



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

We aim to create an environment in which children are listened to and respected, where children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

To do this we will :

- Exclude any known abusers. It will be made clear to applications for posts within the setting that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act 1974
- Require that all potential workers within the setting will provide references, attend an interview and undergo an enhanced CRB check
- Ensure that all staff attend appropriate training so that they are able to recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect or emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Good Practice :

- Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or small groups
- Students will never be left unsupervised with children
- Adult helpers who have not completed the necessary checks will not be alone with a child, e.g. changing them or taking to the toilet
- The layout of the room will permit constant supervision of the children
- We will keep records of observations of significant changes in children's behaviour or appearance and liaise with parents if appropriate
- We will work closely with Social Services, Ofsted and the Police in the interests of the child
- Continue to work with and support the child's family

Responding to suspicions of abuse :

- Changes to children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated
- Suspicions will be referred to Social Services. Any reports made to Social Services will be reported to Ofsted
- The Managers will be responsible for dealing with and recording any concerns or allegations and liaising with Social Services and Ofsted
- All suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Those involved are likely to be the key-worker, managers and the Registered Provider
- Any accusations against a member of staff will result in immediate suspension while the accusation is investigated
- If parents have concerns about a member of staff they can follow the complaints procedure (set out in a separate policy)
- Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff they will :
 - listen to the child and offer reassurance
 - make a record of the exact words spoken, without questioning them
 - record the date and time

- the child will be listened to, respected and taken seriously

Records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, separate from the on-going records of the child's progress and development.

The record will include the name of the child, timed and dated observations describing the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation and noting the exact words spoken by the child, and the date, name and signature of the person making the report.

Such records will be kept in a separate file and will be shared, if necessary with Social Services and Ofsted. All details are confidential and will not be shared with anyone not authorised to have this information.

Supporting Families

The staff will continue to work closely with the family. Where abuse at home is suspected, staff will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.

Whilst the care and safety of the child is the priority, staff will work with and support the child's family.

Staff will take every step possible in building up trusting and supporting relationships between families and staff.