

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Statement

We, as members of staff and the Committee at Rickmansworth Nursery School, are committed to the safeguarding of children. We will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children so that they get the very best start in life.

Aims

Our aims are:

- To create an environment where children are safe from abuse and in which suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to by following the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board procedures;
- To create an environment in the nursery which encourages children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of race, language, religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background;
- To encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy, independence and the self-confidence to resist inappropriate approaches;
- To help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- To work with parents, carers and volunteers to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

Procedures

We aim meet the three key commitments of the Preschool Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Key Commitment 1	Staff and volunteers
Key Commitment 2	Recognising and Responding to suspicions of abuse Recording suspicions of abuse Making a referral Informing parents Allegations against staff Disciplinary action Confidentiality
Key commitment 3	Training Premises Children's development and learning Support to families

Supporting documentation

Key commitment 1

Rickmansworth Nursery School is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery

Staff and volunteers

- Our Designated Safeguarding Leads are Teacher in Charge Jane Herman and Nursery Assistant Victoria Martin.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
- 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.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureaux before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and 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.
- 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.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) 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 take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any purpose other than to record their development or their participation in events organised by the nursery.

Key Commitment 2

We, as members of staff at Rickmansworth Nursery School, are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and 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).

Recognising and 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 disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play (indirect disclosure).
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse, and Female Genital Mutilation. Other factors such as gang activity, organised abuse through forced marriage, honour based violence and child trafficking may be less likely to affect young children in our care but may affect older children, work experience students and families who we come into contact with.
- Where we believe a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow procedures for reporting safeguarding children concerns.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures:

Where a child makes comments to a staff member that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising that staff member will:

- listen to the child and give reassurance that action will be taken.
- not question the child
- write an objective record of the disclosure or observation that includes the date and time, the child's name age and address, the exact words of the child as far as possible, the name of the person to whom the concern was reported and the names of any other person present at the time. This is then signed and dated.
- Inform the member of staff acting as the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity.

Making a referral:

We Follow HSCB procedures www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk

And use 'Meeting the Needs' Threshold Document to help assess the level of need for the child

Also Meeting the needs of children and families

http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/meeting_needs.pdf

Customer services line: 0300 123 4043

- We cooperate fully in any subsequent investigation which may involve the police or other agencies as identified by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board. We have a folder containing comprehensive procedures for making a referral. This is based on 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006)
- Both documents can be found on the Safeguarding Children notice board in the office
- We are aware of our responsibility to **The Prevent Duty** (2015)
 - We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

- All information is recorded, signed and dated and filed within our confidential Safeguarding Children folder which is kept in a locked cabinet.
- If a child arrives at nursery with a significant visible injury or one is discovered during the session, we ask parents or carers for information about the injury and record this information in writing. This is kept in a confidential folder.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events, unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents when we make a record of concern in their child's file and we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to **Children, Schools and Family**, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the **Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board** does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In such cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents are aware how to complain about staff or volunteers within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the **Hertfordshire 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 place, or is taking place, by recording the details of any such alleged incident. We then refer any such complaint to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to **Ofsted**.
- We cooperate fully in any subsequent investigation which may involve the police or other agencies.
- Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of an 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 or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify **Ofsted** and the **Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)** so that individuals who pose a threat to children can be identified and barred from working with them and vulnerable groups.

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 **Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board**

Key Commitment 3

We, as members of staff at Rickmansworth Nursery School, are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues through our training and learning programmes both in-house and external. Through our early childhood curriculum we are committed to empowering young children, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all staff members in the setting to ensure that we are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that we are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all members of staff know the procedures for reporting and recording concerns.

Premises

- The layout of the classroom, garden and playground allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one to one situation without being visible, audible or both to others. Where a member of staff accompanies a child to the toilet they always inform another member of staff.

Children's development and learning

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe 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, 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.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make it clear to parents our role and responsibility in relation to Safeguarding Children, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local social services department.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow procedures as set by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation. The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in Hertfordshire will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and ensuring that this work is effective.
- 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 these procedures.

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

Legislation

The Children Act (Every Child Matters) 2004

The Children Act (section 47) 1989

The Protection of Children Act 1999

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Prevent Duty 2015

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74 ,Serious Crime Act 2015)

Sexual Offenders Act 2003

Criminal justice and Court Services Act 2000

Equalities Act 2010

Data Protection Act 1998 (non-statutory guidance)

Guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2016)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015)

What to Do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2006)

The Common Assessment Framework 2013

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

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board website

NSPCC website