

## **SECTION 1: Child Protection**

### ***1. Safeguarding***

#### ***Safeguarding Children 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. Blakeney Pre-school is committed to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children.

##### **Aims**

- To raise awareness of child protection issues.
- To create and maintain an environment at Blakeney Pre-school that is both safe and secure for all children and one in which they can learn and develop.
- To encourage children to develop a positive self-image that includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious and cultural beliefs, their social background and any disabilities that they might have.
- To enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- To encourage children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- To encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- To work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.

##### **In order to fulfil these aims**

##### **Abuse descriptors**

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2006) defines four kinds of child abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.

##### **Identifying abuse**

We recognise that because of the regular contact with children, pre-school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. Blakeney Pre-school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that they can approach the playroom staff if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

## Signs of abuse

Staff and volunteers will remain vigilant for possible signs of abuse:

- significant changes in children's behaviour;
- deterioration in children's general well-being;
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- children's comments which give cause for concern;
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home; and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

If concerns are identified the Procedure will be implemented.

## Staffing and volunteers

Blakeney Pre-school is committed to Safer Recruitment. Please see our [Staffing and Recruitment Policy](#)

- We have a named person, the Designated Safeguarding (Child Protection) Officer, who coordinates Safeguarding Children issues. Currently this is Rachael Thomas. Our Deputy DCPO is Cathy Rowlands. They refer to the LIVE version of the Designated Child Protection Officer handbook for guidance. [www.gscb.org.uk/handbook](http://www.gscb.org.uk/handbook)
- All staff receive training in Safeguarding Children with update training every three years. The training of the designated member of staff is updated every two years.
- **Our management team member responsible for child protection issues is.**
- The identities of the staff and management team members with responsibility for child protection are in the staff Child Protection Policy file.
- 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 are aware of the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting. (See [Procedure to be followed if there is concern about the welfare of a child](#)).
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- All staff have a duty to maintain the wellbeing 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 obtain DBS checks that evidence of their relevant qualifications will be obtained, and that relevant references are taken up before posts can be confirmed. They will also have a trial session so they can be assessed in the workplace prior to a job offer being made.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information. Please see our [Staffing and Recruitment Policy](#)
- [No staff member will work unsupervised with children where a DBS check is in the process of being obtained](#)

- We abide by OfSTED requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the setting or has unsupervised access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- 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 (see [Premises and Security](#)).
- All staff members and volunteers are required to read and follow the document "Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children." This document can be found in the staff Child Protection Procedures file.
- If concerns are raised about a staff member or volunteer in relation to child protection issues we follow the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Boards Allegations Management Procedure. Details can be found in the staff Child Protection Procedures file and a summary in this document Procedure
- If a member of staff or volunteer is dismissed from the setting or leaves the setting because of a concern about behaviour towards children they will be referred to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). OfSTED will be informed and, in the event of disqualification, information provided as detailed in the EYFS.

## **Curriculum and environment**

- 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 ensure the children are made to feel secure, encouraged to talk and are listened to. Staff are approachable.
- We include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse. We introduce key elements of safeguarding children into our foundation stage curriculum, or activity planning so that children can develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe (e.g. Stranger Danger, Road Safety).
- The layout of the room allows for constant supervision.

## **Supporting Abused Children**

- We would support children who have been abused, in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
- We would notify the relevant social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a child who has a Child Protection Plan
- We would develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection conferences and core groups.
- We would liaise with other agencies that support the child such as social care, child mental health services, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- We would ensure that, where a pupil who has a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the school/pre-school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

## **Support**

- We have a staff Child Protection file available for staff to use if required . We notify OfSTED of any incident or accident which affects the wellbeing of children.

- We have procedures for contacting the local authority's 'Front Door' to discuss concerns regarding a child's welfare (this will not necessarily involve identifying the child in question).
- If a report is to be made to the authorities, we take advice from the 'Front Door'.
- See Procedure

## 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 in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member](#).
- We have a general [Complaints Procedure](#).
- We notify OfSTED and the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) 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.

## Disclosures made to us

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

- Offers reassurance to the child.
- Listens to the child.
- Gives reassurance that action will be taken.

The member of staff does not question the child – the golden rule is to observe and listen but not to probe.

## Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.
- If there are concerns within a setting it is important that the Pre-School Leader and DCPO are made aware of them. However children will work with a number of different adults in a setting and they should also 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 'Front Door'.

## 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 the 'Front Door'.
- 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.

## Supporting Legislation

Protection of Children Act 1999  
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

## Contacts

Gloucestershire Children and Families Front Door which is open from 9am to 5pm:

Telephone: 01452 426565

Email: [childrenhelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:childrenhelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Outside of office hours, we contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) Telephone: 01452 61 4194 or, if we have concerns about the immediate safety of the child or we believe a serious criminal offence has been committed we contact the Police at any time on 101.

In Gloucestershire the LADO is **Nigel Hatten**, who is supported by Tracy Brooks and Jenny Kadodia, the Allegations Management Co-Ordinators, for general Allegation Management advice we contact either Tracy or Jenny on 01452 426320.

OfSTED 0300 123 1231

The LIVE version of the Designated Child Protection Officer handbook should be used for guidance. [www.gscb.org.uk/handbook](http://www.gscb.org.uk/handbook)

## ***Procedure to be followed if there is concern about the welfare of a child***

- The LIVE version of the Designated Child Protection Officer handbook should be used for guidance. [www.gscb.org.uk/handbook](http://www.gscb.org.uk/handbook)
- 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, the setting investigates.
- We allow investigation 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 through the questions that they ask.
- Where a child shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive' or neglect, we make appropriate referrals. We seek parent's 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
- During this process, staff will seek to discuss their concerns with the child and with the parents in an appropriate manner.
- Staff will seek the agreement of parents in making a referral, unless it is considered that doing so will increase the risk of harm to the child.

### **If there is concern about the welfare of a child, the following steps should be taken:**

1. **Discuss the concerns with the Pre-School Leader and DCPO.** The Pre-School Leader may then include other colleagues in the discussion in order to build a clearer picture of the circumstances surrounding the concerns. The Pre-school Leader may also wish to draw on the advice of colleagues in other agencies (particularly the 'Front Door'). This consultation will not necessarily involve identifying the child in question.
2. **A written record will be made of the concerns** in diary form and kept in the locked play leader's cupboard away from the main child files. The following information will be stored:
  - The child's name, address and date of birth.
  - The date and time of the observation or the disclosure.
  - An objective record of the observation or disclosure, including photos of any injuries if deemed appropriate.
  - The exact words spoken by the child.
  - The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time.
  - The names of any other person present at the time.
  - A signature from the staff member taking down the observations.
3. In a case where a child is not in immediate danger we try to **discuss the matter with parents** before making any referrals. However it is the welfare of the child which is paramount and this is at the forefront of all our actions. We are aware that many children have suffered because of 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 the agencies that 'need to know', being open and honest with parents and children as to why we feel we need to share the information.

4. If concerns persist, **a referral will be made**. The Designated Child Protection Officer will handle this (currently Rachael Thomas). The referral will be made to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board via the 'Front Door'.
5. When a referral is made, the person receiving the referral will agree, with the designated member of staff, exactly **what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when**. Full records of conversations will be maintained when any 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.
6. **Gloucestershire child protection procedures will then be followed**. The full procedures can be found in the staff Child Protection Procedure file which can be found in the playleaders cupboard.
7. If there are worries that concerns are not being addressed then the 'resolution of professional disagreements in work relating to the safety of children (escalation policy)' will be followed. This procedure document can be found in the Child Protection Procedure file.

Please note that it is still possible, as part of your professional assessment of vulnerable children, to check to see if a child is subject to a child protection plan. This can be done through the **'Front Door' on 01452 42 6565 or out of hours duty team 01452 614194**

The LIVE version of the Designated Child Protection Officer handbook should be used for guidance. [www.gscb.org.uk/handbook](http://www.gscb.org.uk/handbook)

### ***Procedure in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff***

- The LIVE version of the Designated Child Protection Officer handbook should be used for guidance. [www.gscb.org.uk/handbook](http://www.gscb.org.uk/handbook)
- It is recognised that whilst Setting staff are uniquely placed to detect signs and indicators of child abuse, they are themselves particularly vulnerable to malicious or misplaced allegations made by children either deliberately or innocently, arising from normal association with them within the setting. They may also be perpetrators of abuse.

- When a child makes an allegation of abuse by a member of staff, the person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and deal with it by informing both the Pre-School Leader (if the allegation is not against that person), DCPO(if the allegation is not against that person)and the Management Committee. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

## **What to do when an allegation is made**

The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board guidance on 'Allegations Management' and a 'Summary of Allegations Management Procedures' can be found in the Staff Child Protection Procedures file. The documents 'What to do if you have an allegation of abuse made against you' (gscb) can be found in this file.

- If an allegation is made against an employee of or volunteer at Blakeney Pre-school, the Pre-School Leader, DCPO and the Management team should be informed.
- The following action should then be taken:
  1. The member of staff against whom the allegation is made should immediately be suspended.
  2. A written record of the nature and circumstances surrounding the concern should be made.
  3. Immediate Contact should be made with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and their guidance followed.
  4. OfSTED should be notified immediately, unless this action is advised against by the LADO.
  5. The other Management Committee members should also be informed that an allegation has been made although minimal details provided.
  6. No discussions are to be held at this stage with the member of staff concerned.
- The LADO and OfSTED will advise further on the action that the setting should now take with regard to the member of staff.
- The setting may talk to the member of staff concerned and provide a copy of the leaflet 'What to do if you have an allegation of abuse made to you 'but should not interview the child until OfSTED and the LADO say to do so. The Disciplinary Procedure will be followed.
- If the allegation relates to the Pre-School Leader, the Chair, DCPO and next most senior member of staff must follow the procedure listed above.
- Confidentiality should be maintained throughout this matter, in order that any subsequent investigation is not prejudiced.

## **Setting staff**

- Staff cannot promise total confidentiality to children since they must inform the Pre-School Leader, DCPO and the Management Committee of any allegation(as above).
- Staff must make a written note of the allegation/concerns including a note of anyone else witnessing the incident. Witnesses should also make a record, these will be signed and dated.

- Staff will only establish what the child is saying and will not interview the child about the allegation.
- Staff who have any reason to suspect that a child may have been abused by another member of staff, must immediately inform the Pre-School Leader, DCPO and the Management team.

### **Third parties**

- Where suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child attending Blakeney Pre-school and involving members of setting staff are received by a person outside the group e.g. social worker, Police, by a parent, relative or family friend, then the Pre-School Leader, DCPO and Chair of the Management Committee should be informed as soon as possible and above procedure should be followed. The person to whom the allegation has been made may already have contacted OfSTED and/or the LADO.
- In the event of a third party hearing the allegation the setting will
  1. Obtain details of the allegation in writing, signed and dated by the person who received the allegation (not the child who is the subject of the allegation).
  2. Record any information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses.
  3. Establish whether OfSTED and the LADO have been informed about the allegation.
  4. Follow the main procedure outlined above.

### **Possible outcomes**

Following completion of the investigation by OfSTED and the LADO there will be four possible courses of action:

<b>Criminal</b>	OfSTED and LADO will decide if there sufficient evidence to carry forward a prosecution of the member and if so will involve the police directly.
<b>Disciplinary</b>	OfSTED and the LADO may determine that there is not sufficient evidence to press a criminal, but there may nevertheless be issues which require that disciplinary action is taken via the Setting's disciplinary guidelines. Please see Disciplinary
<b>Training</b>	The investigations may indicate that the allegation was unfounded but the case may well have shown that there are issues of training and performance amongst staff which need to be dealt with by additional staff training.
<b>Safeguarding Children</b>	There may be other outstanding Safeguarding Children issues which do not involve the member of staff concerned but which OfSTED and LADO deem need to be dealt with via Safeguarding Children procedures.

- If a member of staff or volunteer is dismissed from the setting or leaves the setting because of a concern about behaviour towards children they will be referred to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)
- Where the allegation has been found to be without basis, OfSTED and the LADO will write to the setting summarising the outcome of the investigation.

## Records

- Where an allegation has been found to be unfounded a summary of the allegation and subsequent investigation should be kept on the setting's Confidential Safeguarding Children file. Where disciplinary action has been taken, however, documents relating to the investigation should be retained, together with a written record of the investigation, on the member of staff's Personal and Confidential File.

## Contact details

### Contacts

OfSTED 0300 123 1231

for general Allegation Management advice, we will contact either Tracy or Jenny on 01452 426320.

The LIVE version of the Designated Child Protection Officer handbook should be used for guidance. [www.gscb.org.uk/handbook](http://www.gscb.org.uk/handbook)

### **Appendix to Safeguarding Policy - Prevent Duty**

From 1 st July 2015 all schools, registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

Here at Blakeney Pre-school we take Safeguarding very seriously, therefore to ensure that we adhere to and achieve the Prevent duty we will;

\*Provide appropriate training for staff as soon as possible. Part of this training will enable staff to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation

\*We will build the children’s resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views (for early years providers the statutory framework for the EYFS sets standards for learning, development and care for children from 0-5, thereby assisting their personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world)

\*We will assess the risk, by means of a formal risk assessment, of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology

\*We will ensure that our staff understand the risks so that they can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way

\*We will be aware of the online risk of radicalisation through the use of social media and the internet

\*As with managing other safeguarding risks, our staff will be 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). The Key Person approach means we already know our

key children well and so we will notice any changes in behaviour, demeanour or personality quickly

\*We will not carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but we will take action when we observe behaviour of concern. The key person approach means that we already have a rapport with our families so we will notice any changes in behaviour, demeanour or personality quickly

\*We will work in partnership with our LSCB for guidance and support

\*We will build up an effective engagement with parents/carers and families. (This is important as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation)

\*We will assist and advise families who raise concerns with us. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms

\*We will ensure that our DSO's will undertake Prevent awareness training (as a minimum) so that they can offer advice and support to other members of staff

### **Early Help and Support**

Early help is about providing support to potentially vulnerable children, young people and their families as soon as problems begin to emerge or when there is a strong likelihood that problems will start in the future. It is also about providing support at any and every stage of a child's life; pre-birth, during pregnancy, childhood or adolescence.

Children and families are entitled to early help if and when they need it. It may also be provided through an increase in the levels of universal services, or services provided or commissioned in localities.

As part of our Early Help offer we will -

- Provide parent information on various parenting subjects – these are available on the ramp, via face book, Whatsapp and Tapestry and can be photocopied if required.
- Be available to speak to any parent if they have any worries or concerns either face to face, via the telephone, email or Whatsapp.
- Offer any support needed, or refer on to an appropriate organisation.
- Involve parents and carers with all aspects of their child's early years care and education.
- Identify any child with signs of developmental delay, and put plans into place at an early stage to ensure the best outcomes for the child.

