



LEECHPOOL CATERPILLAR NURSERY & AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & PROCEDURE

AIM

Leechpool Caterpillar Nursery and After-School Club will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. It is our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all children in our care and to take the necessary steps should any concerns be raised. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the three key commitments of the Early Years Alliance Safeguarding Children

POLICY

We refer to PAN SUSSEX for regular updates on legislation with regards to Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures.

PROCEDURES

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Alliance Safeguarding Policy.

KEY COMMITMENT 1

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

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- Our designated persons (members of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues are Kate Summerhayes, Maria Gwynn and Bev John. Kate, Maria and Bev have specific responsibility for co-ordinating action in the setting for liaising with the MASH at West Sussex County Council (01403 229900) and OFSTED (0300 123 1231). It is this person's role to ensure that the nursery procedures are followed and to act as a channel for communicating with those agencies, concerns expressed by any member of staff about individual children.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and training is updated yearly and that parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed on the job advert and application form that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out "enhanced disclosure" checks with

the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed. (More information can be found at www.gov.uk search Disclosure and Barring Service)

- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by OFSTED requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the criminal records disclosure/DBS reference number;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - details of who obtained it.
- We inform all staff 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 abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect 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 and adhere to Section 35 'Duty to refer'.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

CAMERAS AND PHONES

- We take steps 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.
- Personal mobile phones belonging to staff, volunteers or visitors are not to be used during session times.
- At the beginning of each individual shift, personal mobile phones are stored in personal bags in the cupboard next to the accessible toilet.
- Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phone whilst on the premises.
- Photographs or recordings of children are only taken on equipment belonging to the setting.
- Camera and video use is monitored by the setting manager.

- Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events permission will first be gained from all parents for their children to be included.
- Parents and Carers are advised not to share photographs/recordings of children other than their own on social media.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- We keep a register of each child's attendance during their time with us. If a child is absent we request that the parents/carer contacts the nursery by 10am on the first day of absence to inform us. If no contact is made the manager or deputy will call the family using contact numbers given. Depending on family circumstances we may contact MASH for advice if we are unable to make contact with the family.

KEY COMMITMENT 2

Leechpool Caterpillar Nursery & After School Club is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies.

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:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;
 - their comments which may give cause for concern,
 - or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- 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; and female genital mutilation; that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.

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 we 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.
- 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 Lead Practitioner who is acting as the "designated person". The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB in some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking 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.

RECORDING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE AND DISCLOSURES

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff 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:

- Listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
- Does not question the child;
- Makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - The exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at

the earliest opportunity.

- Where the Local Safeguarding Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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 social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

LIAISON WITH OTHER AGENCIES

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines.
- We have the current version of 'what to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff and ensure that all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues. These include Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Early Help (formally known as IPEH) and LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) contact details.
- We notify OFSTED of any 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 a member of 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

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the preschool, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, 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:
 1. Inappropriate sexual comments;
 2. Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and

responsibilities.

3. Inappropriate sharing of images.

4. Behaved in a way that a child was or could have been harmed.

5. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.

- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, 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 investigate: 0330 2223339. We also report any such alleged incident to OFSTED and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the Chair will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation and a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the DBS and OFSTED 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

Leechpool Caterpillar Nursery & After School Club 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 setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals 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 the Local Safeguarding Board.

- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

PLANNING

- The layout of the setting 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 so that they develop 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.
- We teach British Values through our daily routines to promote freedom of speech and respect for all.

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 Safeguarding Children Board.

SUPPORT TO FAMILIES

- Leechpool Caterpillar Nursery and After School Club believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- Leechpool Caterpillar Nursery and After School Club makes clear to parents its role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- Leechpool Caterpillar Nursery and After School Club 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 settings 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 Confidentiality and Clients Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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