

## Severn Beach Preschool

### Safeguarding Children, Child Protection+ Policy and Procedure

#### **Safeguarding children and child protection**

The preschool will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the best start in life.

#### **Procedures**

The Preschool is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

#### **Staff and volunteers**

- Our designated safeguarding lead is: Cathie Crew
  - Our Deputy lead is Lara Fielding
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- Our designated committee safeguarding lead is: John Hogan
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- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
  - All staff are trained in safeguarding. The Lead and deputy lead attend multi agency safeguarding training every 2 years. All other staff complete the e-learning course every 3 years. We update all staff on safeguarding matters annually or as changes come in to place. All staff complete a whole range of training in order to be aware of potential concerns - see the list below. The committee safeguarding lead and the Chair also complete the e-learning safeguarding course.
  - We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
  - 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 disclosure' checks (DBS) before posts can be confirmed. Qualification Certificates must also be authenticated.
  - Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
  - We follow all guidance and requirements set out in legislation. See end of policy for statutory legislation followed.
  - We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Disclosure and Barring checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children. Management are trained in safer recruitment.
  - Staff sign regularly to confirm that there are no changes in their circumstances or in their family life that may affect their work with children.

- Volunteers and any non-checked individuals do not work with children unsupervised.
- We are aware of our responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps (locked gates and school security) to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- The use of personal mobile phones and cameras, wearable technology with cameras and other electronic devices with imaging sharing capabilities are not permitted in preschool. These are stored in the cupboard and visitors are also asked not to take photos or use phones at the setting. I pads are used for gathering photos for evidence. All photos taken can be seen by the manager and by other staff as our ipads are all linked together. Staff follow South Gloucestershires Acceptable use of Technology Policy and Severn Beach Preschool's guide on the acceptable use of technology for staff which is issued on induction.

## **Training**

- Child protection is the responsibility of everyone and we all have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- All staff are trained on child protection during their induction.
- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of South Gloucestershire guidelines for making a referral. All staff are trained in safeguarding. The Lead and deputy lead attend multi agency safeguarding training every 2 years. All other staff complete the e-learning course every 3 years. We update all staff including committee members on safeguarding matters annually or as changes come in to place.
- All staff have to complete and keep up to date with training on: Prevent and Channel awareness, radicalisation and extremism, FGM, honour based violence and harm, forced marriage and spirit based violence (incl. witchcraft), ACEs, domestic abuse, Signs of Safety, grooming, online safety, bullying and cyberbullying, cuckooing, up-skirting, financial abuse, mental health issues, non-recent abuse and private fostering. We are also trained to be aware that self harming may be an issue which may also potentially be a concern around a parent or another member of staff.

## **Responding to suspicions/concerns of abuse**

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect, bullying and domestic abuse.
- We may become concerned a child is being abused through things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the safeguarding lead. This information is stored confidentially in our locked cabinet.
- When appropriate we refer concerns to South Gloucestershire children's social care department (via the Access and Response Team (ART)) and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. This may mean working with the police or another agency identified by the Local Authority Designated Officer. (LADO)
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking leading questions of children.

## **Recording concerns of abuse and disclosures**

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as:
  - significant changes in behaviour
  - deterioration in general well being
  - unexplained bruising
  - marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect

That member of staff:

- listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she/he will take actions;
- does not question the child;
- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
  - the date and time of the observation or disclosure;
  - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
  - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
  - the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept and kept securely and confidentially in the locked cabinet.

## **Making a referral to the local authority social care team**

- If we feel a child is at risk of abuse or even if we are not quite sure we report concerns to the ART team.
- They will then inform the setting of the next steps to take which will involve writing records of concern and may mean involving other agencies such as Early Help and/or Social Care. It may involve making a written referral which will be completed by the safeguarding lead and securely emailed to the ART team.

## **Informing parents**

- Parents are normally the first point of contact
- If a concern of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where we feel this may put the child at greater risk of harm.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating offices will inform parents.

## **Liaison with other agencies**

- We follow expectations set out by South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership 2023 and are guided by their 'Continuum of Need' and the threshold matrix set out within the document "The right help, in the right way, at the right time". Early Years sits in the "Best Start in Life" group and we recognise the importance of giving children the best start in their preschool years both within our setting and by supporting parents and carers.
- We are guided by the outcomes of referrals to ART and work with other professionals, carers or family members who may become involved with the care of the children, including the LADO.
- If we are not happy with the outcome we will follow their escalation policy.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of the children.
- If a member of staff puts a child at risk of harm or harms a child at work, Ofsted will be informed, as will the DBS service in line with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (section 35).
- Where there are concerns around a child who has siblings within the school the safeguarding lead will liaise with the school's safeguarding lead if appropriate.

## **Whistle Blowing**

See separate policy

## **Allegations against staff**

- We ensure that 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 South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the South Gloucestershire LADO via the ART team to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do so.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care, and if they are involved, with the police.
- Where the management committee and children's social care agree that it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson 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 children and families throughout the process.

## **Disqualification**

In the event of the disqualification of a member of staff, the preschool must not continue to employ that staff member as an early years provider – nor should they be directly concerned in the management of the preschool. Where the preschool becomes aware of relevant information which may lead to disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children.

When relevant we will inform Ofsted of the following information:

- details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- the date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose;
- the body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed; and
- a certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).

The above information must be provided to Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the date the preschool became aware of the information or ought reasonably to have become aware of it if they had made reasonable enquiries.

If a member of staff puts a child at risk of harm or harms a child at work, Ofsted will be informed, as will the DBS service in line with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (section 35).

## **Supervision**

- Staff take appropriate steps to ensure that children are always within sight and sound or at least sight or sound of at all times. Children are never left unattended with people whose suitability has not been officially checked.

## **Curriculum**

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having a positive regard for children's heritage arising from their ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

## **Confidentiality**

- All concerns and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance given by the South Gloucestershire's Children's Partnership.

## **Support to families**

- We believe in building trusting and 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 South Gloucestershire social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged child abuse.
- We follow any 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.

- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child and only if appropriate under the guidance of South Gloucestershire's Children's Partnership.

In summary:

The Preschool is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the legislation and procedures that are set down in the government's statutory guidances...

Early Years Foundation Stage 2024

Children's Act 1989 & 2004

Human Rights Act 1998

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025

The Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2024

FMG Act 2003

Data Protection Act 2018 and UKGDPR

Information Sharing 2024

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

SEND Code of Practice 2015 (updated 2020)