

# Sunbeams Play

A haven for children and young people with Autism

## Safeguarding children

### 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. Our safeguarding policy is based on the three key commitments.

#### EYFS key themes and commitments

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

- Our safeguarding policy is underpinned by the two principles of Working Together (2015)
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility for services to be effective, each professional and organisation should play their full part.
- A child centred approach for services to be effective should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children and young people.

#### Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments.

*Key commitment 1.*

**Sunbeams Play** 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*

- The designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is:

**Monica Bates**

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In the absence of Monica Bates: **Sue Carr**

- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the disclosing and barring service before posts can be confirmed.
- 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 or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- 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.

*Key commitment 2*

**Sunbeams Play** 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 procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

*Responding to suspicions of abuse*

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or 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.

- 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 are aware of the other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as internet abuse and female genital mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.
- We will also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honoured based violence or maybe victims of child trafficking.

While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.

- 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 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 setting leader or manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.

NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

- We will take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We will take into account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the children's act 1989 .This may include users of the setting, students, 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 view 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 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**

- 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;
- Will not question the child;
- Will make a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
  - date and time of the observation or the disclosure.
  - exact words spoken by the child as far as possible.
  - name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time.
  - names of any other person present at the time.
- The records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept securely and confidentially.

### **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 where we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- Should a suspicion of abuse warrants a referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where a child may be placed in greater danger. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

### **Liaison with other agencies**

- We will work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy 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. (NSCB on line).
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We will notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.
- Should a referral is to be made to the local authority social care department, we act within the area's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

## **Allegations against staff**

- We will ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We will follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We will respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or 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 will refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social care department 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 this.
- We will 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 Manger 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 volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) 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.

**Sunbeams Play is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.**

## **Training**

- We will 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 neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.

- We will ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

### **Planning**

- Layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

### **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 will 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 will 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 Board.

### **Support to families**

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We will 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 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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.

## Legal framework

### Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) (2018)

### Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Human Rights Act (1999)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

This policy was adopted at a meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ name of setting

Held on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Date to be reviewed \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Name of signatory \_\_\_\_\_

Role of signatory \_\_\_\_\_

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