

# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Including; Safer Recruitment  
Babysitting  
Allegations against Staff**

At Telford Preschool every child is special, we work with children, parents and volunteers to ensure the rights and safety of all children and give them the very best start in life.

Telford Preschool is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm, and feel secure, valued and respected and confident to approach adults for help.

We aim to raise awareness with all adults of the need to safeguard children and our responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.

We carefully monitor children known or thought to be at potential risk of harm and contribute to support plans where appropriate.

This policy has 3 sections

- 1) Procedures regarding staff & volunteers
- 2) Our response to concerns of abuse of a child
- 3) Promoting awareness of child abuse and support of children

## **Procedures**

### **Section 1**

#### **Staff & Volunteers**

Our designated safeguarding leads (DSL), who oversee child protection issues, are Claire Harman-Sherwood and Helen Perkins

The designated person understands Warwickshire Safeguarding Childrens Board safeguarding procedures, and attends their training at least every two years and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding at least annually.

We ensure all staff and trustees are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and parents and volunteers are aware of them too.

Safeguarding is high on our meeting and training agendas. All staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse



and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the Local Authority Children's Social Care Team or the NSPCC. They complete statutory Child Protection training regularly.

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

Candidates are informed of the need to carry out Disclosure & Barring Service enhanced disclosure checks before posts are confirmed.

Where applicants 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 DBS checks for all staff, trustees and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified or unsuitable person works at Telford Preschool or has access to the children.

We ensure that we have staff trained in Safer Recruitment on all interview panels. Our Safer Recruitment person is Claire Harman-Sherwood and Katherine Watson.

Volunteers do not work unsupervised, there are always a minimum of 2 staff, all volunteers receive induction training and are familiar with all of Telford Preschool policies and procedures

All staff, trustees and volunteers are expected to complete a Disqualification Declaration Form, regarding any convictions, cautions, court orders etc. which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).

We record information about staff qualifications, ID checks and vetting processes including DBS number, date and renewal date on our Single Central Record.

We abide by current legislation 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 a child protection concern.

All visitors to Preschool sign in to our visitors' sheet and read our mini induction.

Visitors or parents occasionally helping (e.g. welly walks, helping with snack) are not checked by DBS system, however these adults are accompanied by a staff member at all times.

We ensure we have control over who comes in to Telford Preschool so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to children.



Parents sign a consent form for photographs, and their use. We ensure children are not photographed for any other purpose than to record their development.

## **Section 2**

Telford Preschool is committed to responding promptly to any incidents or concerns of abuse and to work with local authorities in accordance with “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused” Gov March 2015

### 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 experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:

- Significant changes in their behaviour
- Deterioration in their general well-being
- Their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure)
- Changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- Any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting

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 are aware of other factors that affect children’s vulnerability such as, abuse of children with special educational needs or disabilities; fabricated or induced illness; 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 may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.

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 concerns.



Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person or the staff member who is concerned makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead. The information is stored on the child's personal file. A green form will be completed . stored on the safeguarding board and in each staffs filing draw.

In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made by the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.

We refer concerns to the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Board and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigations.

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 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 only done where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

#### Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures & making referrals to MASH

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give 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 (on a green form) that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes; the date and time of the observation/disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the 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 securely and confidentially, and shared with other staff on a need to know basis.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity, and within one working day.

We follow MASH flow chart and refer the child using a MASH referral form as soon as possible within 24 hours – copies of the flowchart and forms are on display on the parent and staff notice board and in both rooms in the child protection folders.

All members of staff are able and trained to record and report concerns.

We will make "no name" consultations if possible with the MASH team to discuss any concerns we may have – but understand that if they ask for a name we will disclose it and make a referral.

#### Escalation process

If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the MASH escalation process.

#### Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child at risk. A note will be made of any discussions.

If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to MASH, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed at risk.

This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform the parents.

#### Liaison with other agencies

We work within the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board/MASH guidelines.

The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' is available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.



We notify 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 practicable, 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, which may include an allegation of abuse, posters are on display and policies are available.

We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person living or working on the premises, 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 Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, has abused a child.

We ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, and how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with my response.

We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

The staff member accused will be interviewed by the Manager and a Trustee. The staff member may be accompanied by a friend or colleague. If the allegation is against the manager then the interview will be held by the Chairman and a Trustee. Records will be kept of the allegation and all subsequent proceedings.

We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate and/or offer advice:

01926 743433

LADO@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk



We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by LADO that this is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), as well as 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 Warwickshire Safeguarding Board/MASH in conjunction with the police.

Where the Trustees and MASH agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended 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, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service 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.

### Section 3

Telford Preschool is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues; through training and learning. We believe in promoting children's rights to be heard.

#### Training

We ensure all adults involved in Telford Preschool are trained and regularly updated to ensure they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.

Child Protection and Safeguarding is high on the agenda for all staff meetings, training sessions, Trustee meetings and communications with parents through newsletters and reminders.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead receives appropriate training, as recommended by the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board, every two years to refresh their knowledge and skills.

#### Curriculum and Environment

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being within sight and/or hearing of



other staff or volunteers. Where children need 1:1 work the member of staff and child should be visible.

We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our plans to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they can develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.

At Telford Preschool we have an underlying ethos of valuing and respecting every individual.

We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the ages and stages of our 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 Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board /MASH.

#### Support to families

Telford Preschool believe in building positive, trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.

We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with MASH.

We 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 MASH in relation to our role in supporting the child and the family following any investigation.

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate under the guidance of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board/MASH.

#### Support to staff

We recognise the need to support staff who are working with a child who has suffered or appears to be likely to suffer from harm. We provide opportunities for staff to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

#### Babysitting

Telford Preschool staff are not permitted to babysit for any family that have a child currently on our register.



The only exception to this is if the family and staff member were related/close friends before the child started at Telford Preschool. In this instance; staff are expected to tell the Manager about the relationship and advise her of when they may be babysitting. This is recorded on a confidential declaration form.

Staff are also expected to advise the family that any babysitting they do is absolutely private and nothing to do with Telford Preschool .

#### Prevent Duty

In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office to prevent our children and families from being drawn into radicalisation, extremism and terrorism.

All staff have been trained to give them the confidence and knowledge to identify signs of radicalisation.

We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police.

Related policies: Mobile Phone/Camera Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Parent Complaint Policy, Whistleblowing Policy

#### **Legal framework**

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by :-

*Children Act (1989)*

*Protection of Children Act (1999)*

*Data Protection Act (1998)*

*The Children Act (Every Child Matters) 2004*

*Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)*

And in line with:

*Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2015)*

*What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG, 2015)*

*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015*

*Warwickshire Safeguarding Board and Warwickshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)*

*Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)*

***All parents are encouraged to comment on and contribute to the amendment and development of policies.***

Updated by Claire Harman-sherwood, sept 2019

