



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

At Penhill Playgroup we aim to create a happy and secure environment in which children feel safe at all times and we want parents to feel confident that when they leave their child, that they are in safe hands. The welfare of the child is paramount and we will support and help all children and families attending Penhill Playgroup regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion.

Everyone involved with Penhill Playgroup either as a volunteer, trustee or paid worker, has a duty to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of all children with whom they come into contact and to keep these children safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. The following Policy explains how we plan to keep children safe and details the procedures that should be followed should any concerns arise.

Any safeguarding or child protection concerns should be reported to one of the nominated representatives, Katie Ayling or Sarah Brake, Penhill Playgroup, Guide Hall, 5 Penhill Road, Lancing, BN15 8HA Tel. 01903 767513.

Legal Framework and Putting the Principles into Practice:

The Children's Act 1989, 2006

The Protection of Children Act 1999

The Human Rights Act 1998

Equality Act 2010

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2017)

Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Recruiting and Retaining your Staff Team – West Sussex Early Years and Childcare Service (2006)

Policies for Early Years Settings – Pre-School Learning Alliance (2005)

Policies and Procedures Booklet - Playgroup Network

How to Develop Child Protection Policies & Procedures – Action in Rural Sussex (May 2003)

Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures – West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (Online Procedures, September 2015, due to be updated 2019)

Safeguarding Children – Charity Commission (November 2006)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (advice for practitioners) (2015)

Prevent Duty Guidance – HM Government (2015)

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

Child Protection Procedures

Our aim is to protect children from harm and we should be alert to harmful behaviour by other adults in the child's life, which includes children or adults in their lives being vulnerable to or affected by the radicalisation or extremism of others.

Penhill Playgroup adheres to the four main categories of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect, as described in the Sussex Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Procedures. (Online Procedures, September 2015, <http://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk>) Any suspicion or allegation of abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) will be taken seriously and the following guidelines should be used.

DO

- listen carefully and let the child give an uninterrupted account
- use appropriate body language
- be calm and say you are sorry this has happened to them
- treat allegations seriously
- tell the child they are right to tell you
- reassure them that they are not to blame
- be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why
- tell the child what you are doing and when and keep them up to date with what is happening
- write down everything said and what was done - keep an accurate record
- seek medical attention if necessary
- inform parents/carers unless it will put the child at risk of harm
- take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse, so tell your nominated person immediately

DON'T

- rush out of the room to get someone else to listen
- make promises you can't keep
- ask leading questions
- cast doubt on what the child has told you
- don't interrupt or change the subject
- say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse
- make assumptions about how the child feels.
- do nothing – make sure you tell the nominated child protection representative immediately. They will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

If abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or being vulnerable to or affected by radicalisation or extremism is suspected, the flow charts from the Sussex Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Procedures (Online Procedures, September 2015, <http://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk>) should be followed. A copy of these are in the setting's Safeguarding file, along with contact details for making a referral.

Any information, along with details of any action taken in the case of suspected abuse, should be recorded in a Record of Concern, which will be kept secure, accessible only by the nominated child protection representative and/or manager of the Playgroup.
See also: Confidentiality Policy

The following organisations and services can help if there are safeguarding concerns

Child Abuse

West Sussex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel. 01403 229900 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday

West Sussex Out of Hours Service Tel. 0330 222 6664

Email: MASH@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

OFSTED 0300 123 1231
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000
Childline (for children) 0800 1111
Children Are Unbeatable! Alliance 020 7713 0569

Radicalisation or Extremism Concerns

Any concerns should be reported to MASH

West Sussex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel. 01403 229900 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday

West Sussex Out of Hours Service Tel. 0330 222 6664

Email: MASH@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

You may also want to contact the Police on 101 or if there is immediate danger or concern ring 999.

To raise concerns about extremism in schools or children's services, you can also contact:

Department for Education Helpline Tel. 020 7340 7264 (Monday to Friday 9am – 6pm)

Email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Any concerns regarding FGM should be reported to MASH immediately.

West Sussex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel. 01403 229900 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday

West Sussex Out of Hours Service Tel. 0330 222 6664

Email: MASH@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

Staff Recruitment, Training and Practice

Any member of staff recruited by Penhill Playgroup will be required to undergo the following selection and vetting procedures:

- completion of a standard application form (from West Sussex Early Years Recruiting and Retaining your Staff Team January 2006)
- produce evidence of their identity, including photographic evidence, where possible
- be interviewed by at least two people
- provide a minimum of two references, which will be followed up
- identification of reasons for gaps in employment or inconsistencies
- submit to an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring.
- no unsupervised contact with children until these checks, including the references have been reviewed
- undergo a minimum 3 month probationary period, which will include a comprehensive induction and training period.

All staff must complete a Safeguarding and Child Protection Course offered by West Sussex Early Childhood Service either face to face, or online and update this every three years. This training enables staff to respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse and is open to Trustees and Volunteers as well as paid members of staff. The Designated Person must

update their training every two years. Annual refresher training for all staff should take place and this may be done online, face to face or in house.

Regular staff meetings provide an opportunity for staff to discuss any difficulties or concerns they have and safeguarding is a fixed agenda item at both staff and committee meetings. Staff are also supported by regular monitoring, supervision and appraisals. Opportunities to undertake further training are available and the Playgroup budget includes an allocation towards training costs.

It is important that staff (including volunteers) avoid putting themselves in situations which could lead to allegations being made against them. For their own protection, but mainly as good practice and good manners, staff and/or helpers are advised that children should initiate physical contact with them, although this will not apply where a child needs to be removed from a situation threatening their own or others' safety. Should this happen, it will be recorded in an incident book and the parents/carers informed at the end of the session.

When changing a child, staff should ensure that they record the details on the changing record sheet, and where possible, not close toilet doors behind them.

All staff, students and volunteers must ensure that mobile phones are left with their personal belongings and not kept on their person, during Playgroup sessions. Only the Playgroup cameras should be used for taking photographs of the children as evidence of their learning and development and only once we have obtained parental consent.

Staff, students and volunteers should not put identifiable comments about the setting, the children, staff or parents/carers on any web sites or social networking sites.

The relationships between staff, both paid and voluntary, parents, visitors and children, should be based on mutual respect and everyone is expected to contribute to and take responsibility for ensuring a positive working environment and to conduct themselves accordingly.

See also: Staff and Employment Policy, Staff Development Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy

Dealing with an Allegation of Abuse against a Member of Staff

All adults at Penhill Playgroup are expected to set an example to the children in their care and to conduct appropriate relationships with them. The following behaviours specifically should not be allowed: sexual conduct and exclusive or secretive relationships.

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, including the Manager, the following procedure will be followed:

The designated person e.g. Manager/Deputy/Chairperson of the Committee of the setting will meet with and talk to the person accused, suspending that person from the setting.

The designated person will immediately contact the **West Sussex Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**. Tel. 01403 229900 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday. **West Sussex Out of Hours Service** Tel. 0330 222 6664. **Email:** MASH@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk and follow their advice and instructions and not carry out any investigation until the LADO has confirmed that this can be done.

OFSTED will be informed within 14 days of any allegations and the action taken to deal with it Tel. 0300 123 1231

Once an internal investigation has been sanctioned by the LADO, the designated person will collect all the evidence and assess the source of it i.e. factual, hearsay, opinion.

Factual

Report the evidence/details to the Duty Social Worker/Police Child Protection Unit and the Early Years Directorate, or as directed by the LADO.

Hearsay

Source the evidence and establish whether there is anything to report to the Child Protection Unit.

Opinion

Monitor the situation and keep records of any incidents which may be connected that give cause for concern.

If no evidence is found to substantiate the allegation, the worker should be re-instated to the setting. If evidence is found to substantiate the allegation the worker should be dismissed and the Early Years Directorate informed. If a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been had they not already left), the Playgroup also has a duty to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service as soon as possible.

Safeguarding Children being Collected and Parental Responsibility

When a child first starts at the setting, the parent/carer will fill in a form listing who is allowed to collect their child and who has Parental Responsibility for them. Staff will not allow a child to leave with someone who is not named on this list, unless they have had consent from a parent/carer. This consent may be the parent/carer informing us in person when dropping their child off, by letter or over the telephone.

Every child will be issued with a password, which the parent/carer may wish to use at collection time or pass on to an emergency contact as a way of identifying themselves at collection time. This password can only be used once and will then be changed. It is the responsibility of the two Designated Persons to ensure they are kept updated. All staff are made aware of the location of the passwords; a secure area, accessed only by staff.

Daily or emergency information about changes in collection for a child, should be noted on the whiteboard by the staff hatch, to ensure all staff are aware. If it is a permanent change, the parent/carer must change the permitted adults section on their child's form, which is located in their child's Learning Journal, as soon as possible. If staff have any doubts about who is collecting a child, a telephone call to the parent/carer should be made, confirming collection details, before the child is allowed to leave.

At collection time, a member of staff will be allocated on the front door, greeting parents and carers, identifying any unknown adults and ensuring that children do not leave without a parent/carer. Another member of staff will be on the inner door, noting on the register who has been collected.

Parents are requested not to be on their phones when coming in to drop off or collect their child and if they are, will be asked to wait in the lobby until they have finished.

As stated on the Registration Form, we cannot restrict access to any parent with Parental Responsibility unless a formal Court Order is in place and we have a copy of it on file. If the parent is unknown to us, we would need verification of their parental responsibility, before letting the child leave.

If staff have any safeguarding concerns over letting a child leave with a parent/carer who, for example, may be under the influence of alcohol/drugs, they should not let the child leave and inform the Designated Person.

Complaints

Any complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at an early stage.

Complaints may be made verbally, in writing or by email or in attendance at a Playgroup Committee meeting. All written and emailed complaints will be fully investigated and an account of the findings given within 28 days. The complainant will be kept informed about any action taken and may request this in writing or by email.

If the complainant is not satisfied with how the Playgroup has dealt with the complaint, they may wish to contact Ofsted for further information and advice:

OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) Tel. 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk www.ofsted.gov.uk

For full details, please also see: Complaints Policy and Procedure

Parents/carers are informed of our safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures through information in the prospectus, which they are given prior to their child starting Playgroup. All policies are also available to look at whenever the setting is open. This policy will be reviewed at least annually, alongside all other policies.