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Mucky Pups Pre-School

Safeguarding & Child Protection

Policy and Procedures

Safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

* Protecting children from maltreatment.
* Preventing the impairment of children’s health or development.
* Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
* Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children’s health and development. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with all Mucky Pups policies and procedures.

At Mucky Pups Pre-School, we will work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from abuse in whatever form.

At Mucky Pups, we will:

* Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image.
* Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and in a way, that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
* Provide a safe and secure environment for all children.
* Always listen to children.
* Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need.
* Build children’s resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British Values such as democracy, mutual respect, tolerance, the rule of law and individual liberty.
* Share information with other agencies as appropriate.
* Have a designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) and an appropriately trained Deputy who have undergone appropriate safeguarding training. The safeguarding lead or the Deputy will be available during opening times for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
* Ensure the DSL and Deputy regularly update their training and remain up to date with any changes to national or local policies, procedures, contacts etc.
* Ensure appropriate filters are in place on any resources accessed by the children which would allow them to get ‘online’
* Ensure national GDPR and our own settings GDPR policy are adhered to at all times. It must be noted that when it is suspected that a child is a risk of serious harm, usual confidentiality procedures do not apply and this policy must be followed ensuring information is shared with relevant professionals to ensure the safety of the child in question.

**Mucky Pups designated safeguarding lead is: Stephanie Simpson**

**Mucky Pups designated safeguarding deputy is: Jean Wills & Joseph Wilcock**

Mucky Pups has a clear commitment to child protection and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the DSL or Deputy DSL at the earliest opportunity.

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (2017)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

The Prevent Duty guidance (2016)

All staff have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we provide, staff will often be the first people to sense that there may be a problem. They may well be the first people that children confide in about abuse or spot changes in a child’s behaviour which may indicate abuse.

This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect. It also includes procedures that will be followed should we suspect a child or family of being at risk of radicalisation.

Mucky Pups’ prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of all children in our care. We believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information, where appropriate, with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children’s social care, health professionals or the police. All staff will work as part of a multi-agency team, where needed, in the best interests of the child.

Mucky Pups aims to:

* Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of our staff
* Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest
* Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to share information and seek the help that the child may need
* Ensure staff are trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedure, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children, i.e. bullying, discriminatory behaviour
* Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection issues and procedures
* Ensure that all staff are full trained and aware of the Prevent Duty
* Keep the child at the centre of all we do
* Make any referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board
* Regularly review and update this policy where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board.

Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

Contact telephone numbers

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| Ofsted | 0300 123 1231 |
| Lancashire Safeguarding Children’s Board | 0845 053 0009 |
| Out of hours | 0845 602 1043 |
| Local Authority Children’s Social Care Team | 0845 053 0009 or 01772 221609 |
| Local Authority Designated Officer (Tim Booth) | 01772 536694 |
| The prevent hotline | 020 7340 7264 |

Types of abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution, or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children. The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

Indicators of child abuse

* Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
* Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
* Aggressive behaviour
* Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
* Repeated injuries
* Unaddressed illnesses or injuries.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record on the setting reporting sheet (supported by the DSL or Deputy) of any observation or disclosure and include:

* Child's name
* Age of the child and date of birth
* Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
* Exact words spoken by the child
* Exact position and type of injuries or marks seen (Body maps are available)
* Exact observation of an incident including any other witnesses
* 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
* Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be written in Mucky Pups internal recording forms and signed by the person reporting this and the DSL or Deputy who will also then record the action that is taken.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child’s mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure it is vital details are logged accurately.

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the LSCB and Ofsted, and/or a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) needs to be initiated. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. Mucky Pups expect all members of staff to co-operate with the LSCB and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children. Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about a parent’s or staff members supposed or actual behaviour.

Physical abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face. Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries. These should also be logged and discussed with the DSL or Deputy. Children may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the DSL or Deputy.

Fabricated illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness, e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

Procedure:

* All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into Mucky Pups or occur during time at the Mucky Pups, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member
* The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity, where felt appropriate
* Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records
* If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury, the local authority children’s social care team will be notified in line with procedures set out by Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board.

Sexual abuse

Action needs be taken if the staff member has witnessed occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes. The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge, and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child’s behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole. If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing; the procedure stated earlier in this document under ‘recording suspicions of abuse and neglect’ will be followed.

Procedure:

* The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
* The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report
* The observed instances will be reported to the DSL (deputy in their absence)
* The matter will be referred to the Lancashire children’s social care team
* A sensitive and confidential discussion will be held with the parents/carers of any other children party to inappropriate play. (If deemed appropriate)

Emotional abuse

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them. The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Procedure:

* The concern should be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy
* The concern will be discussed with the parent (where appropriate)
* Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records
* A Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form may need to be completed
* If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the local authority children’s social care team.

Neglect

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold, starvation or failure to seek medical treatment when required on behalf of the child), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive. Signs may include a child persistently arriving at Mucky Pups unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child’s growth or hurt them), arriving at Mucky Pups in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child’s needs. Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at pre-school. They may be clingy and emotional.

Procedure:

* The concern should be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy
* The concern will be discussed with the parent (where appropriate)
* Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records
* A CAF form may need to be completed
* If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the local authority children’s social care team will be notified.

Radicalisation

All staff members have a duty to act should they have reason to believe that a child or member of a child’s family is at risk of radicalisation. This Duty is known as ‘The Prevent Duty’. All staff are trained to notice signs of radicalisation and are aware of the procedure to follow should they suspect a child or family of becoming drawn in to radicalised views or terrorism. The telephone number for the Channel Programme is available in Mucky Pups main office. All staff will help to build children’s resilience trough the promoting of Fundamental British Values and giving them the confidence to challenge extremist views. Staff must remember that extremist views can come from many different walks of life and can take many different forms.

Procedure

* The concern should be discussed with the DSL or deputy.
* The concern will be discussed with the child’s parent (where appropriate)
* The staff member or the DSL will contact the Channel Programme.
* If a member of staff believes that the risk or terrorism or radicalisation is of immediate risk to the person or community, they must contact the police immediately.

Staffing and volunteering

It is Mucky Pups policy to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. Mucky Pups will only allow an adult who is employed by them to care for children and who has an enhanced DBS to be left alone with children. Mucky Pups will not allow volunteers to be alone with children regardless of whether or not they have a DBS clearance.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the setting.

The DSL at Mucky Pups takes responsibility for all safeguarding and co-ordinates child protection and welfare issues. The safeguarding lead liaises with the Local Safeguarding Children board and the local authority children’s social care team, they will also undertake specific training, including a nominated officer training at level 2. The DSL will also ensure they are up to date with all updates and developments in this field. It is their responsibility to ensure that all relevant updates and information is cascaded to staff. The Deputy designated safeguarding person/s will take on responsibility for all safeguarding concerns in the safeguarding leads absence. Both of these staff will formally update training at least every two years with knowledge and skills refreshed annually.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead at Mucky Pups is: Stephanie Simpson**

**The Deputy Safeguarding Person is: Jean Wills & Joseph Wilcock**

* 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 checks 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
* This information is also stated within every member of staff’s contract
* We abide by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and suitability checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the setting or has access to the children
* We ensure we receive at least two written references before a new member of staff commences employment with us
* All students will have enhanced DBS checks conducted on them before their placement starts
* Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
* We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) and the Childcare Act 2006 in respect of any person who is disqualified from providing childcare, 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 Mucky Pups and 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
* All visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
* All staff have a clear understanding of our whistleblowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner
* All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any needs for further support
* The deployment of staff within the setting allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group (e.g. nappy changing), the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.
* GDPR regulations regarding sensitive information are followed at all times unless there is reason to believe this would jeopardise the safety and/or wellbeing of the person involved.

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. 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 LSCB does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser, or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the LSCB.

Support to families

Mucky Pups takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, students and volunteers within the setting.

Mucky Pups continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child.

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 in line with guidance of the LSCB with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

Employees, students or volunteers of the setting or any other person working on the setting premises

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who works on the setting premises, we will follow the procedure below.

The allegation should be reported to the DSL; Stephanie Simpson or in their absence the deputy safeguarding person/s, Jean Wills or Joseph Wilcock. If it is not appropriate to discuss concerns with either of these people concerns should be discussed with the settings owner Alan Wills.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Ofsted and the LSCB will then be informed immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

* The LADO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
* A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LADO, Ofsted, LSCB) to determine how this will be handled
* Mucky Pups will follow all instructions from the LADO, Ofsted, LSCB and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
* Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice
* Mucky Pups reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
* All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
* Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated
* Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children’s social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police, and will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. Mucky Pups will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated
* All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary re-investigation
* Mucky Pups retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry.

Date policy adopted on: 2nd September 2019 Date for review: 2nd September 2020

Signed: Position:Manager