



# *The Nature Nursery Montessori Ltd*

## Child Protection

### **Policy Statement**

Child Protection is an integral part of our ethos and will be infused into every decision we make for the children we care for, we will endeavour to give every child the best start in life and hope to positively enhance their early years experiences as much as we possibly can.

The happiness of all children in our care is by far our primary focus, and with the framework and guidance we have available we will ensure that their safety, health and welfare is protected every step of their journey with us.

We write this policy to provide our parents and employees with support on how to protect children from all forms of abuse and guidance on the steps to take to free them from it. In Scotland we have excellent legal frameworks in place to help us ensure that all children have equal rights, and these rights are respected. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and GIRFEC are 2 essential documents that help guide us through such delegate but serious matters.

### **Our Promise**

To support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. Child protection is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the other nursery policies and procedures.

In order to protect the children in its care, we follow the guidelines outlined in the **Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment (2016)** guidance, released by the Care Inspectorate. This guidance outlines the safe protocols for the recruitment of staff - from screening to seeking references from a previous employer. We ensure that the protocols laid out in this guidance, and then replicated in the Recruitment Policy which is followed for each new recruitment procedure.

We stive to be vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our full team, trainees and volunteers have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care, we are providing, staff may often be the first people to identify that there is a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. Staff will work with other agencies, including being part of a multi-agency team where needed, in the best interests of the child.

We value up to date training to keep knowledge fresh and allowing our staff to be as vigilant and confident to handle any situations which may arise.

The national guidance sets out common standards for child protection services in Scotland making it clear how all agencies should work together, where appropriate, to respond to concerns early and effectively, ensuring that practice is consistent and of high quality.

It is supported by a suite of other policies ( National Policy) and should be seen in the wider context of the *Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach*, *The Early Years Framework (2009)* and *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

## **Our Responsibilities**

At The Nature Nursery we will have a named Child Protection Advisor - **Nursery Owner, Emma Halley**. All employees will be encouraged to take even the smallest concerns to the CPA. All concerns will be treated with the same level of confidentiality and vigilance.

Documentation is an important aspect of Child Protection to ensure all concerns/allegations are as accurate as possible. We encourage all our employees to keep the correct paper work up to date, and also including keeping note of injuries which may have happened outside of the setting.

Having open conversations about how to deal with or notice signs of abuse, and ensure our own employees feel comfortable if they were ever to respond to these situations.

We will endeavour to make sure that our policies are updated regularly, to coincide with any training/initiatives that may be in place.

All Employees, Volunteers and Care Givers will be given will be given our policy to read and sign. This will ensure that we all have a similar understanding of what we believe is Child Protection.

## **Definitions of Abuse**

The Children's Act (1989) has recognised that abuse may come in forms that fall under these four categories

**Physical Abuse** is where deliberate physical harm is inflicted and can involve hitting, kicking, punching, throwing, shaking, scalding, burning, poisoning, drowning or suffocating. Physical abuse also includes where someone has deliberately caused the ill health of another through fabricated or induced illness in order to seek attention.

**Symptoms of physical abuse include:** *unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body, cigarette burns, human bite marks, broken bones, scalds, flinching when approached or touched, reluctance to get changed, depression, withdrawn behaviour, running away from home.* **FGM** (Female genital mutilation) Further information, legislation and guidance can be found on the NSPCC website here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

**Emotional Abuse** is when a person's emotions are deliberately ignored, taken advantage of or not met. Children require love, security, praise and recognition in order to grow and develop emotionally. Someone may be regarded as being emotionally abusive where they are consistently hostile, rejecting, verbally abusive or threatening towards another individual. Domestic abuse can also be regarded as a form of emotional abuse and can include situations where inappropriate expectations are placed on an individual or when someone is prevented from having social contact with others.

**Symptoms of emotional abuse include:** neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking, withdrawn behaviour, being unable to play, fear of making mistakes, too eager to please, sudden speech disorders, self-harm, eating disorders, very low self-esteem, developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

**Sexual Abuse** occurs when someone is forced or enticed into taking part in sexual activities, regardless of whether they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can include both penetrative or non-penetrative physical contact or being made to watch sexual activities for example pornographic material.

**Symptoms of sexual abuse include:** pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in or near the genital area, sexually transmitted disease, vaginal discharge or infection, stomach pains, discomfort when walking or sitting down, pregnancy, sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, fear of being left with a specific person or group of people, sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level, sexual drawings or language, acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

**Neglect** is when there is persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable person's basic physical or psychological needs. Neglect can cause significant harm to an individual's health and development and can include being left unsupervised or alone for long periods of time, being inadequately fed or clothed, ignoring or failing to assist with medical (e.g. failure to seek medical treatment or administer medication) or personal hygiene needs (e.g. toileting, washing, toothbrushing, etc). Being kept in inappropriate, unsafe or unhygienic accommodation can also be viewed as neglect as can lack of stimulation, social contact or education.

**Signs of neglect include:** constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children, constantly dirty or 'smelly', loss of weight, or being constantly underweight, inappropriate clothing for the conditions, complaining of being tired all the time, not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments, having few friends, mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

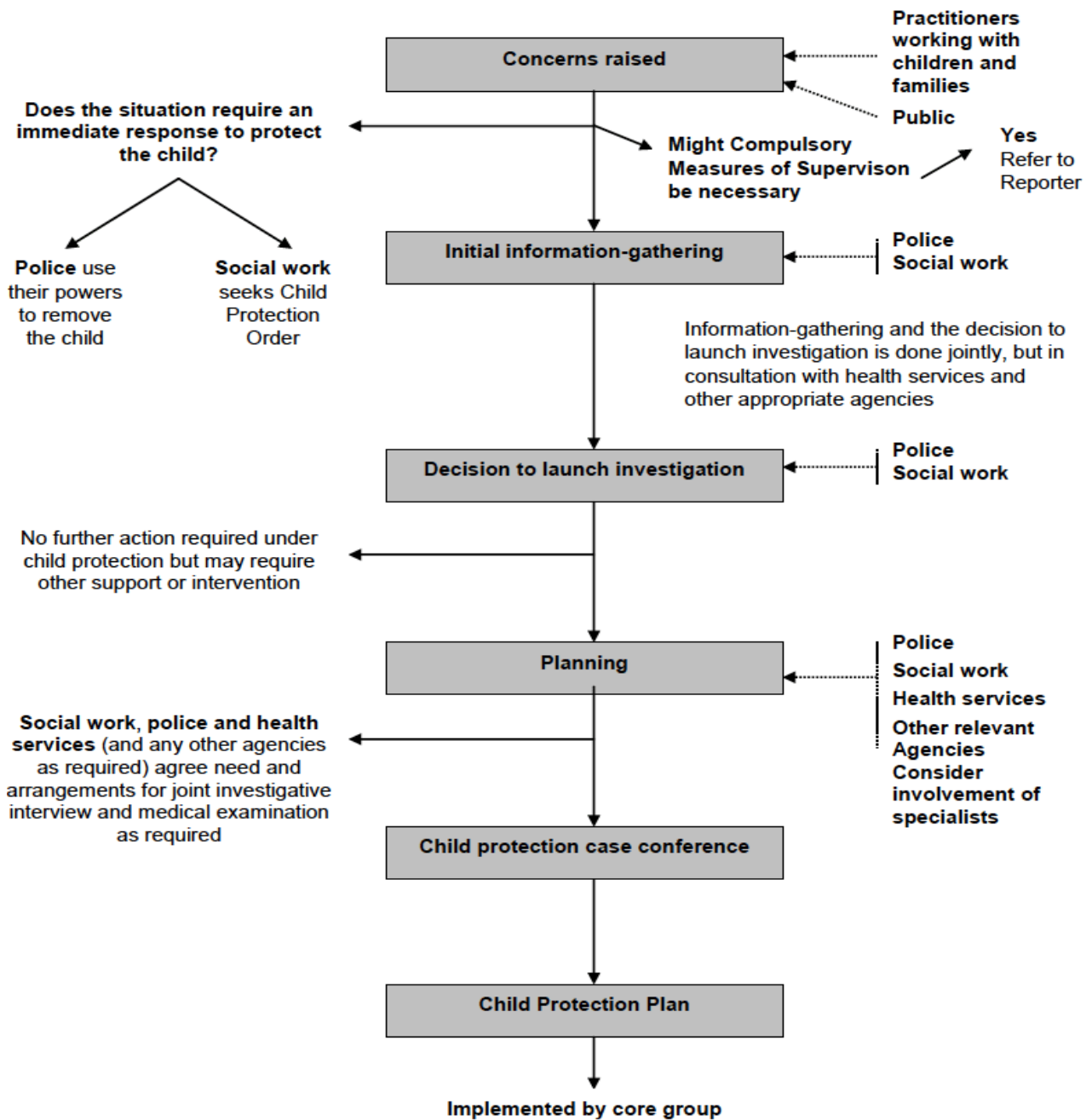
However there are occasions where a single traumatic event constitutes as 'significant harm' to a child and must be handled with extreme care and urgency and on other occasions a build-up of concerns or a series of incidents over time may also lead to 'significant harm' It is important for us to seek guidance from an agency such as the care inspectorate if we feel unsure how as to how to take a concern forward and at what pace which will avoid escalating a situation which may endanger the child further.

### **If a child discloses abuse**

If a child informs a member of our team that they or another child has been mistreated or abused. The Nature Nursery will ensure then following steps are followed:

- Show the child that you are listening, let them know that we take their allegations seriously and that we will do my best to help.
- Reassure them that they can feel comfortable talking to our team members, encourage them to open up but never prompt them or ask them leading questions. We will not interrupt when a child is recalling significant events or make a child repeat their account of events that have caused trauma or upset.
- Explain in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child the actions we must take in order to help them.
- Record what we have been told using exact words where possible in my safeguarding / record of concerns logbook. This will include a record of the date, time, place and any other people present at the discussion so as they can be recalled as a witness if necessary.
- Report any concerns immediately to my who will advise me on how to deal with the situation and if necessary, seek the involvement of social workers and/or the police.

Please see the table taken from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland/pages/11/> on how we will move forward with any Child Protection Concerns which we may have.



## Important Telephone Numbers

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

Social work enquiries Phone: 0303 123 1008

Social work emergency service Phone: 0303 123 1008

Police: 999

Created By: Denise Sieyes

UpDate: 18/05/2022

Health and Social Care Standards:

1.1 I am accepted and valued whatever my needs, ability, gender, age, faith, mental health status, race, background or sexual orientation.

1.2 My human rights are protected and promoted and I experience no discrimination.

1.3 If my independence, control and choice are restricted, this complies with relevant legislation and any restrictions are justified, kept to a minimum and carried out sensitively.

1.4 If I require intimate personal care, this is carried out in a dignified way, with my privacy and personal preferences respected.

1.5 If I am supported and cared for in the community, this is done discreetly and with respect

4.1 My human rights are central to the organisations that support and care for me.

3.1 I experience people speaking and listening to me in a way that is courteous and respectful, with my care and support being the main focus of people's attention.

3.2 If I experience care and support where I live, people respect this as my home.

3.3 I have agreed clear expectations with people about how we behave towards each other, and these are respected.

3.4 I am confident that the right people are fully informed about my past, including my health and care experience, and any impact this has on me.

3.5 As a child or young person, I am helped to develop a positive view of myself and to form and sustain trusting and secure relationships