



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The care, safety and wellbeing of all the children attending the nursery is our highest priority, at all times. As such we will take all possible steps to ensure children in our care are safe from abuse and that any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

Exclude known abusers and follow safer recruitment guidance

We recognise the need to take all possible steps to ensure that every person working at the nursery is suitable to work with children. To achieve this we will adopt the following approach when recruiting all our staff:

- in order to deter unsuitable applicants, we will highlight our commitment to safeguarding children, at every stage of the recruitment process.
- We will seek to reject unsuitable people by adopting a rigorous selection process including interviewing, pre-employment checks and employment history checks
- We will prevent unsuitable people from being employed at the nursery by carrying out pre-employment checks; by implementing a strong code of conduct for all staff; by providing protection for whistleblowers; and sustaining an open but vigilant staffing culture.
- It will be made clear to applicants for posts that the position is exempt from the provisions of the rehabilitation of offenders act 1974. All applicants will be required to declare any information that might affect their suitability to work with young children.
- All applicants for posts will be interviewed before an appointment is made,. Questions will be included at all interviews to assess applicants knowledge of and commitment to implementing strong child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures; and to further assess their suitability to work with young children.
- All potential employees will be asked to provide two references, at least one of which is from their most recent employer. Referees will be asked to complete the nursery's reference form, which includes questions regarding applicants suitability to work with young children and details of any disciplinary action previously taken against the applicant. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.
- All employees will be required to obtain an enhanced criminal records Bureau clearance. Whenever possible, new employees will not commence employment at the nursery until CRB clearance has been received.



- All appointments will be subject to a probationary period and employment will not be confirmed unless nursery managers are confident that the applicant has demonstrated their understanding of and capability to implement all aspects of the nursery's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

Seek and supply training

- All employees will receive detailed induction training in the policies and procedures of the nursery. As part of this induction detailed information will be gathered on employees training needs and priority given to identifying and acting on any gaps in safeguarding knowledge and understanding.
- All employees will receive training during induction, on how to respond to a child making a disclosure and basic information regarding the different types of child abuse and guidance on recognising possible signs and symptoms of abuse.
- All new employees will be given opportunities at induction to read all the nursery's policies, with particular emphasis being placed on safeguarding policies and related procedures, in particular procedures regarding the sharing of information and what a member of staff should do if they have safeguarding related concerns about the actions or behaviour of another member of the staffing team.
- All employees will be required to attend basic level training on safeguarding
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer (Merion Chisholm) will seek the appropriate level of safeguarding training (level 3) and ensure that this training is regularly updated. The DSO will also monitor any developments regarding safeguarding and ensure any such information or guidance is passed on to all members of the staffing team.

To protect children, staff and visitors

- Nursery visitors will sign in and out of the nursery and will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times throughout their visit.
- All new members of staff will receive CRB clearance prior to taking up their post. In exceptional circumstances, such as undue delay in processing clearances, staff may take up their post but will not be left unattended with children at any time and would not be permitted to carry out any personal care of children. Any other adult present in the nursery, who has not received a CRB clearance from the nursery, will not be left alone with children under any circumstances.
- A Safeguarding Designated Officer will be appointed at the nursery. The current SDO is Merion Chisholm, manager of the nursery. The SDO will be trained to an appropriate level in safeguarding and child protection and will ensure that all staff receive appropriate training. The SDO is responsible for gathering and maintaining information on any suspected cases of abuse of children attending the nursery.



- In a way that is appropriate to their age, children at the nursery will be encouraged, through adult support, to develop a sense of autonomy and independence in making choices and in finding names for their feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the confidence and vocabulary to resist and talk about inappropriate approaches.
- The layout of the nursery will enable constant supervision of all children throughout the nursery day.
- Staffing will be organised in such a way that a member of staff will not be in a position to be alone with children in an area that is out of sight from other staff members.
- The nursery will adopt and maintain a use of technology policy to ensure that no unauthorised cameras, mobile phones or other items of technological equipment can be used in a way that compromises the protection of children from abuse.

Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse

- All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. This will usually include the child's keyworker and manager.
- All staff must consider the welfare of children as paramount at all times and should report concerns about the behaviour or actions of other staff to the DSO immediately. Should the DSO not be available and a member of staff is concerned that there is significant risk of harm to a child, they should inform the deputy manager or their line manager. Staff should not discuss concerns with other team members.
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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: time and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation; where possible, the exact words spoken by the child; the date, name and signature of the observer.
- Such records are to be kept in a separate file and will only be accessible to the manager.

Liaise with other bodies

- The nursery operates in accordance with local authority guidelines. All suspicions that a child might be at risk of significant harm will be referred immediately to the Devon County Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Parental consent to such a referral will be sought wherever



possible. Should parental consent be withheld and staff consider the risk of significant harm to the child concerned to be at such a level, a referral may be made without consent. In such cases parents will be informed of the action taken. The only circumstances in which the nursery will neither seek consent nor inform parents of action to be taken, is where the DSO believes that by so doing this would increase further the risk of significant harm to the child. In any case where staff are uncertain about the appropriate action to take regarding concerns about a child, staff will seek advice from MASH. If a report on a child is to be made to the authorities, the child's parents/carers will be informed at the same time as the report is made

- If a referral is made to MASH, the DSO or her deputy will inform OFSTED of the action they have taken, at the same time as the referral is made
- The DSO will ensure that information is received as appropriate, regarding any action taken by MASH in response to a referral.
- Where an allegation is made against a member of the nursery staffing team the DSO will immediately refer this to the Devon County Council, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). At the time of the referral the DSO or her deputy will inform OFSTED of the action that has been taken. In any case where the DSO or her deputy is uncertain about the appropriate action to take she will seek advice from the LADO.
- The nursery is committed to working with all external agencies, specialists and other professionals, as required, to support action taken in relation to safeguarding and child protection issues.

Support families

- The nursery will take every step possible to build up trusting and supportive relationships between staff and families in the group
- Every child will be allocated a Key worker who will take lead responsibility for the welfare and safety of the child whilst at the nursery. The keyworker will ensure that all appropriate information is maintained and development and progress monitored. The key worker will work very closely with the child's parents/carers to ensure the highest possible level of care is maintained and will use their detailed knowledge of the child to contribute to the early identification of any safeguarding or child protection concerns.
- Where safeguarding or child protection issues at home are suspected, the nursery will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed
- Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child's parents/carers
- With the proviso that the care and welfare of the child is always paramount, nursery will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family



Compton Valley Nursery - Child Protection Procedures

In any instance where there is a suspicion that a child is at risk of significant harm, staff must respond promptly and appropriately, as follows:

- ❖ The Key worker or staff member who becomes concerned, should talk to the child, taking care not to lead the child in any way.
- ❖ If a child should make a disclosure about abuse, Staff should follow the guidance given on the 'what to do if a child makes a disclosure' form and follow this guidance.
- ❖ The Key worker or staff member should share her/his concerns with the DSO
- ❖ If there are concerns that the child is at immediate risk of significant harm a referral will be made at once, to the MASH. At the time of making a referral to MASH, the DSO will inform OFSTED of the action taken.
- ❖ Wherever possible parental consent will be sought before making the referral. In other cases parents will be informed that a referral is to be made. The only circumstances where no consent or information is given to parents/carers as a referral is to be made, is where it is considered that by doing so the risk of significant harm to the child could be increased. In any case where the DSO or her deputy is uncertain of the appropriate action to take, advice will be sought from the MASH.
- ❖ The Key worker should speak to the parents/carers about the concerns
- ❖ The Key worker or staff member raising the concern will prepare a confidential report on the child, detailing all concerns. The report must be timed, dated and signed, and conversations with the child should be reported verbatim if possible; details of explanations given by parents/carers should be included; and all other comments should be strictly objective.
- ❖ The key worker or staff member raising the concern, should carry out observations on the child as part of the report; these must be timed and dated and signed by the staff member
- ❖ The report should be kept in a locked cabinet only accessible to the DSO
- ❖ The DSO will follow guidelines on information sharing to ensure any dissemination of confidential information meets all statutory guidance
- ❖ The nursery shall ensure that all staff are fully aware of the nursery's safeguarding and child protection procedures, including what to do if they have concerns about a child and related reporting procedures; and have access to this information via the computer network system, at all times..



Compton Valley Nursery – Child Protection
Procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations made against staff

- ❖ Staff must always consider the welfare of children to be paramount and must report concerns about the behaviour and actions of other staff to the DSO, immediately. Allegations must be kept confidential and will usually only be discussed with the DSO. The DSO will refer these allegations to the Local authority designated officer (LADO). At the time a referral has been made, OFSTED will be informed of the action taken.
- ❖ If a member of staff should have concerns about the behaviour or actions of the DSO these should be shared with the staff member's immediate line manager who will then seek advice and support sought from the LADO, as to the most appropriate way to proceed.
- ❖ Staff should make a note of all actions/incidents that have led to their concerns; details should be timed, dated and signed. Any written statements should be kept in a lockable file, only accessible by the DSO.
- ❖ Where allegations are made against a member of staff by a child's parent/carer a written statement of the allegation must be taken. The statement must be signed and dated by the parents and the DSO. Parents/carers should be advised of the nursery's policies and procedures in such cases and kept fully informed of all action taken
- ❖ If the DSO or her deputy is uncertain about the correct action to take she will seek advice from the LADO.
- ❖ where a formal complaint has been made, the member of staff involved will be asked to make a written statement, which will be signed and dated. If advised to do so by LADO, the member of staff will be suspended from duty whilst the allegations are investigated.
- ❖ In cases where the allegation is made by a member of staff and involves a specific child or children, the parents/carers will be informed and asked to sign a statement which explains the allegations and the action taken by the DSO and the nursery, to date.
- ❖ Once any allegations have been investigated, a report will be prepared and signed by the DSO. The DSO will work closely with the LADO and any other external agencies as appropriate or required, in compiling the report and in determining any action to be taken. The findings of the report will guide any further action, which may include disciplinary action. Any action against a member of staff will be taken in the light of the Nursery's statutory obligations



as child care providers and as employers; and in accordance with the Nursery's own disciplinary and grievance procedures.

- ❖ When determining a response the DSO will, as far as is appropriate, consider the welfare of the member of staff and the role of additional training and support in addressing inappropriate behaviour.
- ❖ As part of their induction training, all staff will be made aware of what they should do if they have concerns about the behaviour or action of a member of staff, including reporting procedures; this information will be available to them at all times, via the nursery's networked computer system.





Compton Valley Nursery and Pre-school

Reviewed: June 2012