SANDCASTLES POLICY

*Stay Safe, be Healthy, make a Positive contribution, Enjoy & Achieve, Economic well-being & Skills for the future.*

*SAFEGUARDING & PROMOTING CHILDREN’S WELFARE*

CHILD PROTECTION

Our day to day contact with individual children means that we are particularly well placed to notice the **outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour** and **failure to thrive/ develop.**

All staff have a responsibility to protect children but Helen O’Hagan, Judith Stewart and Rebecca Watson will take the lead in safeguarding children at Sandcastles, attending and cascade training and liaising as appropriate. It will be Helen, Judith and Rebecca’s designated duty to put the following procedures into practice.

Staff Well-Being: We ensure that three of our team complete LCC DSL training to ensure we are well equipped to discuss concerns and confident to take action. Supporting our DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads) to share their role is essential to protecting practitioner mental health.

OUR COMMITMENT towards

***prevention*** ***:***

- we endeavour to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to,

* we aim to safeguard children generally through other laid down procedures e.g. Health and Safety, S.E.N. and Behaviour Management policies,
* by making every effort to foster effective relationships with families and colleagues from other agencies.
* Our manager reads diary notes each day and on return from leave – ensuring that any low level issues receive attention and support to prevent them escalating.

***protection :***

* by keeping agreed procedures in mind,
* by pursuing relevant training to raise awareness and motivate staff to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns,
* by rigidly complying with staff vetting procedures,
* by always supervising visitors and students on placements here.

***support :***

***The need of the child is paramount*** – but we recognise that staff, family and other children may well need our support throughout child protection procedures.

*Our nominated safeguarding officers work in partnership to reduce personal stress. Our staff team and nominated officers can also seek support from Catherine Isherwood 07909001430 / 01772 531555*

PROCEDURE

Should staff have any worry that a child is/ has2 suffering **physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect** –staff must discuss their concerns with one of our team of Safeguarding Officers immediately, record the concerns (keep it factual and include full details). Helen, Judith and Rebecca’s will then decide on a course of action which may range from talking to parents, monitoring the family to identify any repeated cause for concern. In the unlikely event no safeguarding officer is on site please telephone Helen O’Hagan 07812159247 or Catherine Isherwood 07909001430 / 01772 531555for advice.

If we cannot resolve the concerns ourselves we **Tel: (direct) 0845** **053 0009 and follow up with written information within 48 hours, which, in worst cases, may have limited information if parents cannot be involved.**

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 **\* Children’s Integrated Services contact numbers: \***

 **\* C.I.S. Team (Children’s Service Referrals) 0300 123 6720**

 \* **Emergency Duty Team (out of Hours) 0300 123 6722 \***

 **\* Police https://www.lancashire.police.uk/ 01772 203 203 \***

 **\* Ofsted 0300 123 1231 \***

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**CONFIDENTIALITY**

We can **never** guarantee confidentiality to a child about whom we have concerns.

However, any discussion of those concerns is on a **‘need to know’** basis with due consideration for information sharing guidance. There must be no gossiping about the concerns to anyone else, inside or outside of nursery.

All records relating to child protection concerns are to be stored **separately** from other records, **confidentially** and held even after a child leaves us.

These records can only be **shared** as part of the recognised **referral process.** These records can be added to but not changed nor deleted.

**ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AGAINST NURSERY STAFF**

It is critical that we avoid putting ourselves in situations that may lead to allegations against us.

However if :-

1. abuse is witnessed in Nursery it is cause for ***instant suspension / dismissal*** and would be reported to LADO Tim Booth, Children’s Integrated Services, Disclosure & Barring Service, Ofsted, child’s parents and Police.
2. a parent comes or phones with a complaint of abuse within nursery it would be logged – protecting confidentiality as far as possible. Then we would immediately contact LADO Tim Booth for further advice.

***We cannot investigate ourselves ! – We must contact the Lancashire Area LADO TIM BOOTH without delay.***

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

* Staff must not use nor carry mobile phones nor personal photographic/video equipment within Sandcastles. This protects staff from allegations of being distracted and eliminates the risk of indecent photos being taken or shared. Staff must also ensure visitors including parents do not use mobile phones, photographic equipment, tablets, not visual / audio recording methods within nursery. Staff must also ensure visitors are supervised during visits. If a parent requests to take a photo of their child politely offer to take a tapestry photo and upload to their account for them to access – we retain control of the image.
* Staff must ensure that they continue to be ‘suitable’, ‘fit’, ‘proper’ people. As child care workers staff have a duty to inform their manager if their personal circumstances change in any way which might affect their suitability to work with young / vulnerable children. If staff’s use of alcohol increases or staff are prescribed medication which may potentially impact on their care of children they must inform their manager. If staff’s physical or mental health deteriorates please inform their manager.
* Staff must not discuss children outside of nursery – if a parent approaches staff at the shops please politely explain how lovely it is to bump into families outside of nursery but that we keep our work and home lives separate. This also extends to social media – we ask of staff member to politely refuse online friendships with parents and carers unless they have a close relationship prior to commencing work at Sandcastles.
* Professional confidentiality must not prevent information sharing – see Lancashire Information Sharing Guidance flow chart.

All records relating to child protection concerns are to be stored **separately** from other records, **confidentially** and copies held even after a child leaves us. Individual children’s child protection records are shared with subsequent settings or schools, all worries are closed we still share that previous history of concerns have been recorded.

**The most up to date safeguarding information can be accessed here: - this is also one of the office PC’s internet homepages** [**https://www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk/**](https://www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk/)

M. E. Coates, Helen O’Hagan & J. Stewart. . To be reviewed by Nov. 2026