**Safeguarding Children**

* 1. **Safeguarding children and child protection**

(including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

**EYFS key themes and commitments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A Unique Child** | **Positive Relationships** | **Enabling Environments** | **Learning and Development** |
| 1.3 Keeping safe | 2.1 Respecting each other  2.2 Parents/Carers as partners | 3.4 The wider context | 4.4 Personal, social and emotional development |

**Policy Statement**

* Our setting will work with children, parents and carers and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

**Procedures**

*Staff and volunteers*

* Our designated staff who co-ordinate child protection issues are:

Helen Harris, Suzanne Rogers and Ellen Chapman

* Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is:

Amy Wallace (Committee)

* We ensure all staff, volunteers, parents/carers and visitors are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
* We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
* Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
* Candidates are informed of the need to carry out ‘enhanced disclosure checks’ with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed. Repeat checks are carried out periodically on existing staff to ensure their continued suitability for their roles.
* Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

**The Children’s Act 2004 has introduced the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) who is responsible for ensuring all safeguarding concerns are dealt with.**

* We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff, Committee members and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
* Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
* We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting (policy 1.2a)
* Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

*Responding to suspicions of abuse*

* Where such evidence is apparent, the child’s key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the setting manager/deputy manager who is acting as the ‘designated person’. This information is stored confidentially on the child’s personal file.
* We refer concerns to the local authority’s children’s social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.

*Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures*

* Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), and/or signs or signals are observed that give cause for concern (such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible neglect), that member of staff:
  + Listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she/he will take action
  + Does not question the child
  + Makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
    - The date and time of the observation or disclosure
    - The exact words spoken by the child as far as possible
    - The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time
    - The names of any other person present at the time
* These records are signed and dated and kept in the child’s personal file which is kept securely and confidentially.

*Making a referral to the local authority social care team*

* Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board’s (BSCB) website contains information and procedures for making a referral to the local social care team (as well as telephone numbers and online referral forms), as does the Pre-School Learning Alliance’s Publication ‘Child Protection Record’. These are based on ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ (HMG 2006)
* We keep printed copies of up to date guidance and follow the guidelines given.
* All members of staff have regular safeguarding training, keep abreast of new developments and guidance and follow these procedures for recording and reporting.

*Informing parents/carers*

* Parents/Carers are normally the first point of contact.
* If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents/carers are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the BSCB does not allow this (This will usually be the case where the parent/carer is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents/carers)

*Liaison with other agencies*

* We work within the BSCB guidelines.
* We have a copy of ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ for parents/carers and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
* We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children within 14 days.

*Allegations against staff*

* We ensure that all parents/carers know how to complain about the behaviour/actions of staff or volunteers within the setting.
* We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer occurred within the setting.
* We refer any such complaint immediately to Buckinghamshire social care department to investigate. The person receiving the allegation should immediately notify his/her senior or the designated child protection person in the setting. Within 24 hours the designated person must notify the LADO.
* We report any such alleged incident to Ofsted within 14 days and what measures we have taken. It is an offence not to do this.
* We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children’s social care in conjunction with the police.
* Where the Committee and children’s social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as the children and families throughout the process.

*Disciplinary action*

* Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Independent Barring Board administrators so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.

*Training*

* We provide regular training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect and ensure they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
* We ensure all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

*Curriculum*

* Within the setting we have a culture of value and respect for the individual (Fundamental British Values in the Early Years), having positive regard for children’s heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.

*Confidentiality*

* All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of BSCB.

*Support to families*

* We make clear to parents/carers our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with Buckinghamshire Social Care team.
* We continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
* We adhere to The Child Protection Plan as set by the child’s social care worker in relation to the setting’s designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.

**Legal Framework**

*Primary legislation*

* Children Act (1989 s47)
* Protection of Children Act (1999)
* Data Protection Act (1998)
* The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

*Secondary legislation*

* Sexual Offences Act (2003)
* Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
* Human Rights Act (1999)
* Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
* Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations
* Equalities Act (2010)
* Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

This policy was adopted at a meeting held on 13.5.13

Signed on behalf of the Committee by Louise Sayer (Chairperson)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Review date  Amendments | 19.5.14 HH | 12.3.15 HH | 9.3.16 HH  Amendments |  |