Safeguarding and Child Protection

Introduction

Melbourn Playgroup and Out of School Club fully recognise the responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the setting, including volunteers and students, all of whom have a vital role in safeguarding children. Concerned parents may also contact the setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

This policy sets out how the setting complies with its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who attend the setting. The policy will be reviewed regularly, annually as a minimum.

This policy must be read alongside setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Appendix A; which provides staff, including agency staff, volunteers, students and parents/carers with details about specific safeguarding concerns that may impact on the welfare of children in their care or living locally. As a society we all have a duty to safeguarding children, but it is particularly important that those working or volunteering with children remain vigilant to the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect. Staff, agency staff, volunteers and students should be familiar with the safeguarding procedures within the setting and know how to respond to concerns about children or adults.

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children. The setting will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are actively listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the setting whom they can approach if they feel worried or in difficulty

Designated Safeguarding Leads in our setting: Nikki Cross and Jennie Riggs

Safeguarding Practice in our Setting

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

A trained DSL is always on site (wherever possible) when the setting is open, to be able to access relevant records and take the necessary action. When not on site, a DSL is contactable by telephone and within the local area to attend the setting should it be required.

- All DSLs will refresh their training every two years. In addition, DSLs knowledge and skills will be refreshed regularly (at least annually) via information sources such as the DSL Knowledge Hub, Child Protection Information Networks, further relevant training and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board.
- The importance of the role of the DSL is acknowledged by ensuring they have the time and training to undertake their duties.
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board procedures, Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 and What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused, 2015 are adhered to. The DSL has contact details for Cambridgeshire Children's Social Care and the Early Help Hub readily accessible for use when required. Bordering county Social Care and Early Help contact details are available, as required, for children who live outside of Cambridgeshire.

Staff Members, Agency Staff and Volunteers and Students

- Have a robust induction that includes all relevant aspects of safeguarding practice.
- Know the names of the DSLs and what their role includes.
- Know how to record and pass on concerns about a child or adult.
- Understand their individual responsibility to refer child protection concerns to relevant agencies as a matter of urgency if there is no DSL present and/or they feel the child remains at risk of significant harm.
- Staff Members: Attend basic child protection training every two years as a minimum and will undertake the first available training after commencing employment. Training will contain details of the local safeguarding procedures within Cambridgeshire and support staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond to these in a timely and appropriate way.
- Receive regular and relevant updates on safeguarding practice, usually from their DSL, at least annually.
- Understand the setting policy on babysitting for families who attend the setting. See babysitting policy.
- Ensure they are fully aware of the use of mobile phone, camera and technology policy.

Management

The committee/Management fully recognises their responsibilities regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They will:

- Designate a committee member for safeguarding (a 'Safeguarding Officer') who will monitor the setting's child protection policy and overall practice and champion good practice in relation to child protection and safeguarding.
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually in conjunction with the setting's DSLs.
- Undertake a safeguarding briefing from the DSL upon election
- Individual committee members will comply on election with Ofsted suitability check requirements including undertaking a DBS check.
- Complete Safer Recruitment training (at least one person who has recruitment responsibility).

Liaison with other agencies

The setting will:

- Work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all children.
- Co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups.
- Notify the relevant Social Care team immediately if there is an unexplained absence or is any change in circumstances to a child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.
- Notify the relevant Social Care team immediately if there are any further abuse or neglect concerns (such as fresh marks, bruises or injuries) where a child is already subject to a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan. It will not be assumed that Social Care are already aware of these additional concerns.
- Respond to requests for information about children in the setting's care from the Education Navigator at the Multi-Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH) or a Social Worker in a timely manner.
- Link with Designated Persons/Designated Safeguarding Leads in other settings and schools where we work with the same children and families.

Record keeping

The setting will:

Keep clear, detailed written records of concerns about children's welfare using the Log of Concern form. Records should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern

- The DSL will make contact to request relevant safeguarding and welfare information is shared. This will be ongoing where children attend more than 1 setting concurrently, including how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- Keep note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- Keep Records in individual child welfare files.
- Store records securely and confidentially.
- During registration of each new child, ask for information about other settings the child.
- Unless it would place the child at risk of significant harm, parents will be informed that a Log of Concern Form has been completed, where it will be stored and what will happen to it when the child leaves the setting.
- Parents do not have an automatic right to access child welfare records and consideration will be given as to what the consequences of information sharing might be (in line with Information Sharing Guidance, 2018).

When a child leaves or moves to another setting

Their individual child welfare file will be transferred to the receiving school or setting using the following protocol:

- The file will be sent as soon as possible after the child has moved setting and marked 'Confidential, Addressee Only' and sent to the DSL, if known, of the receiving setting/school. The file will be delivered by hand if possible; otherwise sent by delivery that can be tracked and signed for.
- The setting will contact the receiving setting/school by telephone to make them aware that there is a child welfare file and, once sent, ask them to confirm they have received the file. The setting will keep a record that the file has been received to be able to identify its location.
- Parents will be made aware that child welfare records will be transferred unless this would place the child at risk of acute harm.
- The setting will not keep a copy of transferred records, unless there are younger siblings for whom there are similar concerns about but will keep a record of the current file location and date the file was transferred.
- If individual child welfare files cannot be transferred for any reason, the setting will archive them for 25 years from the child's date of birth.

- All actions and decisions will be led by what is in the best interests of the child.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The DSL will be guided by the Department for Education (DfE) Guidance 'Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' July 2018.

Fears about sharing information will not stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. The UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDSLR) and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe:

- Information, will be shared legally without consent, if the DSL or a member of staff is unable to or cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if to gain consent could place a child at risk.'
- relevant personal information will be shared lawfully if it is to keep a child or individual at risk safe from neglect or physical, emotional or mental harm, or if it is protecting their physical, mental, or emotional well-being.'

(Information Sharing, July 2018, Page 5)

What information will be shared?

When taking decisions about what information to share, the DSL will consider how much information they need to release and the impact of disclosing information on the information subject and any third parties. Information should be proportionate to the need and level of risk. Only information that is relevant to the purposes will be shared with those who need it. This allows others to do their job effectively and make informed decisions.

Information sharing decisions must be recorded whether the decision is taken to share. If the decision is to share, reasons should be cited including what information has been shared and with whom. If the decision is made not to share, the DSL will record the reasons for this decision and discuss them with the person requesting the information.

If a child discloses information that may indicate that they are at risk of abuse or neglect, the staff member will be clear that they cannot promise to keep the information a secret. The staff

member will be honest with the child and explain that it will be necessary to tell someone else to help them and to keep them safe. A note will be made of what information has been shared and with whom.

Communication with Parents

The setting will:

- Undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances may put the child at further risk of harm.
- Contact Children's Social Care first if the setting believes that notifying parents about a safeguarding concern may place the child or another person at immediate risk of harm or prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. Further guidance on this can be found in the 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough document'.
- Ensure that all parents/carers understand the responsibility placed on the setting and staff for safeguarding and child protection by ensuring that they receive a copy of this policy when registering their child at the setting.
- Record on the log of concern form what discussions have taken place with parents and if a decision was made not to discuss the matter with parents, the reason why not (circumstances may include if the DSL is unable to or cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if gaining consent could place a child at risk of harm such as potential physical or sexual abuse).

Supporting Children

We recognise that any child may be subject to abuse or witness abuse and that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Children may also find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and trust those around them. Some children may adopt inappropriate or abusive behaviours and that these children may be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The setting will support children through:

- Activities to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation and resilience.
- An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment that values people.

- A behaviour policy aimed at supporting all children. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the child's sense of self-worth. The setting will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but she/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies which support the child and family such as Children's Social Care and District Teams.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents/carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse/violence, mental ill-health or substance misuse may be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.
- Monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and seeking advice or making a referral to other agencies, e.g., Children's Social Care, when necessary.

Privately Fostered Children

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16, (under 18 if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or relative in their own home for 28 days or more. The setting will follow the mandatory duty to inform the Local Authority of any 'Private Fostering' arrangements and refer to the Specialist Fostering Team.

Promoting a protective ethos

The setting will create an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk, and they are listened to.

This will be achieved in the following ways:

- All staff, including the DSLs, are trained regularly to ensure skills and knowledge are up to date.
- Staff know how to respond to child protection concerns.
- Contribution to an inter-agency approach to child protection by working effectively and supportively with other agencies.
- Raising children's awareness and actively promoting self-esteem building, so that children have a range of strategies and contacts to ensure their safety.

- Using personal safety programmes, such as Protective Behaviours and the NSPCC PANTS campaign.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to the welfare of the children.
- Ensuring the relevant policies are in place, i.e., the use of mobile phones and cameras, behaviour management, intimate care, whistleblowing, social networking.
- Being vigilant to the inappropriate behaviour of staff or adults working with children and ensuring that all staff and volunteers know the allegations procedure and this is actively supported within the setting.
- Staff acting as positive role models to children and young people.
- Ensuring staff are aware of the need to maintain appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with children and parents/carers in line with our setting's staff code of conduct/behaviour policy.
- Ensuring the Designated Person keeps themselves up to date with risks, community disruptions and influences that may be of a safeguarding nature in the local area and disseminates this to the staff as relevant.

Preventing unsuitable people from working with children and young people

The setting has a duty to ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements for their role. The setting will follow safer recruitment practices including verifying qualifications and ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken before the candidate start working at the setting. The setting will not allow people, whose suitability has not been checked, to have unsupervised contact with children.

Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). This is checked and recorded during supervisions to ensure ongoing suitability.

These members of staff/committee have undertaken Safer Recruitment training:

Claire Armstrong and Jennie Riggs

Whistleblowing

The setting has a separate Whistleblowing Policy which aims to help and protect both staff and children by:

- Preventing a problem getting worse;
- Safeguarding children and young people;
- Reducing the potential risks to others.

The earlier a concern is raised, the easier and sooner the setting can take action. The responsibility for expressing concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour rests with all staff, students and volunteers.

Allegation against a person who works or volunteers with children

An allegation may relate to a person who works or volunteers with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a what that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

If an allegation is made against a person who works or volunteers with children, the following action will be taken (refer to: 'Allegation against a person who works or volunteers with children' flowchart and guidance):

- The setting will ensure the immediate safety of the children.
- The setting will **not** start to investigate but will immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01223 727967.
- If the LADO decides the matter is a child protection case, external/internal agencies (e.g., police) will be informed by the LADO and the setting will act upon the advice given to ensure that any investigation is not jeopardised.
- The setting will notify Ofsted of a significant event
- It may be necessary for the employer to suspend the alleged perpetrator. Suspension is a neutral act to allow a thorough and fair investigation.
- If it is agreed that the matter is not a child protection case, the setting will investigate the matter themselves, gaining HR advice as required.

The setting will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the setting and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant

agencies, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and included in references where applicable. For further information, refer to the setting's safer recruitment policy.

Useful Contacts

Children's Social Care:

Contact Centre (for telephone referrals)	0345 045 5203
Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours)	01733 234724
Early Help Hub	01480 376666
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01223 727967
Ofsted	0300 123 1231
Senior Adviser Intervention and Safeguarding (Gemma Hope)	01223 714760
Early Years' Service	earlyyears.service@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Safeguarding Flowchart
February 2024

Safeguarding concern or concern about a child's welfare

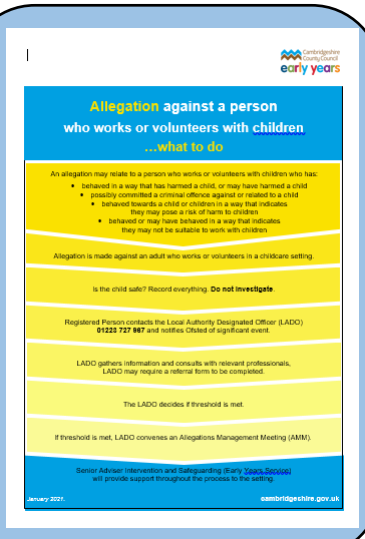
Concern logged and passed immediately to the Designated Person (DP) for Child Protection

DP will decide what action to take, which may include a referral to Children's Social Care
0345 045 5203

If the DP is unavailable or not contactable, for any reason, and you have immediate concerns about a child's welfare, contact Children's Social Care:
0345 045 5203

Allegation made against member of staff

Follow the Allegation against a person who works or volunteers with children Flow Chart and Guidance (Jan 2021)


Cambridgeshire County Council
early years

Allegation against a person who works or volunteers with children ...what to do

An allegation may relate to a person who works or volunteers with children who has:
- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

Allegation is made against an adult who works or volunteers in a childcare setting.

Is the child safe? Record everything. **Do not investigate.**

Registered Person contacts the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **01223 727 967** and notifies Ofsted of significant event.

LADO gathers information and consults with relevant professionals. LADO may require a referral form to be completed.

The LADO decides if threshold is met.

If threshold is met, LADO convenes an Allegations Management Meeting (AMM).

Senior Adviser Intervention and Safeguarding (Early Years Service) will provide support throughout the process to the setting.

January 2021. cambridgeshire.gov.uk

No safeguarding concern, but emerging needs of the child indicate that additional services or support may be required

Discuss with the setting manager or DP

Manager/SENCO/DP will consider completing an Early Help Assessment (EHA) after gaining parental consent and contacting the Early Help Hub for further advice:
01480 376666