

Once Upon A Time Nursery
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Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

At Once Upon A Time Day Nursery we intend to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. In order to achieve this we will:

Exclude known abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the nursery that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants for work within Once Upon A Time Day Nursery, whether voluntary or paid, will have a DBS Check, employment history check and verified qualifications and have their details forwarded to the CSSIW. Once Upon A Time Day Nursery will always ask for references from two persons known to the applicant. All such references will be followed up. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job or place to another, explanations will be sought. All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless Once Upon A Time Day Nursery is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children. All new staff, volunteers and students are closely supervised.

Seek and supply training

We will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of

possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Prevent abuse by means of good practice

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside for example, for time out after behaviour which needs improvement, will leave the door ajar. Adults who have not been checked by CSSIW will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet. Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches. The layout of the playroom will permit constant supervision of all children.

Adults will try to respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse, changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated. Parents will normally be the first point of reference, though suspicions will also be referred as appropriate to the Child Protection Officer. All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff/ keyworker and the Managers.

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 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.

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.

Children and babies 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 nursery manager

Procedure:

All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into nursery or occur during time at the nursery, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member

The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity

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 Child Protection Officer will be notified.

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.

Sexual abuse

Action needs to be taken under this heading if the staff member has witnessed an occasion 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 symptoms may also 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 later in this document under 'recording abuse suspicions' 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 nursery manager

The matter will be referred to the Child Protection Officer.

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 *manager/*room supervisor/*registered person

The concern will be discussed with the parent

Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records

If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the Child Protection Officer.

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 and starvation and 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 nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery 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 nursery. They may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Dealing with allegations against staff members

All allegations of abuse or possible abuse must be referred to the nursery manager immediately.

Allegations will be dealt with on a confidential, individual basis—all staff should be aware that this could lead to immediate suspension from work pending an investigation- this is to protect both the child and the staff member from further allegations.

An investigation into the allegation will follow. The manager will collect information from any witnesses, record this in writing and sign the notes.

In such cases where the All Wales Child Protection Procedures are to be followed the manager will report the issue to the child protection Officer and the police. It will be the decision of these two agencies to decide if a strategy meeting is needed. If a meeting is called then the child's parents/carers and accused staff member will be informed immediately. At all stages of investigation the accused member of staff has the right to be accompanied to any meetings or discussions by a friend, union representative or solicitor and to receive signed minutes of these meetings. The accused member of staff must be kept informed of procedures and outcomes. Arrangements must be made for any support that they may require.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the Manager will seek advice from CSSIW and the Child Protection Officer.

If an allegation is made against the manager then the CSSIW should be contacted.

We will always inform the CSSIW if there are any allegations of abuse against a member of staff or in the case of suspected child abuse.

Procedure:

The concern will be discussed with the parent

Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records

If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the Child Protection Officer will be notified.

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.

CSSIW— 0300 7900126

Child Protection Co-ordinator

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01267 246595

Keep records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development. The record will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child: timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/ appearance, without comment or interpretation; where possible, the exact words spoken by the child; the records will be dated with name and signature of the recorder. Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people in Once Upon A Time Day Nursery other than the nursery Manager, keyworker or other staff as appropriate.

Liaise with other bodies

Once Upon A Time Day Nursery operates in accordance with local authority guidelines. Confidential records kept on children about whom the nursery is anxious will be shared with the Child Protection Officer if Once Upon A Time Day Nursery feels that adequate explanations for changes in a child's condition have not been provided. If a report on a child is to be made to the authorities, the child's parents will normally be informed at the same time as the report is made. However if the nursery has reasonable grounds to suppose the child's safety may be compromised (i.e. in the case of sexual or physical abuse) the parents may not be informed immediately. The group will maintain on going contact with the registering authority, including names, addresses and telephone numbers of any relevant agencies.

Support families

Once Upon A Time Day Nursery will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff and volunteers in the group. Where abuse at home is suspected, the nursery will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed. With the proviso that the care and

safety of the child must always be paramount, Once Upon A Time Day Nursery will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

