Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential; this is set out in the five outcomes that are Key to children and young people’s well-being, namely;

- Staying safe
- Being healthy
- Enjoying and achieving
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

If children are denied the opportunity and support they need to achieve these outcomes, children are at increased risk not only of an impoverished childhood, but also of disadvantage and social exclusion in adulthood. Abuse or neglect pose particular problems.

Any member of staff who has cause for concern that a child may be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm must refer the matter to their Local Authority Safeguarding Team and adhere to the Safeguarding Guidelines and Procedures issued by the Local Authority and ensure OFSTED are advised in line with regulations. Blue Bell Woods nursery recognise its duty to the children, parents/carers and staff to act quickly without delay and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention.

Our commitment to the protection of children

As a registered childcare provider we have a legal and moral obligation to ensure that the welfare of the children in our care is treated as paramount. In order to do this we will liaise with Children’s Social Care Department, Safeguarding Authority, Police or any other agencies in order to protect a child. We aim to work with and discuss with parents any concerns that we may have. However, there are occasions when this would not be appropriate and on those occasions we will take the necessary action without discussion with parents/carers. A referral to Children’s Social Care Department is not an accusation, but is the sharing of a concern. Children’s Social Care Department can offer advice and support to families.

How and under what circumstances parents will be informed about any concerns and actions taken and how confidentiality will be managed

In the vast majority of incidences parents will be informed immediately or when they collect their children unless the allegation or concern is of a sexual nature or it is considered that this may put the child in immediate danger.

- In an open and informative way
- Being fair and non-judgemental
- In a helpful way with appropriate advice
- Making the procedure clear for child and all others
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The Safeguarding Children Policy seeks to:

• Ensure any identified or suspected abuse is reported to the appropriate authorities including the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer.
• Ensure that children are never placed at risk whilst in the care of the Nursery Staff.
• Ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained.
• Ensure that all staff are familiar with Safeguarding children issues and procedures.
• Regularly review and update this policy, annually as a minimum and in line with new legislation and government guidance.
• This policy follows the statutory guidance of the publication. ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children and is accessible in the nursery along with other national and local underpinning documents.

General Procedure

Should any member of staff have concerns for the welfare of any child they will:

• Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer on duty (See the noticeboard for list of officers – includes the Managing Director/Manager.

As soon as possible and in any event no later than by the end of that working day make accurate records of their observations and of anything said to them by the child or others in connection with the suspected abuse.

• Always listen to the child and act on the information given
• Whenever a child reports that they are suffering or have suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect, or have caused or causing physical or sexual harm to others, the initial response from all professionals should be limited to listening carefully to what the child says to:
  • Clarify the concerns
  • Offer re-assurance about how the child will be kept safe
  • Explain what action will be taken

• However, it should be explained to the child that whilst their view will be taken into account, the professional has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child’s safety and the safety of other children.
• Do NOT Interrogate the child; simply repeat the child’s words to confirm that they have been heard correctly.
• Manager/Designated Safeguarding Officer to inform Managing Director, to discuss the concern, gather information and complete a referral form then make referral.
• The child must not be pressed for information, led or cross-examined or given false assurances of absolute confidentiality, as this could prejudice police investigations, especially in cases of sexual abuse.
• If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to LA children’s social care, they should be asked their view.
• Keep records in a secure place accessible only by designated staff
• Manager/Senior Officer in charge to keep Managing Director up to date with information, progress and actions

If no further action to be taken then gather information and discuss with the parents, all information gathered should be kept with the child’s records.
If action is to be taken complete a Safeguarding Referral form and make a referral.
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Where available, the following should be provided with the referral (but absence of information should not delay referral):

- Full name, date of birth and gender of child
- Family address
- Identity of those with parental responsibility
- Names, date of birth and gender of all household members
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of child/children and parents
- Any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication
- Any special needs of child/children
- Any significant/important recent events/incidents in child’s or family’s life
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their source, timing and location
- Action to be taken at the time and subsequent action taken
- Maintain confidentiality
- Advise OFSTED in line with regulatory requirements

It will be noted that:

- It is NOT the responsibility of any member of staff to investigate the suspected abuse.
- Any investigation can only be investigated by the Local Authority
- The Blue Bell Woods Day Nursery staff member with designated Safeguarding Children responsibility will be the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager

All Blue Bell Woods Day Nursery staff will receive training on the Safeguarding Children from abuse. It is the responsibility of the Nursery Manager to ensure that all staff complete this training. It is the responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure that the Manager has attended the local Designated Safeguarding Person training.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) is

- To refer cases of suspected abuse
- To act as a source of support and advice to colleagues
- To keep appropriate records
- To ensure that all staff have access to the relevant documents and policies
- To ensure that staff are trained and have sufficient understand
- To raise awareness of child protection issues and the safeguarding of all children

Identification of Abuse

Identification of child abuse is difficult and will normally be a combination of both social and medical assessment. No list of signs or symptoms can be exhaustive. The following are for guidance only. It must be remembered that alternative medical or social explanations may exist for the problems listed here.

However, if anyone has a concern about a child, they must report it to their Nursery Designated Safeguarding Officer/Manager, so a referral can be made. See General Procedure above.
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Significant harm can be the result of one or a combination of the following:

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse

It must be recognised that children with Special Needs may demonstrate signs of abuse in different and less obvious ways. Staff must be vigilant and ensure all children in their care have equal support and rights to protection from abuse.

Staff must recognise that there may be parents/carers who have Special Needs and that this is reflected in any discussions arising from the implementation of this policy and associated procedures. Reference is made to the policy on Special Needs.

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic and physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsive to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**Neglect: Procedure To Be Followed For Suspected Abuse**

The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer. On going concerns must be discussed with the Nursery Manager.

Any discussion will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to the record of the discussion.

Any concerns will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Officer of Blue Bell Woods Day nursery, who will inform the Managing Director who will make a decision whether to refer to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer.

**Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a patient fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs and indicators associated with injuries arousing suspicion that they are not accidental, may include

- Where the explanation is not consistent with the injury or with the stage of development of the child
- Where there are changes of explanation or no explanation
- Where there is a history of frequently repeated injury
- Where there has been considerable delay in seeking medical advice
- Where there are bruises of different ages on the child at any one time, other than on the common sites of accidental injury in a child of that age (e.g. on shins and forehead)
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- Where there is facial bruising, other than over the bony prominences, particularly around the mouth, eyes or ears
- Where there are unexplained burns, bite marks, severe bruising or any combination of these
- Where there are bruises on the buttocks or thighs
- Any bruising in a baby not yet mobile, reluctance to move limbs or tenderness on handling

**Action will be taken** if a member(s) of staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

**Physical Abuse: Procedure To Be Followed For Suspected Abuse**

- Any sign of a mark/injury causing suspicion or of recurring marks/injuries to a child when they come into nursery will be recorded on child monitoring forms.
- The mark/injury will be discussed with the parent/carer
- Any discussion will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to the record of the discussion.
- Any concerns will be discussed with the designated member of Blue Bell Woods Day nursery staff for Safeguarding Children who will make a decision whether to refer to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer.

**Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation. Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, consenting partners is not usual. However, where a child is under the age of 13 it is classified as rape under 5’s Sexual Offences Act 2003. Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexually inappropriate behaviour.

**Signs and Indicators arousing suspicion of sexual abuse may include:**

- Over sexualised behaviour
- Sexual awareness and knowledge in advance of developmental age
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Drawing or play activity which are explicitly sexual
- Compulsive masturbation
- Wetting and soiling (once toilet trained)
- Recurrent urinary tract infections
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Genital or anal inflammation or irritation
- Genital or anal bleeding or lacerations
- Change in behaviour
- Anxiety during nappy or toileting times
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Sexual Abuse: Procedure To Be Followed For Suspected Abuse

The observed instances will be reported to the Nursery Manager and Managing Director and the designated member of staff for Safeguarding (if this is not the Manager).
The matter will be referred to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer by the Designated Safeguarding Officer in the nursery.
A DISCUSSION WITH THE PARENT/CARER WILL NOT TAKE PLACE

Emotional Abuse

Signs and indicators arousing suspicion of emotional abuse may include:

- An impaired ability for enjoyment and play
- A lack of curiosity and natural exploratory behaviour
- Delayed language development and play skills
- Low self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness
- Eating disturbances or growth failure

Action will be taken if a member(s) of staff believes that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

Emotional Abuse: Procedure To Be Followed For Suspected Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child’s emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children
- Exploiting and corrupting children

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer
- Any discussion will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to records of the discussion.
- Any concerns will be discussed with the designated Safeguarding Officer at Blue Bell Woods Day nursery who will discuss with the Manager/Managing Director and then discuss the concerns with the Local Authority Safeguarding Team.
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Abuse by Early Years Workers

See Safeguarding – Allegations against Staff

Procedure To Be Followed When Making A Referral

• If it is believed that a child has been or is likely to be harmed by abuse or neglect, Children’s Social Care department should be notified immediately. The referral should be made to Children’s Social Care Department initial response and assessment services on:

  Warwickshire: 01926 410410  
  Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm  Saturday 9am.– 4pm

  West Midlands: 024 7678 8555

• Where a child is believed to be in immediate danger contact the police on 999 and then contact Children’s Social Care Department

• It is NOT the responsibility of the nursery Manager, Designated Safeguarding Officer or Blue Bell Woods Day Nursery to investigate any claims, suspicions or allegations of child abuse. Any investigation will be undertaken by the Local Authority Safeguarding Team.

Where available, the following information should be provided with the referral (but absence of information should not delay referral):

• Full names, date of birth and gender subject to the child/children
• Family address
• Identity of those with parental responsibility
• Names, date of birth and gender of all household members
• Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents
• Any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication aid
• Any special needs of child/children
• Any significant/important recent events/incidents in child’s or family’s life.
• Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their source, timing and location
• Action to be taken at the time and subsequent action taken
• Advise OFSTED as per the Early Years Foundation Stage Welfare Requirements and OFSTED regulations on: 0300 123 1231

Telephone Numbers

• Ofsted – 0300 123 1231

• NSPCC – 0808 800 5000

• Childline – 0800 1111

• Children’s Care Services - Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) – Warks: 01926 410410. West Midlands: 024 7678 8555

• Out of Hours phone – Warks: 01926 886922, West Midlands: 024 7683 2222

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