



## Sunshine, Sunbeams and Footsteps Nurseries



### Safeguarding Policy

**DSO = Designated Safeguarding Officer**

**DDSO = Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer**

As a company solely caring for children and young adults, we recognise the importance of protecting children and young people from any kind of abuse. We realise and actively implement statutory guidelines from the Early Years Foundation stage, the Children's Act 2006 and the UN convention on the rights of children bill. Our policy has been created in line with the London Child Protection Procedures, "Working together to safeguard children (2010)" and "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2006) and the legislation outlined in these documents.

We believe that the children and young adult's safety and well being is of paramount importance and train our staff on child protection as soon as they enter employment with us (whether paid or otherwise).

Our child protection policy refers to all children and young adults up to the age of 18 within our care, whether this is through being cared for by us, or as a young member of our staff team. Children of an understanding age are taught through daily group activities and through general conversations with their carers what is and what is not acceptable behaviour towards them; and also their rights as a child. They are also aware through these conversations that they can talk to any carers if they are upset or concerned about anything. We are confident that our training procedures regarding child protection will reflect on the positive relationships our staff have with children and young people.

#### **Our aim:**

Our aim is to provide a nursery environment, where children are safe from all forms of abuse. The welfare, safety and protection of the children in our care is paramount.

The nurseries are committed into building a culture of safety in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its care provision.

The managers and staff of Sunshine, Sunbeams and Footsteps Day Nurseries fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff including volunteers have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm.

In order to achieve this, the nursery will;

- 1 **Exclude all known offenders** - it will be made clear to all applicants for positions in the nurseries that positions are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitations of Offenders Act 1974. References will be required by all applicants that are appointed.
- 2 **Gain recognised references for all workers**- It is our policy that all adults who have access to children in our nurseries will have had supplied suitable references and been supplied with an enhanced CRB check, renewed every three years.

## Safeguarding Policy

- 3 **Seek and supply training for staff** - the nurseries are committed to encouraging and providing training to all staff. The nurseries will seek out appropriate child protection training for all staff or offer in-service training where appropriate.
- 4 **Respond appropriately to concerns regarding safeguarding issues** - where notable changes are witnessed to a child's behaviour, management will be informed and parents will be asked if there are any significant changes within the home that may explain the behaviour. Written records will be kept and stored confidentially on the child. Continuous concerns or non accidental injuries will be reported to Social Services, the parents having been informed primarily.
- 5 **Keep relevant records on each child** - written records will be kept on children, that include full name, date of birth, address, time and date of incident/concern, parent's comments, if relevant, and signature of person writing the report. All records will be stored confidentially in the office. Records will be based on factual information and observations. All communication made by the child, staff and parent will be recorded accurately.
- 6 **Liaise with relevant professional agencies** - relevant agencies will be contacted where concerns for the child's wellbeing are raised e.g. Social Services, visiting Educational Support Team, Health Visitors, Speech Therapists, child's GP, etc. Parents will be informed if such action is taken.
- 7 **Inform parents of all action taken** - parents will be informed when action is taken by the nursery too with regards to child protection concerns.
- 8 **Support families** - it is the nursery's aim to provide and offer support to families who are experiencing difficulties or stress in the home. Our aim is to help families and prevent concerns/issues occurring.
- 9 **Prevent abuse by means of good practice** - the nurseries prime aim is to provide a quality service to our clients. Staff will not be left alone with children for long periods of time. Children will be encouraged to develop independence, to make their own decisions, to identify and express their feelings positively.

The layout of the classrooms promotes constant supervision of all the children by staff.

### **Staff and Volunteering**

At each of the nurseries, there is an appointed designated person (**DSO**) who coordinates and takes the lead in any safeguarding issues which may arise. In their absence, there is also an appointed deputy designated safeguarding officer (**DDSO**) who would assume responsibility.

A list of these names can be found on the "Appointed Officers List" a copy of which is displayed on the parents notice board as well as being at the front of the nursery policy folder and shared with new staff, parents and students/volunteers in their policy pack when they join the nursery group.

In the event of the DSO or DDSO both being unavailable at any of the nurseries, the staff know to go to the most senior person on the premises if they have any cause for concern about the welfare of the children. All senior members of staff will have details of who this information should be passed to. *(Contact numbers are at the bottom of this policy).*

All persons involved in the day to day care of the children or who are left with any children unsupervised are informed of the need for us to carry out enhanced disclosure checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before they can be offered full time posts. A separate policy is in place to cover any circumstances where someone does not have a police check.

## Safeguarding Policy

All candidates, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the nursery is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children. All applicants will be required to go through the CRB process in order to establish their suitability. (see our CRB and recruitment policy and procedures)

On staff induction the nursery will ensure that copies of our policies and procedures are given out to all new members of staff and long term students. Policies which are relevant to all new staff and long term students on safeguarding are:

- Equal Opportunities
- Safeguarding policy
- Aims of the Nursery
- Showing Respect for the Staff and Children
- Staff Conduct
- Behaviour
- Verbal Behaviour Management
- Confidentiality

Regular training will be offered to all staff in order to keep them updated with current procedures. *(In accordance with the DfES, this is every 3 years and every 2 for the designated member of staff).*

Staff will have appraisals yearly and supervision meetings throughout the year. This will be where the managers can have open discussions but in a private way with the staff, get feedback on the staff's working environment and to discuss any concerns or queries staff may have. Discussions in meetings will be recorded.

The nursery will make available its policy and procedure on Safeguarding to staff, students, volunteers and families when they join the nursery.

Any amendments to the policy will be passed on to them immediately.

### **Staff to child ratios**

1:3 for under 2's

1:4 for over 2's

1:8 for over 3's

At the start and end of day and at sleep times we have extra cover and supernumerary staff that are in the building should help be needed.

### **Defining Abuse**

Child abuse is to cause harm to a child or fail to take action to prevent harm.

### **Categories of Abuse**

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

### **What is abuse and neglect?**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### Possible Signs or Indicators

#### **Abuse or neglect**

Factors described below are frequently found in cases of child abuse or neglect, their presence is not proof that abuse has taken but must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm

In an abusive relationship a child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to their age and development.
  
- Persistently avoid routine child health services or treatment when child is ill.
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about the child (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or leave child with inappropriate care givers

#### **Physical abuse**

The following signs are often recognised as indicators or concern:

- An explanation that is inconsistent with the injury
- Several different explanations for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking medical help
- Parents uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a cry for help)
- Frequent use of different doctors and A&E
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries
- Bruising
- Repeated multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally.
- Variation in colour to indicate injuries caused at different times
- Outline of an object used (e.g., belt, hand prints or hair brush)
- Bruising or tears around or behind earlobes indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Grasp marks on young children
- Bruising on arms buttocks and thighs may be indications of sexual abuse
- Bite marks leaving a clear impression of teeth, they are oval or crescent shaped approx .3cm in diameter

#### **Burns or scalds**

- This can be difficult to distinguish between accidents and non accidental.
- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be a friction burn if along the bony part of spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of a uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid. A child getting into hot water of own accord and struggling to get out
- Old scars indicating previous wounds which did not have medical treatment

#### **Scars**

- A large numbers of scars of different sizes or ages or on different parts of the body

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as the signs are behavioural rather than physical. The following indicators **may** be signs of emotional abuse:

- Development delay
- Abnormal attachment between child and parent (anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment)
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Appeasing behaviour towards others
- Frozen watchfulness in pre-school children
- Low self esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a loner, difficulty in relating to others.

### **Sexual abuse**

#### **If a child makes disclosure of sexual abuse it is very important that they are taken seriously**

- Allegations can be often indirect as the child tests the professional's response. There can be no physical indications and are likely to be emotional/behavioural indicators only.
- Behavioural indicators
- Inappropriate sexual conduct
- Sexual explicit behaviour play or conversation inappropriate to child's age.
- Contact or non-contact sexual harmful behaviour
- Continual and inappropriate masturbation
- Physical indicators
- Pain or itching on genital area
- Injuries to the genital area, or anal area, bruising to the buttocks
- Sex Offenders have no common profile and it is important for professionals to avoid attaching any significance to stereotypes around their background or behaviour. Media attaches much importance to "stranger danger" but research indicates that 80 per cent sexual offending occurs in the context of a known person.

### **Neglect**

Neglect in an isolated case will not lead to agencies becoming involved. As professionals we need to compile a chronology and discuss concerns with other agencies which may be involved with the family.

- When working with families in areas where there is poverty and deprivation we may be become desensitised to some of the indicators.
- These include: failure to provide essential physical needs (food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical or dental care)
- Failure to provide essential emotional care, including feeling loved and valued, to live in a safe secure home environment)
- A child may be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected patterns.
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Frequent absences from Pre-school
- Child has inappropriate carers (too young or complete strangers)
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Disabled children can be particularly vulnerable to neglect due to the increased level of care they may require.

**What the nurseries responsibilities are in dealing with suspected cases?**

- Ensuring the child's welfare, safety and protection is paramount.
- We will act in the best interests of the child at all times.
- The designated Safeguarding Officer will immediately contact the Referral and Assessment team in the event of a disclosure either from the child, another member of staff, parent or user of the nursery.
- We will treat all parties involved with respect and not pass judgement or make assumptions and we will offer support to those involved.
- We will respect confidentiality.
- To work co-operatively with all outside agencies.
- To notify Ofsted in cases of a member of staff being involved in a safeguarding issue.
- To work in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the EYFS relating to Safeguarding Children.
- To maintain written records of all concerns even if there is no need to make an immediate referral. This could include the completion of a "body map" showing exact size, colour and place of injury and must include the date and name of person recording injury. All records will be locked away with only those persons with authority having access to them.

**Allegations regarding person(s) working in or on behalf of the nursery (including volunteers)**

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of Sunshine, Sunbeams or Footsteps Day Nursery that he or she has:

- a. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- b. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- c. Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children,

We will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document and we will always follow the procedures outlined in the London Child Protection Procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children. This includes allegations against staff in their personal lives.

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be founded. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly, in line with agreed procedures and outcomes recorded.

**Initial Response to an allegation or concern:**

**Initial Action by person receiving or identifying an allegation or concern**

- Treat the matter seriously and keep an open mind
- Make a written record of the information using the settings incident form, including the time, date and place of incident/s, persons present and what was said and sign and date this
- Immediately report the matter to the DSO or DDSO in their absence or where the DSO is the subject of the allegation

**Initial Action by the Designated Safeguarding Officer** (The DSO will normally be the Owner/manager. If the DSO is the subject of the allegation, then the director will take the following action:

- Obtain written details of the concern or allegation but do not investigate or interview child, adult or witnesses
- Contact the Referral and Assessment Team or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) within 1 working day

## Safeguarding Policy

- Discuss with the LADO next steps using the London Child Protection Procedures Flow charts Allegations/Concerns Against Staff
- Inform the owner of the allegation

### **Subsequent Action by the Designated Senior Manager/owner**

- Action to be informed by any professional strategy meeting held.
- Contribute to the child protection process by attending professional strategy meetings.
- Conduct a disciplinary investigation, if an allegation strategy meeting indicates the need for this
- Maintain contact with the LADO
- Ensure clear and comprehensive records regarding the allegation, and action taken and outcome are retained on the staff member's personnel file
- The decision to suspend a member of staff is the responsibility of the line manager, taking into account of any advice given by the LADO. The protection of children and the staff member must be the paramount consideration and suspension must be without prejudice and without delay in line with disciplinary procedures.
- Refer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority, if this outcome is agreed with the LADO

### **Whistle Blowing on a parent**

All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. ( see Whistle blowing Policy)

If a concern regarding a child's wellbeing and safety is raised then the following action must be taken:

1. Speak to your DSO immediately. Bring with you any written information, records of development, observations made on the child concerned.
2. In the case of an injury to the child, please ask a senior member of staff to look at the injury.
3. Contact the parent and ask for an explanation regarding the injury, if you feel the explanation does not support the injury and need to report the incident to Social Services, speak to a supervisor first. They will take the necessary action.

In the case of marks and bruising on a child, staff will complete an accident at home form. You must record the location of the mark/bruise on the child's body, the approximate size, the colour and shape, the date when you noticed the mark/bruise, and what explanation you were given by the parent if any. This information must be passed on to a senior supervisor or management, who will deal with the incident appropriately. The manager will then pass this information on to the DSO who will then see if any other action will be taken. All confidential material relating to must be treated as confidential and stored in the office.

If a child discloses an incident of abuse to you, do not question the child, refer the incident straight away to DSO or the DDSO recalling what the child has said accurately. Do not add to the statement or leave out any information. Again the nursery confidentiality policy must be adhered to on such matters, do not discuss this with any other member of staff.

Changes in a child's normal behaviour pattern may be a sign that the child is suffering from a form of abuse, however do not jump to conclusions or make your own interpretations or make comments. Check with the parent that the child is not going through any changes at home e.g. moving house, arrival of a new baby, one or both parents are working away from home or the child's parents have separated. All of these can have an effect on a child's behaviour.



## Safeguarding Policy

If however everything is as normal, monitor the child and record the child's behaviour.

### **What happens when an allegation is made against a parent or carer from a child? This is referred to as a disclosure.**

- The child will be comforted and reassured that the person they are telling believes them.
- No promises are made to the child to keep their disclosures a secret, but they are gently told who else must be told and that they will tell them what will happen next.
- The child may be asked some gentle open ended questions in order to ascertain more information.
- Notes will be written as soon as possible after the disclosure with the exact language the child used. Any questions asked will be noted with the responses given by the child.
- Any witnesses to the conversation will be named.
- The date, time and place of the disclosure will be noted.
- The named Safeguarding Officer will be informed immediately. It is then their responsibility to pass the information shared on to Social Services.
- Wherever possible, we would want to discuss our concerns with the parent/guardian, however, there may be times when our concerns are such that we are obliged to follow the procedures laid down by the Local Safeguarding Board.

Child Protection is provided by the Social Services Department, which supplies support for families whose children are in need of safeguarding to promote their welfare and upbringing.

All staff members should be aware of the possible indications of abuse or neglect and of the procedure for dealing with suspected cases.

Should any person involved with the disclosure for any reason be unhappy with the way that the DSO has handled any issue of child protection, please contact Referral and Assessment team straight away. Their number can be found at the bottom of this policy.

Should you wish to view our public liability insurance certificate it is displayed on our information board by the front door.

### **Procedure to follow in event of child protection concerns**

DSO - Designated Safeguarding Officer

DDSO – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer

LADO: Local Authority Designated Officer at 1<sup>st</sup> Response

### **If you have a cause for concern that a child may be being abused then please do the following:**

1. Report immediately with your findings or suspicions to the DSO
2. The DSO will then report to the LADO within 1 working day.
3. Do not discuss this sensitive matter with anyone else apart from the DSO.
4. The LADO will establish whether there is any evidence that establishes the allegation is false or unfounded or if a criminal offence has taken place.
5. The LADO will then report their findings with the police child protection team that is based in Woodford.
6. The police safeguarding team will then do their own report by taking statements from relevant people and with the help of the DSO.

## Safeguarding Policy

### **Subsequent Action**

Following such a referral, enquires will be undertaken by Social Services and possibly the Police. Staff may be required to provide statements and attend an Initial Child Protection Conference. When a child leaves the nursery their child protection file is copied for the new establishment and sent to the new setting as soon as possible separately from the main pupil file.

### **Confidentiality**

This policy has been devised to meet the guidelines as set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and conforms to the guidance set by the London Borough of Waltham Forest and the Local Safeguarding Board. (see Confidentiality Policy)

The nursery has the right to share any information regarding child protection with other childcare professionals. All information will be kept confidential.

### **Policy in Confidentiality**

Our work will bring us into contact with confidential information. To ensure that all those using and working in the nursery can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:

1. Parents/carers will have ready access to files and records of their own children - but not any other child.
2. Staff will not discuss individual children with people other than the parents/carers of that child.
3. Information given by parents/carers to nursery staff will be passed on to other staff members on a need to know basis.
4. If outside agencies are to be used i.e. speech therapist, portage workers, etc then parents will be consulted first and all paperwork will be made available to the parents.
5. Personal issues will remain confidential to the people involved.
6. Any anxieties/evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the nursery except for the child's key worker and Manager.
7. The nursery will comply with all requirements of the Data Protection Act.

### **Where to contact in the event of a suspicion of abuse.**

Referral and assessment Team	020 8496 2311 / 2316
Police Child Protection Team - Woodford	020 8345 3670
Leyton Police Station	020 8556 8855

Safeguarding Policy

**Duties of the Safeguarding Officer**

The named / designated Safeguarding officer must be a willing and capable candidate who takes his / her responsibility seriously and have the skills and knowledge to act on their findings. They must liaise with the managers and deputy managers as well as being able to act under their own initiative.

Typically the designated safeguarding officer will be responsible for:

- To ensure the nursery’s safeguarding policy and procedures are followed.
- To ensure the staff know how to make contact with social services and police staff responsible for dealing with child protection concerns both during and after office hours.
- They must report any concerns to social services or the police (N.B. urgent concerns should be reported immediately by those aware of them even if the designated person is not available)
- They will act as a source of advice on all child protection matters and seek further advice and guidance from local statutory agencies as needed.
- To ensure that records are kept of any concern about a child or adult and any conversations or referrals to statutory agencies.
- To ensure that any such records is kept safely and securely and that any such matters are to be kept confidential
- To attended relevant safeguarding training and oversee the training needs and provision for all staff.
- Encourage good practice and supervision of procedures to protect the children.
- Provide practical support and assistance in managing the effects of allegations or suspicions of child abuse within the nursery
- Ensure parents are made aware of the safeguarding policy, and understand our role with regards to referrals.
- Ensure safeguarding policy is updated and reviewed annually.

Signature of person responsible for Safeguarding within the company:-

Name .....

Signature .....

## Safeguarding Policy

### **Code of conduct for staff, students and volunteers** **With regards to safeguarding**

1. The nursery has a duty of care to all those we work with and this policy is written to help support our desire to fulfil this duty of care.
2. Always remember that while you are caring for other people's children you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the nursery must be uppermost in your mind at all times.
3. Always remember you have to protect yourself from any circumstances where you could be accused or questioned about your conduct around safeguarding never put yourself in a compromising position.
4. When supervising activities off of the nursery premises it is important to maintain a professional manner.
5. Never use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
6. Do not smoke in front of the children.
7. Do not use un-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol. If you have been prescribed medication by your doctor that you think may make you drowsy or it may affect your work please notify the management team.
8. Never behave in a way that frightens or intimidates a child in your care.
9. Do not use racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language.
10. You should not invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside the nursery.
11. You should not engage in any sexual activity (this will include using sexualised language) with young workers (students) you meet through your working duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.
12. Physical contact should be open and initiated by the child's needs only e.g. a hug if the child becomes upset or help with toileting. Always prompt children to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help.
13. Do not ask or force a child for kisses if they would like to give you a hug or a kiss they will ask you. No child should be kissed on the lips by a member of staff, an affectionate peck the cheek or head is much more appropriate.
14. Do listen to the children and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
15. Do work as a team with your co-workers. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from the children and be consistent in enforcing it.
16. If you have to speak to a child about their behaviour, remember you are challenging "what they did" and not "who they are."
17. Make sure you have read our safeguarding policy and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.
18. Do seek advice and support from your colleagues and your safeguarding officer with regards to child protection.
19. Do be clear with anyone disclosing and any matters that could concern the safety and well being of a child that you cannot guarantee to keep the information to yourself and that you may have to pass this information on to the correct person.

This policy will be reviewed within the Ofsted guidelines of every 12 months.

January 2014  
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