

Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

Policy statement

White Rock Pre-school will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Commitment 1 : We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

Staff and volunteers

Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is:

Karen Hornabrook

Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is

Louise Curtis

Our deputy designated person who oversees child protection and safeguarding issues in the absence of the above is

Rachel Phillips

- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures. All staff are aware of the early help process. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment..
- 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 Disclosing and Barring Service before posts can be confirmed.
- 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 Disclosing and Barring 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/students do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of 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.
- We have appropriate filters in place to protect our children from accessing online harmful material.

Commitment 2 : We are committed to responding 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 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2020 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

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 or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- All staff are aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We know that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. This can include:
 - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
 - children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs; and
 - communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- 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 beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.
- 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 maybe 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 a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns.
- 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 manager who is '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's Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We use the detailed procedures when making a referral to children's social care or other appropriate agencies.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives 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;
- 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 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.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team

- The setting will use the procedures for making a referral to either Early Help if there is no immediate danger to the child, or to MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) if we consider a child at risk of significant harm, as detailed in Safeguarding Children Partnership Threshold Chart (Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership Sept 2020).
- We keep a copy of this document and follow the detailed guidelines given.
- All members of staff are familiar with this document and follow the procedures for recording and reporting.
- To report an urgent safeguarding concern to MASH 01803 208100, to contact the Early Help Team 01803 208525

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 Local Safeguarding Children Partnership does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines.
- 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 names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- If a referral is to be made to the local Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub we act within the area's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.
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Commitment 3 : We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our early childhood curriculum, in 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 can recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that our designated members of staff receive updated training in accordance with the Torbay Safeguarding Children's Guidelines, and their knowledge and skills are refreshed at least annually.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

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.

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 that they develop an 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.

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 Partnership

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, providing information, 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 policy and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The Prevent Duty

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty upon local authorities and educational providers to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The DfE has provided statutory guidance for schools and child care providers: 'The Prevent Duty Guidance' (2023). The guidance summarises the requirements on schools and child care providers in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies.

Our pre-school will, in an attempt to combat radicalisation, ensure that British values are promoted to the children throughout our curriculum as well as helping children build their understanding and appreciation of others as early as possible. This means showing children about all kinds of different lifestyles and cultures, helping them see that there are lots of different

ways of living that all deserve respect. This is in response to the definition of terrorism as stated within the Prevent Duty Strategy. Terrorism is defined as:

"Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs."

This statement clarifies the four British values as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

We will ensure that staff are aware of the indicators of extremism and radicalisation and know how to respond. We are protecting children from being drawn into terrorism by our robust safeguarding and recruitment process.

If staff suspect a child is at risk from radicalisation they will discuss their concerns with safeguarding leads who will contact the Local Counterterrorism Policing Team on 01392 225130, and may complete a prevent national referral form.

Female Genital Mutilation

'Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon staff along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at- 'Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information' Our designated safeguarding lead must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.