



Safeguarding children and child protection policy

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Statement of intent

At Tansor Playgroup we will work with children, parents and the wider community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Aims

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by:
 - Creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image.
 - Encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
 - Enabling children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Helping children to establish and sustain positive relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- Working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Playgroup and social services to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social care department, we act within the area's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Method

We carry out the following procedures to ensure that we build a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm.

Staffing and volunteering

- Our designated staff who co-ordinate child protection issues are

Mrs Rosemary Fitch & Mrs Teresa Doughty

- Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is the Chair of the Tansor Playgroup Committee.
-

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 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 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau 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.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised and are not left alone with the children.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We 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.

The Playgroup is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and, if appropriate, discusses what to do with the playgroup supervisor or deputy supervisor who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- Staff in the playgroup take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
- listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
- does not question the child;
- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - the 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.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept securely and confidentially.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team

- The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication 'Child Protection Record' contains detailed procedures for making a referral to the local social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral. This is based on 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).
- We keep a copy of this document and follow the detailed guidelines given.
- All members of staff are familiar with the Alliance's Child Protection Record and follow the procedures for recording and reporting.

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 Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Allegations against staff

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the playgroup, which may include an allegation of abuse (the Complaints Procedure).

We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.

- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social service department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management committee and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Independent Barring Board administrators so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved with the Playgroup to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns within the Playgroup.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be 'strong, resilient and listened to' and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- Tansor Playgroup believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The Playgroup makes clear to parents its role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local social services department.
- The Playgroup continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the social care department in relation to the Playgroup's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The legal framework for this work is:

Primary legislation

The Children Act 1989 - s 47
The Protection of Children Act 1999
Data Protection Act 1998
The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)
The Children (NI) Order
The Children (Scotland) Order

Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 2006)
What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused (revised 2006)
The Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and Their Families (2000)
The Common Assessment Framework (2005)

Secondary Legislation

Sexual Offences Act (2003)
Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
Human Rights Act (1999)
Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	<u>Tansor Playgroup Committee</u>
Held on	<u>25th June 2008</u>
Signed on behalf of Tansor Playgroup Committee	<u>Nicola Clayton-Bailey</u>
Role of signatory	<u>Chair of Playgroup Committee</u>
This policy was reviewed and updated on	<u>19th January 2010</u>
Reviewed on behalf of Tansor Playgroup Committee	<u>Faye Betts</u>
Role of reviewer	<u>Jt Chair of Playgroup Committee</u>