

# Mucky Pups Childcare

## Child protection and safeguarding policy

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### Terminology

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** - refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Child protection** - refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

**Child** - includes everyone under the age of 18.

**Parent** - refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

**Staff** - refers to all those working for or on behalf of the nursery, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**DO** – Refers to Designated Officer who is responsible for all aspects of safeguarding children

## MUCKY PUPS CHILDCARE CHILD PROTECTION CONTACTS INFORMATION

The nominated Child Protection Director is:

Theresa Maples

info@muckypups-childcare.co.uk

01536264656

The Designated Officers (DO) are:

Lynsey Final and

info@muckypups-childcare.co.uk

01536264656

### **What to do if you are concerned about a child's safety or welfare.**

#### **Emergencies:**

If a child is in immediate danger, left alone or missing, contact the police and/or ambulance service directly on 999.

If there is no immediate danger, you will need to establish the level of need and risk before you take action. **Thresholds and Pathways** will help you to do this.

If you need advice about the levels of need and whether to make a referral, please contact the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**.

If a child is at immediate risk you should call MASH on 0300 126 1000 and make a telephone referral, you will subsequently be required to put this in writing.

In all other circumstances to make a referral to the MASH please complete the **online referral form**.

#### **Non Professionals / Parents, Carers and Young People:**

If there is no immediate danger or if you need advice, contact the Northamptonshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub:

- Telephone: 0300 126 1000;
- Email: [MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk).

#### **Out-of-hours:**

If you need to contact children's social care urgently during the evening, at night or at the weekend, phone our out of hours team on 01604 626938.

An operator will answer the phone and take details of the problem and your contact details. They will then pass this information over to the duty social worker.

If you are concerned about the nursery Designated Officer or the nursery director then call OFSTED – 0300 1231231

**A COPY OF [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners](#) and [working together to safeguard children](#) - IS KEPT IN THE STAFF ROOM ON THE STAFF NOTICE BOARD FOR STAFF TO REFER TO IF YOU ARE UNSURE WHO TO CONTACT OR WANT MORE INFORMATION**

1. **Policy statement and principles** Mucky Pups Childcare is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people and expects all staff, students and volunteers to share this commitment. Representatives of the nursery including the children themselves, their parents/carers, staff, students and volunteers will therefore be involved in the review and development of this policy. We work with children, parents/carers, external agencies and the community to promote the well-being and safety of all children. We support and encourage all children to be strong and resilient; we treat all children with respect and keep them safe from harm in order to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding arrangements are inspected by Ofsted through inspecting:

- How effectively leaders create a safeguarding culture within the nursery
- Arrangements for staff recruitment and vetting
- The quality of safeguarding practice
- Arrangements for handling serious incidents and allegations

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- Our responsibility to safeguard and promote the Children who are safe and feel safe are better equipped to learn
- Policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.
- If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made to Children's Social Care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, any staff member with concerns should press for reconsideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some stage.
- All staff members will maintain an attitude of 'It could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

### **Child protection statement**

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, students and volunteers and are consistent with those of Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board

Policy principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm at home, in the community or in nursery
- Children and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support Policy aims:
- To provide all staff with the necessary information and training to enable them to meet their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice

- To demonstrate our commitment with regard to child protection and safeguarding children, parents/carers, staff and other partners
- To contribute to and effectively use our Safeguarding Box

## 2. **Safeguarding legislation and guidance**

Research suggests that around 20 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse and disabled children are three times more likely to be abused. Children may turn to a trusted adult when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all staff are alert to the signs of abuse, are approachable, trusted and listen actively to children and understand the procedures when a disclosure has been made and for reporting their concerns. Staff at Mucky Pups Childcare annual training to:

- observe any changes in a child's behaviour that may be caused by a form of abuse
- know and understand what to do and what not to do when a disclosure has been made
- know and understand the procedures to report their concerns.

We will act on all identified concerns and provide early help to prevent concerns from escalating.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in nurseries, schools and colleges.

The statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and nurseries must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

## 3. **Roles and responsibilities**

### **The Child Protection Director:**

- appoints a Designated Officer who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency work in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the role of the Designated Officer is explicit in the role holder's job description
- ensures the nursery has a Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy and a Staff Code of Conduct that are consistent with NSCB and the statutory requirements, they are reviewed annually and made available publicly on the nursery's website, page and any other means as necessary Key personnel

- has set procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff, students and volunteers including allegations made against the Designated Officer and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children
- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, students and volunteers receive information about the nursery's safeguarding arrangements on induction
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are understood and implemented by all staff, students and volunteers
- ensures that all staff complete child protection training, which is updated every 2 years and the DO receives refresher training annually, with in-house training taking place once a year
- ensures that the nursery contributes to inter agency working and child protection plans
- participates in the early help and assessment process and offers to initiate CAFs for children with additional needs in order to provide a co-ordinated offer of early help
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DO to carry out their role effectively
  - supports the DO with looked after children in promoting the educational achievement of any children who are looked after by the Local Authority and to ensure that all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe
  - ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
  - ensures that children are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe at all times including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
  - refers all allegations that a child has been harmed by or that children may be at risk of harm from a member of staff or volunteer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day prior to any internal investigation
  - ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service, as advised by the LADO

The Designated Officer (DO) is appropriately trained and in the absence of the Child Protection Director carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of all children and their parents/carers and all staff, students and volunteers.

**The Designated Officer has:**

- completed the full Designated Safeguarding Lead training course and will complete a refresher annually.
- a working knowledge of Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) procedures
- a working knowledge of relevant national guidance in respect of all specific safeguarding issues highlighted in paragraph 25 (page 9) of Keeping Children Safe in Education, ensuring that all staff receive necessary training, information and guidance
- the status and authority to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff

- an understanding of the CAF process to ensure effective assessment and understanding of children's additional needs in order to inform appropriate provision of early help and intervention The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- keep detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged, but kept separate from, the child's general file
- refer cases of suspected abuse to Children's Social Care or Police as appropriate
- notify Children's Social Care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensure that when a child with a Child Protection Plan leaves the nursery, their information is passed to their new setting and the child's social worker is informed
- ensure the child protection file is passed securely to any new setting as soon as possible but transferred separately from the child's general file
- attend and/or contribute to child protection conferences
- coordinate all contributions to child protection plans as part of core groups, attending and actively participating in core group meetings
- develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the NSCB
- ensure that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy and staff code of conduct
- ensure that the child protection policy is regularly reviewed and updated annually
- liaise with the nominated director
- keep a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- make the child protection policy available publicly through our website page
- ensure that all parents/carers are aware of our role and responsibility in safeguarding
- ensure parents/carers are aware that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect from themselves may be made as well as any allegations about a member of staff, student or volunteer will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day prior to any internal investigation; and to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as appropriate
- act as case officer in the management of allegations concerning members of staff and volunteers, as directed by the child protection director
- act as a source of support and expertise to the children and their parents/carers and all staff, students and volunteers
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings

#### 4. **Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- treating all children with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving children in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among children
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in children's behaviour and to signs of abuse and neglect

- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the nursery's child protection and safeguarding policy, code of conduct and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact and information-sharing
- asking children's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force and physical intervention only as a last resort and in compliance with the nursery's policy and procedures and NSCB guidance
- recording all concerns appropriately, following the nursery's protocol
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DO or, if necessary, directly to the Police or Children's Social Care
- following the nursery's policy and procedures with regards to communication with children and the use of social media and online networking

**Please also refer to the nursery's Code of Conduct for all staff, students and volunteers.**

#### 5. **Abuse of trust**

All of our staff at Mucky Pups Childcare are aware that any inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable and that their conduct towards children must be beyond reproach. In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18 where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of staff and a student, volunteer or child under the age of 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that person is over the age of consent. The nursery's code of conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.

#### 6. **Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect than others. Several factors may contribute to that increased vulnerability such as social attitudes and assumptions including prejudice and discrimination; child protection procedures that are inadequately responsive to children's diverse circumstances; isolation; social exclusion; communication issues; a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur; as well as an individual child's personality, behaviour, disability and family circumstances. To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- living in a domestic abuse situation
- affected by parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- looked after by the Local Authority
- otherwise living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying behaviours

- living in temporary accommodation
- living transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, 13 disability or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in child sexual exploitation (CSE)
  - do not have English as a first language
  - at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
  - at risk of becoming radicalised, involved in gangs and/or violent extremism

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

## 7. **Early Help and use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process**

Mucky Pups childcare recognises that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Children and families may need support from a wide range of external agencies. Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, Police), we will use the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process to complete an early help assessment and identify what help the child and family require to prevent their needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

We are committed to working in partnership with children, parents/carers and other agencies to:

- identify situations in which children and/or their families would benefit from early help
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help, using the CAF process
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family, developing an action plan that will focus on activity to improve the child's outcomes We will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for any child who:
  - is disabled and has specific additional needs
  - has special educational needs
  - is showing signs of engaging in anti-social behaviour
  - is in a family whose circumstances present challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental ill health, domestic abuse
  - is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
  - is particularly vulnerable in any of the ways identified above The CAF process can only be effective if it is undertaken with the agreement of the child's parents/carers.

The CAF should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them. If parents and/or the child do not consent to the CAF process being initiated, we will make a judgement about whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into Children's Social Care may be necessary.

## 8. Attendance at Mucky Pups Childcare,

We believe good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them. At a young age continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. Also we believe regular attendance at nursery is good practice ready for school. Attendance is monitored closely and will involve other agencies if the patterns of absence are of concern.

**Our attendance policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly.**

## 9. Children Missing from Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DO will monitor absence, particularly where children are absent on repeated occasions. Where a child has consecutive days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps have been taken by the nursery to establish their reasons without success, we will make an immediate referral to Northamptonshire County Council's Social Care Team.

Reasonable steps include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visits where safe to do so
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the child/family
- All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the child's file

## 10. Helping children to keep themselves safe

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through the personal, social and emotional aspect of the EYFS. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and with staff work out how those risks might be overcome. Discussions about risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. The nursery continually promotes an ethos of respect for children and children are encouraged to speak to a member of staff about any worries they may have.

## 11. Support for children, families and staff involved in a child protection issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child. It can also result in distress and anxiety for the families and staff who become involved. We will support children, their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person (usually the DO) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, a separate link person will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from children, families and/or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety

- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

#### 12. **Complaints procedure**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent/carer raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way.

Complaints are managed by the director of the nursery and the nursery's deputy manager. Please see the separate complaints procedure policy.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the complaints and disciplinary and procedures.

#### 13. **If staff have concerns about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague - including visiting professionals and volunteers - towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood a situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise a colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. Our Whistleblowing Policy enables staff to make a sensitive enquiry and to raise concerns or allegations in confidence. Staff are expected to report all concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues, including what may seem minor contraventions of the nursery's Code of Conduct to the Director and/or the Deputy manager of the nursery. This will facilitate proactive and early intervention to maintain appropriate boundaries and a safe culture that protects children and reduces the risk of serious abuse in the nursery.

Concerns or complaints about the Deputy Manager should be reported to the Director of the nursery.

Concerns or complaints about the director should be reported to Ofsted.

Staff may also report concerns about suspected abuse or neglect directly to Children's Social Care or the Police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to ensure action is taken.

#### 14. **Allegations against staff**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to children and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the

default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. However, in some cases staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that allegations are investigated fairly, quickly and consistently and that all parties are protected.

**As stated above, all allegations against staff/volunteers/students and any other carers within the setting should be reported to the designated officer and the director of the nursery. Allegations against the management should be reported to Ofsted. Staff may also report their concerns directly to Police or Children’s Social Care if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.**

*The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2015) and WSCB’s inter-agency safeguarding procedures, section 6 - Managing Allegations Against People Who Work With Children.*

Staff, students, volunteers and parents/carers are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a member of staff who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites. In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the nursery will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

**Ofsted and the DO must be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Providers must also notify Ofsted of any action taken in respect of these allegations.**

- **Notifications must be made to the DO immediately. Settings must not do their own investigation and notification of the incident must be made as soon as possible and by email to Ofsted but at least within 14 days.**

The designated officer should be informed of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed an offence against children, 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, for example if their conduct falls within any of these categories;
  - Physical
  - Emotional
  - Sexual
  - neglect

Direct link to NSBC Designated officer information:

<http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/childcare/eycm-referrals-eha/designated-officer>

When making a referral to the designated officer, please email the referral form to the MASH team at [MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

## 15. **Staff training**

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff, students and volunteers who will have direct contact with children are required to attend an induction where management will discuss

- the nursery's child protection and safeguarding policy
- signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect
- responding to disclosure of abuse or neglect by a child
- reporting and recording concerns and disclosures
- the staff code of conduct
- details of the DO.

The individual is required to read the two policies in advance of the induction. The individual will be given an opportunity to clarify any issues and then asked to sign to confirm that they have read and understood both policies and undertake to comply with them.

All staff, including management will receive training that is regularly updated and regular discussions at staff meetings. The DO will attend training for newly appointed DO's and refresher training delivered in relation to the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Boards policies and procedures. That training will include up to date information about NSCB inter-agency procedures. The DO will also be supported to access WSCB inter-agency training as part of their continuing professional development. In addition, the Delegate Manager and director of the nursery will attend safer recruitment training.

## 16. **Safer recruitment**

At Mucky Pups Childcare, we endeavour to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff and allow 'safe' volunteers to work with children by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) together with NSCB Safer Recruitment policies. At least one member of the recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training. Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form which includes their employment history
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role
- provide evidence of their right to work in the UK
- be interviewed by a panel of at least two members of the management team

All new members of staff, students and volunteers will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the nursery's child protection and safeguarding policy and code of conduct, as well as identifying their child protection training needs. If the nursery uses supply staff we obtain confirmation from their supply agency that they have satisfactorily undertaken all appropriate checks that we as a nursery would undertake if we were employing the individual directly. The nursery maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers including any parent representatives will undergo checks corresponding with their work in the nursery and contact with children.

### **Supervised volunteers**

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safer recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the nursery's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

### **Contractors**

The nursery checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks where appropriate.

## **17. Site security**

Visitors to the nursery, including contractors, are asked to sign in. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the nursery's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure the children are kept safe including the awareness of the phone policy. Management will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

## **18. Behaviour Management**

Our behaviour policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the Delegate Manager. This policy is transparent to staff, students, volunteers, parents/carers and children.

## **19. Record Keeping**

The nursery will maintain child protection records in accordance with the guidance document provided by NCC Education Safeguarding Service Child Protection Record Keeping Guidance. In accordance with that guidance, the nursery will:

- keep clear, detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children's Social Care immediately
- ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations
- ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to any receiving nursery, school or other education establishment that a child moves to. Child protection records are kept separately from the child's general file and will only be accessible to the Designated Officer, the deputy Manager and the director of the nursery.

Such records will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child, timed and dated observations describing the child's behaviour, appearance, statements/remarks made to staff or other children and observations of interactions between the child, other children, members of staff and/or parents/carers that give rise to concern. Where possible and without interpretation, the exact words spoken by the child or parent/carer will be recorded. Records will be signed, dated and timed by the member of staff making the record. These records are completed as a paper version with any extra information being electronically recorded and password protected. When a referral is made and all evidence is sent through the post by recorded delivery it is photocopied to enable us as a nursery to maintain the file. It is important

that all staff keep to this one consistent system for the recording of concerns and that all records are passed to the DO, who should complete the form to confirm what action has been taken.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent/carer to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the DO who will advise them to submit a Freedom of Information request for consideration. However, the Data Protection Act does not prevent staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

## **20. Disclosing information about staffs personal situation**

Staff members or anyone working on the premises are aware that they must disclose any safeguarding information about anyone they live with over the age of 16. They are made aware on their induction that if anyone over the age of 16 living in their household and is barred from working with children then this could affect their rights to work with children.

## **21. Disqualification**

In the event of the registered person being disqualified, the provider must not continue being a provider – nor be directly concerned in the management of the provision.

Where a person is disqualified the provider must not employ that person in connection with early year's provision.

Where an employee becomes aware of relevant information that may lead to disqualification of an employee, the provider must take relevant action to ensure the safety of the children.

A provider or childcare worker may also be disqualified because they live in the same household as another person who is disqualified.

The provider must notify ofsted of any of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the premises where childcare is provided.

Ofsted must be aware as soon as possible but at least within 14 days.

The registered provider must give Ofsted the following information about themselves or any other person who lives in the same household as the registered provider:

- Details of any order, discrimination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the children's Act 2006
- The date of the order, determination or conviction or other ground for disqualification.
- The body or court which made the order, determination or conviction and sentence (if any arose)
- A certified copy of the relevant order.

## **22. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the designate manager and/ or the nursery director. It is reasonable for staff to discuss day-to-day concerns about children with colleagues in order to ensure that children's general needs are met. However, staff should only refer child protection concerns to the DO, delegate manager or the nursery director. The person receiving the referral will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to know' basis. In the case of concerns being about the DO, deputy manager or the nursery director, the concern should be made to Ofsted. However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in schools failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education emphasises that any member of staff can contact Children's Social Care if they are concerned about a child.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child or parent to keep secrets.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles. Child protection information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access to sensitive information. Any sensitive information that needs to be stored on portable devices such as a laptop, computer, tablet or on portable media such as a CD or flash drive will be password protected or encrypted and kept in locked storage.

### **23. Extra curricula activities and off-site arrangements**

Where extended curricula activities and off-site arrangements are provided by and managed by the nursery, (such as the swimming or outings) the nursery's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures apply.

### **24. Mobile Phones and cameras**

Our mobile phone and camera policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the Delegate Manager. This policy is transparent to staff, students, volunteers, parents/carers and children.

### **25. Photography and images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons.

Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect the children, we will:

- seek consent from the children and their parents/carers for photographs to be taken and published (for example, on our website page)
- use only first names with an image
- ensure children are appropriately dressed
- ask children and their parents/carers to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken before they are published

Please refer to our separate Policy on the use of mobile phones and other recording devices

## 26. **E-Safety**

Children and young people increasingly use mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis. Those technologies and the internet are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some adults and young people will use those technologies to harm children. That harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

Staff also receive advice regarding the use of social networking such as Facebook and twitter. Staff must not post anything onto any social networking sites that;

- is in any way linked to the nursery
  - would offend any other member of staff, student, parent/carer or child
  - could have an impact on the nursery's reputation
- Staff must not be friends of any parents/carers on any social networking sites unless they were friends before starting at the nursery and agree this with the manager.

If any of the above points are not followed then the member of staff involved will face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal.

## 27. Child protection procedure

Recognising abuse.

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

There are four categories of abuse: Physical abuse, Emotional abuse, Sexual abuse and Neglect.

### **Physical abuse**

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

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may

occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Indicators of abuse**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised.

The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For those reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the DO.

It is the responsibility of all staff to report their concerns.

It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned around changing time
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their play/work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age and/or stage of development.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed. It is very important that staff report all of their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are – they do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

### **Impact of abuse**

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

### **Taking action**

Any child in any family in any nursery could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “It could happen here”. Key points for staff to remember when taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child
- report any concern to the DO as quickly as possible – immediately when there is evidence of physical or sexual abuse and certainly by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief.

### **If you are concerned about a child’s welfare**

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a child may be at risk but have no ‘real’ evidence. The child’s behaviour may have changed, their artwork could show distress, they’re imaginative play could reveal what they’re seeing at home or physical but inconclusive signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine for staff to ask the child if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should speak to the DO to decide what form to record these early concerns on. If the child does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

### **If a pupil discloses to a member of staff or volunteer**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual. Their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell. They may have lost all trust in adults, they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a child talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will need to let the child know that they must pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the child this is a matter for professional judgement. If

they jump in immediately the child may think that they do not want to listen but if left until the very end of the conversation, the child may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with children staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the children may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the child
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the mother think about all this (however, it is reasonable to ask questions to clarify understanding and to support a meaningful referral if that is required, e.g. when did this happen, where did this happen?)
- at an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them, they must pass the information on
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- not reprimand the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the child what will happen next
- let them know that someone (either you or another named person, e.g. the DSL) will come to see them before the end of the day
- report verbally to the DO
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the DO
- seek support if they feel distressed or need to debrief.

### **Notifying parents**

The nursery will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents/carers. This must be handled sensitively and the DO will make contact with the parents/carers in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. However, if we believe that notifying parents/carers could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will be sought first from Children’s Social Care.

### **Making a referral to Children’s Social Care**

The DO will call Children’s Social Care with a referral if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The Children’s Social Care Team will advise the DSL of the next step as this can differ with individual circumstances. The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents/carers will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child. However, following a number of cases where senior leaders have failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education emphasises that any member of staff can contact Children’s Social Care if they are concerned about a child.

### **Children with sexually harmful or inappropriate behaviour**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people.

Members of staff who become concerned about a child's sexual behaviour should speak to the DO as soon as possible. The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the nursery will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole nursery. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Any instances of sexual harm caused by one child to another and any situation where there are concerns about power imbalance, coercion or force will be discussed with Children's Social Care. The nursery will also be informed by the Police or Children's Social Care about referrals made directly from other sources (e.g. family members, family friends, parents of other children) in relation to alleged sexualised inappropriate or sexually abusive behaviour displayed by children inside and/or outside the nursery.

In all such circumstances, the DO may be required to attend a strategy meeting under multiagency child protection procedures in order to facilitate risk management and planning with other agencies. In responding to cases involving children or young people who have committed sexually abusive behaviours, Children's Social Care will consult with the Sexualised Inappropriate Behaviours Service (SIBS), for advice, consultation or provision of a direct service. A wide range of practice guidance, knowledge and therapeutic materials has been developed by SIBS to inform the interventions relating to children and young people with sexual behaviour difficulties.

In circumstances where a child displays sexualised inappropriate behaviour but evidence of sexual harm towards other children is not clear cut, the nursery may seek consultation and advice from SIBS and/or the Education Safeguarding Manager.

In deciding the most appropriate response, relevant considerations will include:

- the nature and extent of the inappropriate/abusive behaviours. In respect of sexual abuse, it is necessary to distinguish between normal childhood sexual development and experimentation; and sexually inappropriate or aggressive behaviour
- the context of the abusive behaviours
- the child/young person's development, family and social circumstances
- the need for services, specifically focusing on the child/young person's harmful behaviour as well as other significant needs
- the risks to self and others, including other children in the nursery, household, extended family, peer group and wider community.

The nursery is committed to participating in plans both to provide children who are at risk from other children and those children who may present a risk to other children with appropriate services to address any concerns and, wherever possible, to facilitating ongoing access to early education in this nursery for all children concerned, subject to appropriate risk assessments and risk management plans.

### **Sexual exploitation of children**

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people.

Victims can be boys or girls.

Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to the trafficking of children.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation of children and all concerns are reported immediately to the DO.

### **Preventing radicalisation**

Mucky Pups Childcare is committed to preventing children from being radicalised and drawn into any form of extremism or terrorism. The nursery promotes British Values which includes **democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty** and **mutual respect and tolerance** of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. We provide children with the opportunity to learn how to discuss and debate points of view and to understand a range of faiths and ensure that all children are valued and listened to.

All staff are made aware of the importance of identifying indicators of children being radicalised and all concerns are reported immediately to the DO.

The nursery will make appropriate referrals in respect of any child whose behaviour or comments suggest that they are vulnerable to being radicalised and drawn into extremism and terrorism in order to ensure that children receive appropriate support.

The nursery expects all staff, students, volunteers, visiting professionals, contractors and individuals or agencies that use the premises to behave in accordance with the nursery's Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct).

We will challenge the expression and/or promotion of extremist views and ideas by any adult on nursery premises or at special events and, when necessary, will make appropriate referrals in respect of any such adult.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Female Genital Mutilation was made illegal in the UK in 1985 and since 2013 it has been illegal to take a child abroad to get the procedure. It is believed that a woman is cleaner and will give women better medical benefits. It is also believed that it will have sexual control.

- Areas where FGM is most communally practiced are countries in North Africa including Sudan, Somalia, Mali, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.
- FGM is cultural, not religious.
- There are currently approximately 137,000 girls living in the UK who have been effected by FGM and approximately 23,000 who could still be at risk.
- Mainly effects children between 5 and 8 but the procedure can be carried out on children as young as birth and as old as 15 years.

- Northamptonshire has a large population of immigrants who are from the areas most likely to practice FGM
- FGM in the UK is at higher risk as the schools break up for the summer holidays as the recovery period is 6-9 weeks so schools and childcare providers should be on high alert at this time.
- Anaesthetic or pain relief is not usually used and the girls have to be restrained and the tools include knives, scissors, pieces of glass or razor blades

#### **Post FGM symptoms include**

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom
- Unusual behaviour after lengthy absence
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations

#### **Longer term problems may include:**

- Frequent chronic vaginal, pelvic or urinary infections
- Menstrual problems
- Kidney damage
- Cysts and abscesses
- Emotional and mental health problems
- Infertility
- Complications during childbirth

There are 3 types of FGM

- **Type 1 (clitoridectomy)** – removing part or all of the clitoris.
- **Type 2 (excision)** – removing part or all of the clitoris and the inner labia (lips that surround the vagina), with or without removal of the labia majora (larger outer lips).
- **Type 3 (infibulation)** – narrowing of the vaginal opening by creating a seal, formed by cutting and repositioning the labia.
- **Other harmful procedures** to the female genitals, including pricking, piercing, cutting, scraping or burning the area.

At Mucky Pups Childcare we will ensure any females who are at potential risk of FGM will be recorded and any absences will be monitored by the DO, and in particular any long absences will be reported immediately.

#### **Special Circumstances**

##### **Looked after children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. If a looked after child attends the nursery the DO will have all the appropriate information about a child's looked after status including their background, their social workers name and contact details and details of the carer the child is living with. The DO will ensure that information is passed onto staff on a need to know basis only.