

Child On Child Abuse Policy

At butterflies Montessori Nursery, we work in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Sept 2022, which states that 'All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it (Page 12). The document also states it is most important to ensure opportunities of seeking the voice of the child are heard.

At our setting we understand that very young children are learning to identify and deal with their feelings and emotions and as a result sometimes hurt each other whether physically, verbally, emotionally or sexually. Should there be an incident when we believe a child may have hurt one of their peers whether intentionally or unintentionally we always encourage them to think about how they make others feel if they hurt them.

We monitor such an incident to assess whether there may be a particular trigger for such behaviour and also to see if there are individual children who are often involved in such incidents and will always speak to the parents at the end of the session where possible.

We frequently remind the children of 'Our Nursery rules' of which one is to be kind and caring to each other and staff offer positive role models for behaviour.

Our setting will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems will be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, any system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Related Policies

At Butterflies Montessori Nursery we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy

Behaviour Policy

Framework and Legislation

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document that focuses adult thinking towards the views of the child is 'Working Together, 2018', highlighting that every assessment of a child, 'must be informed by the views of the child' and within that 'It is important to understand the resilience of the individual child when planning appropriate services. (Working Together, 2018:23) This is clearly echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

Expected action taken from all staff

It is important to deal with a situation of child on child abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred before the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. In all cases of peer on peer abuse it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young children and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

Gather the Facts

Speak to all staff who were present and children dependant on age and understanding, using consistent language and open questions. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask young children to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the children from this to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

- Track evidence through observations, incident reports and ABC charts.
- Consider the Intent (begin to Risk Assess)
- Has this been a deliberate situation for a young child to be able to harm another?
- From the ABC tracker charts, can you define a trigger?
- Are staff consistent with behaviour management?
- Are all new staff to the nursery informed of the circumstances and required amount of supervision?
- Are the parents working together with the setting on using the same strategies? And are the parents consistent at home?
- Decide on your next course of action. If the answers are not always clear cut or you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU).
- If from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to the MARU. /social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps.

'SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONES RESPONSIBILITY'

If you are worried About a Child or Young Person speak to any of the following staff immediately:

Designated safeguarding lead: Michele Dann. In her absence Amanda Lorrimer-Roberts.

This policy was reviewed: April 2023

(Policies dated and signed by Manager in nursery 'Policy and Procedure File')