



## **Safeguarding children and child protection**

### **Policy statement**

At Little Squirts we will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety and protection of children whilst promoting their rights to assist in them having the best start in life.

### **Our intention**

It is our intention to:

- create an environment in our setting which is safe and secure for all children;
- enable children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;
- encourage 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;
- work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children and their community.
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism by having due regard for the Prevent Duty (June 2015) and by promoting British Values.

This is implemented by:

- Policies and procedures being in place and reviewed regularly to keep all children safe.
- Ensuring that all staff and parents are made aware of the safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Staff read and sign all policies.
- All our staff and leaders have received training in Safeguarding Children with regular updates in line with guidance.
- We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead that receives training at least every two years and their knowledge and skills are refreshed at least annually.
- We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriately trained Deputy available at all times that the setting is open.
- All staff have also received PREVENT DUTY training
- We have a Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct policy that is read, understood and signed by everyone in the setting.
- We follow the guidelines laid down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- We have a copy of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 available in the setting for staff to use if required and for parents to see if they wish. We also have regard for other relevant government guidance including, but not limited to, 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused,' 'Information sharing' and 'Prevent Duty'
- Staff are supported to have a good awareness of the signs that a child is neglected or abused, as described in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- In consultation with parents/carers we are able to refer children for additional help through the Early Help Assessment (EHA – formerly CAF). We do this with the support of other professionals and the Early Help Team
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident which affects the wellbeing of children.

- We have procedures for contacting the local authority's Access and Referral Hub on safeguarding children issues
- If a report is to be made to the authorities, we take advice from the Access and Referral Hub in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.
- We have a password system in place for when a parent is unable to collect their child.
- We reserve the right to refuse to allow a child to leave the setting if there is no appropriate car seat for them to be transported in, this a legal obligation toward the safeguarding of that child.

## **How we ensure that children are safe and protected**

### **Staffing and volunteering**

- There is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead who coordinates safeguarding children issues. They access training to enable them to provide support, advice and guidance to all other staff about safeguarding issues.

Our designated person is: Rebecca Mann (Nursery Manager)

- We provide appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- All staff have a duty to maintain the wellbeing of children in their care.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Safer Recruitment Procedures. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'Enhanced with lists' DBS check and take-up references 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.
- Current and prospective staff are informed that they must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children whether received before or during employment
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff and regular volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Records are kept about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed.
- Volunteers and unvetted persons do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA) 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 safeguarding children concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Staff members are not allowed to carry their mobile phones with them or wear 'smart watches' or other mobile photographic devices. All mobile phones (other than those specifically used for and by the setting) will be stored in the office and are for emergency use only. Cameras on mobile phones / photographic devices must not be used. (See also Photography and Mobile Phone Policy)
- We have CCTV in the main nursery rooms, this is for security reasons (in case of break ins etc) and can also be accessed if needed to for safeguarding purposes. Parents are made aware of CCTV

on looking around nursery and signs are up throughout the nursery to make everyone aware. CCTV is only ever looked at by management if deemed necessary and all footage captured is deleted every 2 weeks. (See separate CCTV policy)

## **Disciplinary action**

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the Setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify Ofsted, the LSCB and if required the DBS. We are under a legal duty of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 to notify the DBS of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to vulnerable children can be identified and barred from working with these groups. Please also see our allegations against a member of staff policy and procedure.

## **Training**

All of our staff have received training on Safeguarding Children issues through local authority approved providers. All new staff will have to undertake safeguarding awareness training if they do not have a relevant certificate. We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the Setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation as well as awareness of inappropriate staff behaviour. They are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. We ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting. Our designated officer has specific training on multi-agency working.

## **Complaints**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We have a procedure on Allegations made against a member of staff
- We notify Ofsted and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) team when we receive an allegation made about a member of staff, in line with our procedure
- We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.

## **Planning and curriculum**

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision.
- 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 so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, 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.

### **If we suspect abuse**

- We will always seek and follow guidance from the access and Referral Hub and Social Services.
- Staff are fully aware that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, verbal, sexual and neglect. Children can also be at risk of child sexual exploitation and radicalisation.
- We provide an information leaflet for staff to help them to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse. This also details what to do if they have any concerns about a child.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour or in their play, deterioration in their general wellbeing and appearance, unexplained bruising and/or marks or comments that are made (directly or indirectly). In such situations where there is a concern we will seek support and advice.
- We allow investigation to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff in the setting 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. We seek parent's permissions before making a referral unless by seeking this permission we put a child at risk.
- Where we suspect a child may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism we make a referral to the Channel programme as part of the prevent duty.
- We work co-operatively with the parent unless this is inconsistent with the need to ensure the child's safety.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as, social exclusion, domestic violence, parents drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parents learning disability.
- All concerns are recorded.

### **Disclosures made to us**

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

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

*The member of staff **does not question the child** – the golden rule is to observe and listen but do not probe.*

Staff will make a record of:

- The child's name; address, date of birth;
- 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.

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The member of staff will discuss the incident with the designated safeguarding officer on duty and a decision will be made about who should be notified. If a child's safety is at risk the Access and Referral Hub will be contacted immediately. We will take advice from them regarding information that is then given to parents.

In a case where a child is not in immediate danger we try to discuss the matter with parents before making any referrals. However, it is the welfare of the child which is paramount and this is at the forefront of all our actions. We are aware that many children have suffered because of lack of communication between agencies, and that government guidance now encourages the full sharing of information. We shall therefore use our professional judgement in sharing information with the agencies that 'need to know', being open and honest with parents and children as to why we feel we need to share the information.

Full records of conversations will be maintained when any referrals or discussions are held with any other agencies or with parents prior to a referral. These records will include dates and times of the conversation, who we speak to, and the advice we were given.

### **Informing Parents**

We will always aim to involve parents in any referrals before they are made. However if a suspicion of abuse is recorded, and the child is considered at risk an immediate referral will be made to the Intake and Assessment team and we will take their advice on informing parents.

### **Confidentiality**

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. If there are concerns within a setting it is important that the Supervisor is made aware of them. However children will work with a number of different adults in a setting and they should also be made aware that there are concerns about an aspect of well-being of the child in question. The full details of any suspicions and investigations may not be fully discussed with all members of staff if it is not deemed as necessary. Any information shared with external agencies is done under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Support to families**

- The setting takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The setting 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 under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 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.

## **Use of camera and mobile phones**

We ask parents for permission to use the photos/video of their children for the purpose of displays, publicity and in developmental files.

Only photos taken by staff with a setting camera/ phone/ tablet or video camera/ phone/ tablet will be used in the setting or for publicity.

Staff must never use a camera to take picture of bruises or any other injuries. Concerns over bruises etc. must be referred to the senior manager and full details recorded in the incident book and drawn on the body map before being referred to Social Care.

Staff will never take photos on their own personal cameras, mobile phones or wrist cameras. Mobile phones and wrist cameras are kept out of the play areas along with other personal belongings. Memory cards remain on the premises when they are not in use.

We discuss with parents any concerns they have with any of the photography occurring in the setting. We hope that an understanding can be reached in all situations.

## **Looked after children**

At Little Squirts we recognise that children who are 'looked after' or have been 'previously looked after' are likely to have experienced trauma in their life. In order to protect them from further trauma it is important that the key person is aware of any abuse or neglect the child has suffered to help to promote a positive experience at the setting, free from fear.

The designated person for looked after children will generally become the key person, however, if this is not possible for any reason, they will ensure the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.

The impact of this policy is that children remain safe whilst in our care and early signs of abuse are detected and acted upon.

See also: Allegations against member of staff policy  
Photography policy  
Looked after children policy

Access and Referral Hub – 0300 300 8585

Police – 01234 841212 / 01582 4021212

NSPCC 24 hr helpline – 0808 800 5000

Ofsted – 0300 123 1231

**DBS - <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>**

**LADO - 0300 300 5026/ 03003008142**

**Prevent Officer (Channel Panel) – 0300 300 8585**

**Channel programme – 020 7340 7264**

This policy was adopted by Little Squirts Preschool on 2<sup>nd</sup> March (Next review date 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024)

Signed.....

Name.....

Role.....