

Managing Allegations Against Staff

Findon Village Preschool (FVPS)

Revised August 2022

Yvonne Wilson (Chair of Trustees)



Statement

Our Preschool believes that children have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse, and we are committed to protecting all the children in our care from harm.

Method

- Our setting ensures all staff including volunteers and student placements, working with our children, undergo statutory checks to ensure they are suitable to do so.
- Additional recent character and employment references must be received and any gaps in employment explained.
- All convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect working with children should be declared.
- Staff member(s) awaiting completion of DBS checks are never left unsupervised with the children.
- Each year at staff appraisal members of staff are required to sign their appraisal to confirm they have not been subject to any criminal investigations. The DBS number is recorded for each individual and held in their staff folders. DBS documentation can be held for a maximum of six months if deemed necessary, however, should be destroyed once the DBS number is recorded.

Allegations

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, which could be by a parent or colleague, an immediate and thorough investigation will be conducted by the designated Safeguarding Person - Mrs Vanessa Peek (*Please see our Safeguarding Policy*) in conjunction with the child's parents and the Chair of Committee. All details will be recorded/logged in the relevant records.

- West Sussex County Council's HR department will give guidance on whether the staff member, against whom the allegations have been made, will be suspended on full pay pending further investigation. The final decision will however be made by the Committee Chair.

If we consider that a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) referral is needed we will gather all relevant information, which will include:

- The name, date of birth and home address of the ADULT connected to the allegation/incident · The child/ childrens' details, as LADO procedures cannot begin without this information.
- The name and role of the person making the referral and our organisation's address.

Further information on how the LADO will deal with the referral can be found at: <https://www.westsussexscp.org.uk/professionals/professional-disagreements-and-concerns/ladoinformation#:~:text=The%20LADOs%20for%20West%20Sussex,LADO%20is%20Sally%20Arbuckle.>

We follow the guidance of the local Safeguarding Children's [Board](#)

- Ofsted will be notified of the allegations and informed of the outcome
- The child's parents will be kept fully informed throughout
- Staff will need to work with the child and their family to offer them support and rebuild trust;
- The staff will be supported throughout by the designated Safeguarding Officer and the Managers
- The governing body and staff will check the policies and procedures and review as necessary in light of the allegations and the outcome of any investigation.

If we consider an incident or allegation to be an emergency, and that a child/ children may be in danger of immediate harm, we may, in the first instance contact either:

- the Police on 999 or
- The LADOs for West Sussex are Miriam Williams and Donna Tomlinson. The Asst. LADO is Sally Arbuckle. Consultation Contact Number: **0330 222 6450** (Available 09.00 – 17.00)
LADO Service Contact Number: (Available through the MASH) **01403 229900**
LADO Service email address: LADO@WestSussex.gov.uk

Written Report

As a result of the allegation a comprehensive, confidential report will be compiled and circulated to the parents and other interested parties. It will include:

- A description of the allegation
- A diary of events
- Accounts of any meetings with parents
- Details of the internal provision's investigation and the subsequent involvement of any professionals/agencies
- Any action taken
- The steps taken to support the child and family
- Any lessons learnt from the allegation and resulting investigations
- Details of any resulting changes to be made in the provision's procedures/policies
- Where a member of staff is dismissed because of misconduct relating to a child, we will notify the Independent Banning Board, so the person will be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults barred list.

Protection of Staff from Allegations of Abuse

All our Preschool Staff are privileged to be able to work closely with children and their families, forming warm and caring relationships. However, because of the nature of their work they are also vulnerable to allegations of child abuse. By having appropriate policies and procedures in place and by following the principles of good practice our Preschool not only protects the children in their setting, but also the adults.

For their part, staff need to avoid putting themselves in situations that may lead to allegations being made against them. They also need to ensure:

- The safety and welfare of the child is always paramount
- They fulfil their responsibilities and duties towards children by working in partnership with parents
- Their relationship with children and families are conducted in a professional manner at all times
- All provision policies and procedures are followed and all staff clearly understand the procedures to follow for suspicions/allegations of abuse. The policies and procedures listed below are particularly relevant:
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Parent/ Carer Involvement Policy
 - Behaviour Management Policy
 - Equality Statement
- Vigilance in Health & Safety matters, e.g. recording any bruises/marks a child has on arrival in their incident book (separate pages for each child to ensure confidentiality);
- Comprehensive reporting of all children's accidents is made to parents, for their signature Where possible any written account should be witnessed by a second staff member
- Any training needs identified in themselves or other team members are passed on to their Line Manager
- Advice, help and/or support is sought if they find a child's behaviour is persistently challenging or difficult to manage
- Parents clearly understand the procedure for making a complaint about behaviour/actions of staff/volunteers
- All staff undergo regular and appropriate training for safeguarding
- Two members of staff remain on the premises at all times when the children are present.

LONE WORKING

We provide guidance and advice to keep lone workers healthy and safe. This is to ensure that all staff who sometimes work alone are being supported in the risks they face and understand the appropriate measures to improve their safety. It is essential for all staff to know the law and standards that apply to their work activities, and that it is essential for the Manager to assess whether they can meet those legal obligations for people working alone.

Definition

Although there is not a single definition, at the preschool we define lone working as:

“Any situation or location in which a member of staff works without a colleague nearby or when someone is working out of sight or earshot of another colleague or with a child or talking to a parent/care..

Procedures

Establishing a healthy and safe working preschool environment for lone workers is different to organising the health and safety of other employees. The Manager needs to investigate the potential hazards faced by staff working alone in our setting. The following procedures are in place to control and avoid such risks:

- All staff have an up-to-date DBS check
- No member of staff or volunteer who does not hold a current up to date DBS will be left alone with the children.
- We will adhere to the following: Ofsted require that all DBS applications submitted on or after 1 September 2014 must join the DBS update service and give their consent to Ofsted re-checking the status of their DBS certificate at least every six months. If a re-check shows that a DBS status has changed it is a requirement to obtain a new DBS certificate.
- All staff are involved when undertaking the required risk assessment process.
- We take steps to check control measures are in place (e.g. training, supervision, discussions at staff meetings and health and safety audits when using other space in and around the village hall).
- The Manager and the Committee Chair review risk assessments yearly or when there has been a significant change in the working practice.
- When a risk assessment shows it is not possible for the work to be conducted safely by a lone worker, that risk is addressed and changed for example, making arrangements to provide help or back up e.g. another member of staff, change the room being used etc.
- All staff have attended Paediatric First Aid.

There will, of course, be instances where a member of staff is left alone or left alone working with children at our preschool, particularly as we are a small setting with a small number of staff. The list below gives examples of these instances but this should not be considered exhaustive:

- Whilst changing nappies and taking children to the toilet.
- Outside with the children.
- In another room/place space with a small group of children.
- Talking to parent/carers.
- Cleaning the Pre-School area when the setting is closed.

Supervision and Recording of Lone Working

Although staff lone working cannot be subject to constant supervision, control, guide and help is in place when staff have their initial induction with the Manager. The Manager and Committee will ensure that we have procedures in place to prevent incidents occurring whilst staff are working alone.

- Staff are in place to help assist others in lone working situations within the Preschool
- Lone working staff can call for back up from other staff in the Preschool at any time and staff are checked throughout their lone working duties
- We use a day book to record when a member of staff is lone working or lone working with children. This is also used to record cover/agency/bank staff if they have had to do any lone working that day
- Staff use the Intimate Care book to record when they have changed a child's nappy. They will record the time, date and sign it

All staff must declare that they have no medical conditions that may make it unsuitable for them to work alone, during their induction and yearly on Appraisal. If necessary, medical advice will be sought for clarification.

Publicity

Any allegations or investigation dealt with by the Preschool should not be discussed with any member of the press. Any

media interest should be directed to the Committee Chair.

Safeguarding contact details

The LADOs for West Sussex are Miriam Williams and Donna Tomlinson. The Asst. LADO is Sally Arbuckle.

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