

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Purpose and Aims

This document is designed having regard to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LCSB) procedures and the Governments statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

The purpose of Pixies' Safeguarding policy is to provide a secure framework for the staff team and volunteers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children who attend our setting. Within this document 'staff' refers to all persons directly involved in the care of children at this setting, irrespective of their employment status, and includes students, trainees and volunteers.

We recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989) therefore this policy aims to ensure that all our children are safe and protected from harm.

Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children to feel safe and to adopt safe practices; Staff, children, visitors, volunteers and parents are aware of the expected behaviours' (as set out in the Pixies Behaviour Management Policy) and the settings legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our children.

Ethos

The Government Green Paper *Every Child Matters* (2003) set out 5 outcomes that are key to children's wellbeing, they are:

- Be healthy.
- Stay safe.
- Enjoy and achieve.
- Make a positive contribution.
- Achieve economic wellbeing.

Improving outcomes for all children whatever their background or circumstance underpins all the development and work within the setting. Safeguarding at Pixies is considered everyone's responsibility and as such, our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their 5 outcomes.

At Pixies, we recognise the contribution we can make in ensuring that all children using the setting feel they will be listened to and appropriate action taken. We will do this by working in partnership with other agencies and seeking to establish effective working relationships with parents and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities throughout our curriculum that will help to equip our children with the skills they need.

We work within the Local (Pan Sussex) Safeguarding Children Board Guidelines

www.pansussexscb.proceduresonline.com/index

Responsibilities and Expectations

The proprietor of Pixies has a legal responsibility to make sure that the setting has effective Safeguarding policy and procedures in place, and monitors that the setting complies with them. The proprietor will also ensure the policy is made available to parents if requested. Further, the proprietor and the manager will ensure all staff and volunteers are properly checked to make sure they are safe to work with children and that the setting has procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against any member of staff or volunteers to include regular staff supervisions.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Charlotte Earthy is the 'Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer', with **Katie Bonner** and **Laura Jackson** being the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) and will have lead responsibility with all safeguarding issues in the setting. The DSOs will ensure issues raised will be effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency. All Child Protection concerns need to be acted on **immediately**. If there is a concern that a child may be at risk or is suffering abuse, it must be reported to the DSOs as appropriate.

All adults, including the DSO's, have a duty to refer all known suspected cases of abuse to the relevant agency. Where a disclosure is made to a visiting staff member from a different agency, e.g. Early Years Consultants, Health Visitors, it is the responsibility of the agency staff to formally report the referral to a DSO in the first instance. Any records made will be kept securely on the child's protection file.

Responsibilities

The Designated Officer is responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation of the Safeguarding Children policy and procedures and in ensuring that they comply with those approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards.
- Attending training and keeping up to date about child protection practice and local arrangements.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with parent/carers, staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring that all setting policies and documents are consistent with the child protection policy and procedures.
- Ensuring staff attend training that includes recognition factors and appropriate responses so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals
- That all members of staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.
- Notifying Ofsted about any allegations of serious harm or abuse against a child while the child is in our care and any changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of children.
- Liaising with other bodies and working within the Local Safeguarding Children Boards guidelines as needed. Following procedures and gaining confidential advice from the 'Front Door for Families' (on 01273 290400), or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). Our (LADO) is Darrel Clews (01273 295643).

It is not the role of the manager to decide on whether a child has been abused or to investigate; this is the role of the local authority and the police.

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Recognising and responding to physical, emotional and behavioural indicators of a child suffering harm
- Responding appropriately to a child's allegations of abuse or neglect.
- Responding to inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children.
- Acting on concerns about the conduct of a colleague or volunteer.
- Acting on a report of suspicion of abuse.

Recognising Concerns, Signs and Indicators of Abuse

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm; for our setting, it includes such things as child safety, bullying, racist abuse and harassment, visits, intimate care and internet access etc.

Abuse can take place in any family, institution or community setting, by telephone or on the internet. Abuse can often be difficult to recognise as children may behave differently or be unhappy for many reasons as they move through the stages of childhood or their family circumstances change. However, it is important to know the indicators of abuse and be alert to the need to consult further. Staff should also be aware of their responsibilities under 'The Prevent Duty' (see separate document).

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, poisoning, scalding, burning, drowning and suffocating. Physical abuse can also result when a parent or carer deliberately causes the ill health of a child to seek medical attention through fabricated or induced illness. This was previously known as *Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy*.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is where a child's need for love, security, recognition and praise are not met. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of someone else such as Domestic Violence or Domestic Abuse. A parent, carer or authority figure is considered emotionally abusive when they are consistently hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining toward a child or other family member. It can also occur when children are prevented from having social contact with others or if inappropriate expectations are placed upon them.

Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively clingy or attention seeking behaviour.
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism.
- Withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness.
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers: too eager to please.
- Eating disorders or self-harm.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical contact both penetrative and non-penetrative, or viewing pornographic material including through the internet.

Indicators of sexual abuse include:

- Allegations or disclosures.
- Genital soreness or injuries
- Sexually transmitted diseases.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour including words, play or drawings.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or physiological needs which can significantly harm their health and development. Neglect can include inadequate supervision (being left alone for long periods of time), lack of stimulation, social contact or education, a lack of appropriate food, shelter, appropriate clothing for conditions and medical attention and treatment when necessary.

Methods

- We encourage the children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- We have developed safe working practices and policies including:
- Ensuring that parent/carers, students and volunteers working at the setting are never alone with children (Intimate Care Policy)
- Ensuring that mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised photographic equipment is locked in the office and never used near the children
- Ensuring that all videos and photos are taken with parental consent and are stored securely in accordance to setting policies
- We have procedures for recording visitors to the setting, and have made security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. We use a 'password' system for anyone new who may be picking up a child. Any child or visitor to the setting is signed in and out by a member of staff.
- We note and inform parent/carers about accidents at setting that have made a mark and ask parent/carers to inform us about marks made at home. This needs to be recorded and signed on the same day.

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- offer reassurance to the child;
- listen to the child; and
- give reassurance that she or he will take action
- not ask leading question of the child or make promises. The child will be treated with dignity and respect and will be listened to whatever their level of development /communication.

On being alerted to suspicions of abuse all staff and volunteers must:

- Record accurately, separating third party information, professional opinion and fact. These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file
- Report concerns to Charlotte Earthey or the Named Person in her absence (in the case of all being absent the most senior full time member of staff) without delay and certainly on the same day.

Where there is a concern that a member of staff or an adult in a position of trust poses a danger to a child or that they might be abusing a child these concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Where those concerns relate to the Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer however, this should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Partnership with parent/carers

Staff will endeavour to work in partnership with parents/carers. Parents/carers will be kept informed on all policies and procedures. All views will be considered. Parent/carers will be listened to, and all concerns taken seriously as we aim to work openly and honestly in partnership, always remembering that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Parent/carers are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parent /carers are informed at the same time as the report is made. In exceptional circumstances, when informing parent/carers would put the child at risk or compromise criminal evidence, staff will consult with the 'Front Door for families' about when and how to discuss concerns with parent/carers.

Support to families

- The setting takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The setting will continue to welcome the child and family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's with parent/carers who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Advice, Contact and Assessment Service.
- We support and work with children's families, with the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount.

Training

- All members of staff and volunteers will receive in-house safeguarding training up to the minimum at least once every 3 years. We will also, as part of our induction, issue all relevant information and policies in relation to safeguarding and child welfare to new members of staff and volunteers. The DSO's will undertake further training at least every 3 years to update their awareness and understanding of the impact of the wide agenda in safeguarding issues. This will support the DSO's to better undertake their roles and support the setting in ensuring our safeguarding arrangements are robust and achieving better outcomes for the children in our setting. This will include multi-agency training. Further, the DSO's will support all staff and volunteers in their role in handling allegations against adults.
- Our safeguarding arrangements and policies will be reviewed annually or as appropriate to ensure they keep updated in line with local and national guidance and legislation.

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 the Local 'Front Door for Families'.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PROCEDURES

A concern is expressed about a child in our setting because the child has:

- Behaved inappropriately in a way that could suggest abuse has occurred or
- Unexplained bruising or marks or
- Shown deterioration in their general wellbeing.

A concern should be reported as soon as possible to the Named Child Protection Designated Officer, or alternative named Person if they are not present.

Still has a concern.

No longer has a concern.

Designated Person liaises with the practitioner involved and confidential Cause for Concern record will be filled in, omitting any names at this

Child concerned will be informally monitored.

If it is considered that the child is or may be a Child in need the Designated Person will have reference to a Threshold document published by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. This document provides guidance to identify and assess the level of individual need and clarify the circumstances in which to refer a child to the **Front Door for Families**, the **Emergency Duty Service** or to a specific agency to address an individual need. The Designated person will then either refer the child and family to the **Front Door for Families**, the **Emergency Duty Service** as determined, informing parents/carers as appropriate. Confirming in writing within 48 hrs.

Front Door for Families – tel: 01273 290400 (out of hours: Emergency Duty Service – 01273 335905/6), Confirm in Where appropriate the child's allocated social worker will be informed of concerns.

Child Protection Designated Person will then act on advice from the Front Door for families regarding how to proceed further and will advise Ofsted when appropriate.

Allegation of abuse by staff

Managing Allegations

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers that are working with or who may come into contact with children in our setting.

Allegations will usually be that abuse has taken place. They can be made by children or concerned adults.

Allegations are made for a variety of reasons:

- Abuse has taken place.
- Something has happened to the child that has reminded them of a past event – the child is unable to recognise that the situation and people are different; Children can misinterpret your language or your actions.
- Some children recognise that allegations can be powerful and if they are angry with you about something they can make an allegation about you as a way of hitting out.
- An allegation can be a way of seeking attention.

If an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust whether they be members of staff or volunteers this should be brought to the immediate attention of a DSO. In the case of the allegation being made against the DSO the matter should be directed to the Senior DSO or if the concerns are about the Senior DSO's handling of the issue, to the attention of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO will need to discuss the nature of the allegation with the concerned party for the appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion depending on the allegation.

The Designated Officer will:

- Refer to the LADO immediately and follow up in writing within 48 hours.
Consider safeguarding arrangements of the child to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser.
- Contact the parents of the child if advised by the LADO to do so.
- Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation.
- Advise Ofsted of the allegation.
- Ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed including whether suspension from work pending the outcome is deemed necessary.
- Act on any decision made in any strategy meeting.
- Advise the Independent Safeguarding Authority where a member of staff or volunteer has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations being found.

Procedures

A concern is expressed about an adult in our setting because the person has:

- **Behaved inappropriately in a way that has or may have harmed a child or**
- **Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child or**
- **Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children.**

An allegation should be reported as soon as possible to the named Child Protection Designated Officer, or their representative if they are not present.

Still have concerns.

No longer has a concern.

The designated person should report the allegation to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) within 1 working day so that s/he can consult police and social care colleagues as appropriate. We follow any advice and guidance we receive. We keep a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and details of any action taken and decisions reached.

Suspension should be considered in any cases where there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, or the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

The member of staff who has had an allegation made against them will be given as much support as possible, if necessary with individual and/or group counselling being made available to all members of staff as required.

Parent/Carers will be kept informed in an unbiased, sympathetic and confidential manner by the Child Protection Designated Person

If the allegation is substantiated and on conclusion the employer dismisses the person or ceases to use the person's services, or the person ceases to provide his/her services, the employer should consult the LADO about whether a referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority ISA and Ofsted is required. If a referral is appropriate the report should be made within one month.

Useful Numbers:

- Local Police: 01273 665502 or 0845 6070999
- **Front Door for Families – tel: 01273 290400 (out of hours: Emergency Duty Service – 01273 335905/6)**
Whitehawk Community Hub and Library
179a Whitehawk Road, Brighton BN2 5FL
email: FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Darrel Clews (01273 295643, 07795335879)
Darrel.clews@brighton-hove.gov.uk

The relevant legislation, standards and guidance used as a framework for this policy and procedures are:

- The Childcare Act 2006
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Data Protection Act 1984 and 1998
- Human Rights Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Safeguarding Vulnerable groups Act 2006
- EYFS – Safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare, Suitable people.
- ‘Working together to Safeguard Children’ 2010

Associated policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Pixies Partnership with Parents Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Mobile phone policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Collection of Children Policy
- Lost Child Policy
- Outings Procedures
- The Prevent Duty