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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

In terms for this policy, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Legislation is "The Children (Guernsey and Alderney) Law 2008

Our Safeguarding lead is Claire Yates, supported by Jennifer Heald who should be the first point of contact with any safeguarding concerns relating to the nursery, it's children and/or staff.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development.

Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single child protection policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the other nursery policies and procedures.

At Humming Bees, we will work with children, parents, external agencies, and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from an abuse in whatever form.

To this end we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Always listen to children

Our Nursery has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the Nursery Owner / Registered person at the earliest opportunity.

Practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care, we are providing, staff will often be the first people to sense that there is a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide about abuse.

The Nursery has a duty to be away that abused does occur in our society.

This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of all children in our care. As such we believe that we have a duty to the children, parents, and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. All staff will work as part of a multi-agency team where needed in the best interests of the child.

The Nursery aims to:

- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of Nursery staff
- Ensure that confidentiality is always maintained
- Ensure that all staff are trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedure, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed including by other children
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection issues and procedures
- Ensure parents are fully aware of children protection policies and procedures when they register with the Nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur
- Keep the child at the centre of all we do
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate
- Ensure that all staff are trained to recognise signs of FGM

Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort, and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to the individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

Important Contacts

Guernsey SEYT: 01481 228313

MASH: 01481 225241

Alternative the local police (999 or 112)

ISCP (local safeguarding board) - <http://iscp.gg/>

Operation Encompass - <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

Types of Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child, or children. The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms of any of them to a marked degree.

Physical Abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning; where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child e.g.: fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles, and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries – these should also be logged and discussed with the Nursery Manager or Room Leader.

Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the Nursery Manager.

Procedure

- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into Nursery or occur during time at the nursery, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member
- The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury the local authority will be notified

E-safety

Children will not have access to the internet during their time at the Nursery, this includes afterschool club. Any devices connected to the internet will be stored away from children's reach and password protected.

Intimate care/dignity

All steps will be taken to ensure children's dignity at all times, especially when intimate care (such as nappy changing, toileting and changing) is involved.

All staff are fully trained in appropriate measures regarding intimate care (safeguarding training and induction training) and all intimate care is done in a private space. Staff do not have access to photographic devices in the private spaces where changing/toileting occurs. Staff will never be alone in the building with children.

Fabricated Illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g., through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialised support.

Sexual Abuse

Action needs to be taken under this heading if the staff member has witnessed occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. For nappy changes

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge, and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawing or overlay extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

Actions Required

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse, they may be experiencing; the following procedure plus the procedure stated later in this document under “recording abuse suspicions” will be followed:

Procedure

- The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report (confidential area on FAMILY app where practitioners can make private observations only readable by Management)
- The observed instances will be reported to the Nursery Manager
- The matter will be referred to MASH.
- Parents/Carers will be notified **if this does not place the child at further risk of harm**

Emotional Abuse

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

This may include extreme of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdraw, aggressive or clingy to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Procedure

- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report (confidential area on FAMILY app where practitioners can make private observations only readable by Management)
- The observed instances will be reported to the Nursery Manager
- The matter will be referred to MASH.
- Parents/Carers will be notified **if this does not place the child at further risk of harm**

Neglect

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of child *for example by exposure to any kind of danger including cold and starvation and failure to seek medical treatment when required on behalf of the child) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at Nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them) arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in or child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. Child may not be receiving the attention

they need at home and may crave love and support at nursery. They may be clingy and emotional. IN addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse.

Procedure

- The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report (confidential area on FAMLY app where practitioners can make private observations only readable by Management)
- The observed instances will be reported to the Nursery Manager
- The matter will be referred to MASH.
- Parents/Carers will be notified **if this does not place the child at further risk of harm**

Indicators of child abuse:

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record (supported by the Nursery Manager or designated Safeguarding Lead) of any observation or disclosure and include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and DOB
- Date and time of the observation or disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of an incident including any other witnesses
- Name of the person to whom the concern was report with the date and time and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parents

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the manager/supervisor dated and kept in the confidential section of FAMLY.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse, it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly, and disclosure is not forced, or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure it is vital details are logged down accurately.

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with MASH or the police.

Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information / concerns they have about the child. The Nursery expects all members of staff to cooperate with the SEYT and other relevant authorities to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about a parent's or staff's behaviour, both actual and speculated.

Staffing and Volunteering

It is the policy of the Nursery to provide a secure and safe environment of all children. The Nursery will therefore not allow an adult to be left alone with a child who has not received their Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service clearance (DBS)

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children of the Nursery.

We have a named person within the Nursery that takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and coordinates child protection and welfare issues. This person undertakes specific training and receives regular updates to developments within this field.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at the Nursery is Claire Yates

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children
- Applicants for posts within the Nursery are clearly informed that the positions are exempt for the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information
- We recheck the suitability of all adults working or volunteering with children, including anything in their private life or medical background that may affect their suitability to care for the children
- We abide by SEYT requirements in respect of references and suitability checks for staff and volunteers to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the Nursery or has access to the children
- All students will have an enhanced DBS check conducted on them before their placement starts
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- We Abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Nursery and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Nurser so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- All contractors/external workers will be enhanced DBS checked if entering the building when children are present, and the manager will request this before allowing them access to the Nursery. All visitors/contractors will still be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use.

- All staff have access to a whistleblowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner
- All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss child protection training and any needs for further support
- The deployment of staff within the Nursery allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be placed into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of MASH does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform the parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.

Support to families

The Nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, and volunteers within the Nursery.

The Nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgemental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child.

Confidential records kept on the child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate under the guidance of SEYT with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

Employees or Volunteers of the Nursery

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, we will follow the below procedure:

The allegation should be reported to the senior manager on duty. If this person is the subject of the allegation, then this should be reported to the owner/registered person instead.

SEYT and MASH will then be informed immediately for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals to determine how this will be handled
- The Nursery will follow all instructions from SEYT/MASH and asks all staff to do the same
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with the SEYT/MASH support and advice
- The Nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file

- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisation (police) and will result in the termination of employment. SEYT & MASH will be notified immediately of this decision. The Nursery is also required to notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated
- All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary re-investigation
- The Nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry