

PARENT/CARER POLICY **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

Policy Statement

At Birstall Rainbow Nursery we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of the children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and be safe from any abuse, whatever form. This complies with the local safeguarding children's board. These procedures are available at all times and all staff put the procedures in place and are fully conversant with them.

Staff when asked to do so must endeavour to participate in training, as this is essential to further knowledge and skills regarding child protection and recognition of signs of abuse.

Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring the children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Policy Intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Provide positive role models
- 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
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However FGM is child abuse, it is dangerous and a criminal offence. There is no medical reasons to carry it out and it does not enhance fertility or make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long

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lasting damage both physically and emotionally. If there is concern about a child in this area, social services will be contacted in the same way as other types of abuse.

Any instance of suspected abuse must be reported to the nursery based child protection officer who will in turn offer advice and refer to the nursery safeguarding procedure. Action must never be delayed because of the absence of the manager or child protection officer. The nursery must always record and take necessary actions if abuse is suspected.

Immediate Action

If through conversation with, or observation of a child, or from anything reported to you, you have cause to suspect physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect, or you have concerns that an adult is experiencing difficulties that is impacting on the care that the child receives e.g. domestic violence, mental health issues or parental substance/drug abuse you must:

- Take any necessary immediate action to protect the child.
- Ensure immediate medical attention if necessary.
- Make a written record, including diagrams, of observations and explanations given.
 - Write down exactly what the child says or what actions concern you and what you have said in response, don't forget to **sign and date it!**
 - Have a witness whenever possible.
 - Explanations however puzzling should be accepted and accusations should not be made.
 - This recording of information is to ensure that reasonably full and clear information is obtained in order to be able to make an appropriate referral to the Social Services Department if necessary.
 - Retain any original notes made in case they are needed in court.
- If you suspect that the child has been harmed by assault or failure to protect the child, you must contact without delay the social services office or emergency duty team.
- Listen to what the child has to say. Be comforting and sympathetic. Ensure that the child feels as little responsibility as possible.
- It is particularly important not to make any suggestions to the child regarding how the incident may have happened or ask the child to repeat their information unnecessarily, therefore do not question the child except to clarify what they are saying.
- Do not make assumptions about who the allegations might concern. If a member of staff is involved, appropriate steps must be taken to ensure the safety of the child and other children.

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Who to Contact

The following numbers detail contacts for Social Services. The area relates to the child's address not the nursery address.

Children's Social Care (Charnwood)	- 0116 305 0005
Leicester City	- 0116 2531191
Emergency	- 0116 255 1606
Police	- 0116 222 2222

You should also inform Ofsted that you have made a child protection referral by telephoning Ofsted's 'Concern, Complaints and Queries' line on 0300 123 466.

If it is related to an adult that needs reporting, also inform the local LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) Jennifer Johnson - 0116 305 7597.

Subsequent Action

Following referral to the local social services department or emergency duty team, enquiries will be undertaken in liaison with and sometimes jointly with the police. All staff are responsible for providing statements if required and to attend an initial child protection conference. In conducting those enquiries the social services and the police will emphasise to parents and staff that it is the duty of the day care setting to refer child protection allegations or concerns and to provide information if requested to do so.

Please see the accompanying reference document on which this policy is based from the local office for the Children and Young Peoples Service.

Allegations against Staff Members

If allegations are made against the proprietor, management or other staff members, including students or volunteers it is essential that, in addition to the above, the following procedure is adhered to:

- The primary consideration will be to ensure safety of the children in the nursery regardless of the seniority of the person involved. The staff member must be relieved from duty while initial consultations take place.
- The incident must be reported immediately to the most senior member of staff available or, where appropriate, the person nominated for child protection. Staff should contact senior managers/proprietors by telephone if the allegation is made against the most senior person on site. Telephone numbers are kept on the contact sheet in the main office.
- If the allegation can not be satisfactorily explained the person involved will be suspended from duty until further notice and the Disciplinary Procedure will be applied.
- Ensure the following have been contacted and informed:
 - The manager
 - The Directors
 - The intake and assessment team (for contacting information see Keeping Children Safe is Everybody's Business – Local Safeguarding Children Board)

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- OFSTED
- Parents/carers of children involved

- Ensure that social workers and OFSTED are aware that the person concerned has an involvement with a registered facility. The purpose is to ensure that appropriate liaison occurs and that advice is given regarding any implications for the registration conditions.

- Each adult present when the incident occurred must write down accurately the details of the incident/conversation/concern and record facts only. All statements should be witnessed, should record dates and times, should explain their context and should be signed.

- All information must be treated in a sensitive manner and remain confidential. Documentation must be kept under lock and key and remain inaccessible to those directly involved in the allegation. Any computer documents must be password protected.

- The most senior person present is responsible for ensuring that all the above are informed and for ensuring that written records are made and kept confidential. In the case of suspicion of an employee, the manager or deputy may suspend the person but if the most senior person present is the one accused then senior management must suspend the person.

These procedures have precedence over any disciplinary, criminal or registration procedures.