

HAPPY HEDGEHOGS LTD

Safeguarding children & Welfare Requirements

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding policy is based on the three key commitments.

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments
Safeguarding Children Policy.

Key commitment 1

Happy Hedgehogs Pre-School is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Staff and volunteers

- Our designated person who coordinates child protection issues is:
Carly Turner

- Our designated officer (member of the management) who oversees this work is:
Carly Turner
- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding & welfare requirements, policies and procedures.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues and attend regular safeguarding training courses.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We record all information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting procedures processes that have been completed including the criminal records disclosure reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it.
- We expect all staff 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 our setting) We will not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, including through a criminal records check to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for.
- Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their suitability to care for children, those practitioners should seek medical advice. We ensure all staff only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly. All staff medication on the premises is securely stored away and out of reach of children at all times.
- We abide by the safeguarding vulnerable groups act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- All visitors and parents who visit the group will be asked to turn off their mobile phones and keep them in their bags or in our designated phone box which is kept away from children, this will be carried out during the signing of the visitors book on arrival. All Visitors and Parents will also be made aware that no cameras will be allowed in the group.
- Staff will turn off their mobile phones when they arrive in the morning and will be safely stored away. All staff have been informed via their Contract of Employment which has been signed by them.
- Happy Hedgehogs Camera only to be used in the group for recording children's achievements (signed permission forms have been previously signed by the person who has Legal Responsibility. All images on the Happy Hedgehogs camera will be deleted on a daily basis .
- During special events at Happy Hedgehogs, parents and visitors will only be allowed to take video recordings or photographs with the agreement of all parents attending.

- Happy Hedgehogs runs a Facebook page which allows us to communicate with parents/carers. Any photos posted on the sight are done so with the permission from parents/carers.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Key commitment 2

Happy Hedgehogs Pre School is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play, or the deterioration of their general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks, or signs of possible abuse or neglect, or reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We take into account factors affecting parent capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parents drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parents learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability, such as, abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illnesses, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through Internet abuse and female genital mutilation that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or maybe victims of child trafficking
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the setting leader or manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.

NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- 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 referral to consent to share information if it feels 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.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - the 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.
 - These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept safe and secure.
 - the member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.
 - Where the local safeguarding children board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the local safeguarding children board.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

- We record concerns and make a referral. This is based on 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).
- We keep a copy of this document and follow the detailed guidelines given.
- All members of staff are familiar with the procedures for recording and reporting.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events, unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents of when we make a record of concern in their child's file and that we also make a note of any decision we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on 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 well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practical, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.

- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or any other person working with the children, which includes inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority designated officer (LADO) to investigate (Stephen Tee: 0116 4542440).
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the management will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary Action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the independent safeguarding authority (ISA) of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups) can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Key commitment 3

Happy Hedgehogs Pre School is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.
- We ensure that designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by the local safeguarding children board.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be *strong, resilient and listened to* and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting 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.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.

- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2006)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG 2013)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for children and young people: a guide for practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and managers (HMG 2008)(HMG 2006)
- Independent safeguarding authority: www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

Happy Hedgehogs LTD

Held on

July 2020

Date to be reviewed

July 2021

Name of signatory

Carly Turner

Role of signatory

Director
