

## **NURSERY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY**

*Linked to the Nursery Child Protection Policy*

# **Safeguarding** ***Everybody's responsibility***

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff working on behalf of Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT) in relation to safeguarding procedures. Where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected all staff must follow Berkshire child protection procedures online.

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To explain the responsibilities BHFT and its staff have in respect of safeguarding
- To provide staff with an overview of safeguarding
- To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where safeguarding issues arise

## **Context**

For the purpose of this document a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

All children have the right to protection from all forms of abuse including exploitation, neglect, physical and mental abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

## **Legal Framework**

This guidance reflects the principles contained within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) ratified by the United Kingdom in 1991 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Children Act 1989 sets out the legislative framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the Children Act 2004 underpins the Every Child Matters, Change for Children programme.

## **Staff**

All staff, working on behalf of BHFT have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children. Staff may receive disclosures of child abuse and observe children who are at risk. This policy will enable staff to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding and child protection issues.

BHFT has a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff is dismissed because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.

## **What is Child Abuse?**

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

The 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' guidance published by the Government defines four categories of abuse as follows.

### **Physical Abuse**

A form of abuse which 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional Abuse**

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 conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber 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**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## **Neglect**

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, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- \* provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- \* protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- \* ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- \* ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Protocol: Bruising in children non-independently mobile**

ALL staff must follow the Berkshire child protection procedures online and refer to the I bruising in children non-independently mobile protocol. This protocol can be found on the Trust intranet site, the link for this is at the end of the policy. The protocol refers to any bruises or suspicious marks on a child who is non-independently mobile. The named professionals on duty can be contacted to support staff with the protocol.

## **Procedure in the event of a disclosure**

It is important that children are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. The Berkshire Child Protection Procedures Online must be followed whenever an allegation is made that a child has been abused or when there is a suspicion that a child has been abused.

Promises of confidentiality should not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the child.

If the complainant is the child, conversation should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged and leading questions should not be used. The use of leading questions can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any court proceedings.

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information including using the Nursery 'Initial Concern Form'. This should include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the child who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation. Any disclosure by a child should be recorded using the child's words

Updated August 2024 and reviewed annually in September or in line with Safeguarding updates.

[www.nurseries.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.nurseries.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk)

## **Responding to an allegation**

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead on that working day where possible.

The manager or persons in charge shall telephone and report the matter to the appropriate local social services department duty social worker. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported.

A referral will be made in line with each nursery's local authority's process.

Where it is considered that a family require either singular or multi agency support an Early Help Assessment (EHA) will be carried out. The Early Help Assessment has replaced the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and will involve either a Team around the Child (TAC) or a Team around the Family (TAF). An EHA is not used if practitioners have any safeguarding concerns.

## **Responding appropriately to a child making an allegation of abuse**

Stay calm.

Listen carefully to what is said.

Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.

Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.

Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.

Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.

Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.

Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.

Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible – note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the designated child protection officer.

## Staff should be aware of signs of possible abuse or neglect

- significant changes in children's behaviour
- deterioration in children's general well-being
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- children's comments which give cause for concern
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of the usual role and responsibilities or inappropriate sharing of images

## Allegation against a staff member or volunteer

Any allegation made against a staff member will be referred to the Local Authority Designated officer (LADO), in Children's Services

Members of staff have a responsibility to be aware of and maintain good personal and professional boundaries. Any member of staff who hears about or observes a situation in which a child may have suffered significant harm should firstly determine whether the child is in need of emergency medical attention. If so, this should be sought immediately and directly from the appropriate services and the parents informed.

The member of staff should clarify what is being said constitutes an allegation of abuse or possible abuse (but should not closely question the child or third party).

The manager/deputy or senior member of staff on duty should be informed without delay and provide a written report by the following working day, (if made by a child exact words must be used).

The staff member about whom the allegation is made will be supported throughout (once the manager/deputy or senior member of staff on duty has a full understanding and information of the allegation made). Lee Owen-Macleod, Area Manager, Allison Rees, Head of Facilities and any member of the Safeguarding Children Team for BHFT must be informed. Paid suspension may follow if advised by Children Services.

Once reported to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**, who works within Children's Services an initial assessment will be carried out to determine if there is sufficient substance to warrant an investigation, and at what level.

Where reasonably practical to do so, the parents of the child who has suffered serious harm or alleged abuse will be notified immediately and be informed of any case progression.

The contact details for the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** for each nursery are at the end of this policy. Should you be unable to contact this person call Children's Services/Referral and Assessment Team/MASH or Out Of Hours Emergency Duty Team for Berkshire, these numbers are also at the end of this policy.

In the event of an emergency or if you are unable to contact the LADO contact the police directly by dialling 999 and inform the LADO as soon as possible afterwards. You will need to confirm the content of the referral in writing to both the LADO and the police by the following working day.

If an investigation is deemed necessary it will be instigated and coordinated by the Social Services Department. BHFT will also conduct their own internal investigation.

At all times confidentiality must be maintained and information shared on a need to know basis.

Where an employer becomes aware of relevant information that may lead to disqualification of an employee, the provider must take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children.

Ofsted must be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children on the nursery premises (whether the allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. Ofsted must be informed as soon as is reasonably practical but at the latest within 14 days of the allegation being made. Ofsted should be informed by the manager/deputy or senior member of staff on duty.

Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, disqualifications, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children, whether received before or during their employment at any of the BHFT nurseries.

#### Disqualification by association

This includes information regarding disqualification for anyone living or working in the same house as the member of staff (details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009).

Failure to provide the nursery with the correct accurate information may result in a member of staff being disqualified and the nursery will not continue to employ them (3.1 – 3.18 *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014*).

Staff are required to complete a DBS declaration form regarding the above every three months or sooner if required.

## **Confidentiality**

Safeguarding and child protection raises issues of confidentiality which should be clearly understood by all.

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly investigative agencies.

Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all. All personal information regarding a child will be kept confidential except when it is suspected that a child under 18 years is the victim of abuse.

If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child's own sake.

Within that context, the child should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

Where possible, consent should be obtained from the child before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the child is the priority.

Where a disclosure has been made, staff should let the child know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result.

Staff should assure the child that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why. The child's involvement in the process of sharing information should be fully considered and their wishes and feeling taken into account.

Child Protection issues are highly sensitive and staff who receive information about children or their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts. All child protection records should be kept secure.

The nursery has a legal obligation to report any suspicions of abuse but in most cases will talk to parents/guardians first if we have any concerns. On occasions where we feel a child may be at significant risk of harm, the nursery may consult their local authority's Social Services department prior to discussing their concern with parents. Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of all the children in our care. The nursery will act responsibly, quickly and confidentially. The nursery will always ensure that children are never placed at risk whilst in the care of the nursery.

## **Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The role of the designated safeguarding lead is to deal with all instances involving child protection that arise within BHFT nurseries. They will respond to all child protection concerns and enquiries.

### **Apprentices and students must be made aware of their responsibilities and those around them on their initial induction**

#### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead is;**

Jack In The Box – Carly Byrne

Kiddies' Cabin - Leigh Kelly

Little Dragons – Rebecca Croft

**But safeguarding is everybody's responsibility**



## **Role of line managers**

The role of the line manager is to support the member of staff, involved with the incident and to ensure the correct procedures are followed.

The line manager could if agreed with the staff member dealing with the incident, make contact with the designated safeguarding lead in the first instance.

The line manager should ensure that all staff within their team are familiar with Safeguarding procedures and ensure that all staff undertake safeguarding training, and that records are kept

## **Use of photographic/video equipment**

Written consent to take and use images of children should be obtained prior to the taking of photographs and or video footage. Parents/carers should be made aware of when, where and how the images may be used to give their informed consent.

## **Use of mobile phone, camera and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities**

We have a separate policy which refers to all electronic devices able to take pictures, record videos, send or receive calls and messages. This includes cameras, laptops, webcams, mobile telephones, tablets, and any recording devices including smartwatches.

## **Child car seats**

Children will not be permitted to leave the nursery if they are going to be making a journey in a car without an appropriate car seat. This is in line with the guidance on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website pages 'Child car seats: the law'.

The only exception to this will be according to the information on the above webpages '[When a child can travel without a car seat](#)'.

Staff will report children not using appropriate car seats to the relevant services.

## **Training**

Training will be provided, as appropriate, to ensure that staff are aware of these procedures. Specialist training will be provided for the member of staff with Safeguarding responsibilities. All staff who work directly with children in the nursery attend regular child protection training which includes an awareness of the possible indicators of abuse and the Berkshire Child Protection Procedures. They are also trained by the nursery's Child Protection Link Person (CPLP) to ensure that they fully understand the procedure for recording and reporting suspicions of abuse. All new staff are given a copy of the Berkshire Child Protection Procedure to read. A link to the continually updated website is stored on both the Nursery Manager's and Deputy's computers which are within the office.

The BHFT nurseries regularly consider the training and development needs of all staff. Staff will be continually updated and assessed as to their knowledge of and procedures linked to child abuse and allegations; the CPLP carries out competency tests on all staff.



## **Complaints procedure**

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust has a complaints procedure available to all staff, and parents. We want to work with the families in our nursery and we are here to help both parents/guardians and their children.

## **Recruitment procedure**

When employing staff, all individuals are required to have a new Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before they can be left alone with children in the nursery. Newly employed staff are not permitted to begin their employment within the setting until an Enhanced DBS check has been completed and returned with satisfactory results. It is the responsibility of the Nursery Manager in partnership with Human Resources to ensure that all staff in the nursery completes a re-check at five yearly intervals. The recruitment department operates a safer recruitment process which includes, gaining satisfactory references, a full employment matrix, health clearance and receiving qualification certificates from individuals.

## **LADO, internet links and further sources of information**

### **LADO contact details**

Jack In The Box - Dawn Lises 07927 681858

[LADO@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk](mailto:LADO@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk)

Kiddies' Cabin - 0208 8917370 or 07774 332675

[LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

Little Dragons - 0118 937 2684 [LADO@brighterfuturesforchildren.org](mailto:LADO@brighterfuturesforchildren.org)  
Sarah Rae and Sue Darby share the LADO role.

Berkshire Safeguarding procedures <http://proceduresonline.com/berks>

**Please also refer to the following Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust's policies located on the Trust's intranet site;**

[CCR072 Safeguarding and Promoting the Wellbeing of Children](#)  
[ORG013 Raising Issues of Concern](#)

**Please also refer to the following;**

Allegations Management Early Years advice which can be located at <http://proceduresonline.com/berks> along with all child protection procedures for Berkshire.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 - [Available to download](#)

### **Internet Links**

[www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

[www.ceop.gov.uk/reportabuse/index.asp](http://www.ceop.gov.uk/reportabuse/index.asp)

### **Useful telephone numbers**

Safeguarding Children Team for BHFT between Mon-Fri 9am-5pm 07771 381369  
Heather Owoo 07827 978419

Specialist Practitioner for Domestic Abuse – Sue Carrington 07900 167416

Designated Doctor for Child Protection (BHFT) – Louise Watson  
01753 636611

Prevent Lead - Gemma Nunn 07342 062471

Lee Owen-Macleod, Nursery Area Manager - 07557 207429

Allison Rees, Head of Operations, BHFT Facilities – 07775 518380

Ofsted helpline: 0300 123 1231 / 0300 123 4234

NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000

ChildLine: 0800 1111

Thames Valley Police emergency: 999

Thames Valley Police non-emergency: 101

**Out Of Hours Emergency Duty Team for Berkshire: 01344 351999.** Daytime Admin Line number is 01344 355050

## **Slough Borough Council**

Slough Children's Services, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm: 01753 875362.

[sloughchildren.referrals@scstrust.co.uk](mailto:sloughchildren.referrals@scstrust.co.uk)

[Multi-Agency-Referral-Form.docx \(live.com\)](#)

## **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (Achieving For Children)**

Single Point of Access (SPA)

MASH team: 01628 683150. [MASH@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:MASH@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

[Safeguarding](#) and [Single Point of Access referral form](#).

## **Reading (Brighter Futures For Children)**

The Children's Single Point of Access is how to raise a concern about a child (pre-birth to 18 years old) in Reading, including safeguarding and child protection. 0118 9373641

[Berkshire West Safeguarding Partnership](#)

[Complete a children's single point of access referral form](#)