

Safeguarding Children Procedure

The Ark at Waddington is committed to an environment in which children are safe from abuse and where any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to in accordance with The Governments Statutory Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

(This can be accessed via <http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb> – useful links and publications)

- All staff are aware of their responsibility as early years practitioners to share any concerns they have about a child with the designated lead safeguarding person.
- Staff members also have the right to share concerns directly with the Lincolnshire County Council Children's Service Customer Services Centre (CSC) (01522 782111 or Emergency Duty Team 01522 782333) or the police if they feel this is appropriate.
- All staff will be made aware of possible indicators of child abuse and the procedures for recording and reporting through staff training, both internal and external. The Safeguarding folder has lists that can be used to help recognise signs of abuse or neglect and advice on how to make a referral.
- The staff will be made aware of the importance of recognising and reporting inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities or inappropriate sharing of images (see Whistle Blowing) through staff training, both internal and external.
- All parent/carers will be provided with a copy of the setting's safeguarding policy and procedure and are made aware of the fact that The Ark at Waddington has a legal obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in their care, and that the child's needs are be our first concern.

Records will be kept as appropriate:

Whenever concerns are raised or changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific record is set up. Our records include pre-existing injuries, incidents, accidents and observations. All concerns remain confidential and shared only on a need to know basis. The guidance set by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board will be followed.

Where a disclosure is made by a child:

- Reassurance is given to the child.
- The child is listened to.
- The child is not questioned.

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- Promises are not made to the child to not share any of the information made in the disclosure.
- The designated person with responsibility for safeguarding children is informed immediately and procedures under the guidance of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board are followed.
- A referral is made without delay to Lincolnshire County Council Children's Service Customer Services Centre (CSC) on 01522 782111 or Emergency Duty Team on 01522 782333.

Records are made to include:

- The child's name, full address, date of birth.
- The date and time of the disclosure/observation.
- The exact record of disclosure (in child's own words).
- The name of person to whom disclosure was made.
- The name of any third-party present.
- The Safeguarding Concern Form completed (as far as possible with all information) signed and sent to the relevant officer (Children's Services will advise on this) within 24 hours of the telephone referral.

All records are kept separately and securely from the child's main records with restricted access.

(For more information on the Team Around the Child (TAC) and the Safeguarding Concern form please refer to www.lincolnshirechildren.net)

Allegations against a staff member:

In accordance with requirements our procedures for dealing with allegations against staff complies with Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board policies.

Examples of inappropriate adult behaviour may include:

- Staff that have behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Staff that have possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Staff that have failed to execute their duty to safeguard a child/ren at the setting or elsewhere.
- Staff that have behaved towards a child/ren in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Our procedure is as follows:

- The setting co-operates fully with all investigations.

- Details are recorded and stored securely.
- The setting's disciplinary procedure will be followed where necessary.
- Ofsted and LSCB will be informed of the allegation and outcome.

The setting will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for managing allegations through the Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services Customer Service Centre (CSC) on 01522 782111 or Emergency Duty Team 01522 782333 / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation, however, we will consider the seriousness and plausibility of the allegation, the risk of harm to children and the possibility of tampering with evidence, as well as the interests of the person concerned and our organisation.

Where a member of staff leaves our employment during an investigation or is dismissed because of an allegation being upheld a referral will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Referral guidance and form: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/services/dbs-referrals/>

Supporting families:

The Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 have extended the rights of individuals and families to confidentiality and professionals as a rule should seek the agreement and consent of parents/carers before making a referral to the local authority.

Where our designated lead is in doubt as to whether consent is necessary, the facts of the case will be discussed with the Customer Service Centre.

- We acknowledge that parents will be the first point of contact and they will be informed of any suspicions **unless** this is deemed likely to put a child at risk.
- We will follow the guidelines laid down by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board.
- The setting, through the Safeguarding Children policy and other sources of information will inform parents of their role and responsibility regarding safeguarding children.
- The setting will continue to work with families throughout any investigation.

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

This section provides details on the arrangements that the setting has in place for the safe and effective use of mobile phones and cameras as required by requirement 3.4 of the EYFS 2021.

Mobile phones

The Ark at Waddington has a setting mobile phone as part of the contact arrangements for the setting due to having no landline available. The phone will be kept on the main office desk throughout sessions, if all staff are supervising the children outside or on an outing, it will be taken.

The safety of the children is paramount. Casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones by staff may pose a risk, if a staff member is distracted from caring for children (*Ofsted, Mobile Phone guidance Feb 2011*).

Staff mobile phones should be away and kept on silent, with the rest of their belongings either on the blue chairs in the main hall, or in the kitchen:

- Staff may not carry or use their personal mobile phones whilst working in the setting without prior permission.
- The setting telephone number should be given out to be used as an emergency contact for staff (with schools etc).
- Staff can use their mobile phones during breaks.
- If necessary, staff can use the camera facility on their mobile phone during a session purely to take photos to be posted on the settings closed Facebook group only or to upload onto iConnect. Once these photo's have been successfully uploaded, they must immediately be removed from the device, witnessed by the designated person in charge.
- Mobile phones are prohibited within the toilet / nappy changing areas.

Cameras

- Consent for photographs is obtained from parent/carer on admission as part of the registration process.
- Children will have access to a child friendly digital camera and any photographs taken by children will be downloaded or deleted at the end of each session.
- Staff will only use the setting's own digital camera to take photographs to support the recording of activities or events and these will be downloaded or deleted at the end of each week.
- The camera where the photos are stored will be securely stored at the end of each day.
- Cameras are prohibited within the toilet / nappy changing areas.

Social Networking

- Staff are not permitted to post anything about the children attending the setting, past or present, their families or any other member of staff.

