

Safeguarding Children Policy

Aim

In Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup we are committed to the protection and safety of the children. We maintain rigorous procedures for safeguarding children and we expect everyone working within the playgroup to take responsibility for following these procedures and complying with the Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. Partnership.

In Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup the designated person with responsibility for matters relating to safeguarding children is: Yvonne Parfett.

In her absence please contact: Julie Ray or Debbie Crooks.

Implementation of the policy in Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup

The management committee must:

- produce a written policy statement which includes the playgroup's commitment to the protection and safety of the children.
- identify in the policy statement specific procedures for all staff, including students and volunteers, to follow if concerns are raised about any form of abuse or neglect of a child.
- identify in the policy statement specific procedures for all staff, including students and volunteers, to follow if concerns are raised about any disclosure by a child.
- ensure that all policy and procedures of the playgroup comply with the Bexley S.H.I.E.L.D. Partnership procedures.
- make sure that a copy of the policy and procedures is given to all staff, and others working with the children in the playgroup, including students and volunteers.
- share the playgroup procedures for safeguarding children with parents before their children start at the playgroup.
- signpost contact details clearly so that children, parents and other family members are aware of who they can contact if they wish to make a referral, require advice and/or support.
- ensure that all staff, including students and volunteers, are trained to recognise signs of abuse.
- ensure that safeguarding children training is included in new staff inductions and that all staff receive regular updates.
- have regard to the Government's statutory guidance '*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*'
- have regard to the Government's statutory guidance on the Prevent Duty
- identify one member of staff as the designated person for matters of safeguarding children. This person should advise and support staff and liaise with other agencies. (see above)

- identify in the policy statement a clear outline of the procedures used to inform parents of any concerns, and the action taken, as well as the situations in which the parents will be informed.
- manage the issue of confidentiality within the playgroup.
- follow the local authority guidelines and procedures for allegations of abuse against a member of staff.

Staff responsibilities

All staff are aware of the Prevent Duty and their responsibility to be vigilant. They will have completed the Channel training available online.

All staff must:

- be alert for significant signs of abuse or neglect of any children.
- take action, following the playgroup's procedures, if they have any concerns about abuse or neglect of any children.
- be alert to the potential need for early help for a child (see Chapter 1: Assessing need and providing help from the Working Together document - attached here as Appendix A)
- report and record all concerns.
- have a clear understanding of appropriate contact with the children.
- be alert to sharing information with the main designated safeguarding person about any adults with whom a child has contact which may impact on the child's safety or welfare.

Procedures

In the event of a safeguarding children concern arising at playgroup, staff will follow the guidance given on the 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' poster (which is displayed above the staff table) and in our Safeguarding folder.

- If a member of staff, including students and volunteers, has concerns about a child's welfare these are discussed with the designated person or, in her absence, the safeguarding deputy.
- We will record what our concerns are, what we have seen and heard, and details of any injuries. This will be done quickly after the event on the Safeguarding Children – Record of Concern Raised (SC-RCR) form.
- These notes will be kept in a confidential folder marked Safeguarding Children and stored in a lockable cupboard to ensure confidentiality.
- After careful consideration and preliminary enquiries – which are:
 1. speaking to the child - eg "that's a nasty bruise, how did that happen?"
 2. speaking along similar lines to the parent/carer
 3. also asking if there was anything significant that had happened at home to cause a change in the child's behaviour

these discussions will also be recorded on the SC-RCR.

- If concerns remain the designated person will contact Bexley's Children's Social Care (020 8303 7777) and seek advice from the Duty Safeguarding Children Advisor.

- If a full disclosure is made eg Where a child reveals to an adult that they have been abused, the designated person will contact Children's Social Care immediately. The staff member to whom the disclosure was made will record on the SC-RCR about the disclosure, including the exact words used by the child.
- The Duty officer will advise the designated person of the appropriate course of action to take, according to the nature of the concern.

Referrals

- If a referral is then made to Children's Social Care, the designated person will send written evidence of the reasons for concern within 48 hours.
- If the playgroup do not hear back from Children's Social Care within 10 working days as to what action is being taken, the designated person will phone them to find out.

Confidentiality

- Within the staff team, details of any concern raised/referral made will be discussed on a strict 'need to know' basis. Safeguarding records will be retained in a secure place, on site.
- If the Leader/designated person is informed that a child in the playgroup's care is known to Children's Social Care, this information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- Under GDPR guidelines, settings are allowed to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and which should be treated as 'special category personal data'.
- Where a setting needs to share 'special category personal data', they should be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows them to share information. This includes allowing settings to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a setting gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Allegations against Staff

- In the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff, that member of staff will be suspended whilst a full investigation is carried out.
- A referral must be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day of the allegation being made.
- Ofsted must be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working, or looking after children at the playgroup, and of the action taken in respect of the allegations.

Disqualification

- In the event of the disqualification of a registered provider, the provider must not continue as an early years provider – nor be concerned in the management of such provision. At Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup, the management committee is the registered provider.
- Where a person is disqualified, the provider must not employ that person in connection with early years provision.
- Where a member of the management committee, or the playgroup leader become aware of relevant information that may lead to disqualification of a member of staff, appropriate action must be taken to ensure the safety of children.

- If a member of staff becomes aware of such a situation they are responsible for informing the playgroup leader. In the case of the playgroup leader, they should inform the management committee chairperson.
- Ofsted must be informed within 14 days of the date of the receipt of the information.

Cameras and Mobile phones

- The playgroup has its own camera. Photographs taken on it are used for displays (with parental permission) or to put in the child's playgroup journal. They are printed out on the playgroup printer and the memory card is cleared on a regular basis.
- Mobile phones belonging to staff will be left in a secure place eg in the storage cupboard with staff bags. They are only to be used in an emergency, away from the children, having first informed the person-in-charge of the need to do so. Anyone needing to contact a member of staff should use the playgroup landline. Staff are not allowed to use their phones to take photographs in the setting.
- Parents who are visiting, or who are in the setting as part of the parent rota are informed of our policy regarding use of phones and are asked to follow the same procedure as staff.

References and Regulations

Reference to the Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding and welfare requirements

The provider must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well.

Providers must be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.

Providers must notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the premises where childcare is provided.

Children Act Regulations relating to our policy

A statement must be kept of the arrangements that are in place for the protection of each child, including arrangements to safeguard children from abuse or neglect and the procedures to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse or neglect.

References

Department for Education: Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2018)

Department for Education: The Prevent Duty (June 2015)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)

Department for Education: Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2018)

Data Protection Act 2018

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018

Reviewed and revised October 2020