



## **Safeguarding children policy**

### **Statement of intent!**

Sevenoaks Day Nursery will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. We recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

**Note:** We understand that Covid-19 and the lockdown has affected some of our children. We (the staff) are sensitive to all the different needs of the children on their return to nursery. We do observe the children on their return and if needed, we will communicate with outside agencies as per this policy.

### **Key commitments**

1. The Nursery is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.
2. The Nursery is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015).
3. The Nursery is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for staff. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

### **Liaison with other bodies**

- We work within the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) guidelines.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff. All staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns. A copy can be found in the different rooms and on the parents' board.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues. We refer to our Education Safeguarding services list that is on display in the Manager's office and on the staff notice board in the staff room.

- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any significant incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children, or where an allegation of abuse is made against staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.

## Methods

### Key Commitment 1

The Nursery is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

### Staffing and volunteering

- The Nursery has a DSL who co-ordinates child protection issues. The Trustees oversee this work.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
- We have regular supervision with all staff to ensure efficient and safe care for all our children. We do this through regular monitoring of practice and professional support to identify staffs training and development needs.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding concerns are reported to the DSL or Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP).
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value, but can be respectfully sceptical.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff, Trustees and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:

- the Disclosure & Barring Service number;
  - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
  - details of who obtained it.
- All staff are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
  - We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
  - Volunteers and students do not work unsupervised.
  - We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Nursery.
  - We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Nursery so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
  - Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
  - In accordance with the Policy for Staff, staff must put their personal mobiles away and never carry them around. After gaining permission from the Manager, personal mobiles may be kept where staff can hear them if they are awaiting an emergency call and should only be used away from any children. Personal mobiles must **never** be used to take photographs of the children. This can only be done using Nursery cameras for Nursery purposes and must only be downloaded on the Nursery printer. Photographs on the Nursery cameras are deleted weekly.
  - Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office.
  - We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
  - We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
  - The Trustees will support the Manager to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
  - The Manager will inform the Chair of Trustees at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern; however, this should not delay any referrals being made to the children's social worker services, the LADO, Ofsted or RIDDOR.

## **Key Commitment 2**

The Nursery is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015).

### **Responding to suspicions of abuse**

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
  - the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure)
  - changes in their appearance or their play
  - significant changes in children's behaviour
  - deterioration in their general well-being
  - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse
  - neglect.
- We consider factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority Children's Education Safeguarding Services for advice.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as,
  - abuse of disabled children
  - fabricated or induced illness
  - child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession
  - sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse
  - Female Genital Mutilation and
  - Radicalisation.

that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.

Refer also to the Nursery's separate policy on British Values and the Prevent Programme.

- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or

honour-based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who they may come into contact with.

- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and follow the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) procedures.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the DSL. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- In the event that a staff member is unhappy with the decision made by the DSL in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral, they must follow escalation procedures.
- We refer concerns to the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation, including by the police or another agency identified by the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP).
- Members of staff in the Nursery take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking leading questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- We actively encourage whistle blowing.

## **Disclosures**

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives assurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child. The member of staff will not promise confidentiality to the child.

### **Noting injury that occurs outside the Nursery**

If a child arrives with an injury sustained elsewhere we will ask for an explanation and again record this in the accident book and ask whoever has brought in the child to sign the Injury on Arrival form.

### **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

- A member of staff makes a record of:
  - the child's name
  - the age of the child
  - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure
  - the exact words spoken by the child, as far as possible
  - the exact words spoken by the member of staff, as far as possible
  - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time and
  - the names of any other person present at the time.
- A body map should be completed where appropriate.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept securely and confidentially.
- All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.
- The DSL is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity and within 1 working day.
- Where Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership.

### **Making a referral to the local authority social care team**

- The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication Safeguarding Children contains procedures for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral. This is based on 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015).
- We keep a copy of this document alongside procedures set down by our Local Safeguarding Children Board which we follow where local procedures differ from those of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **Informing parents**

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to KSCMP, parents are informed at the same time as the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Partnership does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger. The staff can access the KSCMP and make a request online or phone the Front Door. The Education safeguarding Service information can be found in the Manager's office or on the wall in the staff room.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the social workers will inform parents.

## **Allegations against staff**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff, volunteers or student within the Nursery which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, or any other person working with the children, which includes:
  - inappropriate sexual comments;
  - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or
  - inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Authority Designated Person when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the Nursery, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree further action to be taken.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by Local Authority Designated Officer or Children's Social Work Services.
- We inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children at the Nursery (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. We

are required to do this as soon as practicable. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.

- Our policy, where deemed appropriate by the Trustees in agreement with children's social care, is to either dismiss or suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the member of staff, or volunteer, as well as children and families throughout the process.

### **Disciplinary action**

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the Nursery or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

### **Key Commitment 3**

The Nursery is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

### **Training**

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the Nursery to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by Local Authority and The Education People.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the Nursery.

### **Planning**

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

### **Curriculum**

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.

- We create within the Nursery a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

### **Confidentiality**

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Authority Designated Officer.

### **Support to families**

- The Nursery believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The Nursery makes clear to parents its role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- The Nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the Nursery's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Nursery's Confidentiality Policy and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Trustees of Sevenoaks Day Nursery in September, 2012 and amended in March 2021.



Susan Dreksler  
Chair