# Child Protection Policy

At The Ark Nurseries our commitment to protect children is our first priority. It is our aim to uphold the rights of the child to be safe and secure. We comply with the procedures approved by the Lincolnshire Local Safeguarding Children Board. It is parents’ duty to inform the nursery of any changes in the child's home circumstances, such as any adult moving in or out of the family home.

Child abuse is defined in the Children Act 1989 as;

…”actual or likely harm to the child, where harm includes both ill treatment (including sexual abuse and non-physical ill-treatment such as emotional abuse) and the impairment of health and development, health meaning physical or mental health, and development meaning physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.”

This policy is based on the procedures laid out in the booklet “Working together to Safeguard Children.” and is reviewed annually. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/592101/Working\_Together\_to\_Safeguard\_Children\_20170213.pdf

**Prevention of Abuse**

The aim is to prevent abuse by means of good practice. All staff and regular volunteers working with the children and dealing with toileting/nappy changing will all have clearance from the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS). Volunteers, college students and work experience persons will never be left alone with the children and are subject to a risk assessment..

Employment in paid and voluntary posts will be subject to a probationary period and will be confirmed when the applicant can be safely entrusted with the care and safety of the children. Staff and students are aware of the 'Whistle Blowing Policy' through their induction and regular review of this policy at staff meetings. Please see 'Whistle Blowing Policy' for further information. As part of our safer recruitment procedures we check the history of employment of applicants, analysing and enquiring about any identified gaps. We also ask for two references (one from the latest employment) on appointment.

All mobile phones are kept securely in lockers or the office during working hours. Permission for photographs is obtained on admission to the nursery. Photographs of children are only taken on the nursery cameras and i pads which are kept on nursery premises (except on outings). Photographs are only kept and printed on the nursery computers which are not removed from the premises. Please see 'ICT Policy' for more information.

Children will be encouraged through adult support to express and have names for their own feelings; fostering their self-confidence and ability to resist inappropriate approaches from others.

Designated members of staff: **Nursery Manager and Linda Nursery Deputy Manager**

Responsibilities:

To provide appropriate staff training, support, keep staff aware and updated in matters of child protection procedures.

To ensure that the staff who work closely with the children notice changes, and report them to the designated person regarding:

* any significant changes in behaviour
* any unexplained bruising or marks
* any comments children make which give cause for concern
* any deterioration in a child’s well being.

Advice and concerns regarding safeguarding children should be directed to

* **Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children’s Board Customer Service Centre:**
* **Office Hours: Tel. 01522 782111**
* **Out of Hours: Tel. 01522 782333**
* **Lincolnshire Police – 01780 752500**
* **Ofsted: Tel. 03001231231**
* **LADO (Local Area Designated Office) referrals for allegations against professionals Tel. 01522 554674**

**Type of child abuse**

* Neglect
* Physical abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Emotional abuse

**Staff**

Applicants for posts (including volunteers) within the Nursery will be interviewed and informed that they are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore must disclose any criminal convictions. References will be sought. It is the staff’s responsibility to inform the nursery of any changes in home circumstances that may impact on their suitability to work with children (e.g. cohabiters who have a conviction under the sexual offenders act). The declaration of disqualification form is signed annually at appraisal.

**Training**

Training opportunities will be given to enable the staff to recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse through e learning courses and in house training. Designated persons update annually on sections of Safeguarding, working through the 5 year pathway.

**Response to Suspicions of Abuse**

The first concern is the child. They will be listened to without leading questioning, reassured and helped to understand that they are valued, respected and have not been at fault. If an allegation is made against an adult and the child has a corresponding visible mark we are duty bound to refer to the local safeguarding board under section 47 child in need of protection.

Changes in children’s behaviour/appearance will be investigated and records kept and objectively written.

Parents will normally be the first point of contact. If parents are unable to allay any legitimate anxieties the matter will be referred to the local safeguarding board. In exceptional circumstances when the child is considered to be at ***significant risk of harm***, as laid down under section 47 of the children Act 1989, the local safeguarding board, police or NSPCC and Ofsted will be contacted.

All suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential and shared with only those who need to know.

**Procedure When a Staff member is Accused of Abuse**

If a staff member is accused of any form of child abuse the seriousness, plausibility and extent of possible tampering with evidence will be considered. The staff member may be suspended on full pay, immediately. LADO will be contacted: Tel. 01522 554674 and Ofsted will be contacted: Tel. 03001231231

An investigation will be made in line with the Local safeguarding children board.

Counselling may be offered, as the staff member will be under great stress at such a time.

Confidential records will be kept of the allegation and subsequent proceedings.

**Records**

When any ‘worrying’ changes are observed in a child’s behaviour or appearance, a specific confidential record will be kept. Details will include name, address, and date of birth, timed and dated observations, whenever possible the child’s exact words will be recorded and this will be signed and dated by the person recording.

The record will be kept in a separate file from ordinary child development observations, and not accessible to people other than Manager and persons on a need to know basis.

Other details to be recorded will be the names dates and times of contact with other bodies, i.e. social services, police or NSPCC. A TAC (Team around the child) coordinator will be contacted and if deemed necessary a Early Help Assessment form completed and emailed to TAC administrator: [tacadmin@lincolnshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:tacadmin@lincolnshire.gcsx.gov.uk) Tel: 01476 584640

**Prevent duty and British Values**

The Nursery has a due regard to the need to protect people from being drawn into terrorism. (The prevent duty) and safeguard children from radicalisation. Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. The nursery will help to build children’s’ resilience to radicalisation by promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths, which are embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. If deemed necessary a referral to the CHANNEL programme may be made with parental consent. (Please see separate policies)

**Alcohol or Other Substance abuse**

As part of our Duty of Care The Ark Nursery reserves the right to retain a child within the setting if the person collecting the child appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other substance. In such a situation the child’s emergency contacts would be contacted to collect the child or if unavailable or unable to collect the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Board would be contacted.

**Support for Families**

The nursery will ensure that every step is taken to build up and maintain trust and foster supportive relationships between staff and families.

Where abuse may be suspected at home, the nursery will continue to welcome the child and family while the investigation proceeds.

**PLEASE READ WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE? THIS FORMS PART OF THIS POLICY AND CONTAINS THE CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS WHICH MAY BE NEEDED FOR A REFERRAL**

This policy will be reviewed annually

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