

Safeguarding and child protection policy.

Rationale

Little Whits nursery believes that every child has the right to feel secure and safe from abuse and harm. We are committed to protecting all the children in our care from harm during their time at Little Whits in line with the underlying principles “helping Every child achieve more”

Little Whits has written this policy to ensure that the best practice and procedures are carried out at the nursery. This policy complies with the legal requirements of the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage and safeguarding and welfare requirement.

Little Whits believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognizes its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice that which protects them. We recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount and all children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.

The purpose of this policy is to provide protection for the children and young people who receive Little Whits services, to provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt if they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing or be at risk from harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, agency staff, students or anyone acting on behalf of Little Whits.

This policy follows the statutory Government Guidance **Working together to safeguard children and what to do if you're worried a child is being abused.**

Children are onsite during the hours of 8-6 on a Monday to Friday. They are dropped off and collected by parents, carers or their nominated person. Parents on the day of admission are asked to provide a password if they are unable to collect the child and their nominated person will pick up a child. No other person without a DBS will supervise the children at any time.

Child abuse.

Child abuse can manifest itself in a variety of different ways and across all cultures, areas and social economic groups.

The nursery will ensure that all members of staff receive high quality and regular safeguarding training and will be competent at identifying signs and evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect.

Definitions of child abuse.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development, often by making them feel they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children causing children frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing or neglect of, or unresponsive to a child's basic emotional needs.

Child trafficking is the recruitment and movement of children for exploitation: it is a form of child abuse. Children may be trafficked within the country, or from abroad. It overlaps with sexual exploitation and private fostering.

Peer on peer abuse relates to situations such as sexual exploitation, gang violence, financial boost control and exploitive relationships. (please refer to separate peer on peer abuse policy.)

Implementation of the policy.

Signs to monitor.

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if:

- The child has any injury which is not typical of those normally associated with children's injuries.
- The child's behaviour has changed significantly.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries, bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse.
- There has been deterioration in the child's general well-being.
- Regularly have injuries with explanations given but more than is considered normal.
- Gives confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained.
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.
- Shows signs of neglect.
- Demonstrates sexual behaviour which is inappropriate to the age of the child.
- Discloses an incident in which resulted in the child being significantly harmed.
- Any other cause to believe that a child may be suffering from harm.
- The child makes comments which may give cause for concern.

Golden rules to follow when a child is disclosing abuse.

1. Listen carefully to the child and do not make judgements or discuss your own opinions about what the child is telling you.
2. Try to ask open ended questions that enable the child to describe the incident using their own vocabulary and terminology.
3. Ensure the child feels secure, safe and comfortable in the room with the supervising adult.
4. Staff members must not make promises of confidentiality to the child.

Golden rules for staff following a disclosure of suspected abuse.

1. Inform the nursery manager immediately and record the incident on the nursery record sheet.
2. Discuss any concerns, however small or insignificant, with the nursery manager who will decide on the appropriate procedures and actions which need to be taken.
3. Staff members must never delay in referring the issue as this could result in increased or prolonged danger for the child.
4. Staff must always believe what a child says and make thorough notes about the conversation containing all pertinent information however insignificant it might seem. If possible, try to have a witness present when the child is making the disclosure.
5. Staff members must never discuss the issue with other members of staff or people outside the pre-school as this could cause significant distress to the child.

The safeguarding officer Michelle Cane will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidentially. Any incidents should be recorded on the Safeguarding record sheet and handed immediately to Michelle Cane. The records will be kept in a locked and secure cupboard on the nursery premises.

There will always be either the safeguarding lead Michelle Cane or deputy lead Kelly Fiander on site whilst the nursery is open to the children.

Referring allegations to SPOC (Single point of contact)

If the Safeguarding officer has sufficient evidence that a child has been, or is in danger of being subject to abuse, the following procedure will be activated.

- If there is an immediate need for a safeguarding response, we would phone SPOC. The contact details are, 02082552888. This will connect the caller to MASH team and after some basic details are taken, they will be transferred to a social worker who will discuss the concerns and if necessary, start the child protection process. The caller would need to follow up with an electronic referral within 3 hours of the call
- If the concern is urgent and out of hours (17.00- 9.00) we would call 02087266400 and speak to the out of hours team.
- If the Safeguarding officer would like to get some advice before making a referral, they can call the consultation line on 02087266464 to speak to a social worker. (At present need to email to childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk)
- If we need to make a safeguarding referral to the partnership, we will go to www.croydon.gov.uk and follow the link “[concerned about a Croydon child](#)”
- Always follow up the telephone calls by e.mail within 3 hours.

- The safeguarding officer will pass on all relevant information about the incident to SPOC.
- Little Whits will assist the investigation by SPOC as much as possible.
- OFSTED and LADO will be informed immediately of any allegations against a staff member, student or volunteer, or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises or during a visit or outing. The LADO details for Croydon are LADO service manager-Steve Hall. Email address steve.hall@croydon.gov.uk. Assistant LADO is Jane Parr. Email address jane.parr@croydon.gov.uk. 02082552889. Alternatively you can email LADO@croydon.gov.uk

Staff support and training.

Little Whits will ensure that it meets its legal and statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and child protection through high quality support and training to staff and rigorous adherence to safeguarding guidelines.

Little Whits nursery will ensure that:

- All staff, students and volunteers are carefully recruited following the safer recruitment guidelines and have verified references and an up to date DBS. References will be followed up by telephone to confirm authenticity. Only original documentation for proof of identity will be accepted for a DBS check and will be checked and photocopied by the pre-school manager. (please refer to safer recruiting policy.)
- All staff and volunteers at the nursery will be issued with a copy of the safeguarding and child protection policy during their induction period, and have its main points explained and their roles and responsibilities clarified.
- The safeguarding sheets will be explained and staff will be guided through the process of completing a record of any incidents.
- Staff will be required to sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understood the policy and agree to follow the procedures contained in the nursery's policy.
- All staff and volunteers will receive regular professional development opportunities covering safeguarding issues. Staff members will be provided with any relevant information and guidance that is available to the pre-school.
- If a member of staff or adult is under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child they will be subject to the staff discipline policy which will be given to them at the beginning of the investigation process and explained fully.

Safe caring.

At Little Whits all staff understands Little Whits safeguarding and child protection procedures and sign to acknowledge they have read and understand their roles and responsibilities. They have had appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring and this is regularly checked and reviewed during staff training sessions.

- For their own safety staff should avoid situations where they are alone with a child. If staff are alone with a child staff should if possible, keep the door open and request support from another member of staff.
- If a child makes physical contact with a member of staff or adult that is deemed inappropriate or gives cause for concern this must be recorded in the incident record log and reported to the nursery manager immediately.
- Staff at the nursery must not carry out personal tasks for children that they can do for themselves such as toileting, dressing or cleaning themselves up. If a child does need help with hygienic or intimate care permission should be sought from the parent/carer and two members of staff should be present.
- Staff should be cautious about touching children by taking into account their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary physical contact will be avoided to minimise the risk of allegations being made against children and staff.
- If an allegation is made by a child against a member of staff this will be fully recorded in the incident book and referred to the nursery manager. Copies of allegations and evidence will be given to the nursery manager. This will be reported to OFSTED immediately. (please refer to the whistle blowing procedure and staff behaviour policy.)

Managing allegations against staff.

If an allegation is made that a member of staff has harmed a child or is alleged to have behaved in a way in their private life that may suggest they are unsuitable to work with children and young people, the designated safeguarding officer Michelle Cane or the person in charge must be informed immediately. If the allegation concerns the designated child protection officer/person in charge the proprietor must be informed who in turn will inform LADO.

To assess the most appropriate course of action the following initial information must be collated.

- The time and date of the observation or the disclosure.
- The exact words spoken by the child/staff member/parent/volunteer as far as possible.
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported (with time and date.)
- The name of any other persons present at that time.
- Wider relevant knowledge or background information.

Note; It is not appropriate at this stage to conduct formal interviews or take written statements from staff, as this could compromise a later children's social care or police investigation.

For advice contact LADO on 0208 2552889. LADO@croydon.gov.uk The LADO will clarify if and how the matter will be taken forward and what appropriate course of action should be taken. In serious situations the LADO will advise whether a suspension should take place immediately.

After discussing the situation with LADO it may become clear that a referral to SPOC is required.

Refer the allegation to SPOC on 0208 2552888 and follow this up by e.mail within 3 hours.

The LADO will liaise with SPOC and contact the setting as to how to proceed. A formal strategy meeting may take place between SPOC, the setting representative and the police (as appropriate.) At the meeting it will be agreed what immediate action is required to

safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, and/or to provide interim services and support.

The members of staff may be suspended on full pay (advice from LADO will support you with this decision). This overall decision to suspend is vested in the head of centre/school/governing body. Suspension is a neutral act and allows a full investigation of facts to take place.

Ofsted must be informed (0300 123 1231) of any allegation concerns made against a member of staff within 14 working days. All notifications must be followed up in writing by using the serious incident reporting form on the Ofsted website.

Once the investigation is complete Ofsted may visit to discuss the implications of the investigation. It may be necessary to implement the settings disciplinary, grievance or complaints procedures.

And if after discussing the situation with LADO it may become clear that a referral to SPOC is not required and the setting is to follow their own complaints and disciplinary procedures.

The LADO will advise the appropriate course of action.

The incident should be documented and a clear and honest explanation given to the child's parents/carers. Ofsted must be informed of this outcome in writing.

Little Whits safeguarding officer is Michelle Cane. Kelly Fiander is the deputy safeguarding lead.

Further policies in relation to safeguarding and child protection are.

- Prevent duty and British fundamental values policy.
- Mobile phone policy.
- Missing or lost child policy.
- Use of social networking sites policy.
- Staff behaviour policy.
- Peer on peer abuse policy.
- Safer recruiting policy.
- Photography policy.
- Whistle blowing policy

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