

01 Health and safety procedures

Threats/abuse towards staff and Staff Safety

The setting is responsible for protecting the health and safety of all staff and volunteers and has a duty of care in relation to their physical and emotional well-being. We believe that violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against staff are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Where such behaviour occurs, we will take all reasonable and appropriate action in support of our staff and volunteers.

- Staff and volunteers have a right to expect that their workplace is a safe environment, and that prompt and appropriate action will be taken on their behalf if they are subjected to abuse, threats, violence or harassment by parents, service users and other adults as they carry out their duties.
- The most common example of unreasonable behaviour is abusive or intimidating and aggressive language.
- Where a person recklessly or intentionally applies unlawful force on another or puts another in fear of an immediate attack. We would normally expect the police to be contacted immediately.

Any staff member or volunteer who feels under threat or has been threatened, assaulted, or intimidated in the course of their work must report this immediately to their manager who will take appropriate action to support. This may include the manager sending a letter to the aggressor, warning them that their behaviour is unacceptable and may result in further action being taken against them. All incidents must be recorded and reported to the Chairperson.

Banning parents and other visitors from the premises

- If a parent or other person continues to behave unreasonably on the premises a letter will be sent to them from the Chairperson, withdrawing the implied permission for them to be there.
- Further breaches may lead to prosecution of the person concerned by the police and they are treated as a trespasser.
- Full records are kept of each incident

Dealing with agitated parents/visitors in the setting

- If a parent or visitor appears to be angry, two members of staff will lead them away from the children to an area on the playground, or the Kitchen area but will not shut the door behind them. We will try to arrange a meeting away from the setting or over the phone to reduce risk to children and staff.
- Staff offer to discuss the issue of concern and show they recognise the concern and is empathetic, trying to solve the issue..

- If the person makes threats and continues to be angry, members of staff make it clear that they will be unable to discuss the issue until the person stops shouting or being abusive
- If threats continue, members of staff will explain that the police will be called and emphasise the inappropriateness of such behaviour in front of the children.
- After the event, it is recorded in the child's file together with any decisions made with the parents to rectify the situation.
- Any situation involving threats to members of staff are reported to the Chairperson.

Copies of correspondence regarding the incident will be kept in the relevant child's file.

Dealing with an incident

- We would normally expect all cases of assault, and all but the most minor of other incidents, to be regarded as serious matters which should be reported to the manager and/or the police and followed up with due care and attention.
- A record of the incident must be made whether the police are involved or not.
- A range of support can be obtained:
 - from the setting manager, committee and/or a staff colleague
 - from Victim Support on giving evidence in court
- 999 calls receive an immediate response.

After the incident has been dealt with, a risk assessment is done to identify preventative measures that can be put in place to minimise or prevent the incident occurring again.

Harassment or intimidation of staff by parents/visitors

- The setting manager should contact their chairperson for advice and support.
- Where the parent's behaviour merits it, the setting manager, with another member of staff present, should inform the parent clearly but sensitively that staff feel unduly harassed or intimidated and are considering making a complaint to the police if the behaviour does not desist or improve. The parent should be left in no doubt about the gravity of the situation and that this will be followed up with a letter drafted by the setting manager but sent to their Chairperson for approval before being issued.
- The setting manager and/or their Chairperson might wish to consider advising the parent to make a formal complaint. Information about how to complain is clearly displayed for parents and service users.
- If the investigation concludes that the parent's expectations and demands are unreasonable, and that they are having a detrimental effect on staff, the findings can strengthen the setting manager's position in further discussions with the parent and subsequently, if necessary, with the police.

Staff personal safety on visits

General

- Members of staff who are in the building early in the morning or late in the evening, ensure that they keep their phones on them and lock the doors where possible.

Home visits

Home visits are done at the setting manager's discretion under the following health and safety considerations:

- Staff normally do home visits in pairs, usually manager or deputy and key person. Visits alone can be made by the SENDCO or Manager, when there is ongoing SEN concerns, but must be recorded in the diary and a phone call or text is made to the setting at the end of the meeting.
- Each home visit is recorded in the diary with the name of the family being visited, prior to the visit taking place.
- If there is reason for staff to feel concerned about entering premises on a visit, they do not do so, for example, if a parent appears drunk or under the influence of drugs.
- Members of staff carry mobile phones, when going out on a home visit.
- If staff do not return from the home visit at the expected time the person in charge attempts to phone them and continues to do so until they make contact

If no contact is made after a reasonable amount of time has passed, the contact person rings the police

Manual handling

- All staff comply with risk assessment and have a personal responsibility to ensure they do not lift objects likely to cause injury. Failure to do so may invalidate an insurance claim.
- Members of staff bring the setting manager's attention to any new risk, or situations where the control measures are not working.
- Risk assessments may need to be changed for some individuals, such as a pregnant woman, or staff with an existing or previous injury or impairment that may affect their capacity to lift.
- Risk assessment is carried out of the environment in which the lifting is done. Features such as uneven floor surfaces, stairs, etc. add to the general risk and need to be taken into consideration.

- The setting manager ensures that they and their staff are trained to lift and move heavy objects and unstable loads correctly. Young children are also heavy and need to be lifted and carried carefully and correctly.

Guidelines:

- Do not lift heavy objects alone. Seek help from a colleague.
- Bend from the knees rather than the back.
- Do not lift very heavy objects that are beyond your strength.
- Use trolleys for heavy items that must be carried or moved on a regular basis.
- Do not stand on objects, other than proper height steps, to reach high objects and never try to over-reach.
- Push rather than pull heavy objects.

Jewellery and hair accessories

Children, staff members, volunteers and students do not attend the setting wearing jewellery or fashion accessories that may pose a potential hazard to other children or themselves.

- Health and safety take precedence over respect for culture, religion or fashion.
- Members of staff do not wear jewellery or fashion accessories, such as high heels or large hooped earrings that may pose a danger to them or to young children.