

# St Matthew's Pre-School Policy

## 1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

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

### Policy statement

Our setting 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.

### Procedures

#### *Staff and volunteers*

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with regard to issues relating to children is  
Mrs Allison Warner  
All child protection issues relating to serious allegations concerning staff and suitable persons policies are the joint responsibility of the chair of the Preschool committee and the DSL.

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- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and parents are made aware of them too.
- All practitioners have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues. The DSL must attend modules 1, 2 & 3 of the Safeguarding Children Training, and Ofsted recognised DSL training and then attend an update yearly. Deputy Managers have to attend modules 1 & 2 of the Safeguarding Children Training, and Ofsted recognised training for Deputy DSL's. The DSL MUST have knowledge and skills refreshed annually, this must be fed back to ALL staff at in house training annually.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the provision are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'disclosure' checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Staff are encouraged to join the update service.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person has access to the children.
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
  - the DBS reference number;
  - the date the disclosure was obtained
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us) This is recorded on staff supervision sheets.
- Volunteers who do not have a pre-school or verified DSB/CRB disclosure do not work unsupervised.

- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We will make a referral to the DBS and Ofsted when a member of staff has been dismissed because they have harmed a child, or if they resign before being dismissed.
- 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 provision so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child. See Mobile Phone and Camera Policy.

### *Responding to suspicions of abuse*

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect and domestic violence.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect or domestic violence, this may be demonstrated through:
  - significant changes in their behaviour;
  - deterioration in their general well-being;
  - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
  - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
  - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
- Bruising in not independently mobile (NIM) children
  - Bruising is the most common presenting feature of physical abuse in children.
  - Any bruising or mark that might be bruising, in a child of any age, should be taken as a matter of enquiry and concern.
  - Any bruising or mark that might be bruising on a NIM child should result in immediate referral to the Children's Single Point of Access, (C SPA) 0300 470 9100, Surrey Community Health 01737 768511 or out of hours 01483 517898. Staff are aware that they have a responsibility to refer any child with bruising and not just those who are registered at Pre-School.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We recognise that under section 26 of the counter terrorism and security act 2015 we are subject to a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism." Prevent duty. We acknowledge the vulnerability of children and their families and recognise our duty to protect and safeguard children from the risk of radicalisation and terrorism.
- Staff recognise the need to be aware of the factors for concern, Appendix 1. Staff follow Safeguarding procedure should they have concerns. We follow guidance in the Effective Family Resilience document.
- Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where evidence of any kind is apparent, the child's key person and/or DSL or deputy makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the DSL. The information is stored in a secure file.

- We refer concerns to;

C SPA (Children's Single Point of Access) 0300 470 9100

Out of hours 01483 517898 (emergency duty team)

Local contact (South East) 0300 123 1620 (once a referral has been made)

In an emergency we contact the police on 101 or 999

email : [cspa@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:cspa@surreycc.gov.uk)

For counter terrorism concerns we contact:

The police on 101

We co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.

- Within 14 days of a serious allegation being made, we would also inform Ofsted in writing , outlining the allegation and the action taken in respect of the allegation.

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- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking leading questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns.
- The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

#### *Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures*

##### *Escalation Policy*

- 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 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 action 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 signed and dated and kept securely and confidentially. The report may be typed for ease of reading but the original must be kept.
- The DSL is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.

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

- Should the DSL or in her absence a Manager, (All staff are aware of their own responsibility to contact SPA should a manager be unavailable.) feel that a referral should be made they will contact
- The Single Point of Access Team (C SPA) 0300 470 9100

#### *Informing parents*

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents that we will make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made except for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.

#### *Liaison with other agencies*

- We work within the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines.
- We have the current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns. A copy of the referral flow chart is displayed in the cupboard.
- The Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements document is download and kept in the setting.
- We have procedures for contacting SPA on child protection issues; the DSL maintains a list of names and telephone numbers of relevant social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We follow and give regard to MAISP protocol. We following the ten golden rules for information sharing (appendix 2).
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the

allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

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### *Non-Attendance*

- Parents are requested to contact the setting on the first day their child is absent from the setting. They may either speak to a practitioner or leave an email or text message. We ask parents to tell us in advance when the child will be absent due to booked family holidays.
- Children who have an authorised absence will be marked as such in the register. Non- authorised absences will be highlighted.
- If a child is absent for more than two days without notice then a telephone call, email or text message is sent by a Manager to the child's parents on the second day.
- Patterns of absence are recorded and the appropriate action taken if there is cause for concern.

### *Allegations against staff*

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting. Ofsted's complaints procedure and address are displayed on the notice board in the foyer.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, or any other person working with the children, which includes:
  - inappropriate sexual comments;
  - inappropriate touching.
  - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or
  - inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the Surrey Safeguarding Children 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 DO NOT start an investigation.
- We refer any such complaint within 24 hours to the LADO 0300 123 1650 option 3 email : [LADO@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@surreycc.gov.uk) to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted 0300 1234 234 again within 24 hours and record 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 Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership in conjunction with the police.

- Where it is agreed appropriate in the circumstances, the chair 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.
- Staff are made aware of the importance of 'Whistle Blowing' should they have concerns about another member of staff. They will contact the LADO 0300 123 1650. The Ofsted Whistle Blower Hotline is 0300 123 3155.

#### *Disciplinary action*

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Barring and Disclosure Service of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups. See also staff disciplinary policy.

#### *Training*

- We seek out training opportunities for all staff involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence and neglect and that they are aware of the Surrey guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by Surrey Education Safeguarding Team/ Surrey County Council/ Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnerships.
- 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.
- We promote British Values to support our Prevent duty.

#### *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 Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Records are kept locked in a safe and are sent to the child's new setting when the child leaves. Should this not be possible records are sealed and destroyed when the child reaches 26.

#### *Support to families*

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the setting.
- 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 Surrey 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 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 under the guidance of the Safeguarding Children Partnership .

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

St Matthew's Pre-School

Held on

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(date)

Date to be reviewed

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(date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

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Name of signatory

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Role of signatory

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