

## 1:3 Safeguarding Children & Child Protection

### Policy statement

St Saviour's Preschool promotes children's rights by working closely with them, their parents and the wider community, to ensure they are kept safe and given the best start in life. Our safeguarding policy is based on three key commitments.

### Commitment 1

#### **We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.**

- Our Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) is Tina Alder and in her absence Margaret Jacobs/ Claire Toms.
- The DSP will ensure her skills and knowledge are updated and refreshed annually.
- The DSP will ensure all staff are trained to understand the Safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are aware of them too.
- The DSP will be trained to recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional and sexual abuse in children, and to liaise with other Child Protection agencies.
- New staff and volunteers will be trained in Safeguarding at Induction, and all staff will be updated annually.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children. All children should be in sight and hearing whenever possible, and always within sight or hearing of an adult. Adults not CRB checked, are not allowed to accompany children to the toilet or to be left alone with a group of children, unsupervised. An adult taking a child aside for any reason, i.e. 'time out' for a behavioural problem, must inform a leader and be within the view of witnesses.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including
  - *the criminal records disclosure reference number*
  - *the date the disclosure was obtained*
  - *details of who obtained it*
- All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect

their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).

- We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
- Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.

## **Commitment 2**

**We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).**

### ***Responding to suspicions of abuse***

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
  - *significant changes in their behaviour;*
  - *deterioration in their general well-being;*
  - *their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);*
  - *changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;*
  - *unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect*
  - *any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.*
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where a member of staff has cause for concern they initial raise it with the designated person and record their observation. The designated person will then decide what further action is required which could include further observations, making records of suspicions of abuse and disclosures or immediate referral to external agencies.
- Where evidence of abuse is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who

is acting as the 'designated person'. This information is then stored on the child's safeguarding file.

- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

### ***Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures***

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
  - *listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action*
  - *does not question the child*
  - *makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.*
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's safeguarding personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### ***Informing parents***

- Where the designated person suspects there is evidence of abuse, parents will normally be the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child in greater danger.
- Parents are informed when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.

### **Liaison with other agencies**

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues as set out on the following website: <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/healthsoc/childfam/childprotection/hertssafboard/>
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements, which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

### **Allegations against staff**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person working on the premises, which includes:
  - *inappropriate sexual comments;*
  - *excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.*
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate – (01992 555420)
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

### **Disciplinary action**

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children can be identified and barred from working with this group.

### **Commitment 3**

**We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.**

#### ***Training***

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

#### ***Planning***

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

#### ***Curriculum***

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

#### ***Confidentiality***

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

#### ***Support to families***

- We aim to build trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.

- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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