

# Safeguarding Children Policy

## Statement of intent

Our pre-school wants to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

## Aims

Our aims are to:

- \* Create an environment in our pre-school which encourages children to develop a positive self image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
- \* help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- \* encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- \* enable children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches; and
- \* work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.

The legal framework for this work is:

- The rehabilitation of offenders act
- The children act 1989
- Human rights act 1998
- Data protection act 1984
- The protection of children act 1999
- The children (NI) order
- The children (Scotland) order

Liaison with other bodies

- We operate in accordance with local authority guidelines. Confidential records kept on children, about whom the pre-school is anxious, will be shared with the Social Services Department if we feel that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of children.
- 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, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Pre-school and social services to work well together.
- If a report is made to the authorities, the child's parents will be informed and the regulators (Ofsted) the same time as the report is made- unless the suspicion is of sexual abuse.

Catey pre-school is committed to the welfare and safeguarding of its children, staff and volunteers at all times.

## **Methods**

### **Staff and volunteering**

- Our named person who coordinates safeguarding issues is the pre-school leader, Mrs Teresa Rutterford, Deputy Mrs Carrie Evans.
- 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 CRB checks, and references from the most recent employee, 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 CRB checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the pre-school or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- 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.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the pre-school.
- 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.
- Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or small groups.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the pre-school or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the list for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. We would contact the local area designated officer on 01284 352205.

### **Training**

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the pre-school to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect, so 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.

### **Planning**

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door is left ajar.

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## **Curriculum**

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our foundationstage curriculum, so that children can develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the pre-school a culture of value and respect for the individual.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is appropriate for the ages and stages of our children.

## **Complaints**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the pre-school, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Social Services Department when investigating any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation of abuse by any other person.
- 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, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour, or in their play. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where children's play gives cause for concern, the pre-school investigates.
- We allow investigation to be carried out with sensitivity, staff in the pre-school take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.
- Where a child shows signs and symptoms of failure to thrive or neglect, we make appropriate referrals.

## **Disclosures**

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child and the member of staff does not question the child.

## **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

Staff make a record of:

- The child's name;
- The child's address;
- The age of the child;
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- The exact words spoken by the child;
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported with date and time;
- The names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file and only accessible by the pre-school leader and chairperson.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

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## **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. Although, suspicions will also be referred, as appropriate, to the Social Services Department. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents, unless this puts the child at more risk or sexual abuse.

If the suspicions of abuse is of a sexual nature, the first point of contact will be social services. The issue will not be discussed with the parent or child involved until a social worker has been appointed to the case.

## **Confidentiality**

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the pre-school leader and the committee chairperson.

## **Support to families**

- The pre-school takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The pre-school continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
- 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.
- With the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Catey Pre-school

Held on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of the pre-school \_\_\_\_\_

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