

WESTMILL NURSERY

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Statement of intent

It is our intention to provide an environment in which children, parents and the community are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is handled promptly and appropriately.

Aim

Our aims are to:

- Promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to, by creating an environment that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- Help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults.
- Promote children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- Promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;
- Work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.
- Work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

Liaison with other bodies:

- We work within the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We acknowledge the shared responsibility and the need for effective joint working between agencies and professionals. Statutory guidance from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) provides us with the necessary guidance to fulfil our role in this.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff. All staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child safeguarding issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of professionals, to ensure that it is easy, in an emergency, for us and associated professionals to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any serious incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board, we act within their guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time if it is safe to do so.

COMMITMENT 1

Westmill Nursery is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our sessions.

Staffing and Volunteering

- Our Designated Officers, who co-ordinate safeguarding children issues are **Mandy Sweet** and **Lorraine Pike**.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within Westmill Nursery 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 or the Independent Safeguarding Authority (effective from July 2010) before posts can be confirmed.
- We interview all staff prior to appointment, verifying their identification. At least two referees are required and following up such references.
- We ensure that all adults in the group are adequately trained in the recognition of symptoms of physical, neglect, emotional and sexual abuse.
- Where applicants are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We ensure that children are under constant supervision at Westmill Nursery.
- 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 Children Act (1999) 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 our setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into our setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

COMMITMENT 2

Westmill Nursery 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 are worried a child is being abused' (DoH 2006).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional and sexual as well as neglect.
- When 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 worker makes a dated record in the Incident Book of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the Designated Officers, Mandy Sweet and Lorraine Pike.
- Staff in our setting take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.

- Parents will be the first point of reference, although suspicions will also be referred as appropriate to Children, Schools and Families or the Department of Social Services. All such investigations will be kept confidential.

COMMITMENT 3

Westmill Nursery is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programme 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 to all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the Hertfordshire guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in our setting.

Planning

- The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. We avoid children being left alone with staff or volunteers in a one to one situation without being visible or informing others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of safeguarding children into our plans to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be 'strong, resilient and listened to' and so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within our 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.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- Offers reassurance to the child;
- Listens to the child; and
- Gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- The child's name;
- The child's address;
- The age of the child;

- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation or 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.
- In addition to this a 'logging a concern' sheet may also be completed if appropriate.

These records are signed, dated and witnessed. Records are kept in the Incident Book within the Safeguarding Children File.

All members of staff know 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 Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this. In such cases the Nursery will maintain ongoing contact with the authority, facilitating appropriate action in any emergency.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the outside investigating officers will inform parents.

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 Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- Westmill Nursery believes 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 Safeguarding Children, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local social services department and other professionals.
- Westmill Nursery continues 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 social services department in relation to our role and tasks in supporting the child and the 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 procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

The policy was modified and adopted on (date):

Review Date:

Signed: (member of staff representing the group):

Role of signatory: