

Safeguarding Children Policy

Children have a right to protection from being hurt, and from violence, abuse and neglect (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19)

Statement of Intent

St. Mary's playgroup will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Staff have undertaken training in Child Protection, and this is updated where and when appropriate. We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and that parents are aware of them too.

At Playgroup, only staff who have the relevant statutory checks will be left alone with a child.

If an allegation were made against a member of staff, this would be dealt with by the Supervisor, who will liaise with the Committee as how best to proceed. Should allegations be made against the Supervisor, the matter will be dealt with by the Committee.

When taking on new members of staff, it will be made clear to all applicants that the position is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Statutory checks will be made on all new members of staff. All applicants for work will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least one reference. All references will be followed up. Should applicants have unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, then explanations and confirmation of these will be sought. All appointments will be subject to a probation period and will not be confirmed unless Playgroup is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

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 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.

Playgroup is committed to working with parents and where possible, will discuss concerns with them. However, there may be circumstances where, in the interests of a child, parents would not be informed of a child protection concern. The Playgroup Supervisor works closely with the Social Services for advice or to make a referral. Where possible, the

Playgroup Supervisor will attend relevant care meetings to provide information for care planning. A written report is provided should Playgroup not be able to attend.

Liaison with other agencies

- Playgroup will support on-going work with children and their families by liaising with Social Services and other relevant Agencies i.e. Health Visitors.
- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have the current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff and ensure that all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have any concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding 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 children's social care to work together.

In accordance with:

The Children Act 1989, 2004
Care Standards Act 2000
Protection of Children Act 1999
Data Protection Act 1998
Human Rights Act 1989
The Children Act (Every Child Matters) 2004
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Sexual Offences Act 2003
Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
Equalities Act 2010
Data Protection Act 1998 Non-Statutory Guidance

Our Safeguarding policies must be read in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct and a range of other welfare policies this setting adheres to, as well as with the Assistants code of conduct. All our policies are available to staff, parents, Ofsted and the Local Authority.

It is the policy of the setting that all members of staff, including volunteers, apprentices, and students, will read and sign to signify that they have read and understood all safeguarding policies. This forms part of their induction process.

All staff and volunteers are expected to make themselves familiar with the policies and procedures of the setting, and these are to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff or if they have serious concerns about a child.

In our setting we have a strong ethos which recognises that every member of staff/volunteer has a key role in the prevention of harm, early identification, intervention and support for children at risk of significant harm.

We endeavour to provide an environment in which children feel valued, cared for and feel safe. Children are listened to and all concerns are taken seriously and referred to the relevant safeguarding authorities.

We are fully aware that we need to take action as early as possible, and we have the correct procedures in place to do so. Staff are also trained so that they too are aware.

Children are spoken to in words that is appropriate for the ages and stages of their linguistic development and mental understanding.

Realistic boundaries are set, and all children are encouraged to behave appropriately and with consideration for others.

Our setting follows the current statutory guidance for Safeguarding.

Our lead Safeguarding is Lorraine Mold and she is responsible for maintaining their knowledge and understanding, as well making other staff aware of their responsibilities about the safety and welfare of the children in our care.

September 2019

Review Date: February 2021