

THE LAWNS EARLY EXCELLENCE AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

What we believe

- The Lawns Early Excellence & Children's Centre works in partnership with parents and carers. The safety of children is crucially important, as we work together to give children the very best start in life. We recognise that the Centre has a statutory duty under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- We believe that our centre promotes the welfare, safety and guidance of every child through its positive safe and stimulating environment. Centre governors and senior management are responsible for ensuring that the centre has a safeguarding children policy and that procedures are in place to deal with incidents, consistent with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance, Safeguarding Children in Education, September 2004, Every Child Matters, Change for Children 2004.

Aim

The aim of this policy is:

- To create a warm, supportive environment in which we will support all children to work towards the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters and in particular Stay Safe.
- To ensure all teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of the need to safeguard children and to understand their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To promote the safeguarding of children and young people and encourage the prevention of child abuse through the curriculum.

Procedures for ensuring our children stay safe

- All staff who have access to children are checked in line with government guidelines. Key members of staff and governors have undertaken training in safer recruitment in line with the Bichard Recommendations.
- The Head of Centre (interim), **Mrs Valerie Ellar** and at present two trained designated teachers carry responsibility in all safeguarding children and child protection issues. The designated teachers are:

Mrs Ann Pawlowski Deputy Head of Centre (interim) and Senco

Mrs. Deb Willcox Community Outreach Teacher

- All staff are trained and understand the safeguarding children procedures and all cases of child abuse or suspected child abuse are reported immediately to one of the designated members of staff who has responsibility for referring suspected child abuse cases to Child Care Duty Desk, Social Care. In the absence of one of the designated members of staff all staff members will know the reporting procedures.

- All staff undertake refresher training every three years. (In line with Safeguarding Children 2004).
- All new members of staff including supply staff and students will be given a copy of our safeguarding children procedures as part of their induction.
- Parents and carers are informed of the existence of our policy and of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to procedures for safeguarding children.
- Effective working relationships with other agencies are developed and promoted, especially the police and social services.
- Good record keeping systems are in place and a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm is provided. All staff are aware of the in-house Cause for Concern forms for recording concerns, and these are filed in the office of the Head of Centre.
- Through our links to other policies, for example, anti-bullying we will help to develop self-esteem and self-assertiveness in our pupils.
- Our procedures will be reviewed and updated yearly.

Responsibilities

The Designated Teachers and the Head of Centre are responsible for:

- Carrying out child protection procedures in accordance with the Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board 'Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures' and Safeguarding Children in Education 2004, and Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance 2006.
- Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.
- Ensuring that staff can be released to attend all safeguarding meetings, especially child protection case conferences
- Monitoring the attendance of any pupil currently on the child protection register and referring concerns where appropriate to the Education Welfare Service in the first instance. Where concerns remain the social worker for the family will be informed.
- Ensuring that all Centre staff, teaching and non-teaching are trained and receive refresher training every three years.
- Ensuring that the Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board 'Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures' file is displayed in the reception office and is accessible to all staff.
- Passing on any safeguarding children records/concerns to the receiving school when a child leaves.
- Holding a regular review meeting in the second half of each term, in order to appraise all cases, and to prepare for handover as children make the transition between different groups within the Centre, or transfer between settings.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Nominating a governor to have responsibility for safeguarding children who receives training, currently Mr Bernard Briars.
- Ensuring safeguarding children is a standing item on the agenda for Governor's meetings
- Reviewing the policies and procedures annually
- Remedying any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding children arrangements that are brought to its attention, without delay
- Ensuring that the Chair liaises with the Local Authority / Partner Agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head of Centre

Confidentiality:

- We recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding children are confidential and staff are informed on a need to know basis.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise child confidentiality

Supporting Staff:

- We recognise that staff working in the centre 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 teacher and to seek further support.

Allegations against staff:

- There may be times when a pupil, parent or other member of staff makes an allegation against a member of staff. In such cases procedures will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authority Guidelines 'Staff Facing an Allegation of Abuse' which are intended to be complementary and supplementary to the guidance contained in the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. Ofsted will be informed.
- If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head of Centre.
- The Head of Centre, on all such occasions, will discuss the content of the allegation with the Principal Education Welfare Officer.
- If the allegation made to the member of staff concerns the Head of Centre the other designated teacher will immediately inform the chair of governors who will consult with the Principal Education Welfare Officer.

Whistleblowing:

- We provide an environment in which children and adults feel confident to express concerns regarding the behaviour of a member of staff.

We work in accordance with Local Authority policy and guidance documents on:

*Physical Intervention
Health & Safety
Personal, Social, Health Education
Behaviour and Attendance
Drug and Alcohol Education
Sex and Relationship Education
Special Educational Needs
Anti-bullying
Children Missing Education*

Racist Incidents:

All staff are made aware of this policy through the staff handbook. Parents are made aware of the existence of this policy document through our school booklet.

(See annexe to this policy – ‘Procedure for Lost or Not Collected Children’)

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STAFF ACTION FOR INCIDENTS RELATED TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

- When child abuse is suspected (physical, emotional, sexual or neglect) or a child makes a disclosure, immediately notify one of the named staff members for safeguarding children, **Valerie Ellar** (Head of Centre_interim), **Ann Pawlowski** (Deputy Head of Centre_interim), or **Deb Willcox** (Community Outreach Teacher)
- In the absence of Val, Ann or Deb the Social Services Intake and Assessment team (01582 818499) should be contacted for advice.
- Where there is serious concern about a child's welfare but it is not clear that a referral should be made to Social Services, staff should record any concerns on the "cause for concern" form. All staff have a copy of this form in their Staff Handbook. These can also be found in the LSCB Safeguarding Children Inter-agency Procedure file which is in the reception office. The completed form should be handed to one of the designated teachers, noting handover and action taken.
- When a child has been referred to Social Services and has a Child Protection Plan if there is an injury or other significant concern the following procedure should be adhered to –
 - Speak to the Social Worker who has been allocated the case
 - If this is not possible seek the advice of Intake and Assessment
 - Take the Cause for Concern and deliver by hand if you are unable to speak to a social worker regarding the concern. Put as much detail in as possible
- A maximum of three significant recorded incidents is allowed *before* making a referral to Social Services.
- Written referral on a CAF form should be sent to Social Services within 24 hours of a telephone referral. Parents must be informed that a referral is being made unless this will put the child at further risk.
- All safeguarding children forms should be forwarded on, by one of the designated staff members, when the child transfers to a new school.
- The LSCB Safeguarding Inter-agency Procedure file is kept in the reception office and can be referred to by any member of staff.
- Accurate and complete information is essential for taking action to promote the welfare of the child.
- If a child wants to talk, he or she should be allowed to do so. Children will often seek a promise that a disclosure is made in confidence. Such a promise **cannot** be given. There is an overriding duty to protect a child from abuse, and all abuse must be reported.

- It is important, wherever possible, to have separate (uninterrupted) communication with the child. Care must be taken not to ask leading questions and only note marks which have been noticed or which have been brought to their attention by the child. No further examination should be carried out.
- A record must be made as soon as possible after such a conversation. The record should be signed, dated, timed and where possible, countersigned.
- The golden rule is 'observe and listen, but do not probe'. TED – 'Tell me about . . . , Explain . . . , Describe