



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Whitchurch Pre-School believes that children have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse. We are committed to protecting all the children in our care from harm and abuse.

Whitchurch Pre-School will ensure that all concerns remain confidential and will only be shared on a need to know basis. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

All families attending Whitchurch Pre-School will be treated equally with regards to their social background: for more information please refer to our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality and Inclusion Policy.

Whitchurch Pre-School has appointed Becci Garner as their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). She will be supported by Pre-School Manager Marie Winnett. Becci and Marie have suitable experience and training, and will be responsible for liaising with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). If an incident were to occur at Whitchurch Pre-School, the Pre-School Manager Marie Winnett would notify Ofsted as soon as it is reasonably practicable to do so, but at the latest within 14 days if an allegation or referral were made.

Whitchurch Pre-School is committed to reviewing its Safeguarding Children Policy regularly. The policy will be shared with all parents within the Welcome Pack. It is also available online and within our working policies file located in the office.

Mobile Phones and Cameras

Whitchurch Pre-School owns a mobile phone that is taken on all walks for emergency purposes. The phone is not used to take photographs of children. Whitchurch Pre-School accepts that mobile phones are a part of everyday life for parents, carers and staff. For more information regarding the use of mobile phones at Whitchurch Pre-School please refer to our Mobile Phones and Camera Policy.

Whitchurch Pre-School has a camera and iPod that is purely for the use of observations. All images of children are stored on the Pre-School computer. For further information regarding the use of cameras and photographs please refer to the Pre-Schools Camera and iPod Policy.

Whitchurch Pre-School is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of safeguarding by treating any allegation seriously and sensitively. Whitchurch Pre-School will not carry out any investigations itself into a suspected child abuse incident.

Procedure to be followed in the event of a concern

On discovering an allegation of abuse, the DSL will immediately refer the case to the LSCB. If there is a concern about a child we have a duty to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer – **Patrick Crawford 01305 221122** and in addition seek advice from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): Dorset: 01202 228866

Devon: Complete the enquiry form, or in urgent cases, telephone 0345 155 1071.

The Pre-School Manager would speak to the MASH Team to share the concern over an incident or emerging pattern of concerns. The MASH Team are responsible for escalating the safeguarding concern. Whitchurch Pre-School will also contact Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), on 01305 221122

Further to this, the following principles will govern any suspected or reported case of abuse:

- Where actual or suspected abuse comes to the attention of staff, they will report this to Becci Garner or Marie Winnett at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Staff, are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgment and if they suspect abuse has, or is taking place, to report this.
- Full written records of all reported incidents will be produced and maintained. Information recorded will include full details of the alleged incident, details of all the parties involved, any evidence or explanations offered by interested parties, relevant dates, times and locations and any supporting information or evidence from members of staff. Whitchurch Pre - School will demonstrate great care in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents of child abuse.
- Becci Garner and Marie Winnett will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidentially.
- Staff will ensure that all concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Any children involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured.
- If an allegation of abuse is made against Becci Garner or Marie Winnett, the Chair of the Pre-School will be informed as soon as possible. The Chair will then assume responsibility for the situation. For further information, please refer to the Pre-School Complaints Policy.

In circumstances where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure, the member of staff concerned will:

1. Listen fully to all the child has to say
2. Make no observable judgment
3. Ask open questions that encourage the child to speak in their own words
4. Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone
5. Make no promises that cannot be kept, such as promising not to tell anybody what they are being told

Staff will be made aware of the Government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2015 and 'What do to if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for Practitioners'. Copies are available to all within the pre-school.

Recognising child abuse

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much less so. All staff will receive safeguarding training and will be vigilant to signs and evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect.

Physical abuse – is deliberately physically hurting another and may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- children with frequent injuries, or unexplained/unusual fractures or broken bones
- children with unexplained bruises or cuts, burns or scalds or bite marks.

Emotional abuse – is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects of the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to the children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of the other person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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 ill treatment of another. It may involve serious 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, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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 and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born it may involve a parent failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Female Genital Mutilation

The Children Act of 1989 places a duty on MASH to investigate such matters. As a registered Pre-School, we will follow the procedures set out by LSCB and will take guidance of MASH on further action or procedures to be followed.

Allegations of child abuse or neglect could lead to a criminal investigation so Whitchurch Pre-School will not do anything to jeopardise this, for example, ask a child leading questions or attempt to investigate allegations themselves. If initial clarification is needed or if requested by MASH, we may use open ended questions (T.E.D. tell me, explain to me, describe to me) but should be mindful that MASH and Police are responsible for child protection matters

If a case of child abuse is suspected the above procedure will be activated.

Peer on Peer Bullying

Staff at Whitchurch Pre-School help the children develop positive ways of relating to their peers. Helping children develop these skills can help to prevent behavioural patterns that escalate into more serious bullying behaviours later on. Whitchurch Pre-School staff encourage appropriate behaviour through role play, and role modeling. We will label feelings, discuss how children who get hurt might feel and talk about the difference between helping and hurting to help all children understand their behaviour.

Bullying can take many forms but there are three main types:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, shoving
- Verbal – name calling, threats, racist or homophobic remarks
- Emotional – isolating / leaving an individual out from activities or games, and the social

acceptance of their peer group

Whitchurch Pre-School staff will challenge inappropriate behaviour from children and adults. Any concerns regarding adults or children's behaviour will be reported and recorded, and as applicable, the above procedure will be activated.

Children with Additional Needs

Many factors can make a child who is disabled or with additional needs, more vulnerable to abuse than a child who is more able. Staff at Whitchurch Pre-School are particularly aware of their vulnerability, individuality and particular needs. Children may be especially vulnerable to abuse for a number of reasons. Some children may:

- Have fewer outside contacts than other children
- Receive intimate care from a larger number of carers
- Have communication difficulties that may make it difficult to tell others what is happening
- Be more vulnerable to bullying and intimidation, or more vulnerable to abuse by their peers

Whitchurch Pre-School staff take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. In addition to the usual indicators of abuse/neglect, the following behaviours must be considered:

- Force feeding
- Unjustified or excessive physical restraint
- Rough handling
- Misuse of medication, sedation and/or deliberate failure to follow medically recommended regimes
- Extreme behaviour modification including deprivation of food medication, or clothing
- Failure to address ill-fitting equipment i.e. callipers, aids

If a case of child abuse is suspected, the above procedures will be activated.

Our Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator is Marie Winnett, and further information can be found in our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy.

The Prevent Duty

The Prevent Duty is the way that agencies are working to prevent the radicalisation of children and young people.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. Staff will engage effectively with parents and other family members, as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation.

Indicators include children with a growing sense of isolation, low self esteem, becoming more argumentative or domineering in their views, searching for answer to questions about faith and belonging, or abnormal routines, etc. The list is not exhaustive and further information can be found at www.dorsetscb.co.uk/working-with-children/prevent

Whitchurch Pre-School staff will use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, seeking advice from MASH.

Social Media

Whitchurch Pre-School accepts the use of social media as a business tool to promote the setting, and as a social platform it's staff use and enjoy. However, the safeguarding of our children and young people remains paramount. Whitchurch Pre-School will request permission from parents and carers for children to be photographed and for those images to be used on either website or in social media.

All staff are required to manage their personal security settings, observe confidentiality and maintain a professionalism on social media. This includes refraining from discussing any issues relating to the Pre-School, avoiding any personal communication with the children and parents who attend the setting, and reporting any concerns breaches in our Social Media policy.

Staff should not accept service users, children and parents as 'friends'. If a staff member and family are friendly prior to the child coming to Whitchurch Pre-School, staff are required to inform the Manager prior to the child starting at the setting.

Further information is available on our Online Safety and Social Media Policy.

Staff training and support

Whitchurch Pre-School is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children through the provision of training and support to staff. Therefore Whitchurch Pre-School will ensure that:

- All staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children, whether received before or during their employment at Whitchurch Pre-School.
- All staff, students and volunteers are carefully recruited, have verified references and have full and up to date checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- All staff, are given a copy of the Safeguarding Children Policy and its procedures during their induction, and have its implications explained to them.
- All staff are provided with supervision and management support commensurate with their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children, and their requirement to maintain caring and safe relationships with children.
- All staff and volunteers receive regular training and supervision in safeguarding children and are provided with any relevant information and guidance.
- All staff are aware of the main indicators of abuse.
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements in respect of the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All staff, students and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the DSL. All staff, students and volunteers are aware of the need for confidentiality at this point.

Whitchurch Pre-School will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any investigation into allegations of abuse, consistent with its duties to protect the safety of the children and uphold fair processes for staff, students and volunteers.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, they may be suspended immediately to allow investigations to be carried out. Suspension of any member of staff may be considered necessary if:

- there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, or
- the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or
- the allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal

Ofsted will be notified of the allegation and of the action taken in respect of the allegation as soon as is reasonably practicable to do so but within 14 days of the allegation being made.

Any member of staff, a student or volunteer under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child, will be subject to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the pre-school because of misconduct relating to a child, Whitchurch Pre-School will notify the Independent Barring Board administrators so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.

Full LSCB guidance and procedures on Managing Allegations is found in "Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People 2015"

Code of conduct

Whitchurch Pre-School will ensure all staff understand the Pre-Schools policy and procedures on Safeguarding Children and have had appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring

- Every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when members of staff are left alone with a child. Students and volunteers (unless long-term and counted in the ratio) will **never** be left alone with a child. If staff are alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff should be informed.
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, student or volunteer, this will be recorded fully.
- Staff will never carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves. Where this is essential, staff will help a child whilst being accompanied by a colleague. Unless a child has a particular need, staff should not accompany children to the toilet. Staff are aware that this and other similar activities could be misconstrued.
- Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.
- All allegations made by a child against a member of staff will be fully recorded, including any actions taken. In the event of there being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.

Full LSCB guidance and procedures on a code of conduct for people working with children is found in "Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People 2015"

What could give you cause for concern?

The list is not exhaustive, but below are a few indicators, and/or possible signs and symptoms of abuse:

- Significant changes in children's behaviour
- Seductive behaviour
- Deterioration in their general well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse
- Neglect
- The comments children make which give cause for concern

It is important to remember that these signs and symptoms may be observed combined or individually. There may also be other reasons for the signs and symptoms.

Visitors Signing In Sheet

Whitchurch Pre-School asks all visitors to sign in on the daily register. It asks for time of arrival and departure. (Please refer to our Employment and staffing policy.)

Visitors including students who have not undergone these checks will be fully supervised and never left alone with children

Working with parents and carers

Whitchurch Pre-School believes in building a supportive and trusting relationship with its families, staff and volunteers. Parents/carer, staff and volunteers will be provided with a copy of this document when they join Whitchurch Pre-School this will explain in a clear way so as not to frighten, upset or accuse but to impress upon them the commitment to their child's well-being.

Parents/carers will be reassured that allegations against any member of staff of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported to LADO/MASH to investigate. The concern should be made to the Manager or the Manager is the subject of the allegation, directly to the LADO and Children’s Social Care.

At all times the child or young person's well-being comes first, we have the right to seek advice, regarding a concern they may have about a child, before discussing it with the child's parent. If the child is thought to be at risk of significant harm, a referral may be made to LADO and/or MASH without having first discussed it with the parent.

Follow on

If a concern or allegation is reported to any member of staff then a decision will be made regarding the next step which could be to discuss the concern with the parent/carer; take further advice; or to raise the concern with LADO. The MASH TEAM will advise me on necessary procedures, depending on the severity of the concern. The LADO may investigate if the concern has reached the threshold for this to be taken forward.

The LADO may hold an initial meeting with the setting, and offer advice and support to improve the care of the child.

Whitchurch Pre-School will continue to provide the best care for the child and work to support parents/carers in a confidential, non-judgmental manner.

Whistle Blowing

Everyone connected to our setting is aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding. Any such concerns should be raised with the Marie, Pre-School Manager or Committee Safeguarding Lead Helen Van der Plank hbrush@hotmail.co.uk. If your concern is about the Manager then please contact the Chairperson, LADO or Children’s Social Care. Please refer to our Whistle-blowing Policy.

This policy is reviewed annually, or as deemed necessary.

Policy reviewed and updated.....(date)

Signed.....