**Safeguarding Policy**

**INTRODUCTION**

Cygnets Nursery has a duty to be aware that abuse does happen in our society. Because of this, it is our aim to ensure that all children are treated with dignity and respect whilst ensuring their safety and welfare at all times, giving them the very best start in life.

Cygnets Nursery acknowledges the importance of protecting children from abuse. All

complaints, allegations or suspicions are taken very seriously. We cannot promise

confidentiality as the matter may develop in a way in which this cannot be honoured,

however, we have strict guidelines on sharing information which we adhere to.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

• Protecting children from maltreatment

• Preventing impairment of children’s health or development

• Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe

 and effective care.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The policy ensures that all staff in our Nursery is clear about the actions necessary with

regard to a safeguarding issue. It aims and objectives are:

• To nominate a CPLO (Child Protection Liaison Officer) and Deputy CPLO who have

 received the appropriate training and have up-to-date knowledge.

• To train and educate staff in Safeguarding matters (new starters to be booked on a

 course within the first week or as soon as possible with course availability).

• All staff to have an Enhanced Criminals Records Bureau certificate.

• To provide staff with suitable information which will enhance their knowledge of

 how to identify abuse. Leaflets, online information etc.

• To raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible

 cases of abuse.

• Ensure effective communication between staff with regard to information sharing.

• To ensure a cohesive and consistent procedure for those who encounter an issue

 of Safeguarding.

• To ensure that staff are trained and have access to the Surrey Safeguarding Children

 Board Manual and to update it as per Surrey guidelines.

• To notify Ofsted of any incidents or accidents that may affect the safeguarding of all

 children. Staff will also notify LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) for support

 and advice.

• LADO Number 01372 833321 or e-mail on masm.dutydesk@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk

• The Safeguarding Officer will have knowledge and training about information sharing

 and working in partnership with parents.

**OUR PRIME RESPONSIBILITY IS THE WELFARE AND WELLBEING OF ALL CHILDREN IN OUR CARE.**

All members of staff must be aware of the procedures for recording and reporting any concerns regarding the safety and welfare of all children in their care. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Children will be listened to and supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. All staff has a duty to the children, parents, carers and themselves to act as quickly and responsibly in any of the following instances that may come to their attention:

• Significant changes in children’s behaviour

• Deterioration in their general well-being

• Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse

• Signs of neglect

• Comments children make which give cause for concern

**NATURE OF THE CONCERN**

Staff may be in receipt of knowledge of safeguarding issues through:

• Observations of the child – changes in behaviour/mood/demeanour or physical signs

 that are a cause for concern.

• A child confiding in an adult something which is a cause for concern.

• Another parent reporting concerns they may have.

• Another agency contacting the Nursery, such as housing, to discuss the child.

**What is abuse?**

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Staff in the nursery recognise that child abuse can and does happen in all types of families. The different social and cultural backgrounds of the children do not constitute barriers to child abuse and in most cases children are abused by individuals known to them, rather than strangers. Child abuse can take many formats, but all instances can be broadly categorised under one of four headings; neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. The following identifies some possible manifestations of child abuse; however these lists are not exhaustive.

**Neglect** – is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and psychological needs, which may result in the serious impairment of the child’s health and development. For example; poor hygiene, untreated medical problems, emaciation or under nourishment. Staff may notice behavioural signs such as a child who always seems to be hungry, is constantly tired or talks of being left alone.

**Procedure:**

• The concern should be discussed with the parent/carer.

• Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such

 records.

• If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances the children’s services

 access centre will be notified.

**Physical abuse –** physical signs may involve unexplained bruising in unlikely areas, facial bruising, hand/finger marks, bite marks, burns, lacerations or abrasions. Staff may notice certain behavioural signs that also indicate physical abuse such as a child that shy’s away from physical contact, is withdrawn or aggressive towards others or their behaviour changes suddenly.

**Procedure:**

• All signs of marks/injuries to a child when they come into nursery will be recorded as

 soon as noticed by a staff member.

• The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest opportunity.

• Such discussions will be recorded and a signature obtained from the parent/carer who

 will have access to such records.

• If there appears to be any queries regarding the injury, the children’s services access

 centre should be informed immediately.

**Sexual Abuse –** Physical signs may include bruising consistent with being held firmly, discomfort in walking/sitting, pain or itching in the genital area, discharge or blood on under clothes, or loss of appetite. Behavioural signs may include drawings or play showing indicators of sexual activity, sexual explicit language, knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, seductive behaviour towards others, poor self-esteem and a child who is withdrawn.

**Procedure:**

• The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report.

• The observed instances will be reported to the DSMS/Nursery manager.

• The matter will be referred to the children’s services access centre immediately.

**Emotional Abuse –** Physical signs of emotional abuse may include a general failure to thrive, not meeting expected developmental milestones and behaviourally a child may be attention seeking tells lies, have an inability to have fun, low self-esteem, speech disorders, and be inappropriately affectionate towards others.

**Procedure:**

• The concerns should be discussed with the parent/carer by the DSMS/Manger.

• Such discussions will be recorded and the parent/carer will have access to such

 records.

• If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the children’s

 services access centre will be notified.

 However, when identifying any potential instances of abuse, staff must at all times be

 aware that children may demonstrate individual or combinations of the indicators

 detailed, but may not be the subject of abuse. Individual or isolated incidents do not

 necessarily indicate abuse. However, staff should always remain vigilant and must

 not ignore warnings signs and contact Children’s services access centre at any stage

 for support.

**Recording and reporting suspicions of abuse and or disclosures**

• Staff members involved are to notify the Designated Children Protection Liaison

 Officer.

• Staff will be asked to write an objective record of any observation or disclosure.

 The report will include the following:

• Child's name

• Date and time of the observation or the disclosure

• Exact words spoken by the child

• 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.

• The child’s parents will be informed at the same time as the report is made, except

 were the guidance of children’s services does not allow this. This will usually be

 the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating

 officers will inform parents. All discussions and records will be recorded and the

 parents/carers will have access to such records.

Cygnets Nursery has incident forms and body maps which would be completed for a safeguarding issue.

**RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION -** A checklist of how to respond:

1. Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the designated

 people, CPLO, Deputy CPLO’s and owners and LADO within 2 hours.

2. The CPLO will report the matter to the local Social Services Department (Children

 Schools and Families) via the Contact Centre, whether or not it is felt that this action

 is justified in the particular circumstances of the case.

3. The CPLO will telephone and report the matter to the local Children’s Schools and

 Families Duty Worker / LADO. A written record of the date and time of the report

 shall be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to

 whom the matter is reported. The telephone report will be confirmed in writing to

 the CSF Department within 24 hours and one kept on file at nursery.

4. The CPLO will discuss with the LADO what action will be taken to involve the Police

 and to inform the parents of the child and a note of that conversation should be made.

5. If the CPLO cannot be contacted within 2 hours of the initial concern arising, the

 Deputy CPLO must report the matter to the LADO and notify the CPLO and owners as

 soon as possible about the action taken.

6. The CPLO will notify the Owners as soon as practicable and in any event within 24

 hours of the initial concern arising.

7. If the nursery had a concern outside of working nursery hours we would call Social

 Services.

 Surrey County Councils Contact Centre 0300 200 1006

 Emergency Duty Team 01483 517898

It is the responsibility of any person who hears/witnesses or has concerns about a child to respond appropriately. The safeguarding of a child is paramount and a practitioner may be held accountable if they fail to act after being privy to information that later leads to further abuse, critical injuries or death. The duty of the member of staff is to ACT, after which time the professional bodies can further investigate the allegation.

**Partnership with Parents and Carers**

Parents and families will always be treated with respect in a non-judgemental manner whilst investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child. The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers within the nursery.