



BEES KNEES NURSERY SCHOOL

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy(2023)

Policy Statement.

We believe that every child has the right to develop their full potential. Promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children will always be our top priority. If we are worried about the safety or welfare of a child using our service, we have a legal duty and responsibility to act on our concerns. We will discuss our concerns with parents and carers in the first instance and if necessary, make a referral to Wandsworth Children's Specialist Services - Mash

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning & Development
1.2 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	4.4 personal, social and emotional development

The Legal Context

The legal context and requirements for Safeguarding and Child Protection are laid down in the following laws and policies:

- The Children Act 1989, 2004, 2017
- What to do if you Suspect a Child is being Abused 2015
- EYFS statutory framework, Section 3 Safeguarding and Welfare 2021
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings 2019
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Serious Crime Act 2015 (with regard to FGM & D.A.) FGM Act 2003
- London Safeguarding Children Procedures - updated 2020
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Yrs, education and skills settings. 2019
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures
- GDPR – updated May 2018
- Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in EY settings: online safety considerations for managers. Feb 2019 (also for practitioners 2019)

Child Abuse: An Overview

Child abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development. Children can be abused through the

infliction of harm, or through a failure to act to prevent harm.

We understand that:

- Abuse and neglect can affect children of any age, class or family background and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Children may be abused within their family, a setting, an institution or in the community
- Children can be abused by people known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger
- Children can be abused by an adult/s or another child/children.
- Children may show signs of being abused in different ways - physically, emotionally, by their behaviour or they may tell directly.

The four main categories of abuse are:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect.
- And Bullying – see Policy on Bullying

See Safeguarding File for detailed description of the four categories and their signs and symptoms.

Our Duty to Co-operate and Refer

We understand that it is the duty of all professionals in agencies with contact with children and members of their families to make a referral to Children's Services if there are signs that a child or unborn baby:

- is suffering significant harm through abuse or neglect, or
- is likely to suffer significant harm in the future.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer (DSL)

All agencies providing group day care must have a designated person who is responsible for safeguarding and child protection. In addition, a second named designated person must be available to undertake the role in the absence of the first person.

See front of this policy or notice board for names of designated persons.

Roles and Responsibilities of Designated Person

- To recognise how to identify signs of abuse
- To recognise when it is appropriate to make a referral
- Refer and follow up child protection referrals
- Ensure/monitor safeguarding/ child protection decisions relating to our setting
- Monitor child protection practice
- To have knowledge & implementation of safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Ensure staff access to setting policy & procedures
- Organise/ensure induction and training
- Provide support & advice
- Communications with parents
- Record keeping and recording systems
- Distribute information

- Liaison with agencies
- Attend meetings, child protection conferences, core groups etc.

The designated person is *not responsible* for investigating child abuse. However they will support and co-operate with safeguarding and child protection investigations and the action/agreements that follow.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

We take the duties and responsibilities towards children very seriously. All staff are required to follow safeguarding and child protection procedures if they are concerned about the safety or welfare of any child. We understand that failure to act on concerns or follow procedures could place a child in real danger.

Suspected Child Abuse - Flow Chart of Actions to be Taken

1. Consider what you know, what you have seen & things about the child that cause concern.
2. Listen to child if s/he tells of abuse. Reassure child that they did the right thing to tell you. Never promise to keep something a secret. Let the child know that you will be telling the Designated Safeguarding Lead as you all have a responsibility to keep the child safe. Don't probe or interrogate the child. Write down what the child told you *using the child's own words*.
3. Discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
4. The designated person will discuss and review the concerns and advise on what actions to take next, including whether a referral to Wandsworth's MASH is necessary.
5. Unless consultation with parents/carers is likely to place the child at risk of significant harm through delay or the parent's actions the following steps should be undertaken. A) Arrange to see the child's parents/carers. Be open and honest: tell parents the reasons for your concerns and seek explanations for your concerns. B) Explain your duty to report your concerns and try to get parental agreement for a referral to Wandsworth MASH. C) If the parent refuses to give permission for the referral, further advice should be sought and a referral made without consent if this is necessary to secure the child's safety.
6. Keep a written record of all concerns, any discussions with the child & parents/carers, discussions with Ofsted & social services and any decisions made.

Working with Parents

- We will ensure that parents/carers are made aware of our role and responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection when their child starts with us.
- We will explain the setting's complaints procedure to parents and provide them with the Early Years Complaints Helpline on 03001231231. which they contact if they are not satisfied with our own complaints procedure.
- We acknowledge that parenting can be challenging. We believe that parents

themselves require and deserve support. We believe that asking for help should be seen as a sign of responsibility rather than as a parenting failure.

Parent Consultation

- Wherever possible, concerns should be discussed with parents unless this is likely to place the child at risk of significant harm through delay or the parent's actions.
- This discussion should include information that the concerns may (or will) need to be referred to Referral & Assessment Services. This will depend on whether the concerns have reached the level of a Section 47 enquiry (at risk of significant harm).
- We will ask parents for explanations of a suspicious injury, behaviour or child's allegation. We will make a written record of this meeting. We will be open and honest, telling parents the reasons for our concerns. We will explain our duty to report our concerns to Wandsworth MASH.
- We will try to get parental agreement for a referral to Wandsworth MASH unless seeking agreement is likely to place the child at risk of significant harm through delay or the parent's actions.
- We understand that the issue of parental permission can be misguided and misleading if there are significant child protection concerns.
- If the parent refuses to give permission for the referral, we will seek further advice from Wandsworth Early Years advisors or MASH Duty Manager and the outcome fully recorded.
- If we decide not to seek parental permission before making a referral the decision must be recorded in the child's file with reasons, dated and signed and confirmed in the referral to MASH.
- A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous unless there are exceptional circumstances, so the parent will in all likelihood be told or become aware of the identity of the referrer.
- The parent will be contacted to inform her/him that, after considering their wishes, a referral has been made.
- We understand and will ensure that any concerns are kept confidential and that information and details are shared only with professionals directly involved with the child.

Listening to Children

We understand that children communicate in many ways, not just verbally, through their behaviour, actions and reactions, play drawings etc. If a child discloses that he/she is suffering or has suffered harm through abuse or neglect, our initial response should be limited to listening carefully to what the child says and to:

- Clarify the concerns
- Offer reassurance about how the child will be kept safe
- Explain what action will be taken.

The child must not be pressed for information, led or cross-examined or given false assurances of absolute confidentiality, as this could prejudice police investigation,

especially in cases of sexual abuse. If we feel the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral s/he will be asked for her/his view. However, it will be explained that whilst her/his view will be taken into account, we have a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child's safety and the safety of other children.

Diversity

We understand that parenting and childrearing styles can vary according to class, age, race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion. We believe that all parents have the right to raise their children according to their family traditions. However, all children have the right to protection and no parent has the right to abuse their child/ren regardless of their background or circumstances.

Working in a multiracial and multicultural society we, as professionals, are committed to equality in meeting the needs of children and families and we acknowledge the need for us to understand the effects of racism as well as cultural and religious misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Anxiety about being accused of racist practice will not prevent the necessary action being taken to safeguard and promote a child's welfare.

Race, cultural and religious factors will not be regarded as acceptable explanations for child abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), or neglect and are not acceptable grounds for inaction when a child is at risk of significant harm. We also follow the 'PREVENT' Guidance for Schools in trying to recognize and act on any signs of radicalization of the children or their families.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing.

Confidentiality

All staff, students and visitors must read and accept our confidentiality policy to ensure that all information and details about parents and children is kept confidential. We understand that *child protection concerns are an exception and that all staff have a statutory duty to report these concerns and share information with other appropriate professional colleagues, Mash or the police as required.*

In these instances, information will not be shared with anyone else who is not directly involved in keeping the child safe.

In situations where there are *no concerns about* the child's safety but it is felt that sharing information would benefit the child then *informed parental consent will be sought* before information can be shared.

Staff who breach confidentiality policy or who fail to share information will face action under our disciplinary policy.

Information Sharing

We understand that information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We will seek parental consent to share information except in the following situations:

- The child is at risk of significant harm or harming someone else
- The child needs urgent medical treatment
- Information is required as part of a legal proceeding e.g. by order of the Court
- Information is requested by the police if investigating a serious crime
- Sharing the information is required to undertake a statutory function.

When these situations apply and it is necessary to share information without consent, the *reasons for doing so must be recorded.*

Recording and Record Keeping

- Day- to- day incidents and accidents are recorded in our accident book/ incident book/ day book etc.
- Child protection concerns will be recorded separately.

Written records will be kept of:

1. Discussion with the child.
2. Discussions with the parents.
3. Discussions with the manager.
4. Information provided to Wandsworth MASH.
5. Decisions taken - with time & date clearly noted, and signed.
6. A copy will be kept of the written referral, confirming the verbal and telephone referral.
7. All records must be concise, objective and factual. Events/actions must be described as they happened.
8. Any judgements or interpretations must be avoided.

A separate case file for storing safeguarding concerns, referrals and follow up communications will be kept. This will be stored in a Safeguarding & Child Protection file in the lockable area of the Office with access limited to staff directly involved with keeping the child safe.

Staff:- Safe Recruitment, Selection and Monitoring.

All staff are recruited and fully vetted under Ofsted's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures using the following checks:

- Documented proof of identity
- Documented proof of academic qualifications
- Professional references
- Character references
- Previous employment history

- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check [DBS]
- Health declaration

A record that such checks have been carried out is kept

In addition all staff must read and sign all our policies and they will have access to regular safeguarding and child protection training and have regular supervisions and appraisal. In addition all staff must read and agree to the Code of Conduct – see attached to this policy.

Any visiting teachers or volunteers will not be left alone with children.

Allegation of Abuse against Staff

Our procedure takes into account the following:

- All allegations or suspicions against staff will be taken seriously and considered as requiring a child protection response/enquiry.
- We have a duty to report to Wandsworth MASH/ LADO within 24 hrs and Ofsted, within 14 days, any allegation or suspicion of a child protection nature made against any staff member.
- Any allegation may require consideration from any of the following inter-related perspectives: criminal investigation/child protection/ staff disciplinary procedure/complaint procedure.
- Any information about an allegation will be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to: protect children./facilitate enquiries/manage disciplinary or complaint aspects/protect any rights of the alleged perpetrator.
- We as the employer have the dual responsibility to safeguard the children in our care and to ensure that staff are treated fairly.
- A staff member may benefit from the independent advice of a solicitor.

Our Procedure Is as Follows:-

- If an allegation is made against a staff member we will ensure that s/he will not have any contact with the child or their records until the matter has been dealt with.
- The allegation will be reported to the LADO within 24 hrs. We understand that we should not make any judgement on the validity of the allegation and that this will be assessed and reviewed by the LADO. We will inform Ofsted within 14 days. Also, we will inform the Wandsworth Early Years Safeguarding Advisor asap for their support and advice.
- Suspension will not be automatic. It will be considered in the case where
 - A) There is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm or
 - B) The allegation warrants investigation by the police or
 - C) The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.
- We will await the final decision regarding the staff member's continued employment pending the outcome of the child protection investigation and/or criminal investigation.
- We will not accept the staff member's resignation as an alternative to dismissal.
- If the police decide not to proceed with criminal charges, we the employer will decide

whether to proceed with a disciplinary hearing on the basis of prima facie evidence under the disciplinary code.

- We understand that even if there is insufficient evidence to support a criminal investigation, Ofsted may pursue the matter under disciplinary, regulatory or complaints procedures and/or bring civil or criminal proceedings against registered or unregistered day care providers.

Unsubstantiated and False Allegations

- If an allegation is demonstrably false, we, in consultation with the Wandsworth LADO and Ofsted, will refer the matter to Wandsworth MASH to determine whether the child is in need of services, or might have been abused by someone else.
- Where it is concluded that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate an allegation, we understand that the chair of the strategy discussion or initial evaluation will prepare a separate report of the enquiry which will be forwarded to the designated senior manager to enable consideration of what further action may be taken.
- If it is established that an allegation has been deliberately invented, we may ask the police to consider what action may be appropriate.

All staff will be made aware of this procedure and will sign the document to indicate that they have understood this and the safeguarding and child protection policy.

Whistle Blowing.

Children have the right to be safeguarded against the unsafe or unprofessional actions and behaviours of child care providers. It is the duty of any child care provider to report their concerns about another provider, colleague or any other person working with children who they believe has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaves towards a child or children in a way that indicate s/he is unsuitable to work with children.
- Display inappropriate behaviour, including inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

These concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer

CONFIDENTIALITY: information and details about these concerns will be restricted to those persons who need to know in order to:

- Protect children
- Facilitate enquiries
- manage disciplinary/complaints processes

Details will not be shared with anyone else not directly involved in these processes as this violates the rights of the child, the parents and/or child care provider.

If the concerns constitute child abuse the designated officer will:

- Make a child protection referral to Wandsworth MASH within 24 hrs.
- Contact the parents/carers of the child and inform them of the concerns and actions.
- Inform Wandsworth Early Years Safeguarding Advisor.
- Inform Ofsted. within 14 days

If the concerns do not constitute child abuse but remain concerned about the conduct of the child care provider the designated officer will contact:

- Contact Wandsworth Early years Safeguarding Advisor for advice.

Safeguarding Training

We will ensure that training is given to our staff through Wandsworth Early Years courses and through in-house training. We will train all staff to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Training will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- 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;.

The Designated Safeguarding Person will attend the training for designated persons.

The Taking and Processing of Photographs.

Photographs are an important part of the observation taking and record keeping of the development of the children. They are also used in displays throughout the setting to inform the children and their families of all the different activities happening and as a record of the life of the setting. Photos also are an effective way to give the children ownership and to help them to feel what they do is valued. They may also be used for the setting website and the parents sign to agree to this or to opt out.

We will ensure that:

- All parents sign a statement to say that they understand and agree that their child will be photographed during the time at the setting.
- Only the setting cameras/setting I-Phone will be used unless the manager has given permission to another staff member to use a different camera.
- All photos will be processed by the chosen Photographic Store or on the designated setting computer/printer. The Designated staff member will be responsible for the camera memory cards when taking them to be processed and for deleting the images afterwards.
- Any photos which are not in the process of being printed or used for the website

will be removed from the computer memory and stored on a disc or cd kept by the manager or designated person.

- Photo albums made available on the website will only be accessible to parents through the use of a password.

Mobile Phones with Cameras.

The use of mobile phones during setting hours is discouraged. Staff, visitors, volunteers or students are not permitted to use mobile phone cameras to take or record any images of children for their own records.

- All mobile phones will be placed in the designated cabinet during setting hours.
- Mobile phones may be used for calls or messages if absolutely necessary in the designated area or outside the setting with permission of the manager.
- In case of a personal emergency, all personal calls should be directed through the setting's main telephone line.
- Visitors may only use their phones outside the premises or by special permission of the person in charge.

Use of social networking, emails, WhatsApp and Internet .

Any work related issue or material (e.g. comments, photos, confidential information) that could identify an individual who is a service user, relative or work colleague, which could adversely affect the setting must not be placed on a social networking website.

- Work related matters must not be placed on any social networking site at any time either during or outside of working hours via any computer equipment or mobile phone.
- Adults are not permitted to share information, contact details, images or filming of children and families without the written permission of the parent/carer and the employer.
- Written reports on a child's development and assessment cannot be shared through the Internet or email with other professionals without the written permission of the parent/carer.

The Bees Knees Instagram account

Photos and short videos will be posted onto our Bees Knees Instagram to update and show what the activities have been. This Instagram account is monitored by The Bees Knees and always with parental permission. Parents sign their understanding that this is a public account and photos/videos could cover any activity in which a child may be involved at the nursery. These may be individual photos/videos of a child or group photos/videos with other children and/or teachers.

Telephone Numbers:

MASH.

Telephone: 020 8871 6622 9am – 5pm or 020 8871 6000 out of hours

MASH@wandsworth.gov.uk

Outside office hours: 0208 8716000

In an emergency phone Police 999

LADO.

Telephone: 020 8871 7440

LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk

Wandsworth Early years Safeguarding Lead (Matt Hutt):

Telephone: 020 8871 8789

Matt.Hutt@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

susan.reid@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Wandsworth Safeguarding Children's Board.

Telephone 020 88717401

wscb@wscb.org.uk

OFSTED: 0300 123 1231

Making a Referral:

- Referrals can be made directly by phone to Mash above
- Follow up by completing an inter-agency referral form obtainable from duty team or by downloading from WSCB at www.safeguardingchildreninwandsworth.org.uk.
- If previously completed a MARF on the child, this should be forwarded to the duty team.