

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

## GENERAL STATEMENT

At Wonderland Day Nursery/The Den we are concerned about the welfare and safety of all our children and attempt to create an ethos in which pupils feel secure, valued, listened to and are taken seriously.

## STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Working Together Under The Children Act, 1989' requires all childcare settings to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Hertfordshire Safe Guarding Children Board. Settings are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse - these procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused or suspected of abuse.

DfES Circular 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' (May '03) places the following responsibilities on all settings -

- staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions;
- the Nursery Manager will have the responsibility for co-ordinating action within the Nursery/Out of School Club and liaising with other agencies;
- staff with designated responsibility for child protection should receive appropriate training;
- Settings should have procedures ( of which all staff are aware ) for handling suspected cases of abuse of children, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse;

It also states that parents should be made aware of the Settings child's protection policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigative agencies in the interest of the child.

### **THE NURSERY MANAGER - Designated Child Protection Officer**

The NURSERY MANAGER'S role will be -

- ensure that the Hertfordshire Safe Guarding Children Board procedures are followed in the setting;
- ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures;
- ensure that appropriate training and support is provided for all staff.
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services;
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g, refer to Social Services C,S,F);
- Liase with Social Services teams over suspected cases of child abuse;
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked ' Strictly confidential';
- Submit reports to, and attend, Child Protection Conferences;
- Ensure that the setting effectively monitors children who have been identified as at risk;
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support;

## WONDERLAND DAY NURSERY AND THE DEN PROCEDURES

- If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform the Nursery Manager;
- information regarding the concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations;
- The Nursery Manager will decide whether the concerns should be referred to the Social Services Department (C,S,F). If it is decided to make a referral to Social Services this will be done without prior discussion with the parents;
- If a referral is made to Social Services, the Nursery Manager will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to the Social Worker dealing with the case within 48 hours;
- Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as at risk or who has been placed on the Child Protection Register;
- If a child who is known to be on the Child Protection Register changes Nursery's the Nursery Manager will inform the Social Worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving Nursery.

## WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

Staff should be concerned about a child if he or she -

- has an injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's activities;
- regularly has unexplained injuries;
- frequently has injuries ( even when apparently reasonable explanations are given);
- confused or conflicting explanations are given on how injuries were sustained;
- exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude;
- indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age;
- discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.

## DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should -

- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief;
- accept what is being said;
- allow the child to talk freely;
- reassure the child but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- not promise confidentiality - it might be necessary to refer to Social Services;
- reassure him or her that what happened is not his or her fault;
- stress that it was the right thing to tell;
- listen, rather than ask questions;
- ask open questions rather than leading questions;
- do not criticise the perpetrator;
- explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

## RECORD KEEPING

When a child has disclosed the member of staff should -

- make some brief notes as soon as possible after the conversations;
- not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by court;
- record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child;
- draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury;
- record the statements and observations, rather than interpretations or assumptions;

## SUPPORT

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff concerned should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Nursery Manager.

## ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING NURSERY/THE DEN STAFF

If a child, or parent, makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Nursery Manager.

Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a child may have been abused by another member of staff, either at Nursery/The Den or elsewhere, must immediately inform the Nursery Manager. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation.

(If the concerns are about the Nursery Manager the Nursery Director should be informed.)

The Nursery Manager will not investigate the allegation herself, or take written or detailed statements, but he/she will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the local Social Services team in accordance with the child protection procedures. In doing this, the Nursery Manager may consult with the Child Protection Education Welfare Officer, Head of Education Welfare Service or a Senior Officer from Social Services.

If the Nursery Manager decides that the allegation warrants further action through child protection procedures he/she must make a referral direct to the local Social Services team. If the allegations constitutes a serious criminal offence it will be necessary to contact Social Services before informing the member of staff.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Social Services the Nursery Manager will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

**ANY CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE,  
MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO THE NURSERY MANAGER  
OR IN HER ABSENCE THE DEPUTY MANAGER AT THE SOCIAL  
SERVICES DEPARTMENT.**