

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Coping with concerns about the possible abuse of a child is very stressful for everybody involved. However, our main responsibility is to protect the child. Therefore, every member of staff or volunteer needs to be able to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect, and understand what action needs to be taken.

As we work closely with children, we are in a position to observe any changes that a child may display. Practitioners must be alert to any issues for concern in a child's life at home or elsewhere. For example, changes in a child's behaviour, any unexplained bruising or marks, comments made by the child that gives us cause for concern, deterioration in a child's well-being etc. It is our duty in such cases to contact Social Services for advice.

In-depth questions are not asked, and before making a referral we:

1. Ask the child, & parent or carer for an explanation
2. Make a written account, stating exactly what has been disclosed

If we suspect abuse, we:

1. Encourage the child to confide in somebody that they trust and who may be able to help them
2. Allow the child to say in their own words what has happened to them
3. Reassure the child that it is not their fault, and they have done the right thing by confiding in somebody they trust
4. Where possible, and provided it will not place the child at a greater risk, we would try to discuss our concerns with the parent or carer

If a referral takes place, we give the child's name, age, address and the name of the Playgroup. We then give details of the alleged incident, including when and where it is said to have occurred, and who has been named as being present. We also give a description of any evidence of injuries sustained by the child, and the name of the person said to be responsible for causing the injury.

To avoid allegations of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer, we have implemented a Home Accident Book. We ask parents or carers to enter into the book if their child has a bump or bruise etc, which has occurred whilst off the premises of the Playgroup, for example, at home, playground etc. The parent or carer is then asked to sign their statement.

The following points are also in place to help to prevent allegations of abuse being made against a member of staff:

- Never leave anybody alone with a child that has not yet received their DBS disclosure certificate and/or employment history references
- During nappy changes or toileting, the door must always be kept slightly open, and where possible we encourage children to look after their own personal hygiene
- We never play games involving secrets or blindfolds etc
- Staff must not give children any personal details, including home address, telephone number, email address etc unless there is a particular reason for doing so, and in these cases parents and colleagues must be informed prior to the exchange of information
- Staff must not discuss any aspect of playgroup or the children in our care over a social networking site.

If any allegations of abuse are made against a member of staff or volunteer, they will be suspended immediately on full pay whilst the issue is investigated. It is also referred immediately to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer, Tel. No. 0161 234 1214) and Ofsted, Tel. No. 0300 123 1231, so that further advice may be sought, and appropriate enquiries made. The named person responsible for dealing with any Safeguarding issues and liaising with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) is:

St. Catherine's Playgroup
Gemma Pike/Stephanie Ferguson

Ladybarn Community Playgroup
Lindsey Gallagher/Gemma Pike

**The Local Authority Designated Officer for Manchester is Majella O'Hagan
Tel: 0161-274-6618**

Parents and carers, members of staff, and volunteers are reminded that under no circumstances should photographs be taken of any children whilst within the Playgroup setting, during Playgroup hours on your own personal camera or camera phone. Parent/carers are not allowed to snapshot photographs from the "class dojo" and put on their own feed. Staff members and volunteers, and visitors to the setting must place their personal camera or camera phone in a container which will be kept in the storage cupboard in the main room. Only the photographs taken on the playgroup's camera will be used for learning journeys and to enhance our displays. Photographs must only be printed out in the setting, using the settings computer and must not be stored on the computer.

We have updated our records to comply with the new data protection standard. Parent/carers must sign to give their consent to personal data being shared on

the government website (in order to claim funding) and on tracking systems (to ensure children are progressing effectively. These sites are secure, but Parents /carers must sign to give their consent to this on the Registration Document.

All practitioners have received Safeguarding Foundation Level training and this training is repeated every three years in order to keep knowledge up to date. To ensure staff are suitable to work with children, The Community Playgroups ensure that qualifications are seen and verified, employment references are obtained, and regular DBS Enhanced Disclosures are obtained every three years. Staff also have annual appraisals and one to one meetings every term with their manager to allow them the opportunity to disclose any concerns or report any changes which will affect their DBS results, as this is an expectation of their employment. If we are made aware of relevant information which may lead to disqualification of an employee, The Community Playgroups will suspend the employee on full pay in order to investigate the information further, and to ensure the safety of the children in our care. In the event of disqualification of a member of staff, we will not continue to employ that person, and in accordance with the EYFS (2012), they will be dismissed.

Staff are able to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect and understand that they need to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- Significant changes in children's behaviour
- Deterioration in children's general well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- Children's comments which give cause for concern
- Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example, in the child's home; and/or inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with 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

This policy has been written in accordance with the EYFS (DFE: 2012), Working Together To Safeguard Children (DFE: 2010) and What To Do If You Think A Child Is Being Abused (DFE: 2006) and subsequent updates.