

# Chandlers Chatters Preschool Playgroup

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### Introduction

- 1.1 The content of this policy is applicable to paid staff and volunteers at the setting.
- 1.2 The Manager and staff of Chandlers Chatters fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm.
- 1.3 All staff at Chandlers Chatters should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 1.4 The aims of this policy are:
  - To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
  - To raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard children and of the responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
  - To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
  - To support pupils who have suffered abuse in accordance with his/her agreed Child Protection Plan.
  - To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
  - To set out a structured procedure within the setting in cases of suspected abuse.
  - To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the police and social care.
  - To ensure that all adults within our setting who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.
  - To ensure all staff are aware of the preschools code of conduct.

### Equality

Some children's circumstances mean they are more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to easily access services. These children often require a high degree of awareness and co-operation between professionals in different agencies, both in recognising and identifying their needs and in acting to meeting these needs (London Child Protection Procedures).

### Procedures

- 1.5 Our setting procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Local Authority and Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures. Edition 5 of the London Child Protection Procedures Practice Guidance provides comprehensive guidance. We will ensure that:
  - (i) We have a Nominated Child Protection Co-ordinator who has responsibility for child protection and who undertakes regular training for this role. This person is Debbie Russell.
  - (ii) We have a deputy who will act as a support to the nominated child protection co-ordinator. This person is Sharon Bond
  - (iii) Those named above have received appropriate training. The nominated child protection co-ordinator and deputy co-ordinator will undertake to update training every two years and all setting staff will receive training every three years.

1.6 In the event that there are concerns about a child the nominated child protection co-ordinator will access the London Child Protection Procedures, 5<sup>th</sup> edition and use this to inform their decision-making process with regard to presenting safeguarding concerns:

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the children, and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or prompt the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm.

- (i) All members of staff will develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns. and who to refer to
- (ii) All members of staff will be expected to know how to access Edition 5 of the London Child Protection Procedures at [www.londoncp.co.uk](http://www.londoncp.co.uk)
- (iii) All members of staff will know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. It is vital that our actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- Listen to the child, if you are shocked by what is being said try not to show it.
- Do not promise confidentiality. You can, however, promise privacy, reassure the child they have done the right thing, explain who you will have to tell and why.
- If a child is making a disclosure the pace should be dictated by the child. Do not ask leading questions, for example, 'what did they do next?' It is our role to listen not to investigate. Use open questions, such as, 'is there anything else you wish to tell me?'
- Accept what they are telling you.
- Do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you.
- Don't criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they love.
- Report all information immediately to the nominated child protection co-ordinator.

- (iv) The conduct of staff when in a 1:1 situation with a child is managed in a way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their motives or intentions. All staff must ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place children or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to children. All staff must be aware of the settings Whistleblowing Policy and how to access it (P&P file).
- (v) All parents/carers are made aware of the possibilities of staff members actions with regard to child protection procedures.
- (vi) An abbreviated copy of the setting Child Protection Policy will be given to all parents as part of the child induction process and the full version will be available for inspection in the group office.

1.7 Our procedure will be reviewed annually by the Manager and Nominated Child Protection Co-ordinator and will be updated accordingly.

### **Responsibilities**

1.8 The nominated child protection co-ordinator or those deputising for them, is responsible for:

- (i) Adhering to the Havering LSCB, LA and setting procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.
- (ii) Keeping written records of concerns, at the setting, about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.

- (iii) Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from child level records.
- (iv) Ensuring that an indication of further record keeping is marked on the child level record.
- (v) Checking the attendance of children subject to a child protection plan on a daily basis.
- (vi) Ensuring that any child currently who is subject to a child protection plan, who is absent without explanation is referred to Social Care and Havering Early Education Inclusion Team.
- (vii) Ensuring that where any child who is currently subject to a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new setting or school (if known) immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

### **Supporting Children**

1. We recognise that a child who is abused or witness's violence and/or abuse may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. We additionally recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We also recognise that a child may feel self-blame.
2. We recognise that the setting may provide the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
3. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
4. Our setting will support all children through:
  - (i) The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.
  - (ii) The setting ethos.
  - (iii) Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
  - (iv) Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the preschool, giving children A sense of being valued.
  - (v) Ensuring children know there are adults in the preschool whom they can approach if If they are worried.
  - (vi) Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies Involved in the safeguarding of children.
  - (vii) Notifying Social Care and Early Education Inclusion as soon as there is a significant Concern.
  - (viii) Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who Leaves the preschool, by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded, under Confidential cover, to the child's new setting or school.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

- (i) We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential
- (ii) Department for Education (DfE) information sharing protocols will be adhered to at all times (Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers 2015).
- (iii) The Manager, nominated child protection co-ordinator, or staff generally, will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis.

- (iv) All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share
- (v) Information with other agencies in order to safeguard children
- (vi) All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

### **Supporting Staff**

- (i) We recognise that staff working in the setting 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.
- (ii) We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to discuss the situation with the Nominated Child Protection Co-ordinator and/or the Deputy and to seek further support as appropriate.

### **Safer Recruitment**

- (i) Our setting will ensure that we practice safe recruitment by undertaking enhanced DBS checks of staff and volunteers who work with children. Any recruitment advertisements will highlight the priority that the setting places on this and the setting's commitment to safeguarding.
- (ii) The setting will follow the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) and in line with the Local Authority and Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures

### **Allegations against staff**

- (i) We understand that a child or 3<sup>rd</sup> party may make an allegation against a member of staff.
- (ii) We understand that an allegation is wider than just those where it is considered that there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm. Some allegations may indicate that a staff member is unsuitable to work with children.
- (iii) We will be guided by Working Together 2013 which defines an allegation as:
  - (a) Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
  - (b) Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
  - (c) Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that she/he is Unsuitable to work with children.
- (iv) If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Manager – this must be done within one working day.
- (v) The Manager, on all such occasions, will discuss the content of the allegation with The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – this must be done within one working day.
- (vi) If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Manager, the Nominated Child Protection Co-ordinator will immediately inform Havering Early Education Inclusion Team, who will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – this must be done within one working day,
- (vii) The setting will not internally investigate unless instructed by the LADO.
- (viii) The setting will follow the LA procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the setting. These are also contained in Chapter 7 of the London Child Protection Procedures 5th edition 2015.

## **Whistleblowing**

- (i) We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- (ii) All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns where they exist and about the attitude or actions of colleagues.
- (iii) Further information is available in our separate policy – ‘Whistleblowing’.

## **Physical Intervention**

- (i) Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in our Behaviour Management Policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort. This must at all times be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another child.
- (ii) We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. Staff need to be aware that if a child sustains an injury as a result of physical intervention, child protection processes must be adhered to.

## **Bullying**

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **Racial Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **Prevention**

- (i) We recognise that the setting plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- (ii) The setting community will therefore:
  - (a) Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
  - (b) Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

## **Health & Safety**

Our Health & Safety policy (set out in a separate document) reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children, both within the setting environment and when away from the setting - when undertaking setting trips and visits (H&S P&Ps and Risk Assessments).

## **Other Relevant Preschool Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with other preschool policies and procedures involving welfare. These policies are:

- Whistleblowing Policy; Health & Safety Policy; Anti-Bullying; Equal Opportunities; Role of the Keyperson; Cameras & Mobile Phones P&Ps; Managing Behaviour.

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## **ANNEX COVID-19**

- We will act on individual changes to a child when returning to the group this will be identified by changes within the four areas Physical, Emotional, Neglect and Sexual.
- DSL and Deputy is aware of arrangements.
- The DSL and Deputy will be looking to update the guidelines accordingly.
- Any updates from local authorities regarding EHC plans, Risk Assessments and attendance will be put in place.
- We will still follow our usual procedures with concerns regarding a staff member or volunteer who may pose a risk to children.
- We will pay particular attention to the Mental Health/Wellbeing of all children and staff.
- We will pay particular attention to all children with SEN as they return to the setting as there may be additional worsened social emotional and mental health needs as a result of Coronavirus. There may also be children that have fallen further behind their peers due to time out of the setting or missed diagnosis due to the period of absence.