

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The group will create an environment in which children are safe from harm and abuse; in which the welfare of the children is paramount and any suspicion of abuse is responded to promptly and appropriately.

In order to do this the group will:

- **exclude known abusers**
- **prevent abuse by means of good practice**
- **respond appropriately to suspicion of abuse**
- **keep accurate records**
- **liaise with other bodies**
- **support families**
- **offer training**

Exclude Known Abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for posts, both paid and unpaid, within the group, that they will be asked to sign a statement giving details of any convictions for criminal offences against children, including any 'spent' convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and to give permission for checks to be made for any criminal records.

All applicants for work within the group, both paid and unpaid, will be interviewed before appointment and asked to provide at least two references from someone who has experience of their work with children. All references will be followed up.

All appointments, both paid and unpaid, will be subject to a 3 months probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the group is confident the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

Prevent Abuse by Means of Good Practice

Children will be supervised at all times by a responsible adult.

Adults who have not been cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau as 'fit' persons will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet. 2 adults (at least 1 cleared person) will change soiled nappies or clothes, if this is not possible the parent will be asked to come and change their child.

There are no circumstances in which children will be punished by smacking, slapping or shaking. Neither will humiliating and/or frightening methods of punishment be used.

Children will not be left alone with visitors to the group.

Staff and visitors will only use mobile phones in areas of nursery not used by the children

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Children will only be collected from the group by an authorised adult whose details are held by the group.

Children are accompanied at all times by authorised adults when taking part in groups' external activities, eg walks, visits, carnivals, swimming etc.

Staff will listen to and respect children and actively encourage children to participate in their own well being and personal safety.

The group will appoint a Child Protection Coordinator, Name:- Mrs B Rees, who will ensure all staff have knowledge of, and access to, Wales PPA `Child Protection Guidelines' and the 'All Wales Child Protection Procedures', training on a regular basis, encourage good record keeping, and hold regular meetings with all staff and volunteers working in the group to facilitate the raising of any concerns.

Respond Appropriately to Suspicion of Abuse

Changes in the child's behaviour or injuries will be investigated. The member of staff will report their concerns to the Supervisor/Child Protection Coordinator immediately and this will be recorded and a referral may be made.

Parents will normally be the first point of contact, unless this would place the child at further risk.

If there are grounds for suspecting abuse, these will be referred to the Social Services, NSPCC or Police, as appropriate. The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales will also be informed.

All such suspicions/investigations/referrals will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. These would usually be a member of staff, the supervisor and the committee chairperson.

Any allegations or concerns against a member of staff or volunteer will be reported to the Supervisor/Child Protection Coordinator or The Chairperson immediately, these will be recorded and referred to Social Services, and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales will be informed. The advice of the appropriate bodies will be taken with regard to further action, and it may be necessary for staff to be suspended while further investigations take place.

Keep Accurate Records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour or physical condition, or if there is an injury, a confidential record will be set up. The record will include (in addition to the child's name, address, age and date) observations of the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation. Exact words spoken by the child may be recorded, timed, dated and signed by the recorder.

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Such records will be kept confidential and should not be accessible to anyone in the group other than the supervisor, chairperson and other members of staff as appropriate.

Liaise with Other Bodies

The group will operate within the local authority guidelines. Confidential records kept on children about whom there is concern, should be shared with Social Services Department if it is felt that adequate explanations for the child's condition have not been provided, or if the Social Services Department requests access. The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales will also be informed.

Contact Numbers:-

Chepstow Social Services – 01291 635666

N.S.P.C.C. Child Protection Helpline – 0808 800 5000

N.S.P.C.C Cymru Wales Child Protection Helpline – 0808 100 2524

Support Families

The group will do all in its power to build trusting and supporting relationships between families, staff and volunteers within the group.

Where abuse is suspected at home or elsewhere, the group will continue to welcome the child and family whilst investigations proceed.

Confidential records on a child will be shared with the child's parents.

The group believes the care and safety of the child is paramount and will do all it can to support and work with the child's family.

Offer Training

The Child Protection Coordinator will ensure all staff and volunteers have knowledge of, and access to, Wales PPA 'Child Protection Guidelines' and 'All Wales Child Protection Procedures'. Staff and volunteers will be encouraged to attend Child Protection training sessions to enable them to recognise signs of abuse.