



Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) Policy

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Safeguarding responsibility

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Happy Nursery Days is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and will:

- Set clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children which are explicitly stated in policy documents
- Ensure there is a clear commitment to safeguarding children by senior management
- Have clear lines of accountability within the nursery for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Have appropriate whistle blowing procedures and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding children to be addressed
- Maintain accurate records of decision making and actions

The policy is consistent with the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2013), Lambeth Safeguarding Children Board and 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2014)

What is child abuse?

Physical Abuse

This 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/carer or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's 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
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's development capability, as well as over protection and limitations of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another (including domestic violence)
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- Exploitation or corrupting of children

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material, sexual online images, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical 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 occur when a parent/carer or carer fails to:

- Provide adequate food, shelter or clothing
- Protect a child from physical harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is: "Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality." (Home Office definition)

The main characteristic of domestic violence is that the behaviour is intentional and is calculated to exercise power and control within a relationship.

Children who witness domestic violence suffer emotional and psychological harm.

The London Child Protection Procedures (2007) states (5.11.35) states that:

"Where there is domestic violence in families with a child under 12 months old (including an unborn child), even if the child was not present, any single incident of domestic violence should trigger a child protection investigation".

Regardless of age, any child who is suffering actual harm or risk of significant harm from domestic violence should be referred to Lambeth Social Care. In all other cases, where the risk may be more moderate, a Common Assessment Form (CAF) should be completed which includes safety planning for the child/ren.

Private fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement between families without the involvement of the Local Authority, for the care of a child or children under the age of 16 years (18 if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative for 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as parents, step-parents, siblings, siblings of a parent and grandparents.

Privately fostered children are a diverse and sometimes vulnerable group. They include:

- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family for educational purposes
- Asylum seeking and refugee children
- Children cared for by another family due to parental ill-health
- Children of prisoners placed with distant relatives

Childcare staff must notify Lambeth Children's Social Care if they:

- Become aware of a private fostering arrangement which has not been notified to the Local Authority by the parent/carers

Have doubts about whether a child's carers are actually their parents and there is evidence to support those doubts

Indicators of child abuse

All staff must understand common signs that may indicate a child is suffering abuse. These may include:

- Unexplained concerns about health and development
- Concerns about the parent/carer/child relationship
- Mental ill health, substance or alcohol misuse which is affecting parent/carers capacity
- Inappropriate explanation for injuries to the child
- Domestic violence in the home environment
- Concerns about an unborn child where there are previous concerns about an older child
- Information from a third party
- Significant changes in a child's behaviour
- Deterioration in the child's well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse
- The comments children make which give cause for concern

Staff should always record and discuss any concerns with the Nominated Safeguarding Children Advisor at the earliest opportunity. These indicators may require further consultation with, or referral to, Lambeth Children's Social Care.

All parent/carers should be advised that, to avoid misunderstandings any injuries/marks sustained outside the provider's hours should be shared with the staff on arrival.

Likewise, the Happy Nursery Days will tell the parent/carer collecting a child of any injury/mark occurring during a child's time spent at the nursery. Staff shall ask parents/carers to sign a record to say they have been informed of any injury/mark.

Responding to a child telling you about abuse

Whenever a child tells you they are suffering or have suffered harm through abuse, you should:

- Listen carefully to all that the child has to say
- Make no observable judgement
- Ask open questions that encourage the child to speak in their own words
- Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone
- Make no promises that cannot be kept; such as promising not to tell anybody what they are being told
- Let the child know what you are going to do next in an age-appropriate way
- Clarify all concerns with parent/carer unless it is thought that it will further jeopardise the child's safety or in the cases of sexual abuse

Staff will report all suspected or actual abuse to the lead Designated Safeguarding Officer or the manager, without delay.

Where a child might require immediate medical attention due to abuse or neglect, the lead Designated Safeguarding Officer will arrange medical care and inform the doctor of their suspicions at the earliest opportunity. Further advice will be sought from Lambeth Social Care if required.

Role of the lead Designated Safeguarding Officer

The lead Designated Safeguarding Officer shall:

- Refer any child protection concerns to Lambeth Social Care or the Police in line with the governments statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013'
- Inform Ofsted without delay of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises
- Liaise with the manager or Ekaya Housing Association Head Office regarding any safeguarding concerns
- Be a source of advice and expertise on child protection matters to all staff
- Keep all staff updated on current safeguarding procedures, and ensure new or temporary staff receive adequate induction and training regarding their child protection responsibilities
- Have a thorough understanding of their nursery's Safeguarding/Child Protection policy, Lambeth Safeguarding Children Board procedures, and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013' guidelines
- Maintain accurate and secure child protection records
- Ensure arrangements are in place for Safeguarding training for all nursery staff

The lead Designated Safeguarding Children Officer will have suitable experience and Child Protection training (Level One or Group A Child Protection training, and Two Day LSCB Multi-agency training, completed within the last two years).

Referring child protection concerns

Happy Nursery Days shall refer all actual or suspected cases of child abuse to:

- The Lambeth Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) –
- Eva Simcock Tel: 020 7926 4679
- Denys Rasmussen Tel 02079268915 (Safeguarding Manager-Early Years)
- Out of hours Emergency Tel 02079261000
- Local Police Station - Tel 02073261212
- Ofsted - Tel: 03001231231

This includes concerns or allegations directly from children, parent/carer or another staff member. Child protection concerns must be referred regardless of whether the suspected or actual abuse has occurred on the childcare premises, or at another location.

All notifications made by telephone must be followed up by a written referral on the local interagency form as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours. The referral form should be faxed to the appropriate agencies.

Happy Nursery Days shall inform Ofsted, without delay, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

Happy Nursery Days acknowledges that whilst it is good practice to inform parent's prior to any referral, it is not necessary to have the parent's or carer's consent when making a child protection referral.

However, parents/carer's will be informed when a referral to Lambeth Social Care is made, unless it will increase the risk of harm to the child, or in the cases of sexual abuse. If in any doubt about what should be discussed with the parent/carer, seek advice from Lambeth Social Care.

Information sharing

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The following principles would be used when considering whether information can be shared:

- Happy Nursery Days will inform the parent/carer, and children about how information will be shared and their agreement to it. The exception to this is where this would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.
- Where there is a concern that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be given the greater weight.
- Staffs should seek advice where in doubt
- Ensure any information shared is accurate, up-to-date, and necessary for the purpose you are sharing it, shared only with the people that need to see it, and is shared securely
- Always record the reasons for your decision – whether you share information or not staff should ensure that all concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.

Records

Full written records will be maintained and securely stored for all child protection concerns, referrals to Lambeth Social Care, or allegations made against a member of staff. This should include:

- Full details of concern or allegation, which records where possible the words used by a parent/carer or child to describe the incident
- Full name, Date of birth, and address of child
- Full details of all other parties involved
- Relevant dates, times, and locations
- Details of any witnesses or other relevant evidence
- Decisions and action that have been taken, and why

Staff support and training

At Happy Nursery Days all staff, volunteers and students working in the nursery shall be provided with adequate support and training to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. This would include the following as a minimum:

- All staff and volunteers will be given a copy of the nursery's safeguarding and child protection policy, and informed who the lead Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer is.
- Safeguarding responsibilities will be clearly explained during the induction process.
- All staff and volunteers will be provided training on safeguarding and child protection. This will include the main indicators of child abuse, and how to respond and refer concerns to the appropriate services. The training will be updated every three years.
- All staff and volunteers will be provided with a copy of "What to do if you suspect a child is being abused – Summary" booklet during their induction.
- All staff and volunteers shall receive regular ongoing training and policy updates regarding safeguarding children.
- All staff and volunteers are provided with supervision and management support in line with their safeguarding responsibilities.

Safer recruitment

All staff, students and volunteers will be carefully recruited, hold verified references and have an enhanced DBS check prior to having unsupervised access to children.

The policy was modified and adopted on June 2014

Signed: Caroline Ofosuhene

Role of signatory: Manager/Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer

This policy was reviewed and updated: April 2017