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Child Protection Policy

Introduction

This Child Protection Policy works in conjunction with Sunflowers Pre-School and Out of School Club’s Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of conduct. It specifically relates to the protection of children at risk of harm.

Aims and Principles

* To inform staff, parents and volunteers about the setting’s responsibilities for safeguarding children
* To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out
* To establish an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have a worry or concern
* Establish and maintain an environment where pre-school staff and volunteers feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have concerns about the safety and well-being of a child
* Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

Statutory Framework

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children Sunflowers Pre-School and Out of School Clubs will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

* The Children Act 1989
* The Children Act 2004
* Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures (Electronic)
* Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE (2022)
* Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE (2015)
* Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015)
* Early years foundation stage statutory framework (4 January 2024)

All staff to complete an annual safeguarding, prevent and FGM training update online, and attend a team briefing for Sunflowers specific details and discussion/questions.

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The Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding is:

DSP- Louisa Cowler- Manager

The Deputy Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding is:

DSP- Tracey Corner, Sarah Pointon and Nikki Shore

**Pass any concerns onto the DSP or in their absence the Deputy DSP immediately, completing the relevant paperwork.**

They can assist on the necessary paperwork and information needed.

Should the DSP’s not be on site they should be able to be contacted. Contact numbers for both are stored on the Sunflowers mobile phone or in the staff file of the Sunflowers filing cabinet.

Or in exceptional circumstances where none of the above are available, contact Children’s Services or in matters of urgency, the police.

Contact numbers for Children’s Services on poster displayed next to this statement.

‘Working together to safeguard children’ and Sunflowers’ Child Protection Policy.

(This should be displayed on a notice board in the setting always)

Responsibilities and Role of the DSP (Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in Keeping Children safe in Education

* During Term-Time, the Designated Safeguarding Person or Deputy will always be available during Pre-School hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
* Advise and support members of staff with concerns to complete all the relevant paperwork
* Refer all cases of suspected abuse/neglect to the Local Authority Children’s Services (Safeguarding and Specialist Services). Police (cases where a crime may have been committed) and to the channel programme where there has been a radicalisation concern
* Share information with appropriate staff in relation to a child’s looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an Interim Care Order or Care Order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility
* Keep their formal training up to date every two years. Undergo Prevent Awareness Training. Keep knowledge refreshed via e-bulletins or meeting other DSP’s
* Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the pre-school’s safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff
* Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and any other children that may be at risk
* Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
* Ensure all staff undergo training every three years and annual refresher training updates internally
* Link with the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB) to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding

When to be concerned

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means they should consider, always, what is in the best interests of the child.

‘Families First’ is Hertfordshire’s programme of early help services for families. A directory of early help services is available at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst) and will help practitioners and families find information and support to prevent escalation of needs and crisis.

Staff and volunteers should be alert to the potential need for early help for children who are more vulnerable. For example:

* Children with a disability and/or specific additional needs
* Children with special educational needs
* Children who are acting as a young carer
* Children who are engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour
* Children whose family circumstances present challenges such as substance abuse, mental health or learning disability or domestic violence

Staff members should be aware of the main categories of maltreatment:

**Physical Abuse; Emotional Abuse; Sexual Abuse and Neglect**

Dealing with a Disclosure

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff/volunteer should:

* Listen attentively to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
* Accept what is being said
* Allow the child to talk freely without putting words into their mouth/suggesting wording
* Reassure the child but do not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
* Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone
* Reassure him or her that it is not their fault, and it was the right thing to do to tell
* Only question when necessary to clarify
* Pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Person or Deputy DSP
* Make a written record as soon as possible

Record Keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. Please discuss this stage with the Designated Senior Person.

* Record as soon as possible after the conversation. Use the Record of Concern sheet. Blank ones can be found in a folder in the Sunflowers admin area
* Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
* Record statements and observations rather than interpretations and assumptions
* Do not destroy any notes in case they are needed in court in the future
* Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any injuries

All records need to be given to the Designated Senior Person immediately. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

Confidentiality

Safeguarding children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers. Staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children’s Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services and the Police).

It should be made clear to the child disclosing that the information cannot be kept a secret and that it will be shared with other people responsible to keep the child safe.

Communication with Parents

Sunflowers Pre-School and Out of School Clubs will ensure the child protection policy is available either via the policies and procedures folder or on the website.

Parents should be informed prior to referral, unless it is considered to do so might place the child at increased risk of significant harm by:

* The behavioural response it prompts eg. a child being subjected to abuse, maltreatment or threats/forced to remain silent if alleged abuser informed
* Leading to an unreasonable delay
* Leading to risk of loss of evidential material

Ensure the parents have an awareness of the responsibilities of the Pre-School and staff for safeguarding children.

Allegations involving Staff/Volunteers

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have:

* Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child
* Behaved in a way towards children that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

All staff should feel able to raise concerns about safeguarding arrangements. Please see our whistle blowing procedure. Any allegations regarding a member of staff should be disclosed immediately to the Designated Senior Person or if the allegation is regarding them, it should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0300 123 4043.

NSPCC whistleblowing helpline for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285, 08:00am-08.00pm Monday to Friday.

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| Adopted by: Louisa Cowler | Role: Sunflowers Pre-School Manager |



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