Updated 05/01/2023

Review date 24/12/2023

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**2.11 Child Protection Policy**

It is our duty as professional childcare practitioners to work together as a team to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children within our care to prevent them from any physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect they may come in contact with. Safeguarding also relates to the broader aspects of ensuring all children’s needs are met including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This policy applies to staff under the age of 18 who work for us and any other vulnerable adults at the setting.

This policy sets out the specific guidelines by which this will be achieved.

This policy will be made available to:

* All Wakoos staff
* Wakoos Parents and Carers
* West Sussex County Council
* OFSTED
* Any adults involved with the children of Wakoos Centre4Children (eg agency, volunteers, bank staff with a current and up to date DBS)

The areas covered in this policy are:

1. **Definitions of abuse and neglect**
2. **Recognising signs of abuse and neglect**
3. **Responding to suspected abuse/neglect**
4. **Responding to a child wanting to talk**
5. **Bullying/ Peer on Peer Abuse**
6. **Making a referral to social and caring services**
7. **Procedure for reporting a safeguarding concern**
8. **Parental consent**
9. **Record keeping**
10. **Minimising the risk**
11. **Allegations against staff**

##### 1 Definition of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a boy or a girl, under the age of 18 years old. It is the responsibility of all staff within the setting to ensure children are protected from:

* Neglect
* Physical abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Emotional abuse
* Bullying
* Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
* Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
* Substance misuse
* Domestic violence
* Fabricated or induced illness
* Poor parenting
* Female Genital Mutilation
* Forced marriage or honour killing
* Any other issue that could lead to children being at risk of harm physically or mentally; or their needs not being met

**2 Recognising signs of abuse and neglect**

As staff work closely with the children, they know them and therefore they are in a position to notice changes. It is important that staff share with the designated person:

* Any significant changes in behaviour;
* Any unexplained bruises or marks;
* Any comments children or parents make which gives cause for concern;
* Any deterioration in a child’s well-being.

There can be additional barriers to recognising abuse in children who have special educational needs or disabilities. In these instances, staff are supported by the SENCO and work closely with any other agencies involved with the child. Accurate records are kept of any conversations or concerns.

**3 Responding to suspected abuse and neglect**

The welfare of the child is paramount. Statements about, or allegations of abuse, or neglect made by children, must always be taken seriously. Any case of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police.

If a member of staff has any concerns about a child in the nursery; receive information/allegations; witness an event which may suggest a child is being abused or is at risk of significant harm, they must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or in their absence the most senior member of staff – details of which will be recorded in the child’s file. It is the responsibility of the DSL to decide whether there is any cause for further action.

If a staff member sees or hears anything about a child outside of work, the above procedure will be followed and after advice taken from the DSL the staff member may be required to contact social services direct.

The role of the DSL is to collect and clarify the precise details of the situation before forwarding information on to the Integrated Front Door (IFD) whose responsibility is to investigate. The help desk advisors are responsible for making initial assessment as to the nature of the referral and with a social services manager; decide whether a child protection investigation should take place.

**4 Responding to a child wanting to talk**

If a child approaches a member of staff within the nursery, it is important for them to listen to the child carefully, not to interrupt the child or be tempted to ask leading questions. The member of staff should try to enlist the support of a work colleague to listen in on the conversation and witness the disclosure of all the important information, making sure it is kept factual.

The member of staff must then write a report of the conversation with the child noting the date, time and who was present at the time. This report should be filed in the confidential file and made known to the DSL who will then make the referral, if necessary.

**5 Bullying/Peer on Peer Abuse**

At Wakoos we endorse positive behaviour as an effective way to set limits and manage behaviour in our nursery. Staff support the children in using conflict resolution to enable them to learn appropriate strategies for managing their own relationships. We encourage the children to learn about their similarities and differences and be tolerant towards others. Staff are aware of the need to support children in developing healthy relationships with each other to ensure there are no instances of bullying. Strategies for how to manage behaviour are outlined in the Behaviour Management policy and the Social and Emotional Development policy.

**6 Making a Referral to Social and Caring Services**

In order to ensure that we are safeguarding the children in our care we promote multi- agency working.

The following information should be provided when making a referral:

* Cause for concern including details of allegations, their sources, timing and location.
* What the child said, keeping it factual.
* Child’s current location, emotional and physical condition.
* Whether the child needs immediate protection.
* Full names, dates of birth and gender of child/ren
* Current and previous address.
* Identity of who has parental responsibility
* Details of the setting and manager contact details

They will take full details of the child and your concerns and will either:

* provide advice and information;
* direct you to an appropriate team or organisation; or
* make a formal referral to the social care team.

If a staff member is supporting a parent where there are concerns over child protection and attends any meeting in relation to this the staff member will remain neutral at the meeting and will purely support the parent and will keep all information heard confidential. If this is not adhered to the staff member will be disciplined and may be dismissed from Wakoos.

**7 Procedure for reporting a safeguarding concern:**

• If you suspect a child has suffered or suffering, or is at risk or harm you should:

• Immediately report your suspicions to the Integrated Front Door on 01403 229900

Inform the Emergency Duty Team out of hours service on: 0330 222 6664 (between 5.00pm and 8.00am weekdays and 24 hour weekends and bank holidays.) If the Emergency Duty Team line is unavailable and you need to report an emergency safeguarding concern, please call [07711 769657](tel:07711769657). This number does not accept texts.

• If you suspect the child is in immediate danger the referral will be made the same day

• Record any bruises on the skin body map outline noting the sight, size and colour please ensure you record the date and sign.

• Make a note of any comments made by the child being careful not to question or prompt the child.

• Confirm a telephone referral by filling out a confidential child protection form within 24 working hours sending it to the relevant local office. (Forms can be found in the back of this policy folder), send it to:

West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership,  
Floor 1,  
County Hall North,  
Chart Way,  
Horsham,  
West Sussex,  
RH12 1XH

Or use the online form at <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/raise-a-concern-about-a-child/>

Written accounts should not include abbreviations, jargon or speculation about the family. A photocopy of the referral form must be entered into the confidential folder.

• OFSTED should be informed within 14 days.

**8 Parental consent**

Where practical concerns should be discussed with the family and agreement sought for a referral to MASH unless this may:

* Place the child at risk of significant or further harm e.g. by the behavioural response it prompts or by leading to an unreasonable delay.
* Lead to the risk of losing evidential material.
* In cases where fabricated or induced illness is suspected.

If a parent/carer has agreed to give their consent for a referral this should be recorded and confirmed in the referral to MASH. A decision not to seek parental consent before making a referral must also be recorded and reasons given when making the referral.

Information about child protection concerns or cases will be passed to the child’s new setting or school with permission from the parents.

Both parents will be spoken to before a referral is made if the child has contact with both parents.

Whereby a child is already on an early help or child protection plan, practitioners and managers will liaise with other professionals involved in the case without seeking prior consent if it serves in the best interests of the child.

As stated in the Working Together to Safeguard Children policy (July, 2018) “Practitioners should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children’s social care (e.g. they are being supported as a child in need or have a child protection plan). Practitioners should be alert to sharing important information about any adults with whom that child has contact, which may impact the child’s safety or welfare.

For further information on referrals please refer to the ‘Local Safeguarding Children’s Board’ website.

**9 Record Keeping**

Any concerns a member of staff has should be recorded and passed to the DSL. The DSL will then add this to the ‘Disney’ file which will be locked away in the Safeguarding File. This file will be reviewed regularly by DSL team and then summarised to the Committee. The information will then be transferred to the child’s file, this is stored in a locked filing cabinet in the office (Petworth), a locked filing cabinet in the hallway (Billingshurst). All written records should be written clearly containing what was seen, heard and what action was taken in relation to the child – date and time.

Records should be factual events using actual words spoken by the child and should be written as soon as the event has occurred. The site of any injuries should also be recorded. When complete, the report should be signed and dated. The report also must be signed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest time.

Information about children and their families will be stored securely and be dealt with in a sensitive matter and remain confidential.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the responsibility for regularly reviewing the accident book, incident book and any recorded concerns to monitor and/or identify possible safeguarding children issues.

Statutory information will be obtained from the parents when the child is registered at Wakoos Centre4Children this will include name, address(es), gender, date of birth, name(s) of person(s) with parental responsibility, legal contact and who the child normally lives with. This information will be updated annually by the administrator.

**10 Minimising the risk**

All procedures set in place for the protection of children will apply to all paid staff and volunteers within the nursery. All staff at Wakoos Centre4Children will undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at the time of their appointment. All activities which involve a single child working with an adult, should take place in a room which can be easily observed by other staff in nearby areas, however if this is not possible all staff will have undergone a DBS check to ensure the safety and welfare of the child. Staff will not work alone unless a DBS check has been returned clear.

The management team will ensure that staff will receive the following information on appointment to their position and during their induction training:

* Understand their duty to prevent the abuse of all children within their care
* Receive the relevant guidelines produced by the nursery on safeguarding the welfare of the children
* Attend Safeguarding Children/Child Protection training which will be updated and refreshed at least annually
* Staff must report any changes to their personal circumstances that would impact their suitability to work with children eg if you are living with a person that has been disqualified by the DBS, they must also report to us if they have any dealings with the police.
* Staff will receive regular supervisions to discuss any ongoing safeguarding issues as required
* All staff agree to adhere to the measures outlined in the ICT policy in order to ensure the internet is used safely and responsibly
* Key staff will under take the “Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales” and will pass on relevant knowledge to other team members
* Staff are given clear guidance on how to do conduct themselves in the setting as set out in the Staff Behaviour policy
* We ensure that staff do not lone work with children and that any intimate care issues are undertaken so that it is visible whilst respecting the children’s dignity.

**11 Allegations against staff**

ALL staff have a responsibility to report if they believe a member of staff is harming or is behaving in a manner which may potentially cause harm. If a complaint or allegation of abuse or harm to a child is made against a member of staff, it will immediately be brought to the attention of the Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead. The staff member will be immediately suspended and the LADO (Lindsey Tunbridge-Adams) will be informed within 24 hours on 0330 222 3339 or emailed on Lindsey.Tunbridge-Adams@westsussex.gov.uk . The Manager will not complete any investigation but will discover facts such as if the staff member was present that day. Parents will be supported and informed of all progress. We will follow guidance from the LADO and will inform the committee and OFSTED. For further information please see [www.westsussexscb.org.uk](http://www.westsussexscb.org.uk)

**12 Designated Safeguarding Leads**

All Designated Safeguarding Leads must have Safeguarding training at least every 2 years and refresh their skills and knowledge every year. There will be a designated person available to voice concerns to at all times. Contact numbers for all DSL’s are displayed in the office.

Designated Safeguarding Leads at Wakoos are;

* Kellie Ralph
* Charlotte Richman
* Amy Eddy
* Hayley Smith
* Jean Brown (Committee Representative)

The Child Protection (Liaison) Officer provides:

* Provides advice, support and guidance to the staff team
* Liaises with other agencies
* Ensures that the setting meets safeguarding and welfare requirements
* Collates information where there is a concern about a child

STAFF:-

* Staff must attend Safeguarding Children/Child Protection training within their first 6 months of employment
* Staff should feel empowered to raise any safeguarding issues either at Team Meetings, with the DSL or during their Supervisions

**In September 2020 Petworth Wakoos introduced a spreadsheet to log all existing injury sheets and monitoring sheets that have been recorded. In May 2021 this was also introduced at Billingshurst.**

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| Area | Health & Safety |
| Policy or Procedural Guidelines Title | Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Policy |
| New or Existing Policy/Service? | Existing |
| Name and role of Reviewer | Kellie Ralph  Nursery Manager |
| Date | 05/01/2023 |