

Meppershall Pre-school

Safeguarding the Welfare of Children / Child Protection Policy

Statement of intent

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

Aims

Our aims are to:

- Create an environment in our setting that is safe and secure for all children.
- Enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Encourage children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence
- Work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism by having due regard for the Prevent Duty (June 2015) and by promoting British Values.

In order to fulfil these aims

- All staff receive training in Safeguarding Children / Child Protection every two years, with Safeguarding Lead, deputy and third nominated person also completing Safeguarding Lead training
- On registration the legal guardian/s will log a password to be used if anyone else is collecting their child from the setting.
- We follow the guidelines laid down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- We have a copy of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' available for staff to use if required and for parents to see if they wish, along with other government publications such as 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused- a summary', 'Information sharing' and 'Prevent Duty'.
- All members of staff know the Setting's procedures for recording and reporting incidents.
- In consultation with parents/carers we are able to refer children for additional help through the Early Help Assessment (EHA). We do this with the support of other professionals and the Early Help Team
- We notify OFSTED of any incident or accident that affects the well-being of children and any action taken, within 14 days of the incident.
- We have procedures for contacting the Central Bedfordshire Children's Services on child protection issues.
- If a report is to be made to the authorities, we take advice from the Access and Referral Team in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.
- We promote British Values throughout the pre school by respecting the following; democracy, the role of the law, individual liberty and mutual respect, as well as tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

How we ensure that Children are safe and protected

Staffing and volunteering

- **Tamsin Wiseman is our Safeguarding Lead and the first point of contact, Andrea Gardiner is our Deputy Safeguarding Lead, and in the event that neither**

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Tamsin or Andrea are available our third nominated Safeguarding professional is Louise Woodcock. At least one member of the Safeguarding Team will be available at the setting at all times and have overall responsibility for issues concerning safeguarding the welfare of children.

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- All staff have a duty to maintain the well-being of children in their care.
- 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 with lists DBS checks and take up two references 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.
- Current and prospective staff are informed that they must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children whether received before or during employment
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the Setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA) requirements 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 safeguarding children concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- 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.
- Staff members are not allowed to carry their mobile phones with them or wear 'smart watches' or other mobile photographic devices. All mobile phones will be stored in the designated area, and are for emergency use only. Cameras on mobile phones / photographic devices must not be used. (See also Photography and Mobile Phone Policy)

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 Ofsted, the LSCB and if required the DBS. We are under a legal duty of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 to notify the DBS of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to vulnerable children can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Please also see our allegations against a member of staff policy and procedure.

Training

All of our staff have received training on Safeguarding Children issues through local authority approved providers and through our comprehensive induction procedure. 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, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation as well as awareness of inappropriate staff behaviour. They are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. We ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting. Our designated officer has specific training on multi-agency working, making a referral to the Channel programme as part of the prevent duty because a child is at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Planning

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group either for their own safety or for the safety of others, ie; on a 'time out' they will always remain in the main room and in full view of other staff and children.

Curriculum

- We create within the Setting 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.
- We introduce key elements of child protection into our planning so that children can develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe (e.g. Stranger Danger, Road Safety and Personal Safety).
- We use available materials for young children taking account of information in the Early Years Foundation Stage Practice Guidance that support and promote children to be strong, resilient, listened to and valued.

Complaints

- 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 have a procedure on Allegations made against a member of staff.
- We notify Ofsted and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) team when we receive an allegation made about a member of staff, in line with our procedure.
- We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.

If we suspect abuse

- We will always seek and follow guidance from the access and Referral Hub and Social Services.
- Staff are fully aware that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, verbal, sexual and neglect. Children can also be at risk of child sexual exploitation and radicalisation.
- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, sexual 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, we will seek support and advice.
- We allow investigations to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff in the Setting take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.
- Where a child shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive' or neglect, we make appropriate referrals. We seek permissions before making a referral unless by seeking this permission we put a child at risk.
- We work co-operatively with the parent unless this is inconsistent with the need to ensure the child's safety.
- All concerns are recorded.

Disclosures made to us

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff records the disclosure and:

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- Offers reassurance to the child;
- Listens to the child; and
- Gives reassurance that she/he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child – the golden rule is to let children ‘Tell you’. ‘Explain’ and ‘Describe’. Never promise to keep a secret and never question what a child has told you.

Recording and Reporting suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff will make a record of:

- The child’s name, address, date of birth.
- 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 the date and time
- The names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed, dated, and kept in a separate confidential file.

The member of staff will discuss the incident with the leader and a decision will be made about who should be notified. Other staff members will not be informed of the incident or disclosure unless deemed necessary by the Safeguarding team. If a child’s safety is at risk, the Access and Referral Team will be contacted immediately. We will take advice from them and follow the course of action agreed.

In a case where a child is not in immediate danger, we try to discuss the matter with parent before making any referrals. However, it is the welfare of the child that is paramount and this is at the forefront of all our actions. We are aware that many children have suffered because of a lack of communication between agencies and that government guidance now encourages the full sharing of information. We shall therefore use our professional judgement in sharing information with these agencies that ‘need to know’, being open and honest with parents and children as to why we feel we need to share the information.

Full records of conversations will be maintained when referrals or discussions are held with any other agencies or with parents prior to a referral. These records will include dates and times of the conversation, who we speak to, and the advice we were given.

Informing Parents

We will always aim to involve parents / carers in any referrals before they are made. However, if a suspicion of abuse is recorded, and the child is considered at risk an immediate referral will be made to the Central Bedfordshire Children’s Services Access and Referral Team and we will take their advice on informing parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. If there are concerns within the Setting, it is important that the Leader is made aware of them. However, children will work with a number of different adults in the Setting and they should be made aware that there are concerns about an aspect of well-being of the child in question. Any information shared with external agencies is done under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- The Setting takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The Setting 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 parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child only if appropriate under the guidance of Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- With the proviso 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.

Childrens Act Regulations

- You must keep a statement of the arrangements in place for the protection of each child, including arrangements to safeguard children from abuse or neglect and the procedures to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse or neglect.

-You must notify Ofsted about any allegations of serious harm or abuse against a child while the child is in your care.

We are all responsible for Safeguarding children and young people in our community. If at any time you think someone is at risk of harm, dial 999 for the police

To report a concern or get advice please ring:

Central Bedfordshire Children's Services Access and Referral Team: 0300 300 8585

Out of office hours: 0870 238465

LADO: 0300 300 4833

Useful Numbers

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

NSPCC 24 Hour Helpline: 0808 800 5000