

St Helen's Pre-school Child Protection Policy

St Helen's Pre-school is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for young children.

Our Child Protection Officers are:

Tricia Pillay Manager

Mandy Tomlinson

We do this by:

Recognising that all children have a right to freedom from abuse

- Staff will be vigilant to changes in children's behaviour and appearance.
- We encourage children to develop their resilience, self-esteem and self-confidence and use opportunities to help children learn how to express their feelings and develop an understanding of acceptable social behaviour.
- The layout of the Pre-school ensures that children and adults can be seen by other people at all times.
- Forest school sessions will have a higher staffing ratio to ensure that risk from strangers (while out of pre-school and on public land) is minimised. Adults should ensure that they are always within hearing (and sight if possible) of at least one other adult. Students and parent helpers will never be left alone with children, excepting their own children.

Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care.

- It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the pre-school that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders act 1974.
- All staff will need to obtain CRB clearance.
- All staff should be willing to attend Child Protection training to ensure that they are aware of the possible symptoms of abuse and the correct procedures to follow.

Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and providing parents staff and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.

- Children whose condition and behaviour is causing concern will be observed by key workers and the manager, with parent's knowledge.
- In exceptional circumstances, when a child is deemed to be in immediate danger, the Social Services Department may be the first point of reference.
- The pre-school maintains an 'open' policy, doors remain open at all times when areas are in use to minimise opportunities for abuse. Staff and Volunteers, including parent helpers are encouraged not to put themselves in vulnerable situations by being alone

with children, taking children to the toilet (volunteers and parent helpers) or engaging in excessive physical contact with children.

- If a member of staff or volunteer is accused of any form of child abuse, the manager will interview them as soon as possible. The person accused may take a friend, colleague or legal advisor to the interview with them. (If the allegation is against the Manager then the Pre-school committee chair will conduct the interview). The person against whom the allegation is made will be informed of the allegation and may be suspended, on full pay, while an investigation is carried out. Investigations will be in line with Area Child Protection Committee procedures and conducted with the Area Child Protection Committee. Ofsted will be informed of the situation.

Appointing Child Protection officers who will take specific responsibility for child protection and act as the main point of contact for parents, children and outside agencies

- The Manager Tricia Pillay is the appointed Child Protection Officer, supported by Mandy Tomlinson, who will be the first point of contact if the Manager is not in the setting.

Ensuring access to confidential information is restricted to the Child Protection Officers or the appropriate external officers and other staff as appropriate.

- Whenever changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance (should these changes be indicators of possible abuse) a specific and confidential record will be set up, separate from the usual, ongoing records of the child's progress and development. This record will include the child's personal details, observation of behaviour/issue causing concern, date and the name of the staff member observing. This record will remain confidential and will be shared with the Child protection Officer, parents and appropriate external officers.

Reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection Policy and activities on a regular basis (at least annually)

It is a requirement of the pre-school's registration that we follow the South Gloucestershire Child Protection Policy. A copy of this can be found on the parent's notice board.

Policy updated October 2009