

 **Safeguarding Policy**

At Little Bookham Preschool the welfare, safety and protection of the children in our care is paramount. We have a duty to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse and to respond promptly and appropriately to any suspicion of abuse.

It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the Preschool that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. It will also be made clear that the Preschool will arrange for a 'CRB check' on the successful applicant.

All applicants for work within the Preschool will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least two references. 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 appointments will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the Preschool is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

Any unpaid staff or volunteers who are not CRB checked will be appropriately supervised and remain within the Preschool environment. Under no circumstances will they be left alone with children, change nappies/clothing or assist children in toileting

**Seek and Supply Training**

The nominated Child Protection Officer is Helen Terry and Deputy Child Protection Officer is Emma Porch. Helen Terry has attended Module 1 in Safeguarding and Emma Porch has attended Safeguarding: What to do if? Continued training is offered to all staff to ensure they recognise any symptoms of neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse.  All members of staff are trained in the procedures to follow if they suspect abuse.  Training is updated every three years.  The Child Protection Officer will refer to the up-to-date guidance from the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) via the website; [www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding)

**Safeguard Against Abuse by Means of Good Practice**

* Staff are not allowed to take cameras or camera phones into the toilet area.
* All mobile phones will be kept in a basket in the kitchen out of reach of children and will not be used throughout the session unless it’s an emergency.
* Parents sign a consent form to agree to not using photos on social networking sites and all staff members are asked not to use personal networking websites to communicate with parents/carers.
* Any member of staff who intentionally hurts a child will be guilty of gross misconduct and will be dismissed.
* The Children Act 1989 states that physical action is allowed in an emergency or to prevent personal injury either to the child, other children or an adult or serious damage to property. If physical action is used under such circumstances, this will be recorded in the incident book and the parent informed.
* 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 the children to have the self-confidence and vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
* The layout of the preschool will permit maximum supervision of all children.

**Respond Appropriately to Suspicions of Abuse**

Changes in the children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated and recorded. These can be indications of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

On occasions, a child may impart information to a member of staff and ask them to keep this confidential. If a member of staff suspects that this information is related to suspected abuse then this information cannot be kept only between the staff member and the child and must be acted upon.

If we have a concern about a child we will share information with parents/carers. However, if sharing information may put a child at risk of significant harm, we will seek advice from the Duty Assessment Team via the Social Services Contact Centre (see contact details below). If we feel the child will be a risk of significant harm if allowed to go home with parent/carer, we will seek advice from the Duty Assessment Team via the Social Services Contact Centre (see contact details below). If it is deemed appropriate, suspicions will also be referred to the Social Services Department- firstly by telephone and then followed up in writing within 48 hours. Parents will be informed of any action taken.

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 CPLO and the Preschool Manager.

**Keep Records**

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential report 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 the name, address and age of the child: timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation; where possible, the exact words spoken to 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 Preschool other than the Manager and appropriate members of staff.

**Liaise with Other Bodies**

The Preschool operates in accordance with local authority guidelines. Confidential records that have been kept by the Preschool will be shared with Children’s Services if the Preschool feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided or that the child is in immediate danger.

If a report on a child is made to the authorities, the child's parents will be informed at the same time as a report is made.

The Preschool will maintain on-going contact with the registering authority, including names, addresses and telephone numbers of individual social workers to ensure that it would be easy, in any emergency, for the Preschool and the Children’s Services work well together.

Records will also be kept of the local NSPCC contact, or other contacts as appropriate.

If a child moves to another setting, information of any child protection concerns/cases will be passed on with permission from the child's parents/carers.

**Support Families**

* The Preschool will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff in the group.
* Where abuse at home is suspected, the Preschool will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.
* Confidential records kept on a child may be shared with the child's parents.
* The care and safety of the child must always be paramount, the Preschool will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

**Accusation of Abuse against a Member of Staff**

* Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be investigated by the Children's Services and the Police. These investigations are carried out in line with Surrey Safeguarding Children Board Procedures.
* The Preschool management will also inform OFSTED in line with agreed procedures. Similarly, if OFSTED staff become aware of any child protection issues, they have a duty to refer these to Children's Services. OFSTED can be contacted through the Early Years Complaints line on 08456 404040.
* Children's Services will tell the staff member the nature of the allegation and seek their co-operation as soon as possible, as long as this meets the needs of the children involved.
* The staff member being investigated will be suspended from duty whilst any investigation is taking place.  Steps may need to be taken to ensure that any alleged abuser has no contact with children pending the outcome of the investigation.  The investigation will probably involve speaking to staff, parents and children and seeing records.
* Every effort will be made to avoid unnecessary disruption to staff, parents and children. But the priority will be the children's safety and welfare.
* The member of staff being investigated should consider getting support and/or legal advice from the Pre-school Learning Alliance.
* They will be told if the investigation finds no evidence to suggest they are responsible. The investigation is a difficult process and further support and counselling, whatever the outcome, may need to be sought.

**Drug/Alcohol Related Incidents Involving Parents**

The Preschool recognises that some of its pupils may have a parent whose drug use (legal and/or illegal) is problematic.  The child's welfare in this case is paramount and the playschool will act within the legal limits that it can, to support the child in a variety of ways, both practically and emotionally.

If a member of staff suspects that a parent collecting their child from Preschool and intending to drive is intoxicated the police advice is that efforts should be calmly made to help the parent think of an alternative, safer way of getting home. This might include walking home or getting someone else to collect them or calling a taxi.  If the parent becomes aggressive and insists on driving, on no account should staff put their own safety or security at risk.  If possible staff should note down the details of the car and phone the police with this information as soon as possible.

In such circumstances, staff cannot prevent a parent taking their own child, but may refuse to allow any other child to be collected.  The parents of this child would then be contacted as soon as possible.