



Noah's Ark Nursery School

Safeguarding Children Policy

Introduction

At Noah's Ark we are committed to the protection and safety of all the children in our care. The health, safety and well being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our setting. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to create an environment in which children feel safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. We expect everyone working within the setting to take responsibility for following rigorous procedures for child protection and to comply with the New National Guidelines as summarised in the booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused'.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all our staff are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Our aims are:

- To raise the awareness of all staff, and to identify responsibility for reporting possible cases of abuse;
- To ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection issues;
- To set down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.

Procedures

- Exclude known abusers

Noah's Ark will not employ anyone who has previously been convicted of any child offence.

Applicants for work within the school will be interviewed and will be asked to fill in an application form and provide two references, and an enhanced CRB check will be undertaken, where possible before the applicant starts work. If this is not possible, a List99 check will always be undertaken. In the case of unexplained gaps in their employment history, or if they have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.

Appointments will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the school is confident that the applicant can safely be trusted with children.

- See Recruitment Policy.

- Alert staff to recognise abuse or neglect

All adults involved in the school will be made aware of the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse in order to ensure that they recognise any possible causes.

All members of staff should familiarise themselves with the Child Protection guidelines provided by Social Services.

- Prevent abuse by means of good practice

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children. An adult who needs to take a child aside – for example, to deal with a disciplining problem – will do so in the classroom and will therefore normally be either within sight or within earshot of other members of staff.

The layout of the schoolrooms will permit constant supervision of all children.

An adult will accompany children at all times.

- Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse

Changes in children's behaviour/appearances will be investigated.

Parents will normally be the first point of reference, though suspicions, which are not rapidly allayed, will also be referred to the Social Services Department.

Any such suspicions will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff who raised the question of possible abuse, the Head of Noah's Ark Nursery Schools, the Head of the individual school and the board of Governors.

- 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 the name, address and age of the child; dates of observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation where possible; the exact words spoken by the child; the dated name and signature of the recorder.

Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people other than the Head of Noah's Ark Nursery Schools, the Governors, the Head of the individual school and the relevant member of staff involved.

- Liaise with other bodies

Confidential records kept on children about whom the school is anxious will be shared with the Social Services Department if the school feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided.

Parents will be informed that the records will be shared with the authorities at the same time as they are informed that a report is to be made to the registering body.

The school will maintain ongoing contact with the registering authority, including names, addresses and telephone numbers of individual social workers, to ensure that it would be easy, in an emergency, for the school and the Social Services Department to work well together.

- Support families

The school will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff.

Where abuse at home is suspected, the group will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.

Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with parents.

With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount, the school will do all in its power to support and work with a child's family.

- Confidentiality

We comply with the government requirements set out in DHS Circular LA 83/14 and by the LEA with regard to confidentiality. The files we keep on children are open to parents. Information from third parties will not be disclosed without their prior consent. Access to these files may be withheld in certain prescribed cases where there are instances of actual or alleged abuse (see DfES circular 16/19). Working notes are not subject to disclosure, but will be summarised and then kept on file. These guidelines of ours are in line with the safeguards on disclosure of information set out in the Education (school records) Regulations 1989.

Designated Person

In Noah's Ark the designated person with overall responsibility for matters relating to Safeguarding Children is **Annette Miller - 0207924 3472 ext. 5**

In her absence please contact **James Savile - 020 7924 3472 ext. 4**

At each of the Noah's Ark Nursery Schools we have a Designated Safeguarding Person. They are:

Endlesham Road - Rachael Colman - 020 7924 3472 ext 7
Cobham Close - Caroline Parham - 020 7924 3472 ext. 6
Westside - Clare Robinson - 020 7924 3472 ext. 8

Each designated person works very closely with Annette Miller and all decisions are made and procedures followed on a cooperative and joint basis.

Together, their role is to:

- ensure that the Wandsworth Child Protection procedures are followed in the school;
- ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures;
- ensure that appropriate training and support is provided for all staff;
- develop effective working partnerships with other agencies and services;
- decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g. refer to Child Protection Social Worker);
- liaise with Child Protection teams over suspected cases of abuse;

- ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked 'strictly confidential';
- submit reports to, and attend, Safeguarding Children conferences;
- ensure that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as at risk;
- provide guidance to parents, children and staff about suitable support.

Reference to EYFS General Welfare Requirements

Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare
 Suitable People
 Organisation
 Documentation

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into place.

We must notify Ofsted about any allegations of serious harm or abuse against a child while the child is in our care.

We must keep a statement for the arrangements in place for the protection of each child, including arrangements to safeguard children from abuse or neglect and the procedures to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse or neglect.

Laws, Policies and Guidance

The Children Act 1989
The Children Act 2004
Every Child Matters 2004
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006
London Child Protection Procedures 2007

- See separate 'Safeguarding File' at each setting.

Annette Miller
Head of Noah's Ark Nursery Schools

Reviewed January 2007
Revised January 2009
Revised February 2009
Reviewed and Revised February 2010
Reviewed January 2011

CONCLUSION

The Governors and Staff of the School are committed to keeping this policy under regular review and the Governor responsible will ensure that the matters contained herein are regularly discussed and further developed to the benefit of all users.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Sharman', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mr Jeremy Sharman
Chairman of the Board of Governors