



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

1.3 Children 'Looked after'

Policy statement

Young Discoverers is committed to providing high quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. Young Discoverers work to maintain a culture of high aspirations for all our children so that the attainment and progress gap between looked after children and their peers begins to narrow.

A Child is 'Looked After' when a local authority has full or shared legal parental responsibility for that child or a child is the subject of an interim care order (ICO) and is accommodated by the local authority.

Young Discoverers recognise that children who are being looked after can have experienced traumatic situations (physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect). However, we also recognise that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority.

We recognise that a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being. We work with Children Services to provide high quality care for looked after children ensuring that children build secure caring attachments with their primary carers before attending Young Discoverers. Secure attachments in children's lives underpin the child's ability to make long lasting relationships and the ability to learn and overcome challenges in their lives. At Young Discoverers we place a high emphasis on supporting the relationships children make with their primary carers, through their Key Person, to offer them the best possible chance of securing good outcomes in the future. The best interests of the child are always held at the centre of any decisions made.

Responsibilities

The Designated Lead Practitioner has responsibility to liaise with Children's Services and work co-operatively with all agencies involved.

- Every child is allocated a Key Person. The Designated Lead Practitioner will ensure that the Key Person has appropriate information, support and training necessary to meet the needs of the child.
- Information is kept in a locked cabinet in the office. It will be agreed with Children's Services what information will be kept and how this will be securely shared and with whom.
- Young Discoverers recognises the role of the local authority as having Parental Responsibility for the child and works with carers to ensure that the child's pre-school experience is the same as any child in their care.
- Young Discoverers work closely with Children's Services when stepping down child protection to Child in Need and other integrated practice approaches.

Procedures

- It is understood that 'normal' admissions criteria do not apply to Looked After Children. Young Discoverers will make every effort to secure an emergency placement for a looked after child for the term after their 2nd birthday. Where economically viable, an emergency place is kept available for a Looked After Child or a child staying in a refuge.
- We would expect that a child would have made a secure attachment with their foster carer before starting at Young Discoverers. A settling in process can be discussed in order to facilitate this.
- Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer the placement for the child and work with the foster family to provide security and continuity.
- When a child starts at Young Discoverers or becomes 'Looked After' the Designated Lead Practitioner will liaise with Children's Services to input into the Personal Educational Plan (PEP) which forms part of the Care Plan. Children with SEND will have an Education Health Plan (EHP) implemented. The PEP is a 'living document which will record the child's continued progress and achievement. Suitable review dates will be set.

- Additionally Young Discoverers will discuss individual requirements with the child's carers to consider:
 - How to settle in the child
 - How best to support the learning, development and emotional needs of the child
 - How any special needs/disabilities will be supported
 - To what extent and how to manage contact with birth parents and other family members
- Transitions to the next setting will be planned for with the agencies involved. Information will be shared as appropriate by the Child Protection team. 'Relevant information' such as educational achievement records and assessments will be communicated to the new school/or care setting.
- If Young Discoverers have concerns that a child 'Looked after' is suffering abuse or harm the social worker is informed and the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Boards Procedures are carried out under Section 47 Enquiries.

Further guidance

- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures Manual (Sept 2014)
- Children's Act 1989
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Promoting the Education of Looked After Children. Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities. (DFE July 2014 – Expiry date 2016)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015)

This policy was adopted by	Young Discoverers
On	7 November 2016 (date)
Signed	
Name of signatory	Mrs Karen Keene
Role of signatory	Manager