



Young Discoverers Pre-school

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*A community project on behalf of South Hill Centre
the charity wing of South Hill Church,
for two and a half year olds to school entry.*



Safeguarding children

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff – 'Whistle Blowing')

Policy statement

At Young Discoverers we believe that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We actively encourage and build relationships with parents and carers, and other appropriate agencies and professionals to ensure that we create a high quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where all children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

This policy provides parents and carers with information around the issue of child protection and provides both staff and parents with support, advice and guidance on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The policy details the specific legal requirements to safeguard children under Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014) and are in line with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Bureau (HSCB). All policies are available to parents and carers on our web site and on request at the office.

Child Protection

The Designated Lead Practitioner is: Karen Keene (Manager of Young Discoverers); Toni Hirschfield (Deputy Manager). The Designated Lead Practitioner is responsible for safeguarding children in the setting, and liaison with local statutory children's services agencies and the HSCB.

- All staff and the Designated Lead Practitioner attend regular child protection training courses, and receive regular updates on child protection, on our policies and procedures. This training includes how to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse, including neglect.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.
- All staff actively build relationships with their Key Children and their parents in order to support parents and carers with advice on any care, development or behaviour issues that may arise.
- Staff have a duty to share child protection issues with the Designated Lead Practitioner or the Deputy Manager in the Manager's absence. These issues may be shared with other professionals, child agencies or the police as appropriate by the Designated Lead Practitioner.

Suitable people

- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All candidates and staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children. This includes both those received before, and during their employment at Young Discoverers.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced criminal records disclosure' checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed.
- 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. Ofsted will be notified within 14 days of relevant information that may lead to disqualification of an employee or the registered provider.
- All staff and regular volunteers must have an enhanced criminal records disclosure. Staff, volunteers, and work experience students who do not have an enhanced disclosure are supervised at all times when in contact with children. Only staff or volunteers who have a DBS check are allowed to support toileting and hygiene routines in the toilet area.
- We meet our responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. This includes informing the DBS where a member of staff is dismissed (or

- would have been, had the person not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.
- All appropriate information is recorded on staff, students, volunteers and anyone working on the premises where child care takes place, unless they do not work there at times when children are present.
 - Related policies: Section 2 – Suitable people

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- All staff undertake Child Safeguarding training including how to recognise and respond to issues relating to child protection. Staff receive regular updates through staff meetings.
- 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) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- We are aware of factors which may affect 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 religious beliefs (eg. spirit possession), sexual exploitation or radicalisation of children directly, or through internet abuse; all of which 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, through FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) or possibly 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 parents, older children and young people who we may come into contact with including young carers and "aunties" (trafficked domestic helpers).
- The serious Crime Act 2015 places a duty on teachers, social workers and Health Care Professionals to report to the police known cases of (FGM) involving victims aged under the age of 18.
- Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board procedure for reporting child protection concerns. We follow reporting protocols laid down

under the Serious Crime Act 2015 for the reporting of FGM and the Prevent Duty advice to prevent radicalisation.

- We co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. 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 Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) procedure for reporting these 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.
 - Related policies: 1.1 Children's Rights and Entitlements; 1.11 Achieving Positive Behaviour

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- HSCB stipulate that the role of staff members is to RECOGNISE – RESPOND – REFER.
- We follow the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board Bruise Protocol to assess marks and bruises on a child.
- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or where a member of staff observes signs or signals that indicate a child is "failing to thrive" and gives cause for concern, for example significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; suspicious bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, the member of staff must Recognise the significance of the information and Respond.
- If a child's key person has Recognised any concerns they must Respond by informing the Manager or Deputy Manager who is acting as the 'designated lead practitioner' immediately or by phone on: 07428 721 586.
- The staff member must record their observations and concerns on a Record Sheet and body map detailing child's name, DOB, date, details of the concern/incident and the child's words. This record is signed by the member of staff.

- The Manager will Respond to such concerns and document their decisions and their reasons for making them, and Refer as appropriate.

If a child makes comments which are cause for concern (disclosure), the staff member:

- 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 date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
 - The manager is informed and a planned action agreed upon.
 - These records are signed and dated and kept in the safeguarding file which is kept securely and confidentially.

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 where 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 HSCB 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 which case the social workers will inform parents.
- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is only shared under the guidance of the HSCB.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our 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.

- We will continue 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 setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the 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 Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the HSCB.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board guidelines (HSCB).
- We notify the registration authority (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 (within 14 days).
- Should staff or parents require additional information a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' is available from the office.
- All Safeguarding referrals can be made via the Customer Service Centre on: 0300 123 4043
- In an emergency for incidents requiring an immediate police response use the emergency number: 999
- Where a Safeguarding need is unclear we can seek advice from The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team on: 01438 737511
- Modern Slavery Helpline: 08000 121 700
- Department for Education extremism hot line: 020 7340 7264

Allegations against staff ('Whistle Blowing')

- We ensure that all parents and staff know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
 - Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Bureau (HSCB): 0300 123 4043;
 - Ofsted: 0300 123 4666
 - Related Policies: 1.10 Making a complaint; 2.4 Whistleblowing

- We follow the guidance of the HSCB when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or 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 living or 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.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is contacted to receive advice and how to proceed. They can be contacted on: 01992 555420
- On instruction from the LADO we refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social care department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted within 14 days and inform them of 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 Directors and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will 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 as well as children and families throughout the process.
- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know including South Hill Centre's Designated Person. Any information is shared under the guidance of the HSCB.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed (or would have been, had the person not left the setting first) due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service, and Ofsted, as soon as possible or within 14 days of the relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.
 - Related policies: 2.6 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure

Planning

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children, and deploy staff appropriately to keep children safe.

- The layout of the rooms allow for constant supervision. No child is left alone with a volunteer in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.
- Routine jobs, such as toileting and snack are rotated on a daily basis. This is recorded on the weekly planning sheets. Volunteers are not permitted to change nappies or toilet children.
- Staff ensure that they are deployed where the majority of children are at any one time to maintain safe ratios.

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 setting 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.
 - Related Policies: 1.1 Children's Rights and Entitlements.

Premises

- 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.
- Staff are aware of the procedure for admitting and supervising visitors.
- CCTV operates on the premises.
 - Related Policies: 1.9 Maintaining children's safety and security on the premises

Social Networking/mobile phones and digital photography

- 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, using an in-house digital camera.
- Staff, Parents and visitors are not permitted to use their phones or cameras whilst on the premises. Visitors including parents are requested to turn off their mobile phones whilst in the playroom.
- Parents are made aware that any images taken of children during our organised events for example the Christmas Concerts and Family Fun Day are for personal viewing and are not to be shared on social media.

- Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child. (see separate camera and mobile phone policy).
- Lockers are provided to staff and a locker offered to volunteers and visitors in which they can store their personal belongings.
- Parent volunteers as asked to read and sign our playroom rules for keeping children safe.
 - Related policies: 1.9 Maintaining children’s safety and security on premises; 1.10A Social Networking; 1.10B Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography Policy

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG 2010)
- What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008)
- Independent Safeguarding Authority: www.isa.gov.org.uk

This policy was adopted by

Young Discoverers

On

18 October 2016 (date)

Signed

Name of signatory

Mrs Karen Keene

Role of signatory

Manager

