10

Signed: