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**Safeguarding Children Policy**

**Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.**

**Statement of Intent**

Safeguarding children is, in essence, all about keeping children safe, secure, healthy and out of harm’s way. Every child deserves to feel secure and safe and indeed will learn most effectively when this is the case.

**Safeguarding Measures**

Early years settings like ours adhere to some excellent, pre-defined rules around the safeguarding and welfare of children. These must fall in line with several statutory Government directives along with the procedures set out by both the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership and the EYFS 21. They EYFS 21 states:

“Providers must be alert to any issues for concern in the child’s life at home or elsewhere. Providers must have and implement a policy and procedures to safeguard children.”

So the rules we follow are more far-reaching than simply keeping children safe at the nursery itself. The safeguarding measures we follow cover ways to watch out for abuse or maltreatment happening elsewhere, as well as setting guidelines for safeguarding at the nursery itself. When Ofsted makes visits to nurseries including ours, they will also be looking to ensure we follow all the safeguarding procedures effectively.

**Aims**

Our aims are to:

* Create an environment in our nursery which encourages children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
* Help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults;
* Encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
* Enable children to have the self-confidence and vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches; and
* Work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.
* To keep children safe during the COVID-19 19 pandemic following government guidelines.

**The legal framework for this work is:**

* The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
* The Children Act 2014
* Human Rights Act 1998
* Data Protection Act 2018
* The Protection of Children Act 1999
* Working Together to Safeguard Children Act 2021
* Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
* Childcare Act 2006 updated 2021
* Children and Social Work Act 2017

**Liaison with our bodies**

* We work within the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
* We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of children.
* We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child safeguarding issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in an emergency, for the nursery and social services to work well, together.
* Records of the local NSPCC contacts are also kept.
* If a report is to be made to the authorities, we act within the MASH guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child’s parents at the same time. If we feel that we are putting the child at more risk informing the parents of the referral then we will hold off. This will be added onto the referral and the reason will be stated.

**Nursery Procedures**

If any member of staff is concerned about a child, he or she must inform the Designated Safeguarding Leads. Information regarding concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on a safeguarding record sheet, signed and dated. The recording of the information must be accurate and factual.

**Childcare Professionals**

Any staff member who will have contact with children is checked for suitability, including enhanced criminal record and barred list checks (previously known as a ‘CRB’ check but now replaced by the Disclosure and Barring Service or ‘DBS’).

Toddlerz Day Nursery has two designated trained professionals who takes lead responsibility for the safeguarding of children. The lead persons also liaises with statutory local agencies and the LSCP. Ofsted will also check to ensure that the nursery is implementing the appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures when it visits periodically. So, there are multiple levels of safeguarding checks, by several independent professionals.

All childcare staff at the nursery are suitably trained to understand the safeguarding policies in place and know what to do if there are any concerns. Staff are also expected to keep and maintain records.

The nursery also, of course, ensures that staff members are suitably trained, qualified, experienced and supervised, with the requisite skills and knowledge needed for the job being undertaken. Our childcare professionals are also given ample opportunities for additional training and professional development, so that the quality of care continually improves, to the benefit of the children.

Toddlerz Day Nursery adheres to EYFS 21 staff to child ratios.

For children under two, there is at least one staff member for every three children.

For children aged two, there is at least one staff member for every four children.

For children aged three and over, there is at least one staff member for every eight children.

**Staffing and Volunteering**

* Our named person (our member of staff who coordinates child safeguarding issues is Mrs Shirley Chester and Miss Tanya Stirmey)
* 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 from 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 abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the nursery or has access to the children.
* Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
* We abide by the Ofsted requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employments, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child production concern.
* We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the nursery.
* We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the nursery so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
* Safer recruitment.
* In house training.

**The Key Person**

Every child is also allocated their own ‘Key Person’; a member of staff who is responsible for tailoring the learning and development programme to the needs of each individual child. Each Key Person also has a staff member buddy to ensure at least one person is always in setting to work directly with your child. Only the Key Person of the staff buddy of the Key Person will manage the personal care for your child. The Key Person also engages with parents or carers so that the learning and development programme is supported when the child is at home. There is also a safeguarding element to the children having their own Key Person as that staff member will keep a continuous eye on the child’s progress and wellbeing throughout their time with the nursery. In this way, the child should attain the very best outcome and achieve their own individual learning and development goals.

**Special Educational Needs & Disabilities**

Toddlerz Day Nursery has arrangements in place to support children with special educational needs (‘SEN’) and disabilities. With that in mind, the nursery also has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), who is also the Behavioural Co-ordinator (‘BECo’) for the setting.

**Medicines & Infections**

It goes without saying that staff at the nursery take precautions to stop the spread of any infections and that appropriate actions are taken if children become ill. This is more relevant than ever with the recent pandemic affecting the country so deeply.

Staff also have strict protocols in place in relation to the administering of any medicines prescribed by a doctor, nurse, pharmacist or dentist or over the counter medicines in their original boxes with clear dosage instructions. They will only be given, of course, with written permission of the parent or carer of the child involved. Staff involved are also suitably trained where any medical administration requires medical or technical knowledge. Written records are kept whenever medicines are given and the parent/carer(s) informed.

**Disciplinary Action**

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

**Training**

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the nursery 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 nursery.

**Planning**

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. If a child needs time away from the rest of the group, an appropriate adult will find a suitable area.

**Curriculum**

* We introduce key elements of safeguarding into our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, so that children can develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.
* We create within the nursery a culture of value and respect for the individual.
* We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is appropriate for the ages and stages of our children.

**Complaints**

* We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the nursery, which may include an allegation of abuse.
* We follow the guidance of the MASH team investigating any complaints that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child. This may be reporting to MASH or the designated officer for all safeguarding needs.
* We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of staff has abused a child as if it were an allegation of abuse by another person.
* Responding to suspicions of abuse.
* We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, sexual, peer on peer, child on child abuse, and neglect.
* When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour, or in their play. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where children’s play gives cause for concern, the nursery investigates.
* We allow investigation to be carried out with sensitivity. The child safeguarding officer (Mrs Shirley Chester) and /or Miss Stirmey will ensure that the staff member talking to the child does not influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.
* Children are never questioned alone
* Where a child shows signs and symptoms of ‘failure to thrive’ or neglect, we make appropriate referrals.
* Mrs Chester /Miss Stirmey keeps significant records of the child safeguarding children and their back grounds. These are kept in a locked filing cabinet and are only accessed by herself and the manager.
* Confidentiality is always paramount to these cases and they are dealt with care and consideration to the child’s wellbeing and safety.
* Toddlerz nursery’s first priority is the children’s safety and wellbeing

**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/he will take action.
* The member off staff informs the designated safeguarding lead immediately.
* The disclosure is recorded signed and dated and given to the DSL
* No photocopies of the disclosure are made by a member of staff
* Staff members are to respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and they are to not to repeat it to anyone other than the DSL and deputy Manager.
* The member of staff does not question the child.

**Injuries & Accidents**

Staff member are always available, whether at the nursery premises or accompanying children on outings, with a current Paediatric First Aid (‘PFA’) certificate. PFA training, relevant to the care of young children and babies as appropriate, is renewed every three years. The nursery also has its own official Medical Co-ordinator and a suitably equipped First Aid box is available and accessible at all times. Any accidents, injuries or treatments are recorded and parents/carers informed. The nursery would also follow strict Ofsted rules and protocols in the unlikely event of a serious accident or injury.

**Healthy Food & Drink**

Safeguarding is also about children’s health. With that in mind, the nursery serves only healthy, nutritious, balanced, meals, snacks and drinks. Food preferences, special dietary requirements and allergies are all catered for. Fresh drinking water is also available at any time. Food is prepared under strict, hygienic conditions, by people suitably trained in food hygiene. Oral health is an important part of a child’s daily routine, we encourage teeth brushing and have a children’s dentist visit our setting whenever possible to support this.

**A Safe Environment**

The nursery itself does, of course, fall under the general Health & Safety rules. As such, it is always fit for purpose and subject to all the health, safety, hygiene and fire safety precautions that one would expect and, indeed, are a legal requirement of such premises. The nursery maintains the appropriate insurance policies too.

With regard to being fit for purpose, the premises and equipment are supplied in accordance with suitability for the age groups using them, i.e. babies and young children. This applies in both indoor and outdoor areas where children play. Risk assessments are undertaken in order to identify areas that may require measures to be put in place or where items need, for instance, to be maintained. This applies to outings too.

We have a proactive approach to safety, rather than a reactive one.

Emergency evacuation procedures are also in place in the event of a fire or other emergency. Emergency exits are also clearly identified and kept free of obstacles. In the case of fire, the nursery has appropriate detection and control mechanisms in place and these are regularly maintained to ensure that they are in working order at all times. We maintain regular fire drills to ensure our staff and children are familiar with the procedures.

Sleeping babies and children are monitored and regularly checked.

In regard to children leaving the premises, further strict protocols are also in place at the nursery.

These include not allowing children to go outside or leave the premises unsupervised and, when it’s time for children to go home, rules that only allow them to be picked up by individuals that have been agreed with parents. This is achieved through a password system if parents or carers have arranged for someone else to pick children up. The staff at the nursery will check both the ID of that person and accuracy of the password before the child in question is released from the nursery.

The nursery also takes serious steps to prevent unauthorised people from entering the premises, with protocols in place to identify anyone that does visit. The nursery has CCTV in place indoors and outdoors as well as at the main entrance.

Childcare providers like Toddlerz Day Nursery are also expected to keep and maintain records. This includes obtaining and/or confidential sharing of information with parents or carers and, if appropriate and when required to do so, with other professionals who work with the child including social services, the police and Ofsted if applicable. Records are kept secure, of course, and information is only shared with those who have a legal right to see it. The two-way flow of information, when appropriate, is designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and the smooth, efficient and appropriate running of the nursery itself.

**Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

Staff make a record of:

* The child’s name;
* The child’s address;
* The date of birth 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;
* The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with time and date; and
* The names of any person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and given to the DSL who then keeps it in a separate confidential file.

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 the guidance of the local MASH team does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform the 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 NSCP

**Support to families**

* The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
* The nursery continues to welcome the child and the 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 parent or those who have a parental responsibility for the child only if appropriate under the guidance of the NSCP
* With the provision that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child’s family.

Telephone Number: The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0300 126 7000

Signed on behalf of the Nursery

Date

Created September 2014

Reviewed Annually

Sept 15, 16, 17, 18,

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