

WESTMILL NURSERY

ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF POLICY

Statement of intent

Our Nursery expects the highest standards of behaviour from our staff, both within the Nursery and outside it, to ensure that children are safe.

Aim

Our aims are to:

- Create a safe environment
- Respect and protect adults and children's rights
- Ensure that all staff are suitable to work within the Nursery
- Protect staff against any allegations

Method

The Nursery will check and monitor its staff by:

- Obtaining appropriate references
- Verify identification
- Vetting and clearance by the CRB or the Independent Safeguarding Authority (when in affect)
- Monitoring of staff and other adults by the Designated Officers during sessions
- Ensuring that staff and other adults are not left alone with children (we have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Nursery).

In order to achieve this aim, we operate the following policy:

- We follow the guidance of Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and our Local Authority Designated Officer when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
Contact numbers: HSCB: 01992 588757
LADO: 01992 556979
- Our Designated Officers, **Mandy Sweet** and **Lorraine Pike** will liaise with the previously mentioned agencies. Should there be an allegation or suspicion against one/both of our Designated Officers then a suitable Named Officer will be appointed by our Local Authority Designated Officer.
- We respond to any disclosure by children, staff or parent/carer that a member of staff has or is putting a child's/children safety in jeopardy, by first recording the details and clarifying the facts of any such alleged

incident. A Record of Allegation is to be completed with their details, blank copies can be found in the Nursery's Safeguarding file.

- The following criteria applies for referral where a member of staff has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
OR
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
OR
 - Behaved towards a child/children in a way that indicates 'unsuitability' to work with children
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by the Local Authority's Designated Officer or social services in conjunction with the police.
- We will encourage staff to co-operate with the investigation in any way they can and will act impartially.
- All investigations will be completed and brought to a managed conclusion regardless of an alleged staff members resignation.
- If an allegation is shown to be unfounded the LADO may continue their investigations or make a referral to social care as a child may be being abused elsewhere or be in need of additional services.
- We ensure that all parents/carers know who to approach to share their concerns about staff or volunteers within our setting, which may include an allegation of abuse. We do this by displaying the roles and responsibilities of staff on the parent's notice board and incorporating these in newsletters.
- Allegations of child abuse against a member of staff will be treated in strict confidence. Only people who are authorised to know of the allegations in the Nursery will be the Designated Officers or alternatively a Named Officer if required.
- Westmill Nursery will follow the advice of our Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on suspension of the staff member during the period of investigation; Should suspension be advised then 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. Appropriate support from our LADO and Nursery will be provided throughout any suspension period.

- The reasons for the suspension will remain confidential and normal 'confidential rules' apply to all staff should they become aware of the circumstances.
- Where suspension is advised members of staff will be honoured one day's pay with leave to allow an investigation to take place.
- When the investigation is completed and brought to a managed conclusion and disciplinary action is required because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health Administrators so that their name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.
- Should the allegation prove to be founded then any suggested 'Compromise Agreements' will not be entered into and the member of staff's employment will be terminated immediately without pay.
- Our Designated Officers will ensure that the associated parents/carers in a case are kept up to date and support them in their understanding of the processes undertaken.
- Please see Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board website for further details and guidance if required www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk.

The policy was modified and adopted on (date):

Review Date:

Signed: (member of staff representing the group):

Role of signatory: