

# Exford Little Berries Preschool



## Safeguarding Children Policy

Links with Exford Little Berries: Health and Safety Policy, Complaints Policy
Links with Exford First: Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Whistleblowing

At Exford Little Berries Preschool we aim to provide an environment where children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. We recognise abuse takes a number of forms:

- Emotional
- Physical
- Neglect
- Sexual
- Bullying

In order to achieve our aim we;

### **1. Exclude Known Abusers:**

It is made clear to applicants for posts within the Preschool that the position requires that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles. Providers must have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises), are suitable. To allow Ofsted to make these checks, the preschool is required to supply information to Ofsted, as set out in Schedule 1, Part 2 of the Childcare (Early Years Register) Regulations 2008, amended by the Childcare (Early Years Register) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.

All vacancies are processed in line with the Somerset County Council procedure for 'working with children'.

- All applicants are interviewed before an appointment is made and asked to provide two references.
- All references are followed up. In the case of unexplained gaps in employment history, or persons who moved rapidly between jobs, explanations are sought.
- All appointments, both paid and voluntary, are subject to the current regulations in force concerning DBS and medical checks.
- Appointments are subject to a probationary period of six months.

### **2. Seek and Supply Training:**

All staff are trained in recognising the symptoms of possible emotional abuse, physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and bullying. Staff attend regular training relating to safeguarding children. All staff are given time to read the Somerset Local Safeguarding policy as part of their induction. The Child Protection Handbook and flowchart is available at all times.

All staff are given copies of the Preschool safeguarding policy, the HM Government 'What to do if you suspect a child is being abused booklet' and Local Children's Safeguarding Board Child protection 'Guidance for day carers' booklet as part of their induction process and discuss the contents through supervisions during their induction period.

### **3. Prevent Abuse by Means of Good Practice:**

There is constant supervision of all children by members of staff supported by the lay out of the preschool and deployment of supporting adults. Staff ratios are maintained in line with OFSTED requirements.

- 0-2 years 1:3
- 2-3 years 1:4
- 3-5 years 1:8

Adults who have not received an enhanced CRB/DBS are not left alone with children and do not take children to the toilets or change nappies.

Children are encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence, through adult support, in making choices and in finding names for their feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This enables children to have self-confidence and vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

Access to mobile phones is restricted for staff when on the preschool site. When on the premises phones are locked away. Children do not have any access to staff mobile phones. All visitors are requested to leave their mobile phones at the main school reception when signing in.

### **4. Respond Appropriately to Suspicions of Abuse:**

The Preschool operates in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board Guidelines.

Staff are required to monitor any changes in children's behaviour, physical conditions or appearance. Staff share any concerns with the Early Years Lead Practitioner, who shares them with parents/carers unless it is felt that the safety of the child could be compromised. If worrying, these changes are recorded in the child's file with any explanation given by parents/carers, who are made aware of the entry. In most circumstances changes can be explained, but should staff feel that the explanations are not sufficient, then they are required to monitor closely. Parents/Carers are informed of this procedure and will be advised if further entries are made in the file.

The Early Years Lead Practitioner is duty bound to refer suspicions to her line manager and the Head teacher, and also to Somerset Direct and the Local Designated Officer should they be of a serious nature or persistent.

### **5. Record keeping:**

A specific and confidential record is made of concerns and Child/Parent/Carer disclosures in the child's personal file. This is quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development.

The record includes timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation. Where possible, the exact word spoken by the child/parent/carer should be recorded. The recording should be dated, with the name and signature of the recorder.

The file is kept in a lockable filing cabinet and not accessible to staff in the Preschool, other than the Lead Practitioner.

### **6. Liaising with Other Agencies:**

The Early Years Lead Practitioner, and as appropriate with the Children's Centre Early help Officer, maintains on-going contact with Children's Social Care to promote good working relationships should

the need arise. Confidential records kept on children about whom the nursery is anxious, are shared with the Department if it is felt that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided.

If there is any doubt about how concerns should be addressed, a discussion 'in principle' is sought with the Duty Social Worker or the child's own social worker.

If a report on a child is to be made to Social Care/Police, the child's parents/carers will be informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of our Local Safeguarding Children's board does not allow this. (Usually the case where the parent/carer is the likely abuser and the child may be placed in danger).

The Early Years Lead Practitioner and/or the Head of Teaching and Learning and or Head Teacher attend Child Protection Conferences when requested and write the necessary reports.

#### **7. Appropriate Action if Staff are accused of Abuse:**

If a staff member is accused of abuse, the Early Years Lead Practitioner must inform the Head of Teaching and Learning and/or Head teacher **immediately** and the Local Safeguarding Board. The Head teacher will inform their line manager, Local Authority Designated Officer, Somerset County Council (Personnel and Early Years Department) and OFSTED. These notifications must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. A registered provider who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement, commits an offence. Registered providers must also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations.

Consideration is made for the member of staff but the child's needs would be paramount.

#### **8. Supporting Families:**

Exford Little Berries takes every step in its power to build up a trusting and supporting relationship between families and staff and volunteers in the setting. It is recognised that parenting is not an easy task and staff strive to be non-judgmental.

Being in a key position to note anything that is worrying, staff are often able to use their skills to offer support quickly and so diffuse and prevent crisis situations. Close working with Parents/Carers, health visitors and other referring agencies aids this process.

Where abuse at home is suspected, the Preschool continues to welcome the child and family whilst investigations proceed.

The Preschool does all in its power to support and work with the child's family but the care and safety of the child remains paramount.

**Reviewed and Adopted : August 2015**

**Signed :**

**Role:**

<u>Preschool Team</u>		
Name	Signature	Date
Early Years Assistant		
Early Years Assistant		
Early Years Lead Practitioner		