**Neatishead and Barton Pre-School**

**Safeguarding Policy**

**Policy Statement**

Safeguarding and Child Protection is everyone’s responsibility. As a setting, we are all aware of the phrase **“It could happen here”**. As a setting, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at all times and expect everybody working within the setting to share this commitment. We have robust systems in place to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are treated seriously and reported immediately and consistently. It is important that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities as set out in **Working Together to Safeguard Children.**

**Our routines and practices:**

We ensure that all of our staff have every opportunity to record and report safeguarding concerns. We hold regular staff meetings where safeguarding is on the agenda and we have a **Child Protection Folder** whereby concerns and disclosures are recorded. Our Child Protection folder is kept locked away in the office. Any documents/policies given out in staff meetings are signed and recorded in the Child Protection folder.

Parents have access to our Safeguarding Policy via our website. If a child comes into the pre-school and they have a visible injury (e.g. scratch on face, bruise on arm) we ask that parents sign an **Existing Injuries** form. All completed existing injury forms are reviewed half-termly.

All new members of staff and volunteers are given a copy of our Safeguarding Policy as part of their induction into the pre-school. When our policy is updated, staff sign to say they have received and read the policy. All staff attend six-weekly supervision meetings with the setting Manager where they are given the opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have in relation to health and safety and safeguarding etc.

1. **Mobile Phones/Laptops/Tablets**

Staff, visitors, volunteers and students are not permitted to use their personal mobile phones/Laptops/Tablets/smart watches or to take and record any images of pre-school children for their own records during session times. The exception is when a member of staff is taking a picture for the Preschool Facebook page, which will be deleted from their mobile as soon as it has been posted, and witnessed by another staff member.

When signing in, visitors must tick to confirm they have handed their phone/smart watch in to staff, who will place them in the office in a designated box. Parents/carers are not allowed to use their mobile phones/Laptops/Tablets/smart watches in the Pre-School building or its grounds. There is a sign on the pre-school door to remind all parents of this.

In the setting any mobile phones/smart watches must be kept in the office in a designated drawer, which is locked in the office. Staff must only have access to their mobile phone during the working day with permission of the Manager. Pre-school cameras will never be taken out of the school grounds (except for pre-school trips) and only downloaded onto the pre-school laptop and are deleted each week. Only images of existing children remain on the pre-school laptop.

Children have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements for developmental records (The Early Years Foundation Stage). These are uploaded to individual children’s Tapestry accounts and also on the walls as part of a display.

On occasion we might use photographs of the children taking part in an activity to advertise/promote our pre-school via our website and Facebook page (faces of children not displayed) however in this instance specific parental permission for these events would be required (signature on the Admission form).

Some photos are kept as evidence of activities, multi-cultural events and community planning. These will be put in our floor books for children to look at.

**Social Media**

We do not allow staff to be friends with any parents on social media e.g. Facebook, unless they are a committee member, or a pre-existing friend.

Any images of the children that are posted on the setting Facebook page, will not have the faces of any children visible.

The manager and deputy manager are the only members of staff who are able to post onto our Facebook page.

**Child Protection Procedure**

The Safeguarding Lead Practitioners (SLP) at Neatishead and Barton Pre-School are:

**- Manager (Ali Notley)**

**- Deputy Manager (Nicky Painter)**

Additionally **all** **other** members of staff are trained and competent to make a referral in the absence of both the Manager/Deputy Manager. All staff undertake Refresher Training every three years including inter-agency training. Copies of all training certificates are kept in individual staff files and also the CP folder. A record of all training is kept in the setting Training folder and checked regularly. Safeguarding is discussed at all staff meetings and within supervisions and appraisals. All staff are aware that safeguarding concerns should be reported/discussed as soon as they become apparent.

Any concerns relating to emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect of a child are to be reported immediately to the SLP and written on the setting **Concerns Form** which will be then transferred to the setting “Child Protection Folder”. The SLP will then transfer these onto a **Chronology Form** for that child (held in the CP folder which is locked away). A coloured circle will then be placed on the front of the child’s file.

**The designated member of staff will then:**

1. Contact the Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CADS) – Tel no 0344 800 8021.
2. The CADS worker will agree a way forward with us and keep us informed. They will send a written record of our conversation with 5 working days.
3. Children’s Services/Police will lead investigations and we will follow advice given and co-operate fully in any investigation.

**Types of abuse and their indicators**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult/s or another child or children.

We are aware of other factors that affect children’s vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation that may affect or may have affected children using our provision.

**For any concerns, regardless of their type or indicator, staff would complete a setting concerns form, chronology sheet and speak to the Manager/Deputy Manager to decide what action to take e.g. speak to parents. A coloured sticker would then be placed on the front of the child’s file.**

**Contextual Safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents/behaviours can be associated with factors outside the setting. All staff should consider whether there are wider factors present in a child’s life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

**Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Domestic violence can be witnessed by children. Staff are aware that small children may say things during their play or to an adult in the setting. Staff are sensitive to this and would complete setting **concerns form** and complete a **chronology sheet** for that child.

**Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and rubbing outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to**:**

* provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
* protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
* ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
* ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**Female Genital Mutilation**

If a member of staff, in the course of their working day feels that a child is at risk of FGM then that member of staff will report this to CADS or the police if immediate action is needed.

**Prevent**

As Early Years practitioners, we need to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (prevent duty).” Staff understand that a child, or more likely, a child’s family member/s may be at risk from radicalisation.

The fundamental **British Values** of democracy; rule of law; individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance are taught at our setting. We have woven each element into our daily/weekly routines. These include: our Golden Rules which underpin our behaviour expectations, Helping Hands children, children saying their news at snack time, voting on stories and songs, asking children for their input regarding our topics, celebrating each child’s achievements including giving praise and challenging stereotypes through planning/stories/songs/staff as role models.

Any concerns or disclosures regarding Prevent are written on the setting **Concerns Form** which are then included in the setting **Chronology Form** for individual children. A coloured sticker will then be placed on the child’s file. If concerns are escalated to referral form, staff must use VTR form (Person Vulnerable to radicalisation). This is then emailed to CADS.

**Recording concerns and disclosures**

**Where a child makes comments to a member of staff (disclosure) giving cause for concern;**

1. Refer the matter immediately to the SLP. The member of staff will then complete the setting **Concerns Form** including the **Body Diagram Sheet**
2. You should avoid leading questions as this could jeopardise any investigation.
3. Tell the child what is likely to happen next.
4. Ask the child what they wish to happen to ensure they are protected.
5. Make a written record as soon as possible, including, where relevant, a copy of any written statements by staff. Remember that anything in writing may have to be produced in court and is also used to enable patterns to be identified.
6. The record is signed, dated and stored in the child’s **chronology** **sheet** which is kept in the CP folder which is locked away.

No attempt should be made to challenge or undermine a child’s story, as it is the process of investigation which will establish the facts of the matter.

* A guarantee of confidentiality cannot be given to children.
* Parents do not always have to be informed or consulted in cases where a parent may be the perpetrator of any alleged abuse and notifying them may place the child at further or increased risk of harm..
* Do not attempt to investigate reports of abuse. Note: other parties, including staff and children, are only involved / consulted as part of an investigation by the designated member of staff

**Where a member of staff is concerned about a child without a disclosure having been made:**

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral is made immediately.

Children in need (Section 17):

Definition: a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health and development. Or whose health or development is likely to be significantly or further impaired without the provision of services, or a child who is disabled. Children in Need may need to be assessed under **Section 17** of the Children Act of 1989.

Children suffering from or likely to suffer from significant harm (section 47)

Staff have a duty to make enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act of 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Enquiries should enable staff to decide whether they should act to safeguard and promote a child’s welfare. Enquiries **MUST** be initiated if there are concerns about maltreatment, all forms of abuse and neglect, FGM, sexual exploitation and radicalisation.

**Allegations against staff/volunteers:**

**LADO process:**

We follow the guidance of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children’s Board when responding to any concern that a member of staff or volunteer working in the setting has abused a child, which includes the following:

* Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)
* ***The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be contacted on*** ***LADO@norfolk.gov.uk***

**(further info can be found on: norfolklscb.org/people-working-with-children/how-to-raise-a-concern/local-authority-designated-officer-lado)**

* If staff are unclear about whether an allegation has been made, the LADO should be contacted for a consultation
* We co-operate fully with any investigation carried out
* We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children at the premises or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place and the action taken. Ofsted will be informed of the above, as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days.
* LADO and referral flowchart can be found alongside this policy.

**In their report to the LADO the member of staff making the referral must:**

1) Provide factual information only and not speculation.

2) Make a record of the conversation including time/date/information given/name of L.A.D.O contact.

In line with current procedure a member of staff accused of abuse will be suspended from duty on full pay, so that the allegation can be investigated fairly. A suspension does not imply guilt; it is for the protection of both child and adult.

The Management and the L.A.D.O will then investigate the allegation immediately and a decision as to the course of action will be arrived at with all expediency. If the allegation is not substantiated, the member of staff will be reinstated immediately. However, should there be any substance to the allegation disciplinary procedures will be initiated and investigations may take place.

Neatishead and Barton Pre-school Whistleblowing policy can be found as a separate policy, within the settings’ policy document.

**Guidelines for visitors and volunteers/students:**

1. Any suspicion that a child may be suffering from any form of abuse (either from inside or outside the setting) should be reported to the SLP immediately. They may be asked to fill in the setting “Concerns Form” or the SLP may do this with them.
2. Concur with the setting’s procedures of confidentiality, appropriate contact, use of mobile phones, intimate care etc.
3. All staff/visitors/students are asked to read, sign and comply with the setting “Code of Conduct”

**Supporting staff**

We recognise that staff working in the pre-school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated staff member and to seek further support as appropriate. Our committee members can also act as a support network.

Signed on behalf of the Committee

Name of Signatory

Role of Signatory

Reviewed by: A. Notley

Date May 2024

Date to be reviewed