

1. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

1.1 - Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

At St Michael's Community Nursery 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. Our safeguarding policy is based on the three key commitments of the Early Years Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Procedures

Staff and volunteers

- Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is:
DSL - Hilary Budd, Deputy DSL - Gemma Hine

- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures. They are available in paper format by request or also on our web site www.stmichaelscommunitynursery.co.uk
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Staff are not permitted to use personal digital devices for recording information about children. Permission is sought from parents to enable the use of photographs for promotion and marketing.
- 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 with the Disclosure and Barring Service. Candidates may be employed subject to appropriate references, but will not have unsupervised contact with children until DBS check is completed and clear.
- 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.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, neglect, and sexual abuse and exploitation.
- We refer concerns without delay to Surrey Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA) and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.
NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual abuse and exploitation, emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play.
- Practitioners will make a dated record of the details of the concern where such evidence is apparent. The practitioner will discuss what to do with the setting leader/manager or person who is acting as the DSL. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We take care not to influence the outcome through the way we speak to children.
- Bruising in children who are not independently mobile is very rare. If a practitioner observes a unexplained bruise or suspicious mark, a referral to Children's Services via Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA) will be made.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives 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 or he will take action.
 - 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 the 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 kept in the child's personal file which is kept securely and confidentially.

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 Children's Services/Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures does not allow this. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents where the parent is the likely abuser

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within Children's Services/Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures guidelines. <https://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/>

Allegations against staff

- Parents are directed towards our complaints procedure flowchart should they be concerned about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We refer to the Local Authority guidelines when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by 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, or anyone working on the premises occupied by 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 (within 24 hours) to the Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO) (03001231650) to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. We will report what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.

- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management committee and children's social care agree 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.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify Surrey County Council Social Care Team so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that 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 positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, 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 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 Boards Procedures.

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 the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We will engage with Family Resilience and Family Safeguarding, share information for the completion of an Early Help assessment and attend Team around the Family Meetings as appropriate.
- 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.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate by contacting the Schools and Early Years Child Protection Consultation Line for advice and support. (CSPA 03004709100)

Physical contact

There are many occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with children for a variety of reasons for example:

- communication
- first aid
- to comfort a child in distress
- to direct a child (holding hands, hand on shoulder etc)
- for educational skills (e.g. climbing, using tools, directed movements)
- for life skills (dressing, changing clothing, toileting, using cutlery)
- in an emergency to ensure safety to the child

In rare exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for staff to use reasonable force to uphold their duty of care to a child. This level of intervention would be documented.

Prevent Duty

From 1st July 2015 all Schools Registered Early Years Childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 'to have due regard to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the PREVENT DUTY.

It is essential that staff are able to identify children and families who may be vulnerable to radicalisation. The nursery can build resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British Values.

If the setting has cause for concern regarding the prevent duty it will be reported to the Surrey Police Prevent Team, CrimeStoppers or the Anti-Terrorism Hotline. If the concern needs immediate action we will call 999.

Policy updated 18/05/2020

Further Guidance

- South East Surrey Children's Services (Mole Valley) ~ 0300 123 1620