



## Safeguarding Children Policy

Spice Childcare will work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children is paramount, and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

To this end we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image.
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children.
- Always listen to children.

Spice Childcare has a clear commitment to safeguarding children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the manager/owner at the earliest opportunity.

### **The legal framework for this policy is based on**

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) (England and Wales)

Practitioners have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff will often be the first people to sense that there is a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide about abuse. The setting has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society.

This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well being of all children in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. All staff will work as part of a multi-agency team where needed to act in the best interests of the child.

The setting aims to:

- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of the staff.
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- Ensure that all staff are alert to the signs of abuse, understand what safeguarding means, and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed including by other children i.e. bullying, discriminatory behaviour.
- Ensure all staff members attend Safeguarding Children training.
- Ensure that all staff update their knowledge with safeguarding issues and procedures regularly (every three years).
- Ensure parents are fully aware of safeguarding policies and procedures when they register with the setting and kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate.

Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

### **Contact telephone numbers**

- Ofsted - 0300 123 1231
- Gemma Hope - Early Years Named Senior Officer - 01223 714760
- Lynda Davies -Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - 01223 727968
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LCSB) - 01223 727967
- Local Authority Social Care - 0345 045 5203
- Outside hours Social Care - 01733 234724

## **Types of abuse**

### **Physical abuse**

Action will be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning; where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries – these will be logged and discussed with the manager or room leader.

Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing.

Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and will always be logged and discussed with the manager.

### **Procedure**

- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into the setting, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member.
- The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity.
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records.
- If there appears to be any queries regarding the injury, the LSCB in the local authority will be notified.

### **Fabricated illness**

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the parent. The parent may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a parent exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

## **Sexual abuse**

If a staff member has witnessed occasions where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language action will be taken.

This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes. The symptoms may also include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing the procedure stated later in this document under 'recording abuse suspicions' will be followed.

## **Procedure**

- The staff member will reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk.
- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report.
- The observed instances will be reported to the manager.
- The matter will be referred to LSCB in the local authority.

## **Emotional abuse**

Action will be taken under this heading if a staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations on the child. Emotional abuse

may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention.

This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

### **Procedure**

- The concern will be discussed with the manager/room supervisor.
- The concern will be discussed with the parent.
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records.
- A Common Assessment Framework (CAF) may need to be completed.
- If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the LSCB or social care in the local authority.

### **Neglect**

Action will be taken under this heading if a staff member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation and failure to seek medical treatment when required on behalf of the child) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at the setting unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at the setting in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at the setting. They may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

## **Procedure**

- The concern will be discussed with the parent.
- Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records.
- A CAF may need to be completed.
- If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances the LSCB or social care in the local authority will be notified.

## **Indicators of child abuse**

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones.
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies.
- Aggressive behaviour.
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents.
- Repeated injuries.
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries.

## **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

Staff will make an objective record (supported by the manager or Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator (DSCO)) of any observation or disclosure and include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of an incident including any other witnesses
- 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.
- Any discussion held with parent (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the manager/DSCO, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse we will **not** promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure vital details will be logged down accurately.

All staff will attend safeguarding training within their first six months of employment, and receive initial basic training as part of their induction. This will include the procedures for recording and reporting. It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the LSCB and Ofsted.

Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information they have concerns with regard to a child. The setting expects all members of staff to co-operate with the LSCB and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make comment either publicly or in private about a parent's supposed or actual behaviour.

### **Staffing and volunteering**

It is the policy of Spice Childcare to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. The setting will therefore not allow an adult to be left alone with a child who has not received their enhanced CRB disclosure clearance.

We have a named person within the setting that co-ordinates safeguarding and welfare issues. The nursery DSCO undertakes specific training and accesses regular updates to developments within this field.

**The DSCO at Spice Childcare is Lisa Cave**

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- All enhanced CRB disclosures checks will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the suitability of the adults caring for the children (every three years).
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- We ensure we receive at least two references BEFORE a new member of staff commences employment with us.
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) 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 safeguarding children concerns.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- All contractors/external workers will be CRB checked and the manager will request this before allowing them access to the setting. All visitors/contractors will still be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use.
- All staff have access to a whistle blowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner.
- The deployment of staff within the setting allows for constant supervision. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar.

## **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 the LSCB does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser, or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases the 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 LSCB.

## **Support to families**

- Spice Childcare takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers within the setting.
- The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate under the guidance of the LSCB with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

## **Employees of Spice Childcare**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, we will follow the HM Government guidance in '*Working together to safeguard children*'.

The allegation should be reported to the \*manager/owner, who will follow the procedure on the flowchart poster displayed in the entrance to the setting, by contacting the Early Years Named Senior Officer. Ofsted will also be notified immediately.

\*If this person is the subject of the allegation then the allegation should be reported direct to the Early Years Named Senior Officer.

- Early Years Named Senior Officer will be informed immediately for advice and guidance.
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LADO, Ofsted, LSCB) to determine how this will be handled.
- The setting will follow all instructions from the LADO, Ofsted, LSCB and asks all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required.
- If the allegation could possibly interfere with the normal working of the setting, the member of staff will be allocated to another area, after due consultation with all parties and professionals, including the LADO.
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice
- Spice Childcare reserves the right to suspend any member of staff on full pay during an investigation.
- All enquiries/investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file.
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated.
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisation (police) and will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. The setting will be required to notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), according to current legislation, to ensure their records are updated.
- All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future CRB checks and avoid unnecessary re-investigation
- Spice Childcare retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry.
- Counselling will be available for any member of the setting who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the setting and the parents.

Internal use only

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	
<b>Signed on behalf of Spice Childcare</b>	
<b>Date for review</b>	

