SAFEGUARDING POLICY

General Child protection matters:

Early Years Settings play a vital role in protecting the children within their care. Child abuse can cover many areas from physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. As an Early Years Setting it is our responsibility to care for the children we look after and keep them safe from any harm. All staff members have a Duty by Law to report any concerns about the children in our care.

If a child makes a disclosure or we are concerned about a child we will:-

- Listen to the child and keep a record of what has been said.
    - Staff will listen carefully and ensure they do not show surprise, anger or upset about the situation to the child, so not to distress the child
    - At no point will we prompt the child with closed questions or put words in their mouth, all information will come from the child themselves.
- Keep a note of any unexplained injuries or changes in behaviour on a 'Cause for Concern' form.
- Talk to the child's parent/carer about any concerns, as long as this will not put the child in danger.
- Staff will seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead - Jo McClelland
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from the Bedford Borough Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- If we feel a child is in immediate danger, we will contact the police.

The welfare of each child is paramount and all action must be in the best interests of the child. Children's views will always be taken into account and dealt with sensitively. We offer an environment where children will be safe and feel they can come to us for help and support.

Child protection within the setting:

- The setting will have at least 1 named Designated Safeguarding Lead who will be responsible to overseeing all aspects of the settings safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Every effort will be made to retain the dignity and privacy of all children during personal hygiene arrangements and toileting etc.
- Children will not have access to inappropriate materials
- We will keep parents informed about their child's health, behaviour and development. If we have any concerns about their child, the child's key carer will speak to the parents when the child is not there or, if this is not possible, they will phone to discuss issues at a more appropriate time.
- Parents will be informed of any changes of behaviour or attitude from their child, so that we can work things out together to resolve matters.
- Staff receive online training on an annual basis, covering the following as minimum:
    - What is meant by the term safeguarding.

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- The main categories of abuse, harm and neglect.
- The factors, situation and actions that could lead or contribute to abuse, harm or neglect.
- How to work in ways that safeguard children from abuse, harm and neglect.
- How to identify signs of possible abuse, harm and neglect at the earliest opportunity.
- How to respond, record and effectively refer concerns or allegations related to safeguarding in a timely and appropriate way.
- The setting's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Legislation, national policies, codes of conduct and professional practice in relation to safeguarding.
- Roles and responsibilities of practitioners and other relevant professionals involved in safeguarding.

Attendance Patterns

Staff will closely monitor children's attendance patterns for causes for concerns. When children are regularly absent for long periods of time, or have a very sporadic attendance pattern, this can be an indication there may be difficulties at home. Therefore, if a child is regularly absent, or absent for long periods of time without prior notice, the designated safeguarding lead will make contact with the family to check in and ensure all is well. Please see Attendance Policy for further details.

SEND and EAL children

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or English as an Additional Language are more vulnerable to safeguarding issues due to potential understanding and speech and language barriers. We will ensure that we are extra vigilant with these children, looking out for changes in the child's behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn, angry or aggressive or scared of physical contact. They may have unexplained marks and injuries or there may be behaviour changes in parents/carers. We will approach parents if we are concerned, as long as this does not put the child in more danger, and if necessary, seek advice from the Bedford Borough MASH team.

FGM

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there's no medical reason for this to be done. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting, and by other terms, such as sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan, among others. FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15. It's illegal in the UK and is child abuse.

If we suspect FGM is happening to a child at our setting we will speak to the parents, if safe to do so, and contact Bedford Borough MASH team for guidance.

If an allegation is made about a safeguarding concern at the setting:

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, or someone else at the setting, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will follow the guidance of the Local Authority Designated Officer within 1 working day of the allegation being made. We will then follow the guidance given as to how to proceed from there. Ofsted will be notified, without delay, as to the nature of the allegation and the action taken.

Thorough checks will be taken on all members of staff working within the setting to determine their suitability to work with young children. They will be expected to complete a Disclosures and Barring Service check and provide proof of qualifications to ensure they are safe and capable to care for children. The continued suitability of staff will be assessed during the appraisal process.

The setting has measures in place in order to protect staff from false allegations. These are:

- Accurate and efficient record keeping:
    - Ensuring all staff keep information and data confidential at all times
    - Keeping up to date records about incidents and accidents that happen within the setting
    - Keeping records of unexplained injuries or sudden, concerning changes in behaviour demonstrated by a child while at the setting
- Appropriate/professional behaviour:
    - Never leaving a child unattended or in the care of unauthorised people
    - Encouraging children to become independent when carrying out personal hygiene tasks
    - Never handling a child roughly when managing behaviour
    - Always using appropriate language around the children
    - Taking cues from the children and never asking for cuddles etc
    - Encouraging children to be open and honest. Staff will never ask the children to or promising that they can keep secrets
    - Teach the children to protect themselves and keep out of danger
    - Attending regular child protection courses to keep up to date and well informed

Devices within the setting

We have a No Mobile Phone/Camera policy in our setting. This means, no staff, parent/carers or visitors will be allowed their mobile phone or any device with photography capabilities within the rooms that children are cared for. Staff phones will be locked away in the staff room. If a parent/carer or visitor needs to take a call while in the setting they will be asked to do so outside of the rooms where children are cared for. We also do not allow smart watches with cameras to be warn by our staff during working hours.

The setting has designated devices for each room, including mobile phones used for calls to and from the setting, cameras and tablets, that will be used to document the children's progress for their learning journeys. At no point will these devices be taken into areas where sensitive, personal care is provided (such as toilets and nappy changing areas). Photos on the devices will be frequently checked and downloaded from the camera by a senior staff member. At no point will staff be

allowed to take copies of any photos and photos of the children will never be uploaded to our website or social media unless consent is given. Staff will not be permitted to access personal social media accounts on the setting's devices. If any member of staff is found doing this, disciplinary action will be taken.

Prevent Duty

As part of the 'Prevent Duty' published by government, we, as an Early Years Provider, have a duty to safeguard children at risk of being radicalised. This will be done by assessing the risk to all the children in our care and being aware of changes in behavior in both children and families and signs of expressing, or hiding, extremist views. We will also closely monitor children's attendance and ask all parents/carers to inform us if their child will not be in on a day we are expecting them. Should a child be absent with no explanation from parents/carers, we will attempt to contact the family to determine the child's whereabouts and ensure all is well. If we are unable to contact the family after multiple attempts, we may contact MASH for guidance.

Training will be given to all staff on how to identify signs of children at risk and what to do if they are concerned. We will work in partnership with other agencies, such as the BBSCB, the Police, Prevent coordinators and Channel practitioners.

If we feel a child or family is being radicalized or involved in extremist behaviour, we will call the local support team on 01582 473080, The DfE on 02073407264 or 101 for further guidance and support.

List of Contact Numbers:

- Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) - 01234 276512
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - 01234 718700 or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)
- Prevent Duty Support - 01582 473080 or 101
- LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) - 01234 276693 or 01234 276560
- Childline – 0800 1111
- Parentline – 0808 800 2222
- local Prevent team on 01582 473080
- The DfE Prevent support 02073407264
- Counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

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