

Section 1.0

Child Protection

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Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.1 Children's rights and entitlements

Policy statement

- We at the Newman Pre-School Playgroup promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- We promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- We promote 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.
- We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- We work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.

What it means to promote children's rights and entitlements to be '*strong, resilient and listened to*'.

To be strong means to be:

- secure in their foremost attachment relationships, where they are loved and cared for by at least one person who is able to offer consistent, positive and unconditional regard and who can be relied on;
- safe and valued as individuals in their families and in relationships beyond the family, such as Pre-School; self assured and form a positive sense of themselves – including all aspects of their identity and heritage;
- included equally and belong in early years settings and in community life;
- confident in abilities and proud of their achievements;
- progressing optimally in all aspects of their development and learning;
- part of a peer group in which to learn to negotiate, develop social skills and identity as global citizens, respecting the rights of others in a diverse world; and
- able to represent themselves and participate in aspects of service delivery that affects them, as well as aspects of key decisions that affect their lives.

To be resilient means to:

- be sure of their self worth and dignity;
- be able to be assertive and state their needs effectively;
- be able to overcome difficulties and problems;
- be positive in their outlook on life;

- be able to cope with challenge and change;
- have a sense of justice towards themselves and others;
- develop a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others; and
- be able to represent themselves and others in key decision making processes.

To be listened to means:

- adults who are close to children recognise their need and right to express and communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas;
- adults who are close to children are able to tune in to their verbal, sign and body language in order to understand and interpret what is being expressed and communicated;
- adults who are close to children are able to respond appropriately and, when required, act upon their understanding of what children express and communicate; and
- adults respect children’s rights and facilitate children’s participation and representation in imaginative and child centred ways in all aspects of core services.

This policy was adopted by	The Newman Pre-School Playgroup	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On		<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed		<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory		
Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson)		

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Policy statement

The Committee and staff at the Newman Pre-School Playgroup fully recognise the responsibility they have to the safeguarding and protection of children.

We intend to create in our playgroup an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults and to give children the very best start in life. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance's Safeguarding Children Policy which incorporates responding to child protection concerns.

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Key commitment 1

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Staff and volunteers

- Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child, young person and vulnerable adult protection issues is:

Heather Grant

- When the setting is open but the designated person is not on site, a suitably trained deputy is available at all times for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.

- Our designated officer (a member of the management team) who oversees this work is:

The Chair of the Committee

- The designated person, the suitably trained deputy and the designated officer ensure they have relevant links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.

- The designated person (and the person who deputises for them) understands LSCB safeguarding procedures, attends relevant LSCB training at least every two years and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding at least annually.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues are alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children's social care team or the NSPCC. They receive updates on safeguarding at least annually.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.
- All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2015) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All staff understand LSCB thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm.
- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard.
- All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of mobile phones), whistleblowing and dignity at work.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age appropriate way.
- All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- All applicants for work within the Playgroup, whether paid or voluntary, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to supply references.
- All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the Newman Pre-School Playgroup is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with the children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Disclosure & 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.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised and must:
 - be aged 17 or over;
 - be considered competent and responsible;
 - receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings;
 - be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
 - be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - details of who obtained it.
- We inform all staff and volunteers 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).
- All staff and volunteers are required to notify us if anyone in their household (including family members, lodgers, partners etc) has any relevant conviction, court orders, reprimands and warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision, or have had any orders made in relation to care of their children.
- We'll notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- 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.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO.
- The designated person in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate online safety policy in place.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.

- The designated person will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to children's social care, the LADO, Ofsted or Riddor.

Key commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations 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're worried a child is being abused' (HMG, 2015) and the Care Act 2014.

All our staff have access to this publication.

The Newman Pre-School Playgroup will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the Playgroup to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;
 - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.
- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangements, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
- We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The designated person will take immediate action to contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately and LSCB procedures are followed.

If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.

- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision, such as, abuse of disabled children or those who have special educational needs, fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; Female Genital Mutilation and radicalism or extremism;.
- In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCB procedures on responding to radicalisation.
- We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers, including early years practitioners, and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and follow the LSCB procedures.
- 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 member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB: In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989/2004. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- All staff are aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.
- We have a whistleblowing policy in place.

- Staff/volunteers know that they can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing, if they feel that the organisation has not acted adequately in relation to safeguarding they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff 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, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity and within one working day.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

- The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication Safeguarding Children contains procedures for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral.
- We keep a copy of this document alongside the procedures for recording and reporting set down by our Local Safeguarding Children Board, which we follow where local procedures differ from those of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Escalation process

Where we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCB escalation process.

We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.

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 at risk, or interfere with the course of a police investigation. Advice will be sought from social care if necessary.

- We inform parents when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk (or interfere with a police response) the designated person should seek advice from children's social care, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have the current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff and ensure that all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns..
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and children's social care to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person working with the children or on the premises, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments;
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.

- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate and/or offer advice:

LADO

Tel: 020 8461 7669

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- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by LADO that it is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
 - We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
 - Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances the member of staff or the volunteer, will be suspended for the duration of the 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 volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Key commitment 3

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Designated persons receive appropriate training, as recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, every two years and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually.
- We ensure that designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.
- We ensure that all staff receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters, online training and/or discussion at staff meetings at least once a year.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others. However, in the event that only one child needs to use the toilet the staff: child ratio would be 1:1.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme 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 an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, 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.

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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will 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 child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their 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 the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- The Children Act (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- The Statutory Framework for the EYFS

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)

- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2018)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Care Act (2014)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Further guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2018)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2008)
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2015)
- Disclosure and Barring Service www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings, (Ofsted, 2016)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)

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Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Safeguarding Children (2013)

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.3 Whistleblowing

Policy statement

All adults working with children at the Newman Pre School Playgroup are made aware, through the Staff Handbook, of the setting's Safeguarding Policy, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff, students and volunteers. Staff should be watchful for illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct or wrongdoing by employees, or people in the organisation's business, and ensure it is reported and properly dealt with. Adults must acknowledge their individual responsibility to, and the importance of, preventing and eliminating wrongdoing within the setting and to bring matters of concern surrounding the protection of children or adults to the Leader and/or Chair of the Committee, however difficult or stressful.

Procedures

We recognise that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with and the organisation's success ensured. Whistleblowing relates to all those who work with, or within, the early years setting, who may from time-to-time think that they need to raise with someone in confidence certain issues relating to the organisation. Whistleblowing is separate from the grievance procedure.

Staff that have any concern about malpractice within the organisation, are advised to follow the procedure outlined below:

- Report any concerns, suspicions or uneasiness to their line manager at the earliest opportunity. If the concern is about the Playgroup Leader, then to report their concerns to the Chairperson of the Committee.
- Put the concern in writing and ensure a satisfactory response is received.
- Any matter they raise under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to them.
- They will not be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that their continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the Newman Pre-School Playgroup's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.

- If a member of staff makes a malicious, vexatious or false allegation then this will be considered to be a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken against them.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If a member of staff is told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as the Playgroup Leader, they should not agree to remain silent. In this event they should report the matter to the Chairperson of the Committee or the Pre School Learning Alliance.

Further guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2018)
- Independent Safeguarding Authority: www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk

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Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

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1.4 Looked after children

Policy statement

Early years settings are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff in our provision are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Children become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most looked after children will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being. Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home; however, there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who works. It is not appropriate for a looked after child who is under two years to be placed in a day care setting in addition to a foster placement.

We place emphasis on promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on two important concepts, attachment and resilience. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives, as the foundation for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and enable the development of positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Principles

- The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- In exceptional circumstances, we offer places to two-year-old children who are in care. In such cases, the child should have been with the foster carer for at least two months and show signs of having formed a secure attachment to the carer, and the placement in the setting will last a minimum of three months.
- We offer places for eligible two year olds, funded three and four-year-olds who are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and that they will have formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
- We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is two to five years old who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.
- Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer, we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

Procedures

- The designated person for looked after children is the designated child protection co-ordinator.
- Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensure that appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The setting recognises the role of the local authority children's social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting, without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting to determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
- The care plan needs to consider issues for the child such as:
 - their emotional needs and how they are to be met;
 - how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
 - their sense of self, culture, language(s) and identity – and how this is to be supported;
 - their need for sociability and friendship;
 - their interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
 - how any special needs will be supported.
- In addition the care plan will also consider:
 - how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
 - what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be at the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;

- what written reporting is required;
 - wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and
 - with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings and fun-days etc alongside the foster carer.
- The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a sufficient relationship with his or her key person for them to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.
 - In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.
 - Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to firm a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage prime and specific areas of learning and development.
 - Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.
 - If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker according to the setting's safeguarding children procedure.
 - Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.
 - The transition to school will be handled sensitively. The designated person and/or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

Further guidance

- Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care (DfEE 2000)
- Who Does What: How Social Workers and Carers can Support the Education of Looked After Children (DfES 2005)
- Supporting Looked After Learners - A Practical Guide for School Governors (DfES 2006)

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On		<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed		<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory		
Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson)		

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.5 Arrival and Departure Policy

Policy statement

It is the policy of The Newman Pre-School Playgroup that arrivals and departures are carried out with the utmost regard to safeguarding children. We follow a well-established procedure as detailed below:

Procedures

Arrivals:

- Door opens at 9.15 a.m.
- Children self-register with aid of carer, handing their name card to adult on door.
- A contact book is available at each session for the reporting of any changes relating to the normal parent/carer collecting the child, on any given session or periods of sessions. Regular checks are made in the book, thus ensuring that any message from the parent or carer will be received.
- When all the children are inside, the door is locked and a head count taken to tally with name cards.
- If children arrive after the door is locked, the doorbell should be used to gain entry.
- Numbers of adults/children is recorded on the blackboard and amended throughout the morning as necessary. A formal register of children and adults is then completed.
- Should any adult/child leave the session early, the time is immediately recorded in the register.

Departure:

- Door opens at 12.15 p.m.
- No child may be collected by a person under 18.
- Should any child be collected by an unknown adult, the parent/carer should firstly aim to introduce the person to the Playgroup Leader, or, if this is not possible, provide a photograph / description and contact details for that person. A password may be utilised.
- No child will be released to an unauthorised adult. In the event of an unknown person arriving to collect a child, verification will be sought from the child's parents by telephone.
- We will not permit a child to be collected by anyone if the individual appears in our judgement to be unfit to provide for the child's safety, or appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The child's emergency contacts will be telephoned.
- If any child is not collected and the parent/carer cannot be contacted, our Uncollected Child policy will apply and the appropriate authorities will be contacted.

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Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.6 Uncollected child

Policy statement

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day, we put into practice agreed procedures. The child will receive a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible.

We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Procedures

- Parents of children starting at the setting are asked to provide the following specific information, which is recorded on our Registration Form:
 - Home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.
 - Place of Work, address and telephone number (if applicable).
 - Mobile telephone number (if applicable).
 - Names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
 - Who has parental responsibility for the child.
 - Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.
 - On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they inform us in writing of how they can be contacted.
- On occasions when parents, or the persons normally authorised to collect the child, are not able to collect the child, they must provide us with written details of the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child. We agree with parents how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child. A password may be utilised. No child will be released to an unauthorised adult. In the event of an unknown person arriving to collect a child, verification will be sought from the child's parents by telephone.

- No child may be collected by persons under 18.
- Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures. Our contact telephone number is: 07989 280639
- If a child is not collected at their expected collection time, we follow the procedure below:
 - The child's file is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
 - If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
 - If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form - are contacted.
 - All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
 - The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.
 - If no-one collects the child after 30 minutes (after the setting has closed) and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the following procedures:
 - We contact our local authority children's social care team:

Tel: 020 8461 7379

- If the child's social care team is unavailable (or as our local authority advise) we will contact the police.
- The child stays at the setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers, one of whom will be our Playgroup Leader or Deputy, until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker.
- Social care will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- Under no circumstances will staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.
- We ensure that the child is not anxious and we do not discuss our concerns in front of them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.
- Ofsted may be informed:

Tel: 0300 123 1231

- The Head of Early Years Bromley Borough may also be informed.

Tel: 020 8461 7275

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Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Safeguarding Children (2013)

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.7 Missing child

Policy statement

Children's safety is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made, through the implementation of the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure, to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedures

In the unlikely event of a child going missing on the premises, the Newman Pre-School Playgroup follow the procedure below:

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the key person/staff alerts the Playgroup Leader.
- Staff will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden whilst the Playgroup Leader calls the parent/carer of the child. If the child is not found, the Playgroup Leader or nominated person will then immediately contact the police to report the child missing. If it is suspected that the child may have been abducted, the police are informed of this.
- A recent photo and a note of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- The Playgroup Leader talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records in the Incident book.
- The Playgroup Leader contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson-comes to the setting immediately to carry out an investigation, with the management team where appropriate.
- The following organisations may need also to be advised:

Social Services: Tel: 020 8461 7379 / 7373

Ofsted: Tel: 0300 123 1231

Head of Early Years Bromley Borough: Tel: 020 8461 7275

The Pre-School Learning Alliance: Tel: 020 7697 2599

Child going missing on an outing

This describes what to do when our staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the Playgroup Leader and/or other staff back in the setting. If the Playgroup Leader has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated carer and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity, but does not search beyond that.
- The Playgroup Leader or Playgroup Leader is contacted immediately (if not on the outing) and the incident is recorded.
- The Playgroup Leader or Deputy contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The Playgroup Leader contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting as soon as possible.
- According to the advice of the police, a senior member of staff, or our Playgroup Leader where applicable, should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- The Playgroup Leader contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson comes to the setting immediately to carry out an investigation, with the management committee, (where appropriate).
- The Playgroup Leader or member of staff may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.
- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.

The investigation

- Ofsted are informed as soon as possible and kept up-to-date with the investigation.
- The Playgroup Leader together with a representative of the management team, speaks with the parent(s) and explains the process of the investigation.
- The parent(s) may also raise a complaint with us or Ofsted.
- The chair carries out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- Each member of staff writes an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the incident.
 - Where the child went missing from e.g. the setting or an outing venue.
Which staff/children were in the group/on the outing and the name of the staff who was designated as responsible for the missing child.
 - When the child was last seen in the premises/or on the outing, including the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
 - What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.

- The report is counter-signed by the senior member of staff and the date and time added.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff and parents. Children’s social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted are informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.

- Our staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. Feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Playgroup Leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the Playgroup Leader. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the Playgroup Leader and the other should be the chairperson of the management committee. No matter how understandable the parent’s anger maybe, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police will be called.
- The remaining staff caring for the remainder of the children need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children’s questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The chairperson or proprietor will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

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Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

The safeguarding policy and procedures must include an explanation of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, and cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

1.8 Use of mobile phones and cameras

Policy statement

We take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

Procedures

Personal Mobile Phones

- The use of personal mobile phones or any other device with Internet access or inbuilt camera is forbidden in the main playgroup room, outdoor area and toilets.
- At the beginning of each individual's shift, personal mobile phones are stored in a locked box in the kitchen.
- Visitors will also be required to surrender their personal mobile phones for the duration of their visit.
- Parents, committee members, volunteers, students and other visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones whilst on the premises. There is an exception if a visitor's company or organisation operates a lone working policy that requires contact with their office periodically throughout the day. Visitors will be advised of a quiet space where they can use their mobile phone, where there are no children present.
- Members of staff ensure that the telephone number of the setting is known to immediate family and other people who need to contact them in an emergency.
- In the event of an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in the privacy of the kitchen, where there are no children present, with permission from the Playgroup Leader.
- Members of staff may take their own mobile phones on outings, for use in the case of an emergency. They must not make or receive personal calls as this will distract them.
- Our staff and volunteers will not use their personal mobile phones for taking photographs of children on outings.
- The Newman Pre-School Playgroup has two designated mobile phones. One is used for parent contact during sessions and the other for emergency contact when staff are required to attend to children needing the toilet. Neither of these mobile phones has internet capability or an inbuilt camera.

Cameras and videos

- Members of staff and volunteers are not permitted to bring their own cameras or video recorders into the setting.
- Photographs or recordings of children are only taken on equipment belonging to the setting.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, i.e. learning activities, to record their learning and development in their folders, or for displays within the setting.
- Photographs may be taken in the main hall, outside play area or on outings.
- Camera and video use is monitored by the setting Playgroup Leader.
- Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events, permission will first be gained from all parents for their children to be included.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken of children if there is written permission to do so.
- The Newman Pre-School Playgroup’s camera is only taken home by the Playgroup Leader for the sole purpose of developing photographs (due to the lack of Internet access and suitable software at the setting).
- The photographs are uploaded to Playgroup Leader’s computer which is password protected and printed.
- Once the photographs have been printed by the Playgroup Leader the files are deleted from the computer and the camera.
- Under no circumstances are photographs emailed or used online in any way (other than images on the playgroup website for which appropriate parental consent is always sought and obtained in advance.

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