

31. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY (Child Protection)

Statement of Intent

Our nursery wants to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Safeguarding the welfare and wellbeing of children is paramount. Children have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from any abuse/neglect in whatever form. All staff follow the Safeguarding Children Policy.

Aims

Our aims are to:

- create an environment in our nursery which encourages children to develop a positive self image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
- help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults;
- encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- enable children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches; and
- work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the welfare of all our children.

In the Dept of Education document Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018), safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- **protecting children from maltreatment**
- **preventing impairment of children's health or development**
- **ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care ; and**
- **taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes**

CHILD PROTECTION

Purpose

It is the duty of staff and volunteers to protect children and young people whom they come into contact with from abuse. Managers and staff will work together to ensure effective implementation of this Child Protection Policy and Procedures ensuring the safety of children. This is part of our Safeguarding children procedure.

Definition

Child Protection is defined as 'Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare'. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. We recognise that we have an explicit duty to safeguard children who are in need, or who may suffer significant harm. The 4 recognised categories of abuse are:

- Physical Abuse.
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Acorns Nursery School works to provide an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which there is a prompt and appropriate response to any suspicion of abuse. In order to achieve this we will:

1. Recruit Suitable Staff

All staff working at Acorns in a paid or voluntary capacity will have been recruited using the following procedure:

Applicants for posts within Acorns are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All applicants for work within Acorns, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least one reference. All such references will be followed up. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.

Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers are followed to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at Acorns or has access to the children.

All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless Acorns is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children. It is a requirement in EYFS (3:11) that members of staff are required to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).

Volunteers do not work unsupervised.

Staffing levels are appropriate to ensure the safety of the children:

2 - 3 years 1 adult for every 4 children 3 – 4 years 1 adult for every 8 children

Safeguarding training provided by Surrey Safeguarding Children Board and Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service (EYCS) is accessed regularly for all adults to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Staff will refresh this training every three years with the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' update training.

We ensure that, as part of their induction training, all members of staff are aware of the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns about safeguarding.

The DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) for Acorns is Stephanie Howard and Ali Goldup deputy (Deputy DSL). Both have attended Surrey Safeguarding Children Board's 2 day, multi-agency training course. This training is updated every two years.

All Acorns staff received Safeguarding training update courses in April 2018. All members of staff receive safeguarding training at least every three years.

Details of current Committee Chairs can be found in the entrance.

A copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - Summary 2018' is kept on the premises to be referred to in the event of suspected abuse.

Acorns have access to Surrey Safeguarding Children Board's procedure online at www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding. The site is checked by the DSL for updates and amendments at the beginning of each term.

2. Follow good practice guidelines

The layout of the playrooms and the positioning of staff at Acorns allows for constant supervision.

No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one to one situation without being visible to others.

Security measures are in place to ensure control over who comes into Acorns so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. Mobile phones, and devices that are capable of capturing images are not allowed to be used by visitors when visiting the nursery. Details of visitors to Acorns are recorded.

Children are encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings, and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children develop understanding of why and how to keep safe and to have the self-confidence and vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

Acorns staff work to create 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. This is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Information taken from families before admission (name, date of birth, address, contact details) is updated on entry, and then updated annually, or more frequently as required. The Nursery Leader is responsible for updating and storing this information.

3. Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse

Acorns will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and will work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - Summary 2015'.

The abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and exploitation as well as neglect. When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may become apparent through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.

Possible signs of abuse may include:

- significant changes in children's behaviour;
- deterioration in general well-being;
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- children's comments which give cause for concern;
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home; or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

Where such evidence is observed in a child's behaviour, a specific and confidential record will be set up, quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development. (Such record keeping may also be prompted by a pattern being detected in entries to the incident book, such as a child regularly arriving at Acorns with specific injuries.)

The record will include:

- The address and age of the child:
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- where possible the exact words spoken by the child;
- the names of any other person present at the time;
- the name and signature of the recorder
- should any marks be found on the child, a body map will be used in the presence of a witness

These records will be kept in a separate file, which is stored in a secure place, and will not be accessible to anyone other than the designated DSL, deputy DSL and relevant key person or others as deemed appropriate by the DSL.

Disclosures

Should a child make a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff should reassure the child and let them know they are not to blame, but it is also important not to promise the child confidentiality as this will not be possible in the event of further investigations.

The role of staff is to listen to and support the child, but not to put words in their mouth.

Staff should take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to the child or by asking questions of the child.

Disclosure information should be recorded as above.

Children arriving with injuries

Parents of children arriving at nursery with noticeable injuries are asked the reasons for the injury. Staff are made aware of injuries and a record of where marks appear, and details about size etc are made using a named body map.

Informing parent / carers

If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parent/carer/s will be informed. However if sharing information is likely to put the child at risk of significant harm, we will seek advice from the Duty Assessment Team via the Surrey Children's Single Point of Access (SPA).

If it is felt that the child will be at risk of significant harm if allowed to go home with a parent / carer, we will contact the Surrey children's social care via the single point of

Access (C-SPA). If necessary, the police will be contacted to stop the child from leaving Acorns.

Making Referrals

Referrals are made to the Surrey Children's Single Point of Access (SPA) 0300 470 9100.

Confirm referrals in writing within 48 hours, using the Multi-Agency Referral Form including a body map where appropriate. Download latest version of the form from www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding and click on 'guidance for professionals'. Referral forms also available on the SSCB (Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board website)

Complete an Initial Assessment within 10 working days. The initial assessment will decide if the child is in need or at risk. If the child is at risk there is actual or likely significant harm. The referrer will receive feedback once the assessment is complete.

Allegations against Staff, Students, or Volunteers

In the event that an allegation of child abuse is made against a member of the Acorns staff, the individual against whom the allegation is made will be formally informed of the allegation by the Nursery Leader/Committee Chair, as appropriate, and immediately suspended on full pay while an investigation is carried out.

The incident must be reported to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) on 0300 123 1650 within 24 hours, even if the member of staff resigns. The LADO will advise of the next steps to take, how to manage talking about the concerns with the adult who may have harmed the child, how to inform the child's parents/carers, how the employer safeguards children throughout any investigation and what they expect of you and other agencies involved.

A risk assessment must be carried out into how the incident occurred.

Ofsted must be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Ofsted must also be notified of any action taken in respect of the allegation. It is good practice to ring Ofsted within 24 hours of the allegation being made (0300 1234 666) and to follow this up in writing no later than 14 days. It is an offence to fail to comply with this requirement.

Contact EYCS Safeguarding Advisor on lado@surreycc.gov.uk (for allegations made against adults working with children)

It is the responsibility of the Nursery Leader/Committee Chair to gather information where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, not the DSL.

All staff members may then be required to sign a confidentiality form, requesting that the matter is not to be discussed outside of Acorns or amongst themselves at work, as they may be asked to give a statement which could later be used as evidence in Court. This is in order to protect all parties from rumor and false allegations, unintentional or otherwise.

Any written records relating to such an incident should be kept in a secure location. If Acorns dismisses or removes a member of staff or volunteer from working with children because they have harmed or may have harmed a child, the Leader/Committee Chair has a legal duty to inform the DBS. If the member of staff resigns during an investigation or before they are dismissed, the DBS must still be informed. Telling the DBS does not mean the person

will be automatically barred from working with children. Disclosure and Barring Service Tel: 0870 90 80 81 www.gov.uk/dbs customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk

Allegations against Nursery Leader

In the event that an allegation of child abuse is made against the leader, the individual against whom the allegation is made will be formally informed of the allegation by the Committee Chair and at least one other Committee member and immediately suspended on full pay while an investigation is carried out.

A risk assessment must be carried out into how the incident occurred.

Notify LADO within 24 hours, even if the member of staff resigns. Notify Ofsted, within 24 hours, 0300 1234 666, and in writing within 14 days. Notify EYCS Safeguarding Advisor (for allegations made against adults working with children) on lado@surrey.gov.uk.

All staff members may then be required to sign a confidentiality form, requesting that the matter is not to be discussed outside of Acorns or amongst themselves at work, as they may be asked to give a statement which could later be used as evidence in Court. This is in order to protect all parties from rumor and false allegations, unintentional or otherwise.

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Support families

Acorns will take every step to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff and volunteers in the nursery, with the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount.

Where abuse at home is suspected, Acorns will continue to support the child and family while investigations proceed.

Liaise with other bodies

Acorns maintain contact with the Surrey safe guarding team who will be the official first point of contact when needed.

Useful contact details are listed below:

(If the child lives out of Surrey, go to county where child lives)

Surrey Children's Single Point of Access (SPA) Confirm referral in writing within 48 hours	Local Area Contact Team 0300 470 9100 (Mon-Fri 9-5) 01483 517898 Emergency duty team (Out of Hours 5pm – 9am including weekends) csmash@surreycc.gov.uk for a child ascmarsh@surreycc.gov.uk for a adult
Allegations Against Staff LADO (phone within 24 hours) EYCS Safeguarding Advisor	South West Surrey 0300 123 1650 LADO@surreycc.gov.uk South West Surrey 01372 833826 lado@surreycc.gov.uk
OFSTED (good practice to phone within 24 hours and compulsory to submit written report within 14 days)	0300 1234 666
Early Help SW Hub	01483 519722
Surrey Safeguarding Children Board For referral forms SW RAIS team (Referral Assessment Information Service)	<u>www.surreyscb.org.uk</u> 0300 123 1640
Acorns Committee Chair Persons	Details of current Committee Chairs can be found in Acorns entrance.
OFSTED Whistleblowing Hotline OFSTED (General) Helpline	0300 123 3155 0300 123 1231
Whistleblowing disclosures can also be submitted to OFSTED by email on whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or by post to WBHL OFSTED Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD	
Local Police (Guildford - ask for Child Protection Team) Police (non urgent – including radicalization & FGM) Police (emergency)	01483 571 212 101 999
NSPCC Helpline www.nspcc.org.uk	0808 800 5000
Stop It Now (child sexual abuse awareness, prevention and advice organisation) www.stopitnow.org.uk	0808 1000 900
	0808 2000 247

National domestic Abuse Helpline	01483 776822
Your Sanctuary Surrey 24hr Helpline	
SSCB website for referral forms SSCB Support Team:	Surreyscb.org.uk 01372 833330
Assessment Consultation Therapy (ACT) team	act@surreycc.gov.uk 01483 519606
SW RAIS team (Referral, Assessment, Information Service)	0300 123 1640
DSL Steph Howard (works all day Mon, Wed and Fri)	01483 860 723
Deputy DSL Ali Goldup (works all day Tues and Thurs)	01483 860 723
Nursery Leader Cary Dale (works Mon – Thurs)	07900 543 759 or 01483 860 723

Whistleblowing

- Whistleblowing is an important aspect of safeguarding where staff, volunteers and students are encouraged to share genuine concerns about a colleague's behaviour. The behaviour may not be child abuse but they may not be following the code of conduct or could be pushing the boundaries beyond normal limits.
- Whistleblowing is very different from a complaint or a grievance. The term whistleblowing generally applies when you are acting as a witness to misconduct that you have seen and that threatens other people or children.
- The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, known as the Whistleblowing Act, is intended to promote internal and regulatory disclosures and encourage workplace accountability and self-regulation. The Act protects the public interest by providing a remedy for individuals who suffer workplace reprisal for raising a genuine concern, whether it is a concern about child safeguarding and welfare systems, financial malpractice, danger, illegality, or other wrongdoing.
- The statutory guidance from the DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 makes it clear that all organisations that provide services for, or work with children must have appropriate whistleblowing procedures. They must also have a culture that enables concerns about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed by the organisation. The concern may relate to something that is happening now, has happened in the past or could happen in the future.
- All staff, volunteers and students of Acorns are aware that any concerns they may have can be shared with the Committee Chair/Nursery Leader as appropriate. The welfare and safety of the children is paramount.

- Staff, volunteers and students who are unsure whether or not to raise a concern can contact an independent body for advice such as Public Concern at Work. Public Concern at Work is a whistleblowing charity. 0207404 6609 helpline@pcaw.co.uk

Surrey Early Help and Effective Family Resilience EFR (Multi agency levels of need) may be used to help identify needs. It is a holistic approach used by practitioners to assess children's additional needs within their families and wider community and decide how these should be met.

The Early help is designed to be used when;

- a practitioner is worried about how well a child or young person is progressing (e.g. concerns about their health, development, welfare, behaviour, progress in learning or any other aspect of their wellbeing)
- a child or young person, or their parent/carer, raises a concern with a practitioner
- a child's or young person's needs are unclear, or broader than the practitioner's service can address.
- The practitioner assesses their needs using The Surrey Effective Family Resilience Windscreen.
- The process is entirely voluntary and informed consent is mandatory, so families do not have to engage and if they do they can choose what information they want to share.
- The EFR process is not a 'referral' process but a 'request for services'. Working together with the child and their family to gain their confidence, identify strengths and needs, to find practical and achievable solution, and to provide the right amount of information, advice and support.
- The EFR should be offered to children who have additional needs to those being met by universal services.

In the HM Government Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (July 2015) It states that all Early Years Providers must take action to protect children from harm and should be alert to harmful behaviour by other adults in the child's life.

The Prevent Duty

We have a duty to keep children safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. The EYFS focuses on children's personal, social and emotional development and supports children in age appropriate ways to learn right from wrong, mix, and share with other children and value others views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our safeguarding duty and should be responded to as such. All staff should receive prevent awareness training

FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of physical abuse, also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting. FGM has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. This procedure can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating and later cysts, infections, infertility as well as complications in childbirth.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act was introduced in 2003 and came into effect in March 2004. It was made illegal to:

- practice FGM in the UK
- take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country
- Aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad

The signs that children may be at risk of FGM are as follows:

- Child is female (new-born, during childhood, adolescence, sometimes at marriage or during the first pregnancy)
- From a culture where FGM is practised
- Parents request an extended summer holiday to the country of origin

Action will be taken under this heading if staff have any concerns that a child is at risk of FGM and they must inform the Manager/DSL

Procedure

- A request must be made to meet parents in private and ask them directly if they are seeking to take their daughter abroad to have FGM carried out on her
- If the Manager/DSL is dissatisfied with their response and has real concerns that FGM may be imminent they should refer the matter to the Local Authority (MASH Team) or to the Police
- The parents should be told about the referral only if it is felt that it will not bring further risk to the child

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation - where a young person (or a third person or persons) receives "something" (food, gifts, money, affection) as a result of them performing and /or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Risk indicators include:

- Disclosure of older boyfriends
- Gang affiliation
- Receiving gifts/drugs/money
- Missing and truanting
- Coercive relationships
- Trafficking
- Chatting to strangers on line
- Found in risky locations

If a member of staff feels any child, older siblings or young parents are at risk of CSE then child protection procedures should be followed and a referral made.

Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA)

Children experiencing violence at home may be affected in a number of different ways. Staff will need to treat them sensitively, record their concerns informing the Manager/DSL and consider informing the Local Authority. The abuse may be verbal, sexual, physical, emotional, financial or psychological. Both men and women can be abused or abusers. It occurs in all groups and all areas of society and may be experienced differently to, and compounded by, racism, sexuality, disability, age, religion, culture or class. We are committed to supporting the wellbeing and safety of children and acknowledge the profound and damaging effects of DVA on them.

The conversation should be recorded and reported to the Manager/DSL. If we have serious concerns about a victim's situation we will inform the Local Authority who should refer the case to the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference).

Forced marriage

Forced marriage is a criminal offence – it is a form of child/ adult/ domestic abuse and has to be treated as such. Forced marriage affects people from many communities and cultures. If we have serious concerns about a victim's situation we will inform the Local Authority following policies and procedures designed to safeguard children, adults with support needs and victims of domestic abuse. FMU 020 7008 0151 fmufco@fco.gov.uk

Confidentiality

It is always important to listen to children. Strict confidentiality will be observed at all times. Staff must not comment either publicly or privately about a parent's supposed or actual behaviour. Staff must raise concerns initially with the Manager/DSL. The Manager/DSL will then discuss the matter with the registered person and appropriate action will be taken. All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. Staff responsibilities do not include investigating the concerns. However staff will keep accurate records of their observations signed and dated of anything said to them by the child or others in connection with the concerns.

This information will be kept in a safe place. The DSL will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

The links to legislation are:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- What to do if 2015
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners 2018
- Keeping children safe in education 2018
- Every Child Matters – Change for Children 2009
- Surrey Early Help and Effective Family Resilience March 2019
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF 1989
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986
- Sex Discrimination Act (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM 2016
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015
- Human Rights Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- HM Government Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

The use of mobile phones, cameras, videos, internet, and social networking sites are covered in detail in Mobile Phone and Images of Children policies.

Policy updated in September 2019