**St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Statement of intent**

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

The key commitments of the St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup policy for safeguarding children are:

* We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm.
* We will respond 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' (DoH 2015).
* We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues through training for staff. We are also committed to empowering young children by promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

**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 that encourages children to develop a positive self-image;
* promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
* promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;
* helping children to establish and sustain satisfying 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 children.

The legal framework for this work is:

*Primary legislation*

The Children Act 1989 - s 47

The Children’s Act 1989 – s 17

The Protection of Children Act 1999

Data Protection Act 1998

The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

The Children and Social work Act 2017

The Children (NI) Order

The Children (Scotland) Order

The Prevent Duty 2015

The Equality Act 2010

The United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child 1992.

*Guidance*

*The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework sept 2023*

What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2015)

The Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and Their Families (2000)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 2018)

The Common Assessment Framework 2005

Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures

Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers July 2018

*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

Liaison with other bodies

* We work within the Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines.
* We have a copy of 'What to do if you a worried a child is being abused' flowchart 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 contact details for social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Pre-school and social services to work well together. We have the phone numbers for the area Front Door for Families: 01273 290400 and programmed into the setting’s phone or visit

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/frontdoorforfamilies

* We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any relevant incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
* We have contact details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).
* If a referral is to be made to the local authority social services department, we act within the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time. In the first instance we contact Front Door for Families on 01273 290400

**Methods**

Key Commitment 1

St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm.

Staffing and volunteering

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead who co-ordinates child protection issues is

* Mandy Morgan

Our Deputy Safeguarding Lead is

* Chloe Standing
* We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
* Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
* 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 Disclosure and Barring Service checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children, and candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks.
* Employees and volunteers are subject to ongoing checks to verify suitability
* Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
* We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concerns.
* 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.

Key Commitment 2

St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup will respond 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' (DoH 2015).

**Method**

**We follow procedures set by the Local Safeguarding Partnership**

[**https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/**](https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/)

**Responding to suspicions of abuse**

* We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect and female genital mutilation (staff receive training covering these areas on a regular basis and we understand that suspected cases of FGM must be notified to Front Door for Families
* We are aware that some categories of children are more vulnerable to abuse such as children with SEND and children with persistent absences
* 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 discusses what to do with the safeguarding lead and or manager who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
* If we believe a child is in immediate danger we will make an immediate referral to Front Door for Families and contact emergency services.
* Staff in the setting take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.
* Where we have low level concerns about children such as inadequate clothing in cold weather or parents arriving at pick-up smelling of alcohol or drugs, we record these instances on an ‘incident form’ or post-it note and keep it in the child’s file. These notes are monitored to determine if there is a pattern and whether further action needs to be taken

**Allegations against staff**

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

* Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
* We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
* We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Partners when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
* If an allegation is made against a member of staff the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be the first point of contact and then Ofsted (as soon as is reasonably practicable but at least within 14 days). The LADO contact details are ladoenquiries@brighton-hove.gov.uk . We will not carry out an internal investigation before doing so and will take advice from the LADO as to what action to take.
* We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
* The LADO will advise whether it is appropriate to suspend the member of staff. Following the advice, we may suspend the member of staff for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, it is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.
* If the member of staff concerned leaves their employment at the nursery before the investigation is concluded, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service immediately.

**Outcomes of an investigation**

Below are the possible outcomes of an investigation and some information regarding our likely response in each case.

* Substantiated – there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation that the child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm. In this circumstance, the LADO would refer the case to social care for consideration. The Police would also be involved. We would no longer be able to employ the member of staff and would seek to dismiss them as per our disciplinary procedure. We would inform the DBS with immediate effect.
* Malicious – sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there is a deliberate act to deceive. We would refer the matter to the police if the allegation has been deliberately invented. The preschool may also need to refer the child to social services as a ‘child in need’
* False – sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation. In this instance the nursery may need to refer the child to social services as a ‘child in need’
* Unsubstantiated – insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. This term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence. In this circumstance, we would follow our disciplinary procedure and decide whether the preschool can reasonably continue to employ the member of staff. We would also inform the DBS of the outcome.

Key Commitment 3

St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues through training for staff. We are also committed to empowering young children by promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

**Method**

**Induction**

All new staff have a thorough induction programme which covers reading and understanding all policies including the safeguarding and child protection policy. Policies are reviewed annually and all staff are required to take note of any revisions.

All new staff and volunteers will be checked through the DBS system and will not work unsupervised with the children until DBS has been received and the outcome is clear.

Common signs

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child’s life include:

* + unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
	+ becoming withdrawn
	+ seeming anxious
	+ becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
	+ lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
	+ poor bond or relationship with a parent
	+ knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
	+ running away or going missing
	+ always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

These signs don’t necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour – but we can help you to assess the situation.

You may also notice some concerning behaviour from adults who you know have children in their care, which makes you concerned for the child/children’s safety and wellbeing.

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation. It is when criminals befriend children, either online of offline, and then manipulate them into drug dealing. The 'lines' refer to mobile phones that are used to control a young person who is delivering drugs, often to towns outside their home county.

The signs can be similar to above. Sometimes vulnerable adults will also be manipulated or threatened into letting the drug dealers use their home as a base.

**Training**

* We seek out training opportunities for all staff 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 have termly staff supervision meetings which cover training needs including safeguarding
* We seek out training via Brighton and Hove City Early Years and Childcare publications and the BHSCP website <http://www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk/prof_training.html>
* The designated person will attend the mandatory local authority training Safeguarding for Lead Practitioners every 2 years where this training is available
* We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

**Planning**

* We keep a register of all children and staff on the premises
* The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. We aim to ensure that no child is left alone for any period with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to or within earshot of others. We keep in mind children’s need to privacy when implementing this.
* We have a toileting procedure which means that there is always a second adult within sight and/or hearing when a child is being assisted with toileting
* We record all instances where a child has been assisted with toileting
* We keep a record of children’s absences and monitor these on a regular basis to look for any patterns and follow up as required

**Curriculum**

* We introduce key elements of child protection into our planning 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 understanding of why and how to keep safe.
* We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, including children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural, religious and social background.
* We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

**Disclosures**

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

* Will offer reassurance to the child.
* Will listen to the child;
* Will reassure the child that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child.

**Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

Staff make a record of:

* the child's name.
* the date/time of the observation or the disclosure.
* an objective record of the observation or disclosure.
* the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible.
* the name of the person to whom the concern was reported

These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file.

All members of staff know 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 BHSCP does not allow this.
* This will usually be the case where the parent is the abuser. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

**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 BHSCP

**Mobile phones**

We have a mobile phone for the setting which is taken into the garden or on outings as required. Staff are not permitted to use personal mobile phones during working hours.

Parents/visitors are not allowed to use mobile phones whilst in the building. We have a ‘No Mobile Phones’ notice and remind parents where necessary to step outside if they need to take a call.

**Photography**

**Photography policy**

**Aim**

We aim to provide a record of children’s progress throughout their time at the setting which is attractive and informative for parents and children.

As part of the registration process, parents are asked for specific consent for photographs to be taken and used in a variety of contexts.

We use an iPod touch or an iPad or the setting’s dedicated iPhone to take photographs of children whilst they are at the setting and on outings. We mainly use these photos to update their Tapestry Early Years profile (parents are invited to join and can see their child’s profile at any time online). We also use photos for:

* Displaying in the setting
* Putting on the pre-school website or Facebook page (where permission has been given by parents)
* Putting on posters or flyers to advertise the setting

Where photos are used on the website, Facebook or posters/flyers, children are never identified.

As part of the induction of all staff, the following requirements are made clear:

*“Staff should not talk or text on personal mobile phones during working hours; it takes attention away from the children and is also a safeguarding issue. If staff have an emergency, they should speak to the Managers who will exercise due discretion and may allow use of the business phone. If staff need to be contacted* ***in an emergency****, they should be asked to call on the business phone number. Staff can of course use personal phones during lunch breaks or after work.”* Staff are not allowed to have on their person any personal devices which can take photographs during working hours.

The iPod and iPad and iPhone are locked away when the setting is closed and only taken out if we are going on an outing. The photos are uploaded to Tapestry at least weekly and are usually deleted from the devices weekly. Only key people and the Owner and Managers have access to the digital photos for the purposes detailed above. Photos of children may still appear on posters/flyers and on the pre-school website/Facebook page after they have left the setting.

**Support to families**

* We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff, and volunteers in the group.
* We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, e.g., the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and always liaising with the local social services department.
* We continue 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 services department in relation to the setting'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 information sharing procedures and only if appropriate under the guidance of the BHSCP.
* In brief, business records need to be retained for **7 years**, accident reports until the child is 21 years and 3 months, safeguarding records and causes for concern until the child is 25 years old.

Signed on behalf of St Joseph’s Pre-school Playgroup Limited:

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Name………Mandy Morgan………………………………………

Role…………Manager………………………………………Date………12.09.2023………………………

**Useful contact details**

Designated safeguarding officer ; Mandy Morgan 01273 911438 or 07757 865277, mandy.stjosephsplaygroup@gmail.com

Deputy safeguarding officer - Chloe Standing as above or chloe.stjosephsplaygroup@gmail.com

**Front Door For Families (FDFF)**

Telephone: 01273 290400 (9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm Friday)

Emergency out of hours 01273 335905 or 335906

Police 01273 665502 or 0845 60709999 or 101

E-mail: FrontDoorForFamilies@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk

 **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Safeguarding Team, Children’s Services, Moulsecoomb Hub, North Building, Hodshrove Lane, Brighton, BN2 4SB

**Tel**: 01273295643     **Mobile**: 07795335879

E-mail: ladoenquiries@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Police 01273 665502 or 0845 6070999 or 101

Prevent Coordinator, Nahida Shaikh, Partnership Community Safety Team, Tel: 01273 290584; Mob: 07717303292 Nahida.Shaikh@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk

Channel coordinator team Channel.Prevent@brighton-hove.gov.uk 01273 291115

Prevent education officer will.robey@brighton-hove.gov.uk 01273 293926

Or non emergency police Channel@sussex.pnn.police.uk 101 ext 550543

**National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)** Telephone: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC whistleblowing 0800 0280285

Public Concern At Work (now called Protect) 020 31172520