



**General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children’s Welfare**

The provider must take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**Safeguarding children**

**Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy Statement**

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Close to Home will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

**EYFS key themes and commitments**

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

**Procedures**

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

*Key commitment 1:*

*The Alliance is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.*

**Staff and volunteers**

Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is:

Lisa Marie Hayes. Manager and Director of Close to Home.

Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is:

Christopher Hayes. Director of Close to Home.

Our aims to meet the requirements of Key Commitment 1 are to:

- Ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

*Key commitment 2:*

*The Alliance is 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**

Our aims to meet the requirements of Key Commitment 2 are to:

- Acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- Be aware that if children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the setting leader or manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal 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's Board.***

- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

- We use the detailed procedures We use the detailed procedures and reporting format contained in the Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication 'Child Protection Record for use in Early Years Settings' when making a referral to children's social care or other appropriate agencies.

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

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), the member of staff then observes for signs or signals that gives 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 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 which is kept securely and confidentially.

### **Making a referral to the local authority social care team**

The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication 'Child Protection Record' contains detailed procedures for making a referral to the local social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral. This is based on 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

We keep a copy of this document and follow the detailed guidelines given.

All members of staff are familiar with the Alliance's Child Protection Record and the document 'What To do If' and follow the procedures for recording and reporting.

### **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 Local 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.

### **Liaison with other agencies**

We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. We have a copy of 'What To Do If You Are 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, 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.

Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

If a referral is to be made to the local authority social care department, we act within the area's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

### **Allegations against staff or directors**

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within Close to Home, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by Close to Home, which may include an allegation of abuse.

- 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 living or 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 Close to Home, or anyone living or 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's social care department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and inform them of the 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 of Close to Home and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the manager will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, 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 a volunteer is dismissed from the setting because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Independent Barring Board administrators so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.

*Key commitment 3 :*

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

### **Training**

We seek out training opportunities 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.

We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

### **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 that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.

We create, within the setting, a culture of value and respect for the individual, 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. Staff and persons attending Close to Home are made aware of the confidentiality policy Close to Home adheres to.

### **Support to families**

We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.

We make clear to parents our 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 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.

We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.

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.

## **Legal framework**

### *Primary legislation*

Children Act (1989 s47)  
Protection of Children Act (1999)  
Data Protection Act (1998)  
The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)  
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

### *Secondary legislation*

Sexual Offences Act (2003)  
Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)  
Human Rights Act (1999)  
Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)  
Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations  
Equalities Act (2006)  
Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

## **Further Guidance**

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised HMG 2006)  
What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006)  
Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)  
The Common Assessment Framework (2006)  
Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)  
Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide (HMG 2006)