



Safe Guarding Children

The Children Act 2004 recognises that pre-school staff carry a heavy responsibility towards children and families within their group. They are in close contact with children and in a prime position to notice radical changes in behaviour, including talking about experiences or using language that may give cause for alarm and abnormal or excessive marks on the body. Our pre-school will create an environment in which the children are safe from abuse and in which suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. In order to do this we shall:

Exclude known abusers

- Applicants for posts within the pre-school will be advised that the position is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- All applicants will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least two references, which will be followed up.
- All appointments will be subject to a completed DBS check prior to commencing work. They are also subject to a probationary period and not confirmed until the Staff and Committee are confident that the applicant can be trusted with the children.
- Provide training for adults within the group to ensure that they are able to recognise the symptoms of possible abuse or neglect.
- At induction, new members of staff will be made aware of the pre-schools child protection policy and where relevant information is kept.
- All staff at Kingston St Mary Pre-school will be familiar with the procedures set out in the Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Guidance for day carers and as such will seek their advice on all steps taken subsequently.
- Pictures taken within the pre-school setting including children and / or staff should not be published on any social networking site.
- Mobile phones belonging to staff, parent helpers or visitors should be left in the staff locker.
- All committee members will need to complete a DBS disclosure form.

Prevent abuse by means of good practice

- Other than staff, adults will not be left alone with children i.e. with the door closed.
- Only staff may toilet children.
- The layout of the play area will permit constant supervision of the children.

Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse

- Changes in children's behaviour / appearance will be investigated.
- All suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential and shared only with the pre-school Child Protection Officer and any other staff member involved. The chairperson will be made aware of any ongoing investigation but need not be given specific details.
- Parents will be the first point of reference. An exception to this would be in the case of suspected sexual abuse or if the child has told the staff that the parent is harming them - when we would refer to the Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board (Somerset Direct).
- The government booklet ' *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*' is available from the pre-school for both parents and staff to refer to.

Keep Records

- Any suspicious changes will result in a specific confidential record being kept of the changes in the child's behaviour / appearance, exact words spoken, dates, times, name and signature of the recorder.
- Such records will be kept in a separate file and not be accessible to anyone in the pre-school except the Preschool Child Protection Officer, and any relevant members of staff.
- The pre-school operates in accordance with local authority guidelines. Confidential records kept on children who may be at risk will be shared with the duty social worker if the pre-school feels that inadequate explanations have been given for changes in the child's condition.

- If a report is to be made to the authorities, the child's parents will also be informed.

Support families

- The pre-school will build a trusting and supportive relationship between families and staff.
- Where abuse is suspected we will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed. Although the safety of the child is paramount, the pre-school will support the child's family.
- Confidential records will be shared with the child's parents.
- If there are causes for concern and the child/carers use English as a second language, Children's Services/Child Care Advisor are to be contacted for advice on a qualified interpreter in order to gain further information on the case.

Empowering Children

The staff will encourage the children to be independent with toileting and dressing skills. Staff will plan activities to empower children with knowledge of self protection e.g. 'Stranger Danger', 'Road Safety', 'Private areas of their bodies'.

Restraining Children

There may be times when a member of staff, in the course of their duty, need to use physical intervention to restrain a child for their own safety or the safety of other persons or property. The Supervisor must be informed by the member of staff of the incident and a record made at the time or as soon as possible, in the incident book and signed by the member of staff, witnesses and the parent/carer of the child.

Absence Record

When a child is absent parent/carers are encouraged to phone the preschool to report the reason for the absence. This is then entered into the absence record. If nothing is heard from the parent/carer a member of staff will try to make contact to find out the reason. This can help identify a pattern of absence.

Staff issues - If a member of staff is accused of improper conduct:

- If allegation is verbal, it will need to be put into writing.
- The Supervisor (or Chairman if allegation is against the supervisor) will clarify details from the member of staff and other staff.

- The Supervisor will pass all details to the Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- The Independent Safeguarding Authority and OFSTED will be informed.
- The member of staff will be placed on immediate suspension, with pay unless stated otherwise, until allegation is finalised.

If allegation is false: Suspension will be lifted and the staff member would be reinstated.

If allegation is true: Instant dismissal as stated in their contract and relevant organizations contacted.

- On an individual case basis, parents may be kept informed of proceedings.

This policy is in line with the Childcare Act 2016, Childcare 2006, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Whistle Blowing Policy contains further procedures for this.

Sarah Trott is Kingston St Mary Pre-school's named Child Protection Co-ordinator.

Emma Chant is Deputy Child Protection Co-ordinator in the absence of Sarah Trott.

CAMHS advice = 01823 368368

Children's Safeguarding Lead's Consultation line: 0300 123 3078

(Who provide support if a professional is unsure whether or not they need to make a referral. If the social worker establishes that a referral should be made the will be transferred to Somerset Direct.)

Somerset Direct Office = 0300 123 2224 (significant harm)

OFSTED's telephone number for Child Protection issues is: 0300 123 1231