

St Margaret's Nursery and After School Club – Child Protection Policy

Statement of intent

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

The key commitments of St Margaret's Nursery policy for safeguarding children.

1. St Margaret's Nursery is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.
2. St Margaret's Nursery is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'¹ (DoH 2004).
3. St Margaret's Nursery is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Aims

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background;

promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;

promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;

helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults; and

working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

The legal framework for this work is:

Primary legislation

The Children Act 1989-s47

The Protection of Children Act 1999

Data Protection Act 1998

The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

The Children (NI) Order

The Children (Scotland) Order

Guidance

What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2004)

The Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and Their Families (2000)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 1999)

The Common Assessment Framework 2005

Kent and Medway Safeguarding children handbook 2007

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

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Liaison with other bodies

We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.

We have a copy of 'What to do if you a worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.

We contact our local officer, Alfifa Ali, 01227 284684 immediately to seek advice and guidance.

We notify the registration authority (Ofsted, 08456 404045) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.

Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.

If a referral is to be made to the local authority social services department, we act within the local Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting

Where and how to make a referral

If you think that a child or young person under the age of 18 years is being abused or neglected, you should inform the local office of your Social Services Department or the police. The telephone numbers of the Kent County Council and the Medway Council Social Services Department offices are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| • Ashford | 01233625233 |
| • Canterbury | 01277451741 |
| • Dartford | 01322277744 |
| • Dover | 01304204915 |
| • Gravesend | 01474 328 664 |
| • Sevenoaks and Swanley | 01322 611 000 |
| • Shepway | 01303253476 |
| • Swale | 01795473333 |
| • Thanet | 01843860000 |
| • Tonbridge & Mailing | 01732 362 442 |
| • Medway Council | 01634331640/1/2/3 |
| • Tunbridge Wells | 01892 515 045 |

These offices are open from Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 5.00pm. Outside of office hours and at weekends and public holidays, the emergency service should be contacted by telephoning 08457 247 100.

If you are a member of the public, you will be asked for your name and address and details of the child and the concerns you have. These are to help Social Services to make further enquiries and to contact you again if necessary. Information about your name and address will be treated as confidential. You will be informed if it is necessary to identify you if court proceedings are required to protect the child or to prosecute an abuser.

If you are a professional worker with information or concerns about a child or young person, you should inform your local Social Services office as above. In addition, you should also confirm your referral in writing as soon as possible. If you are in doubt about making a referral to Social Services, you should consult, within your agency, with the manager or practitioner with designated responsibility for child protection. If this is not possible or if you need further advice, you should consult with your local Social Services office.

Methods

Key Commitment 1

St Margaret's Nursery is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Staffing and volunteering

Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is **Isabel Gladstone**

After School Cub co- coordinator for child protection - Sarah Embleton

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

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 Criminal Records Bureau 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 abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.

Volunteers do not work unsupervised - Please see student policy.

We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.

We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- Please see Health and Safety policy

We take 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. - Please see Health and Safety policy

Where a staff member is absent for more than 3 months a new CRB check is carried out. Each staff member's CRB is recorded and kept in their individual files.

Our designated child protection officer attends safeguarding training every 2 years, all other staff receive training every 3 years.

All staff must read and understand our child protection policy and the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children handbook - they must sign to say this, staff review these documents annually.

Key Commitment 2

St Margaret's Nursery is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (DoH 2004.)

Method

Responding to suspicions of abuse

We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect.

When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.

Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person or the person the child has disclosed the information to makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the setting leader or manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored in a child's personal child protection file. This is kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office.

Staff in the setting take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff: offers reassurance to the child; listens to the child; and gives

reassurance that she or he will take action. The member of staff does not question the child.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- the child's name;
- the child's address;
- the age of the child;
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
- a body map is used to record any marks as appropriate;
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- the names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal 'child protection file.

The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication 'Child Protection Record' contains detailed procedures for this as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

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 this is not recommended by our area officer.

This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers, usually police and social services will inform parents.

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 Safeguarding Children board.

Support to families

The setting believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.

The setting makes clear to parents its 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 the local social services department.

The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.

We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the social services department in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation.

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee. These records are passed on to the child's next setting where possible. In this case they are handed directly to that settings designated person in a sealed marked envelope, a signature will be obtained to certify this and this will be kept for 25 years. All records are handed on regardless of the outcome of any incident or if the child's social services child protection file has been closed.

Where it is not possible to hand on a file, it is kept securely in the nursery filing cabinet for 25 years.

Allegations against staff

- if anyone makes an allegation against a staff member immediately inform Isabel Gladstone - our child protection officer
- If the allegation is against the above officer then go immediately to the chair of the nursery committee.
- The child protection officer will immediately contact their local children's officer **Alfifa Ali on 01227 284684**. Who will assess the situation. If the child protection officer is unavailable then the person can make the call themselves
- The child protection officer will make a factual report of the allegation by completing a allegations recording form.
- The child protection officer will not discuss proceedings with the member of staff concerned unless advised to do so.
- If the police or social services decide to undertake an investigation we will carry out our disciplinary procedure - see policy
- OFSTED will be informed within 14 days

All staff know that it is an offence not to report concerns about a member of staff that could place children at risk.

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.

We follow the guidance of the local Safeguarding Children board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.

We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

We immediately seek advice from our local officer, see above for additional guidance.

We refer any such complaint immediately to our LADO (local area designated officer) to investigate.

We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.

If necessary we will suspend the member of staff on full pay 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 children and families throughout the process. The decision to do so will be made by the chair of the committee and the designated officer only after seeking advice from the area officer.

Disciplinary action

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Key Commitment 3

St Margaret's Nursery is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Method

Training

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they

are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.

We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

Our designated child protection officer attends safeguarding training every 2 years, all other staff receive training every 3 years.

Planning

The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one to one situation without being visible to others.

We have a named member of staff responsible on a daily basis for ensuring nappy changing is carried out during the morning and afternoon sessions, The key person where possible changes their key children, they inform other staff members what they are doing and leave the bathroom door open to allow for privacy but visibility. They write in the changing record book of any nappy changes and inform parents of this.

Curriculum

We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be 'strong, resilient and listened to' and so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.

We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background. We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmental appropriate for the children.

Please refer to the following policies for further safeguarding:

Equality and diversity policy, Confidentiality policy, Staffing policy,
Electronic policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Held on (date)

Signed on behalf of the Management

Committee/ Proprietor

Allegation against a staff member:

- if anyone makes an allegation against a staff member immediately inform Isabel Gladstone - our child protection officer
- If the allegation is against the above officer then go immediately to the chair of the nursery committee.
- The child protection officer will immediately contact their area children's officer **Alfifa Ali on 01227 284684 or 07545423450 or Alfifa.Ali@kent.gov.uk**. Who will assess the situation. If the child protection officer is unavailable then the person can make the call themselves
- The child protection officer will make a factual report of the allegation by completing a allegations recording form.
- The child protection officer will not discuss proceedings with the member of staff concerned unless advised to do so.
- If the police or social services decide to undertake an investigation we will carry out our disciplinary procedure - see policy
- OFSTED will be informed within 14 days

All staff know that it is an offence not to report concerns about a member of staff that could place children at risk.