



## Strawberry hill Preschool

### Safeguarding children and Child Protection Policy

Strawberry hill Preschool is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'Working together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' (HMG March 2015). This publication can be located in the office.

At Strawberry Hill Preschool we will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are defined as protecting children from maltreatment: preventing the impairment of children's health or development and ensuring that children are provided with safe and effective care

To this end we will do the following:

- 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
- Take action quickly and responsibly in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children procedures and statutory guidance if we have a concern about a child
- Work as part of a multi- agency team in the best interests of the child
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times
- 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 i.e. bullying, racism and discriminatory behaviour
- Ensure parents are fully aware of child 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 this policy, with staff and parents as appropriate.

#### Contact telephone numbers

#### Ofsted

Phone: 0300 123 4666

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

## **SPA - Single Point of Access**

Call 020 8547 5008 from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday,

or 020 8770 5000 out of hours

Email: SPA@richmond.gov.uk or complete the on-line referral form.

Local specialist Police child protection team - 0208 247 6331.

[NSPCC](#) - 0808 800 5000 to speak in confidence, or text anonymously to 88858.

## **Procedures**

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the key commitments of the EYFS Statutory Framework.

- Our designated people who co-ordinate child protection issues are Rowena Brimacombe - Senior Educational Manager, Hayley Wood – Preschool Manager, Lisa Neagle - Business Manager and Jo Meier – Deputy Safeguarding Officer and Nursery Practitioner.
- All staff are inducted into the setting including the Safeguarding procedures.
- Staff details are kept up to date and an annual Disqualification by Association declaration is made to confirm that staff do not live or work in the same household as someone who is barred from working with children or young people, even if they would not otherwise be disqualified themselves.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Applicants are informed of the need to check existing DBS certificates or carry out enhanced disclosure checks with the Disclosure & Barring Service to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We request two references from previous employers for any new member of staff.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We follow the procedures set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances relating to child protection that would otherwise have led to dismissal.
- We have procedures for recording the details of any visitor to the setting
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes in to the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children. We will take action if a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or staff observe signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as a significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being or unexplained bruising.

**If a child discloses abuse:**

- the adult will reassure the child and listen without interrupting
- Staff will not promise confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept.
- The child will be allowed to talk openly and that disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth.
- Staff will offer reassurance and assurance that he or she will take action;
- Staff will not question the child
- Staff will write an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
  1. the date and time of the observation or disclosure,
  2. the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible
  3. an objective description of the child's emotional state and body language
- The matter will be referred to SPA

**If staff observe a sign or indication of potential abuse**

- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report
- Staff will record the type and position of injury on a body map
- The observed instances will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding co-ordinator and deputy manager
- The matter will be referred to SPA
- An Early Help Assessment may be completed

**In general:**

- We record all cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries
- Unusual childhood injuries are always logged and discussed with the nursery manager
- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come in to nursery or occur during time at 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 we have any concerns regarding the injury, the SPA team will be notified.

**Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosure**

Staff should make an objective record, supported by the nursery manager or Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator, of any observation or disclosure and include:

- Child's name
- Child's Address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the 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 reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent (s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this; the deputy manager and the DSCO, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

### **Informing parents**

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 SPA team does not allow this. **If the child is deemed to be at immediate risk of injury we will keep the child at nursery until the statutory services arrive.** This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

### **Allegations against staff**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers 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, within the setting, or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We will respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken or is taking place, by removing this adult from contact with the children.
- We will immediately contact the SPA.
- We will report any alleged incident to Ofsted and outline the measures we have taken.
- We will co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.

- Where the Director and statutory services agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, they will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, 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 the children and families throughout the process.
- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting because of misconduct relating to a child, statutory services will decide whether to notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority so that their name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.

Strawberry hill Preschool & Pre-school is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for all practitioners. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their rights to be strong, resilient and listened to.

- 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 support children to develop an understanding of how to keep safe.
- We create a culture of value and respect for the individual and have positive regard for children's ethnicity, culture and language.
- We are aware that children can be abused by other children and that children with SEN are statistically more at risk of abuse due than other children.

### **Confidentially**

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. Staff will not make any comments either publicly or in private about a parent's or staff's supposed or actual behaviour.

### **Support to families**

- We believe in building trusting supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our 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 statutory services.
- We will continue 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 child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.

Strawberry Hill Preschool has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the Director at the earliest opportunity.

## Prevent Duty

Strawberry Hill Preschool has due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. We will therefore:

- Assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism
- Demonstrate that we are protecting children from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies
- Train staff to give them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism
- Ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet.

The Prevent duty defines terminology relating to terrorism as:

**Radicalisation:** *'the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism'*

**Extremism:** *'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.'*

## Categories of Abuse

Sexual

Physical

Emotional

Neglect

Domestic

At Strawberry Hill Preschool we recognise that domestic violence as a category of abuse and understand that a child witnessing family violence is at risk of:

- Behavioural and emotional difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Long-term developmental problems
- Aggressive language and behaviour
- Restlessness, anxiety and depression

## FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

FGM is child abuse and against the law. It causes serious physical and emotional harm.

Professionals who are worried a child is at risk can call the FGM helpline on **0800 028 3550**.

Families who practice FGM don't think of it as abuse. We need to give families advice and information that is sensitive to their culture and beliefs, but we need to make clear that FGM is illegal.

If a local authority has reason to believe a child is likely to suffer FGM it can apply for a court order to prevent the child being taken abroad for mutilation. This should be to prevent the child from undergoing FGM rather than removing her from her family.

From October 2015, the FGM Act 2003 (as amended by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) introduced a mandatory reporting duty for all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales.

We will make a report to the police, if, in the course of our duties:

- we are informed by a girl under the age of 18 that she has undergone an act of FGM
- we observe physical signs that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18

## **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

CSE is recognised as a category of sexual abuse. Children under school age are unlikely to be exploited but Strawberry Hill Preschool will work with statutory agencies as required if a child in one of our families is being exploited in this way.

The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People defines sexual exploitation as:

“Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child Sexual Exploitation can occur through use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain.

In all cases, those exploiting the child / young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and / or economic or other resources.

Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability”

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