

Safeguarding Children Policy

Aim

Loseley Fields Children's Centre has a duty to protect children in its care and must inform the relevant agencies if they suspect child abuse or neglect. The safety of the child is paramount and this policy overrides any other policy that is in existence. For example, the centre may want to send a child home as per the Sick Children Policy; however, if there are concerns that the child would be at risk then the Safeguarding Policy should be followed first.

Safeguarding children means:

- Protecting them from harm
- Supporting their health and development
- Supporting children to foster security, confidence and independence
- Providing an environment in which children feel valued, safe, secure and confident and where children know that they can approach adults if they have difficulties, believing that they will be effectively listened to
- Ensuring that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children, are aware of the contents of this policy and follow the methods detailed below.
- Ensuring that there is a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and ensuring that Loseley Fields Children's Centre contributes to assessing needs and support packages for those children
- Ensuring all staff are correctly communicated with, whilst maintaining confidentiality
- Developing and promoting effective working relationships with other agencies
- Working with parents/carers and sharing appropriate information; however, if in doing this there is further risk to the child then this will not be followed as the safety of the child is of first importance.
- Ensuring that all staff have undergone appropriate background checks to ensure that they are eligible to work with children. These checks include: verification of their identity and qualifications, undergoing an Enhanced CRB check and taking up appropriate references. A central file of these are kept for audit purposes.

Note: Wherever the word "staff" is used it cover ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self employed staff, contractors and volunteers working with children including governors.

Methods

1. Background

- 1.1. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002, and in line with government publications: "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2006, "Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families" 2000, "What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused" updated 2007. The guidance reflects "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" DofE Sept 2006, and Surrey Safeguarding Children Board SSCB (formerly the Surrey Area Child Protection Committee), Child Protection Procedures.

- 1.2. The Governing body takes seriously its responsibility under section 1751 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.
- 1.3. Loseley Fields Children's Centre recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting the service user and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.
- 1.4. We believe that staff at Loseley Fields Children's Centre should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

2. Safe Loseley Fields Children's Centre, Safe Staff

We will ensure that:

- 2.1. All members of the governing body understand and fulfil their responsibilities.
- 2.2. All members of the Senior Leadership Team, Outreach Workers and Senior Childcare Practitioners have completed all 3 Foundation Modules of the SSCB training or are currently undertaking this training. This training is updated every 3 years.
- 2.3. All members of staff are provided with child protection awareness at induction so that they know who to discuss a concern with. They will be provided with Surrey safeguarding child training within their first six months of their employment with Loseley Fields Children's Centre and this will be updated every three years. Staff, students and volunteers will be given the policy when starting at the centre.
- 2.4. The current designated CPLOs are the Childcare Manager and Family Services Co-ordinator, both are part of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 2.5. The Loseley Fields Children's Centre Manager, where he/she is not the CPLO, and all other staff and governors, have child protection awareness training, updated by the every 3 years, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- 2.6. All members of staff, volunteers, and governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse.
- 2.7. All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the Loseley Fields Children's Centre Child Protection Policy, and reference to it in our introductory centre pack.
- 2.8. Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time.
- 2.9. Community users organising activities for children are aware of the Loseley Fields Children's Centre child protection guidelines and procedures.
- 2.10. We will ensure that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the appropriate bodies for consideration for inclusion on List 99.
- 2.11. Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.
- 2.12. The name of the Designated member of staff for Child Protection, the Child Protection Liaison Officer, or CPLO will be clearly advertised in the Children's centre, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
- 2.13. All new members of staff will be given a copy of our safeguarding statement, and child protection policy, with the CPLO's name clearly displayed, as part of their induction into the Centre.

3. Responsibilities

The designated Staff member, CPLO is responsible for:

- 3.1. Referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Referrals should be made in writing, using the Inter agency Referral and Assessment Form

- 3.2. Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- 3.3. Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are **separate** from child records.
- 3.4. Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- 3.5. Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- 3.6. Ensuring that either they or a relevant member of staff who has a good knowledge of the case attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents or carer.
- 3.7. Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team.
- 3.8. Organising child protection induction, and update training every 3 years, for all Loseley Fields Childrens Centre staff.
- 3.9. Providing, with the Loseley Fields Childrens Centre manager, an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the CPLO, and by all staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children on the child protection register (anonymised).

4. Working with Parents & Access to Information

- 4.1. The Children Act 1989 has, as one of its key features, a strengthening of the partnership between day care providers and parents or carers and Loseley Fields Children's Centre has a commitment to make this work in practice. Parents and carers will be regarded as partners in decisions regarding the care of their child and will be fully consulted to ensure this works.
- 4.2. To comply with the Children Act 1989, and further to the general principle of working together with parents and carers, Loseley Fields Children's Centre will work towards the principle of open access to information about the child. All children's details and relevant information about any safeguarding children concerns and cases will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the office area. This information will only be shared with parents/ carers and the relevant professions. All staff, students and volunteers are aware of the confidentially policy and have read and understood it.
- 4.3. Where there are concerns that sharing information with a parent/carer would lead to further harm for the child then the centre reserves the right not to do share.

5. Supporting Children

- 5.1. We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth.
- 5.2. We recognise that the Loseley Fields Childrens Centre may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 5.3. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 5.4. Our Loseley Fields Childrens Centre will support all pupils by:
- 5.5. Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- 5.6. Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the Loseley Fields Childrens Centre.
- 5.7. Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- 5.8. Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- 5.9. Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the Loseley Fields Children's Centre by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the Child's new school as a matter of priority.

5.10. How to respond when a child confides in you

- Reassure the child
- Keep calm
- Listen carefully to what the child is saying
- Do not ask the child too many questions
- Do not promise that you can keep this a secret
- Say to the child that you need to talk to other people so that they can help
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame
- Explain to the child what you are going to do next
- Report what has been said to a supervisor
- Make a written record of what you asked and what was said by the child
- Include observations of behaviour
- Keep any records factual, avoid “I think”
- Try not to let your own emotions take over
- Always explain what you will do next and keep the child informed of what is happening

6. Allegations or abuse or neglect against staff, students and volunteers

- 6.1. When a member of staff is suspicious of or has received an allegation in relation to a colleague, s/he must report this to the Child Protection Liaison Officer or the Childcare Manager immediately.
- 6.2. If the Child protection Liaison Officer or Childcare Manager is implicated in the allegation, the concern must be reported to the Centre Manager or chair of governors.
- 6.3. This will be recorded and in the safeguarding children form with the date, time, and includes a clear name or signature must be made.
- 6.4. The manager taking responsibility of the allegation will conduct a full investigation and it may be necessary for the person who is being investigated to be suspended on full pay for the duration of the investigation.
- 6.5. Within 24 hours of the allegation being made Ofsted and Surrey Safeguarding children Board will be informed and may carry out their own investigations.
- 6.6. Any member of staff who believes that allegations or suspicions, which have been reported to the Childcare manager or Centre manager, are not being investigated properly has the responsibility to report it to the chair of governors.
- 6.7. Surrey County Council's local authority child protection designated officer (LADO) should be contacted in the event of an issue being raised with regards to a member of the team. 01372 833 895 or 01372 833833

7. Procedure to follow if you have concerns about a child's welfare

Everyone should.....

- 7.1. Listen to what children tell you and act non verbal signal from them:, stop what you are doing, listen to children and take what they say seriously, offer reassurance and do not promise to keep secrets, communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.

Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so do not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations yourself.

- 7.2. Discuss your concerns with your Centre manager and/or Child Protection Liaison Officer

- 7.3. If you still have concerns, you or your manager could also, without necessarily identifying the child in question, discuss your concerns with Early Years and Childcare Service or other relevant Childcare professionals, in order to develop an understanding of the child's needs and circumstances.
- 7.4. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Centre Manager.
- 7.5. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Centre Manager, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult as in 7.5 above, without notifying the Centre Manager first.
- 7.6. The Children's Centre will follow the Surrey procedures for managing allegations against staff. Under no circumstances will we send a child home, pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a Strategy Meeting.
- 7.7. If, after these discussion, you still have concerns, and consider the child and their parents would benefit from further services, consider which agency i.e. play and learn sessions and family group sessions, the Common Assessment Form (CAF will need to be completed.
- 7.8. If you consider the child is or may be a child in need, you should refer the child and family to the children's social care. This may include a child whom you believe is, or may be at risk of, suffering significant harm. If your concerns are about a child who is already known to children's social care, the allocated social worker should be informed of your concerns. In addition to children's social care, the police and the NSPCC have powers to intervene in these circumstances.
- 7.9. In general, seek to discuss your concerns with the child, as appropriate to their age and understanding, and with their parents and seek their agreement to making a referral to children's social care unless you consider such a discussion would place the child at an increased risk of significant harm.
- 7.10. When you make your referral, agree with the recipient of the referral what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when.
- 7.11. If you make a referral by telephone, confirm it in writing within 48 hours using the referral form. Children's social care should acknowledge your written referral within one working day of receiving it, so if you have not heard back within 3 working days, contact children's social care again.

8. Making a Referral

8.1. Making a Referral in writing/orally

- 8.1.1. The name and addresses of the child/family concerned, where known their dates of birth, ethnic origin, any disabilities, religion, language spoken
- 8.1.2. The names and addresses of their GP and next of kin
- 8.1.3. What schools the child/children attend if appropriate
- 8.1.4. The professionals who currently see the child/family regularly
- 8.1.5. The significant problems which the child/family has or appears to have and/or your concerns about them
- 8.1.6. Any other relevant information about their present situation e.g is the child being privately fostered)
- 8.1.7. Reasons for proceeding without the consent of the child/family (**IF APPROPRIATE**)

8.2. If the referral concerns child protection issues, then other information will be needed,

- 8.2.1. Whether the child is currently safe
- 8.2.2. When the child was last seen
- 8.2.3. Whether the child has required medical attention related to this current referral
- 8.2.4. Time, place and persons involved in any incidents

- 8.2.5. Family structure and details of any other significant people in the child's life, including parents' live-in partners or natural parents not living within the child's household
- 8.2.6. The source of information
- 8.2.7. Changes to the child's behaviour or presentation
- 8.2.8. The parents/carer response to the concerns if they are aware of them
- 8.2.9. Whether the child has special needs
- 8.2.10. History of the referrer's own/agency's dealing with the child/family
- 8.2.11. Knowledge of involvement of other agencies
- 8.2.12. Information about any other children in the family household

IF ALL THIS INFORMATION IS NOT TO HAND PLEASE DO NOT USE THIS AS A REASON NOT TO REFER IMMEDIATELY

8.3. Receiving the referral

- 8.3.1. Once the receiving officer has determined that the contact should be treated as a referral and not just a contact they will:
- 8.3.2. Elicit from you as much information as possible, repeating back to you the key points
- 8.3.3. Clarify what information you are reporting directly and what has been obtained from third parties
- 8.3.4. Clarify who has, and has not been told of the referral
- 8.3.5. Explain what will happen next
- 8.3.6. Agree how to re-contact you if more information is needed
- 8.3.7. Clarify expectations about how and when feedback is to be given to you

8.4. What happens next?

- 8.4.1. The referral and information Officer will first check our records to see whether the child/ family are already known to Children's Social Care. If they are, records will be screened and new information evaluated, to inform how to take the matter forward.
- 8.4.2. If a social work Initial Assessment is arranged, the case will pass to an Assessment Team Social worker who will find out more about the family's situation and the support needs of people involved.
- 8.4.3. Where the initial concern does not immediately give cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer a significant level of harm, the assessment should be completed quickly and should take no longer than 7 days from the time of referral. The aim will be to identify the nature of the concern and its impact on the child's health and development.
- 8.4.4. Where there are significant concerns at the point of referral about the child's health or development, then a Core Assessment may be started directly by a Locality Team social worker. The need to move to a much more searching and wide-ranging Core assessment might also emerge during an Initial Assessment. Any other agencies involved with the child's care will normally be part of the process.

9. Contact Details

9.1. Contact Centre Children's Team

Conquest House
Wood Street
Kingston upon Thames
KT1 1AB

Email: contactcentre.children@surreycc.gov.uk

Fax number: 020 8541 7309

On line forms: www.surreycc.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 200 1006 Direct line 8am -6pm Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays.
03456 009 009 General enquiries and select Social Care or Child Protection
0208 541 7401/02 Duty manager, Contact centre
01483 517777 (For professional's use only)
03456 009 009 (For General public use)
01372 833895 or 833833 (Surrey County Council LADO)

Contact centre for seeking advice or making a referral 03456 009 009 and ask for the duty assessment team, this is an 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday number.

If you need to call after 6pm the emergency duty team can be contacted on 01483 517 898.

9.2. Local Authority Child Protection designated officer (LADO)

Managing Allegation Strategy Meetings (masm)
Emergency Duty Desk - 01372 833321
Secure e-mail address – masm.dutydesk@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk

Early Years and Childcare Service Local Authority Child Protection designated officer (LADO) **01372 833895**

9.3. Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
0300 123 1231

10. Definitions of Abuse

10.1. Abuse and Neglect

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 in an institutional or community setting: by those known to them; or more rarely by a stranger.

10.2. Physical Abuse

Physical Abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, poisoning, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to the child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fictitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

10.3. Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they met the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing the child to feel frightened or in danger, or exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

10.4. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

10.5. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical needs or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

11. Useful resources and websites

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00182/>

<http://www1.surreycc.gov.uk/cafis/manual/index.html>

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/workingtogether/>

<http://www.ecm.gov.uk/deliveringservices/informationsharing>

This policy was written for Loseley Fields Children Centre.

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Review Date:

Review Date:

Review Date:

Review Date:

Review Date: