

## Sample Early Years Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

For \_\_\_\_\_ Setting

Date written: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction

I/We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. I/We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. I am/We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

### Principles

My/Our core safeguarding principles are:

- It is my/the settings responsibility to take all reasonable steps to safeguard and protect the rights, health and well-being of all children who are in my/our care.
- Representatives of the whole-early years setting (if applicable) including children, parents and staff will be involved in policy development and review.
- Policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.
- I/ the setting will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all activity
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- I have a/All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm in accordance with this guidance.
- All children and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support from the manager of the setting (if applicable) who will follow this policy guidance in doing so.

### Aims

- To provide myself/ all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the setting/my provision.
- To demonstrate my/the setting's commitment with regard to safeguarding children.

### Terminology

*Safeguarding* and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective and nurturing care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

*Child protection* refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the [Children Act 1989](#) and associated guidance (see [Working Together to Safeguard Children, An Interagency Guide to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children](#)) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

## Context

The Children Act 1989 states that the child's welfare is paramount and that every child has a right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Early Years Foundation Stage

General welfare requirement: Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. The provider must take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

EYFS principles: Unique child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments

Outcome: Stay Safe.

The **designated person** for child protection in this early years setting is:

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Contact details:

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I/We will ensure every member staff member (including temporary/ supply staff/volunteers/ assistance) and governing body or committee members knows the name of the designated person responsible for safeguarding children.

## Roles and responsibilities

All early years settings must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements.

I/The setting will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Person:

- is appropriately trained
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the setting
- has an understanding of LSCB procedures
- keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance, but kept separately from the child's general file
- refers cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to children's social care or police in accordance with this guidance and local procedure
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy
- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- make this policy available to parents.

## Good practice guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, I/the setting agree[s] to the following standards of good practice;

- treating all children with respect
- setting a good example by conducting myself/ourselves appropriately
- ensuring I am a/staff are positive role models to children and other members of the team and never engage in rough, physical or sexual provocative games

- involving children in decision-making which affects them (taking age and development of children in to account).
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in child's behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding all of the setting's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example, physical contact and information-sharing
- asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.
- raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- any form of manual or physical support required, is provided as a last resort and done openly and appropriately, and that children are always consulted and their agreement gained (taking age and development of children in to account).
- establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, particularly in their confidence and self-esteem and to provide opportunities to achievement in accordance with the Statutory Every Child Matters Framework: Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Positive Contributions & Economic Wellbeing.

### **Establishing a professional code of practice**

I am/All staff will be informed of the settings code of conduct, and will sign to adhere to these conditions. Any staff known to be breaking these conditions will be given a formal warning, disciplinary action will follow and is a sackable offence.

### **Intimate/Personal care**

Children's dignity will be preserved and a level of privacy ensured. The normal process of nappy changing should not raise child protection concerns. There are no regulations that indicate that a second member of staff must be available to supervise the nappy changing process to ensure that abuse does not occur, but we ensure that staff do not leave themselves vulnerable and will always work in an open environment by avoiding private or unobserved situations, by closing doors to toilet areas.

### **Behavioural expectations to ensure children are safe and to ensure false accusations are avoided.**

Whilst caring for other people's children we are in a position of trust and our responsibilities to them and the 'organisation' must be uppermost in practitioners minds at all times.

I/We do not:

- use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking, hitting or rough handling.
- behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child
- use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language
- engage in rough or physical games, including tickling or horseplay
- let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon

### **Use of mobile phones**

It is prohibited for any staff to use their mobile phones to take pictures of the children attending the setting. Mobile phones will be stored (say where) whilst staff are on duty. Any staff known or seen to be using a mobile phone will be disciplined (DC only).

It is recognised that childminders will need to use mobile phones throughout their daily practice. Consideration will be given to storage and use of personal details and photographs (Refer to Photography and Images and Confidentiality and Sharing Information section).

### **Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

To ensure that all of children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- living in a known domestic abuse situation
- affected by known parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- living in temporary accommodation
- living transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- do not have English as a first language.

### **Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

I/We will support the children and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- responding sympathetically to any request from a member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

### **Allegations against a member of the family/staff**

The EYFS statutory framework states: 'Registered providers must inform Ofsted of these allegations as soon as reasonable practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. A registered provider, who without reasonable excuse fails to comply with this requirement, commits an offence' (2007: 22).

An allegation of child abuse made against a member of the family or staff may come from a parent, another member of staff or from a child's disclosure.

I/ the setting will:

- report such allegations in the same way as any other child protection referral.
- record the details that give cause for concern.

- contact SPA for advice and further guidance, who will contact The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- inform the designated officer on the management committee (if applicable / for DC settings).
- due to the serious nature of the concerns, the disciplinary procedure must be instigated and the member of staff suspended until a full investigation has taken place (DC settings).
- not take further disciplinary action until the outcome of the investigation is known (DC settings).
- co-operate fully with the process of Social Care and the Police investigations.
- support and treated with respect the member of staff whilst suspended.
- if it appears from the results of the investigation that the allegations are justified, then disciplinary action will follow. This will be done in full consultation with the management committee and with legal advice (DC settings).
- where it seems likely that 'on balance of probabilities' abuse may have taken place, then the setting is able in law to dismiss the individual and refer them to the PoCA list (DC settings).
- if the result of the investigation is that it was a false allegation, the individual will be given the appropriate support (DC settings).
- inform Ofsted through out the investigation. Telephone 0300 123 1231.

### **Whistle blowing**

Any individual who has reasonable suspicion of malpractice should inform the manager immediately. If they do not feel this is the appropriate person they should approach the committee member, Ofsted, Single Point of Access (SPA), Early Years Consultant in the Local Authority. It is recognised for some people that this can be a daunting and difficult experience.

All reports will be investigated and dealt with in confidence, including only those staff on a 'need to know' basis.

Whistle blowing @ Ofsted Hotline: To contact the hotline call 0300 123 3155 (Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00), email [whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk) or write to WBHL, Ofsted, Royal Exchange Buildings, Piccadilly Gate, Manchester M1 2WD.

A charity called 'Public Concern at Work' give free and confidential advice and can help you to decide whether and/or how to raise your concerns at work first. You can call Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609, email [helpline@pcaw.co.uk](mailto:helpline@pcaw.co.uk) or visit [www.pcaw.co.uk/law/uklegislation.htm](http://www.pcaw.co.uk/law/uklegislation.htm) for useful information about whistle blowing legislation.

All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the designated safeguarding person and/or manager. Complaints about the designated safeguarding person/manager should be reported to SPA.

### **Staff training**

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. Child protection training is mandatory for all staff and will be part of my/their induction process. The Designated Safeguarding Person (where applicable) will ensure that the staff's knowledge, understanding and practice of safeguarding children is current and up-to-date at all times. Where gaps are identified support and training will be mandatory. The Designated Safeguarding Person will receive training updated at least every three years, including training in inter-agency procedures and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) training to support for their roles.

## **Safer recruitment**

I/We practice robust recruitment procedures in checking the suitability of staff, volunteers, assistants to work with children (or in the case of childminders members of the family who are living on the premises) this will include regular enhanced CRB checks, health checks and references and follow guidance from the ISA [www.isa-org.uk](http://www.isa-org.uk) / 0300 123 1111 .

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau as appropriate to their role and be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (from 2010 onwards)
- be interviewed.

Safer recruitment guidance is available from: <http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/safeguarding/safer-recruitment/resources>

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the setting's safeguarding and child protection policy and identification of their own safeguarding and child protection training needs. I/All staff sign to confirm they have read and understood the child protection policy.

## **Photography and images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect children I/we will:

- seek parents/carers consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- use only the child's first name with an image
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures**

### **Recognising abuse**

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. I/We will ensure all staff understands their responsibilities in being alert to indicators of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to

children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age – or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

[\(Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children\)](#)

### **Indicators of abuse and what you might see**

It is vital that staff are aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person. I/we are aware that it is my/our responsibility to report concerns. It is not my/your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused and/or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently be absent or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- become disinterested in play activities
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They will be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the Designated Safeguarding Person to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns – you do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

### **Taking action**

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- report your concern to the Designated Safeguarding Person immediately
- if the Designated Safeguarding Person is not available, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the setting that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children’s social care
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately (dated and signed on each page)
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

### **Parental partnership**

Where possible, concerns will be discussed with the parent/carer for an explanation, providing it does not put the child at immediate risk. Parental agreement will be sought for a referral to SPA unless seeking agreement is likely to place the child at risk of significant harm through delay or the parent’s actions or reactions.

Where I/we decide not to seek parental permission before making a referral to SPA team, the decision will be recorded in the child’s file with reasons, dated and signed.

Where the parent refuses to give permission for the referral, unless it would cause undue delay, further advice should be sought from the SPA team, early years consultant, safeguarding champion or the designated child protection person (of the setting) and the outcome fully recorded.

Parents’ must notify the childminder/nursery regarding any concerns they may have about their child and any accidents, incidents or injuries affecting the child, which will be recorded.

I/We will involve parents and carers wherever possible and ensure they have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the setting for safeguarding children by setting out its statutory duty in the nursery policy and procedures, prospectus, notice board and newsletter.

### **Referral to children’s social care**

The Designated Safeguarding Person will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

If the Designated Safeguarding Person has any reason to believe that a child is subject to either physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, will immediately be reported to the Single Point of Access Team (SPA) on 020 8891 7969 or out of hours the Emergency Duty Team on 020 8744 2442 who will refer a duty social worker or the LADO (if it is an allegation against a member of staff or family).

However if I/we are seriously concerned about a child’s immediate safety, I/we will dial 999

### Confidentiality and sharing information

I/All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. I/Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated person or manager. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection and all other child records and information will be stored and handled in line with [Data Protection Act 1998](#) principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals. If a data base is used to record sensitive information it will be stored on a memory stick (not the hard drive of a computer) and kept off premises or locked in a robust safe. Under the Data Protection Act. I/We will register with the 'Information Commissioners Office' (ICO) Telephone number: 01625 545740 or [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk) and follow the guidelines required.

I/We will develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with any enquires regarding child protection matters including attendance of case conferences.

### Guidance and Sources of information from:

The London Safeguarding Children Board	<a href="http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures">www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures</a>
Working Together to Safeguard Children A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.	<a href="http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/">http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/</a> search using ref: DCSF-00305-2010
What to do if you are worried a child is being abused	<a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFES-04320-2006">www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFES-04320-2006</a>
Richmond Local Safeguarding Children Board	<a href="http://www.richmond.gov.uk/lscb">www.richmond.gov.uk/lscb</a>
Keeping children safe	<a href="http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk">www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk</a>
NSPCC	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a>
Information on safe recruitment via	<a href="http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/EYFS/Welfare_requirements/Suitable_people/Ensuring_suitability/Safe_recruitment/">http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/EYFS/Welfare_requirements/Suitable_people/Ensuring_suitability/Safe_recruitment/</a>