



## **Safeguarding Policy Statement**

Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with Twiggs Lane Preschools other policies and procedures.

Our safeguarding policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, including, The Children Act 1989, United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991, The Children Act 2004, Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 years as well as many others.

This policy applies to all staff, including manager/deputy manager, the board of directors, volunteers, students, or anyone working on behalf of Twiggs Lane Preschool.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect all children who attend Twiggs Lane Preschool
- To provide staff and volunteers with the main principles that guides our approach to safeguarding and child protection

Twiggs Lane Preschool believes that a child should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and to keep them safe. We are committed to work in a way that protects them.

All children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.



## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This means it does not solely fall to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Deputy DSO to take responsibility in all the areas covered. **We expect all staff to be responsible.** Staff are aware children may share information at any time during their sessions. Staff will listen to children without promoting them for more information. Staff will share information with the DSO and record only factual information.

### **Our Designated Safeguarding Officer is Becky Copland**

When preschool is open but DSO not on site, we have a suitably trained Deputy available

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer is Emma Gibbs**

In any situation where DSO and Deputy DSO are not on site when preschool is open, they will both always remain contactable.

The DSO and Deputy ensure they have relevant links with organisations regarding safeguarding.

- We ensure all staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that families are aware of them too.
- The DSO and Deputy understand the procedures that Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership would undertake.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility, and they have a professional duty to ensure that safeguarding concerns are reported to the local authority children's team.
- All staff understand the thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including referring families to New Forest Family Support
- All staff understand their responsibility under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018. They understand relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements, and local safeguarding partnership requirements. They ensure any information they may share about families with professionals is shared in the correct ways.
- We will ensure to support families to receive appropriate early help by sharing information with other agencies in accordance with statutory requirements.
- We will share safeguarding concerns with relevant professionals in a lawful way.
- Staff understand how to escalate their concerns if they feel either Twiggs Lane Preschool or the local authority have not acted adequately to safeguard.
- All staff understand what the preschool expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct as set out in staff handbooks and job descriptions, they follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety including the use of cameras and mobile phones, and whistleblowing.
- All children have a key person to build a relationship with and are supported to share their communications including any worries, concerns, or complaints in an age-appropriate way.
- All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression.



- All staff and volunteers must complete a DBS check prior to their post being confirmed this is to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the preschool or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and challenge an incorrect information.
- All volunteers must be age 16 or over, be considered competent and responsible, receive induction and regular supervisory meetings, be familiar with preschools policies and procedures, be fully checked for suitability if they are to be left unsupervised with children.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, DBS numbers and the date it was obtained
- All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which could affect their suitability to work with children. Staff are asked to complete an annual disclosure stating if anything could have changed regarding their suitability.
- From 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018, staff and volunteers in childcare settings that are not based on domestic premises are not required to notify their manager if anyone in their household has any relevant convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings or has been barred from or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision or have had orders made in relation to the care of their children.
- Staff receive regular supervision meets, these include discussion of any safeguarding issues, their performance, and their training needs.
- In addition to staff induction and supervision, staff are all provided with clear expectations in relation to their behaviour, this can be found in staff handbooks.
- In the event a member of staff or volunteer is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would have led to dismissal for reasons of a safeguarding or child protection concerns we would notify the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)
- Procedures are in place to record visitors to the preschool
- Security steps are taken to ensure that we as a preschool, have control over who comes into the preschool, this is to ensure that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Steps are in place to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events or activities organised by the preschool. Staff do not use personal devices to take photos or videos.
- All parents/carers complete a GDPR form so they are aware of how records and information is stored and how they can access it
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with Data Protection and GDPR
- Personal devices including mobile phones are not used where children are present
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including how they were dealt with and responded too.
- We ensure we have robust risk assessments that are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated in line with our health and safety policy.



- All staff will inform the DSO at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, this however should not delay any referrals being made to children's reception team or where appropriate LADO, Ofsted or RIDDOR.

we are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedure that are laid out in 'what to do if you're worried a child is being abused' HMG, 2015.

## **Dealing with concerns about a child and child disclosures policy**

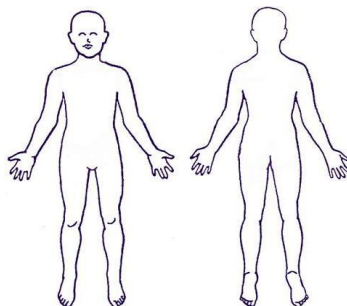
### **Responding to signs and indicators of abuse**

#### **Physical**

Action will be taken if staff has reason to believe there has been physical abuse or injury to a child:

- Any sign of a mark or injury to a child when they come into pre-school will be recorded in our pre-existing injury file. Staff will inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). DSO and deputy DSO will then discuss with the parent/carer, and they will be asked to sign the pre-existing injury form, if staff feels the child will not be at risk.
- Discussion will be recorded, and parent/carer will have access to the records. (Discussion will not take place if it is believed this would place the child at risk of significant harm)
- If staff feels the child will be at risk of significant harm, we will contact the Children's reception Team on 0300 555 1384
- If we feel the child is at immediate risk of danger/harm we will contact the police as well as children's services.
- Advice will be taken from them on the next steps to follow.

Bruises will be included within physical abuse, including those children who are not independently mobile. The above steps would be followed, and a skin map diagram would be used, these are kept within the safeguarding file.





## Emotional

Action will be taken if staff has a reason to believe that there is a severe and persistent adverse effect on the child's emotional development. Emotional abuse can often come hand in hand with another form of abuse; however, this may not always be the case.

- Any concern will be written down by the staff member, signed and dated. The DSO will be informed of the concern.
- If staff feel the child will be at risk of significant harm we will contact the Children's reception Team on 0300 555 1384.
- If we feel the child is at immediate risk of danger/harm we will contact the police as well as children's services.
- Advice will be taken from them on the next steps to follow.

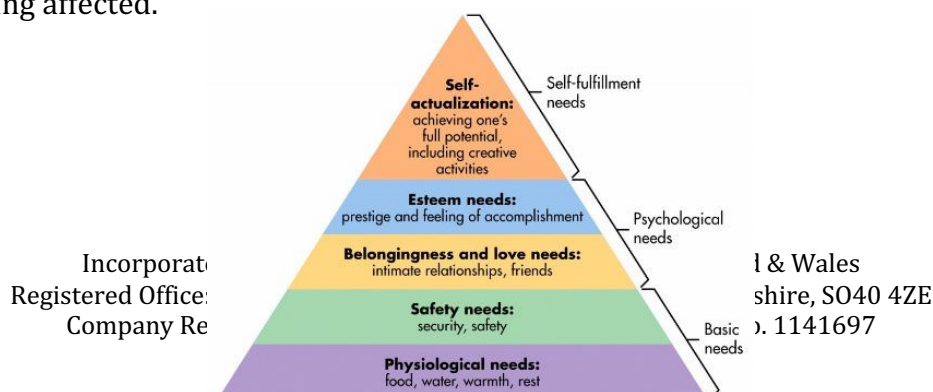
## Sexual

Action will be taken if staff has reason to believe there has been sexual abuse toward a child, this includes penetrative and non-penetrative acts (involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways). Staff may witness occasions where a child has indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawings, or inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.

- Any concern will be written down by the staff member, signed and dated. The DSO will be informed of the concern.
- If staff feel the child will be at risk of significant harm we will contact the Children's reception Team on 0300 555 1384
- If we feel the child is at immediate risk of danger/harm we will contact the police as well as children's services.
- Advice will be taken from them on the next steps to follow.

## Neglect

Action will be taken if staff has recognised signs and indicators of neglect, persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the child's health and development being affected.





- Any concern will be written down by the staff member, signed and dated. The DSO will be informed of the concern.
- If it is felt the concern could be brought to the parent/carer's attention, the DSO will discuss with them. Parent/carer will have access to the form unless it is believed the child will be at risk of significant harm.
- If staff believe the child will be at risk we will call the Children's reception Team on 0300 555 1384.
- If we feel the child is at immediate risk of danger/harm we will contact the police as well as children's services.
- Advice will be taken from them on the next steps to follow.

## Domestic Abuse

Happens between adults in the family and is not directly aimed at children. Children can be affected because of things they might hear, may witness, or see the result of the domestic abuse. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse.

- Any concern a staff member has will be written down, signed, and dated. The DSO will be informed of the concern.
- DSO and deputy DSO would approach the parent/carer about the concern if they believed the child would not be at risk. If parent/carer shared the concern, the Early Help Hub would be contacted; their advice would be followed with what to do next.
- Support would be offered to the parent/carer if needed
- Child's key person would support the child; if additional support was required Area Inclusion Coordinator would be contacted to ask for advice.

## Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a specific type of abuse aimed at girls most commonly between the ages 5-8, however it can be from birth. It is completed for cultural and religious reasons to control sexual activity. It is sometimes referred to as female circumcision. Action will be taken if a staff member has concern that a child has been through this or is at risk of going through this.

- If a staff member has reason to believe a child has been through FGM the concern will be written down, signed, and dated.
- The DSO will be informed, and the Children's reception Team will be contacted on 0300 555 1384 or if it is believed the child is at immediate risk, the Police will be contacted on 999.



## Responding to a Child's Disclosure

If a child makes a comment or discloses information to a staff member, volunteer or student that gives cause for concern. The adult will:

- Listen to the child, giving their full attention. Gives reassurance if the child needs it, being careful not to un-nerve them
- Does not question the child, however, can follow TED guidelines. Can you tell me, explain to me, describe to me?
- Will make a written factual report that will include date and time of disclosure, EXACT words the child has spoken, this must be factual evidence. The name of the person to whom the concern was reported to with date and time. Names of any other people present at the time of disclosure.
- Disclosure will be reported to the DSO, they will sign and date the form and then contact the Children's Reception Team on 0300 555 1384.
- If staff feel the child is at risk of immediate harm/danger we will contact the police as well as the Children's reception team.

## Contextualised Safeguarding

This relates to what children could be influenced by outside of their family, and of their home. At Twiggs Lane Preschool we ask families regularly to complete updated contact information, this includes who is living in the family home to ensure we are aware of any changes. If anyone has any concerns regarding the child, or anyone we are aware of coming into contact with the child, these concerns are recorded and reported to the DSO who would then follow the procedure for reporting concerns to Children's Reception Team. This also includes any disclosures, made by the child, regarding anything they may have witnessed outside of the family home or if a child names a particular person.

**At all times the Designated Safeguarding Officer will follow the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Children's Trust Threshold Chart as well as the pathway for guidance.**

## Looked after children

Definition of 'Looked after children' (LAC): *children and young people become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).*

It is our duty to inform Services for Young Children (SFYC) of any Looked after Children attending the setting.



Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies disruption in their lives that has an impact on their well-being.

At Twiggs Lane Preschool we place emphasis on promoting *children's rights to be strong, resilient, and listened to*. Our policy and practice for looked after children is based on these two important concepts, *attachment, and resilience*. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives as the

basis of resilience. These aspects of wellbeing underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and are the basis in developing positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

All looked after children will be offered the same opportunities, please see all other policies as reference.

#### Procedure

- The designated person for looked after children is the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) this is the manager at Twiggs Lane Preschool
- Every child is allocated a key person before they start, this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs. Where possible the key person would be the DSO or Deputy DSO
- The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The setting recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes places with the child. Nothing changes, especially regarding the birth parents or foster carer's role in relation to the setting without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting that will determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs Personal Education Plan (PEP) this plan is reviewed regularly.
- The plan needs to consider such issues for the child as:
  - The child's emotional needs and how they are to be met.
  - How any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed.
  - The child's sense of self, culture, language and identify how this is to be supported.
  - The child's needs for sociability and friendship
  - The child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway.
  - How any special needs will be supported.
- In addition, the PEP will also consider:
  - How information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored.





- What contact the child has with their birth parents and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed.
- What written reporting is required.
  
- Wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting activities that include parents, such as outings, fun-days etc alongside the foster carer.
  
- The settling in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the proximity stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a relationship with their key person sufficient to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.
- In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's wellbeing is the focus of observation, their sociability, and the ability to manage their feelings with or without support.
- Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning.
- Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.
- If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded and in the child's file and reported to the child's social worker according to the settings safeguarding children's procedure.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.
- Transition to school will be handled sensitively and the designated person and or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

Review date: September 2024

Signed Manager: .....*Becky Copland*.....