

Safeguarding Children's Policy

This policy is part of our Safeguarding Policy and should be used in conjunction with our Behavioral Management Policy.

Statement of intent

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

The key commitments of The Tree house in protecting your child are:

1. We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm during their time with us.
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 are worried a child is being abused' (DoH 2006).
3. The Tree house is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training by raising staff awareness of the possible indications of abuse and of the procedure for dealing with such cases. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Aims

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background. Thus nurturing strong children;
- encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- enabling children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;
- helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults; and
- working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

The legal framework for this work is:

Primary legislation

The Childcare Act 2006

The Children Act 1989 - s 47

The Protection of Children Act 1999

The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

Guidance

What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2006)

The Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and Their Families (2000)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 1999)

The Common Assessment Framework 2005

Liaison with other bodies.

- We have a copy of 'What to do if you a worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social services department, we act within the London Safeguarding Children Board and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

CRB checks

A Disclosure is required for all positions within the nursery and job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event that an individual is offered a position.

The Tree House will only ask questions about unspent convictions as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those in The Tree House who are involved in the recruitment service are suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.

We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

Until a CRB check is received and validated, members of staff will never be left unsupervised with the children.

Induction and training for staff and volunteers

The following induction steps will be carried out for all new members of staff:

- A tour of the nursery showing fire exits, fire equipment, fire evacuation procedures and the location of the first aid boxes.
- Information on all essential policies and procedures in the nursery plus time to read and review all other policies.
- The nursery policy on child protection, confidentiality and behaviour management will be discussed and signed to indicate agreement.
- Conditions of employment will be discussed, including working hours, pay, holidays and procedures to follow in the event of an illness.

The following targets will be set up for each new member of staff in the first few weeks:

1. the Staff Introduction Form will be given to be filled in over the next two weeks. The new member of staff will be expected to read through policies and familiarise themselves with the daily routine in their room.
2. a new member of staff will be expected to start taking on some of the roles and responsibilities in their room by the 3rd week.
3. a new member of staff will be expected to start filling in the medicine forms and accident forms.

Every new member of staff is required to sign their policy sheet stating that they will adhere to the settings policies and procedures at all times. A copy of 'what to do if you think a child is being abused' is held within the nursery and is also part of the induction training to ensure all staff can recognise signs of abuse and know how to go about reporting them. It also gives them guidance on how to support a child or adult who report abuse. The flow chart accompanying this policy is posted in the staff room and on the parent notice board. All staff have access to the council run 'Child abuse' courses which are available throughout the year.

New members of the team will be supervised and progress reviews carried out quarterly or as deemed necessary. Once a week during the first month the manager will talk to the new member of staff to discuss how they are getting on and to overcome any problems.

Code of Behaviour

Statement of intent

Our setting believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Aim

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others by encouraging children to :

- Ask politely for and offer things to each other
- To say 'no' politely and accept 'no' from others
- To use assertive skills to achieve their goals.
- To protect children from neglect and harm first and foremost.

Methods of conduct and general supervision

- We have a named person who has overall responsibility for issues concerning behaviour.
- We require the named person to:
 - keep her/himself up to date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support;
 - check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour. We keep a record of staff attendance at this training.
- We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of - and respect - those used by members of the setting.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We expect all members of our setting - children, parents, staff, volunteers and students - to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behaviour by their key person. We work with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour, using our observations to help us to understand the cause and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.
- All staff and volunteers will be given a copy of this policy to aid compliance.
- Children will not be taken off the premises unless parental consent has been sought, in such cases, qualified members of staff will accompany volunteers at all times.
- Volunteers or staff who have not had an Enhanced CRB check will not be left unsupervised with a child. They will not be allowed to carry out any intimate care of a child.

- All volunteers and guests will be required to sign in the 'Visitors Book' and wear a badge showing their identification.
- Adult to child ratios will be adhered to at all times and are the responsibility of the nursery staff.

Strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate behaviour

- We require all staff, volunteers and students to use positive strategies for handling any inconsiderate behaviour, by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable, and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response.
- We acknowledge considerate behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We support each child in developing self esteem, confidence and feelings of competence.
- We support each child in developing a sense of belonging in our group, so that they feel valued and welcome.
- We never send children out of the room by themselves.
- We never use physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking. Children are never threatened with these.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children.
- We use physical restraint, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.
- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of our setting leader and are recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parent is informed on the same day.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour, such as racial or other abuse, we make clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's inconsiderate behaviour.
- We offer support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.

- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
 - they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs - this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting;
 - their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;
 - the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse; and
 - the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
 - Where this does not work, we use the Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

Children under three years.

- We recognise that very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.

Biting (for more information see separate policy)

Biting is a common stage of development that some children may experience, due to teething, language delay, communication difficulties or frustration.

We ensure that young children experiencing this stage of development are shadowed at all times, to ensure that injuries to other children, are kept to a minimum.

We ensure that parents are informed if their child has bitten or been bitten. All incidents are recorded and logged.

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes - such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour

or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or 'aggressive'.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution. Staff attend specific courses on superhero play for this reason

Persistent, Unacceptable Behaviour

We recognise that children pick up speech habits from adults around them, and may use inappropriate speech (for example racial comments) without realising this to be the case. If this happens, the parent will be requested to work with the child to show the child that comments the child has made are not acceptable. Where the parent refuses to accept that the comments are wrong or if the child shows no signs of improvement in behaviour the parents will be sent a written warning stating that if the unacceptable behaviour does not stop within the next week, the child will be expelled.

Hurtful behaviour

Hurtful behaviour is taken very seriously, but for children under five hurtful behaviour is often momentary, spontaneous and without thought for the effect words will have on the other child. We recognise that children behave in hurtful ways towards each other because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings.

We will help them manage their feelings offering support, and calming a child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt. By helping the child return to a normal state, we will help the child gradually learn how to manage his/her own feelings.

If age appropriate we will offer an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding. We will help them recognise feelings by naming them and connecting them to the triggering event. We will also help young children empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and the impact their action has on others' feelings. Whilst we would never force a child to say sorry, we will encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely remorseful and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.

We will help young children develop pro social behaviour such as resolving conflict through repeated experiences with problem solving. Our practitioners will support children with patient explanations and consistent and clear boundaries during day to day activities.

We will support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.

When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons very young children engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:

- They do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs- this maybe in the home or in the setting.
- Their parent or specific practitioners in the setting do not have the skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feeling of anger.
- The child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be experience child abuse,
- The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.

Where this does not work, the Code of Practise will be followed and appropriate referrals will be made to the Behavioural Support Team.

General Supervision (see above)

Definitions and signs of abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a 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. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through the omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making or conveying to the children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar a they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's normal developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the

child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeking or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all walks of life.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers) or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

Possible signs of neglect are:

- Being constantly tired, hungry and lacking energy,
- Being underweight and not thriving,
- Unclean clothes which may be dirty and smelly,
- Frequent health problems,
- Low self-esteem,
- Possible delay in all areas of development due to lack of stimulation,
- Dull hair, bad breath and poor skin tone.

Guidance on how to respond to a person disclosing abuse (child protection folder for forms and flow charts)

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

- The member of staff does not question the child.
- takes further action by telling the nominated person and recording everything (see below).

Do not:

- Make any promises that cannot be kept,
- Interrogate or blame the child,
- Question what the child has said,

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record on designated record sheets (appendix 1) of:

- the child's name;
- the child's address;
- the age of the child;
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with 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 personal file.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting. This involves informing social services who will help the nursery decide on a further course of action.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact.
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the London Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

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 London Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- The setting believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The setting makes clear to parents its role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local social services department.
- The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' as set by the social services department.
- 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 procedure and the Data Protection Act and only if appropriate under the guidance of the London Safeguarding Children Board.

Whistle Blowing Procedure

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff by a child or another member of staff a procedure is in place for swift action to protect the child:

- The allegation must be reported to the manager of the nursery and recorded as above.
- Confidentiality will be maintained as far as is possible.
- Social services will be contacted for further advice on possible action.

If there is any doubt as to the course of reporting or in the absence of the manager, advice can be sought from the Local Authorities Children's Social Care or the NSPCC.

Incident report form (see appendix 1)

Procedure to follow when an allegation is made against a member of staff

1. The member of staff against whom an allegation has been made should always be:
 1. treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns and the processes involved
 2. kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for themselves, eg disciplinary or related processes
 3. kept informed about events in the workplace if they have been suspended.
2. Suspension does not need to be automatic. It should be considered in cases where:
 1. it is suspected that a child(ren) is at risk of significant harm
 2. the police are investigating the allegation
 3. there are grounds for dismissal due to the nature of the allegation.

If the individual returns to work following suspension, the employer should consider what help and support might be appropriate and how best to manage the staff member's contact with the child concerned if they are still attending the setting .

3. Any allegation should be treated seriously and objectively, with those concerned keeping an open mind.

They should not:

1. investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification
2. make assumptions or offer alternative explanations
3. promise confidentiality (reassure that the information will only be shared on a "need to know" basis).

They should:

4. make a written record of the information given, including the time, date and place of the incident(s), persons present and what was said; sign and date the written record
5. ensure that the setting's procedures are followed.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Procedures to help protect staff from allegations of abuse

Staff should follow the provision's Code of Staff Conduct, particularly ensuring the following.

- The safety and welfare of the child is always paramount.
- Staff must fulfill their responsibilities and duties towards children by working in partnership with parents.
- Staff relationships with children and families are conducted in a professional manner at all times.
- All provision policies and procedures are followed, those listed below are particularly relevant:
 - Parents as Partners
 - Behaviour Management
 - Equal Opportunities/Inclusion/Special Educational Needs.
- Staff must be vigilant in health and safety matters, eg recording any bruises/marks a child has on arrival in their incident book (separate pages for each child to ensure confidentiality) .
- Comprehensive reporting of all children's' accidents should be made to parents, for their signature. Where possible any written account should be witnessed by a second staff member.
- Any training needs identified in team members should be passed on to their Line Manager.

Contact details (also see separate sheet)

<i>Name of Group</i>	Friend's of The Tree House
<i>Designated Child Protection Officer (responsible for implementing policy)</i>	Emma Taaffe 020 8360 6010
<i>Deputy Child Protection Officer</i>	<i>Sarah Cocks</i> 020 8360 6010
<i>Social Services number:</i>	020 8379 2483
<i>Out of hours emergency number:</i>	020 8379 1000
<i>Address:</i>	Children in Need Services Edmonton Centre 36-44 South Mall Edmonton N9 0TN
<i>Police:</i>	Edmonton

Address: 462 Fore Street
Edmonton N9

Telephone number: 020 8807 1212

NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000

Childline: 0800 1111