

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

We intend to create in our pre-school an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. In order to achieve this we will do the following:

Exclude Known Abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the pre-school that the position is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

All applicants for work within the pre-school, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least one reference. All such references will be followed up. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought. All staff will be required to complete a CRB check prior to being employed on a permanent basis.

All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period, and will not be confirmed unless the pre-school is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

Seek and Supply Training

We will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognize the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Prevent Abuse by Means of Good Practice

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside, for example for time out after behaviour which needs improvement, will be in view of at least one other member of staff.

Adults who have not been registered as 'fit' persons will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist various approaches.

The layout of the playroom(s) will permit constant supervision of all children.

Respond Appropriately to Suspicions of Abuse

Changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated.

Parents will normally be the first point of reference, though suspicions will also be referred as appropriate to the Social Services Department.

All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff/key worker, the pre-school Leader and the Management Committee Chair.

Keep Records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development. The record will include, in addition to name, address and age of the child; timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation; wherever possible the exact words spoken by the child; the dated name and signature of the recorder

Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people in the pre-school other than the pre-school Leader, Chair and key worker or other member of staff as appropriate

Liase with Other Bodies

The pre-school operates in accordance with local authority guidelines Confidential records kept on children about whom the pre-school is anxious will be shared with the Social Services Department if the pre-school feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided.