



## Happylands Nursery Safeguarding Policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Hogger (Nursery Manager)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Shoana Thornton (Deputy Manager)

At Happylands, we promote the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We believe our staff should be completely vigilant and attentive during their hours of working to ensure all children in the nursery receive good quality care and education. The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to provide a secure framework to do this.

This policy aims to ensure that:

**ALL OUR CHILDREN ARE SAFE AND PROTECTED FROM HARM.**

Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children to feel safe and adopt safe practices. Staff, children, visitors, volunteers and parents/carers are aware of the expected behaviours and the settings legal responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all the children at Happylands.

Included in our practices to safeguard children is the need for staff to be vigilant to our children and families being influenced by extremist propaganda and radicalisation, as described within the Prevent Duty (2023) guidance. This includes supporting British Values:

- Democracy: Making decisions together, for example, giving opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.
- Rule of law: understanding rules matter and encouraging children to help collaborate to create rules and codes of behaviour.
- Individual liberty: freedom for all, for example, reflecting on their differences and understanding that we are free to have different opinions.
- Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated, for example sharing and respecting other's opinions.

The ethos of the "British Values" are inherent in our policies and procedures, in our planning for children's learning and development and in our partnership with parents/carers.

Happylands will not tolerate any failure to challenge behaviours, (whether of staff, children or parents/carers) that are not in line with the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

### Responsibilities:

Safeguarding at Happylands is considered everyone's responsibility and our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We recognise the contribution it can make in ensuring that all children registered with our setting feel that they will be listened to, and appropriate action taken. We will do this by working in partnership with other agencies and seeking to establish effective working relationships with

parents/carers and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities throughout our curriculum that will help equip our children with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours.

In addition, we:

Prevent abuse, harm and neglect by good practice:

- Each child is assigned a key worker
- Staff are not left alone for long periods with individual or groups of children.
- We employ a robust supervision strategy, including supervision meeting systems.
- When changing nappies, or soiled/wet clothing – the door remains unlocked, unless the building is being shared by other agencies who may rent the hall out, e.g. play group or blood donors.
- Discipline procedures take place in full view of others. Our behaviour policy promotes positive praise and reinforcement to limit the amount of discipline required in our setting.
- Adults who are not yet approved of a DBS check can not take children to the toilet unaccompanied and are not left on their own when supervising individual or groups of children.

Encourage self confidence:

- Children are encouraged to be independent to name their own feelings and finding ways to express themselves. This enables children to have self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Children with SEND are structurally supported to find ways to express themselves and different resources are used to show and represent how they are feeling, as they may not be able to verbally communicate this.

Be vigilant:

- By ensuring that the issues of child protection receive continuous attention and regularly review the way we operate to support this principle.
- All staff complete annual safeguarding training to ensure they are up to date with relevant information, signs to look for and ways of reporting incidents/disclosures.
- Low level concerns are recorded in the nursery concerns book, which is kept in a locked filing cabinet with our safeguarding file. The DSL/manager are informed of each concern and will advise staff on next steps if these low level concerns are continuous. This may indicate signs of the risk of significant harm and staff will be knowledgeable of the steps to take to further report concerns and incidents to the appropriate agencies.

Report:

- Disclosures from children and any signs that they have been a victim of abuse or neglect.
- Unexplained injuries that indicate they are non-accidental, as well as recurring injuries, marks on the body.
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, anyone working with the children or members of the children's family.
- Any significant changes in staff members or family members behaviour patterns. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention from a staff

member that goes beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images; showering the children with over excessive gifts.

It is the responsibility of the Nursery Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead (Sarah Hogger) to ensure that all staff and volunteers are properly checked, using enhanced DBS checks, to make sure they are safe to work with children who attend our setting. To achieve this we:

Exclude known abusers/offenders:

Ensuring all applicants for work are informed of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 exclusion clause and know that enhanced DBS and medical checks are carried out. Specific Recruitment procedures are always followed and at least two up to date and relevant references are taken up on prospective employees. One must be from their current or most recent employer.

All employees work under a probationary period where they are closely supervised. During this period, child protection procedures are discussed and training needs analysed. All staff are usually required to complete their safeguarding training within the first three months of employment.

It is the responsibility of the nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead to ensure that safeguarding issues raised in the setting are timeously and effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency.

Staff knowledge and training:

The annual safeguarding training that staff undertake each year should be broad and encompass a holistic view of safeguarding, by their awareness of the child's life and the people that the child comes into contact with, however well known they are to the child. As well as training, all staff are expected to read and understand our safeguarding policy and procedures, to ensure all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues which enable them to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. This expectation is the same for students and volunteers at our setting as well.

The nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead (or deputy manager in their absence) is required to attend, where appropriate, all child protection case conferences, reviews, core groups or meetings where it concerns a child at our setting, and to contribute to multi-agency discussions to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

Early Help Services:

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help relies upon local agencies working together to: identify children and families who would benefit from early help, undertake an assessment of the need for early help and provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family, which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes of the child.

It is every staff members' responsibility to be vigilant to the need for early help intervention – any concerns should be recorded and reported to the nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead, who will make their own assessment as to whether a referral needs to be made. It may be necessary to observe behaviours and concerns over a brief period to build up a picture of the individual situation, in order to make a referral. Parents/carers can also make their own referral to early help.

In the instance that a referral does need to be made, the nursery manager will need to contact the North Yorkshire Council Early Help team on 0300 131 2131 or visit <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/children-and-families/early-help> to download and complete the referral form. Staff can also signpost parents/carers to this. A referral can not be made for a family without their consent. This is not the appropriate approach for more serious safeguarding concerns. If a staff member is concerned that a child is at imminent risk from harm, they must call the police and social services straight away.

#### Recognising concerns, signs and indicators of abuse.

Safeguarding is not just about children from deliberate harm. At Happylands Nursery, it includes issues such as child safety, bullying, racism, visits, intimate care, inadequate parenting, substance misuse, gender inequalities and e-safety.

The witnessing of abuse can have a damaging effect of those who see/hear it, as well as the person who is subjected to the actual abuse, and it will have a significant impact on the health and emotional well being of the child.

Abuse can take place in any family, institution, or community setting, by telephone or on the internet. Abuse can sometimes be difficult to recognise as children may behave differently or seem happy for many reasons as they move through the stages of childhood or their family circumstances change. Therefore, it is crucial to be vigilant and know the indicators of abuse, in order to be alert to the need to consult further.

#### Types of abuse:

##### Physical abuse:

This can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, punching, kicking, scalding, burning, drowning and suffocating. It can also result when a person deliberately causes the ill health of a child in order to seek attention through fabricated or induced illness. This was previously known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.

Staff procedure when noticing physical marks on a child:

- Any sign of a mark/injury to a child when they come into nursery will be recorded on an "existing injury" form and discussed with the parent/carer.
- It will be recorded in the concerns book if staff have concerns about the mark/injury, for example, if it is located in an unusual place or the child is coming into nursery more than one or twice with marks/injuries.
- If there are further concerns or queries over the injuries then the nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead will need to inform the Safeguarding Partners as appropriate, depending on the situation or incident leading up to the child receiving the mark or injury.

##### Emotional abuse:

Emotional abuse is where a child's need for love, security, recognition, and praise is not met. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of someone else, such as in domestic violence or abuse. A person is considered emotionally abusive when they are hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining towards someone else. It can also occur when children are prevented from having social contact with other or if inappropriate expectations are placed upon them.

### Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively clingy or attention seeking
- Very low self esteem or excessive self criticism
- Withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please
- Eating disorders or self harm

### Staff procedure when noticing possible signs of emotional abuse:

- The concern will initially be discussed with the parent/carer
- It will be recorded in the concerns book
- If there are further concerns or queries then the nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead will need to inform the Safeguarding Partners, depending on the situation or incidents leading up to the concerns.

### Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical contact, both penetrative and non penetrative, or viewing pornographic material including through the use of the internet.

### Indicators of sexual abuse include:

- Allegations or disclosures
- Genital soreness
- Injuries
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour including words, play or drawing
- Withdrawal or fearfulness of adults

### Staff procedure when noticing possible signs of sexual abuse:

- Observed instances will be reported to the nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead and recorded in the concerns book
- It will be reported to the Safeguarding Partners if significant and immediate risk of harm is suspected.

### Neglect:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which can significantly harm a child's health and development. Neglect can include inadequate supervision (being left alone for long periods of time), lack of stimulation, lack of social contact or education, lack of appropriate food, shelter, appropriate clothing or not seeking medical attention and treatment for a child when necessary.

### Staff procedure when noticing possible signs of neglect:

- The concern will initially be discussed with the parent/carer
- It will be recorded in the concerns book

- If there are further concerns or queries then the nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead will need to inform the Safeguarding Partners, depending on the situation or incidents leading up to the concerns.

### Radicalisation:

Radicalisation is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that:

- Reject or undermine the status quo, including British Values or
- Reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.

Indicators of radicalisation include:

The process of radicalisation may involve:

- being groomed online or in person
- exploitation, including sexual exploitation
- psychological manipulation
- exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- the risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts.

If a child or young person is being radicalised their day-to-day behaviour may become increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause. For example, they may:

- spend increasing amounts of time talking to people with extreme views (this includes online and offline communication)
- change their style of dress or personal appearance
- lose interest in friends and activities that are not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- have material or symbols associated with an extreme cause
- try to recruit others to join the cause

(Home Office, 2020).

It happens gradually so children and young people who are affected may not realise what it is that they are being drawn into.

Staff at Happylands Nursery complete annual prevent training so they are up to date and can be vigilant in recognising sign of radicalisation.

Where concerns of radicalisation are identified through changes in children's behaviour, utterances or attitudes that are not appropriate, or explained absences then these need to be reported to:

- Nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead/reported in the nursery concerns book
- The police anti terrorism team on 0800 729 321
- Concerns can also be reported to, and advice sought from the NSPCC radicalisation helpline: 0808 800 5000
- If there are concerns that a child is at risk from immediate significant harm through radicalisation then staff must phone 999 straight away

The Department for Education has a dedicated telephone helpline for schools in England who have non-emergency concerns about extremism: [020 7340 7264](tel:02073407264).

#### Child sexual exploitation, missing and trafficking:

Happylands Nursery, like every other child care provision, could be faced with the challenge of tackling the issue of children going missing from home, care or school, being abused through child sexual exploitation and being trafficked. Although, the chances are slim, we need to be alert to the risks and indicators of this type of abuse, in order to prevent and reduce it. Reporting should be done in the same way as for other types of abuse and if there is an immediate and serious risk of harm to the child, 999 should be called. Staff can refer to the North Yorkshire Police website for further information and advice regarding reporting concerns and incidents:

<https://www.northyorkshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/child-sexual-exploitation/#:~:text=If%20you%20suspect%20a%20person,textphone%20service%20on%2018001%20101>

All concerns should be recorded in the nursery concerns book, located with the safeguarding file.

#### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):

As our duty of care, we have a statutory obligation under national safeguarding protocols, to protect young girls and women from FGM as it is an illegal, extremely harmful practise and form of abuse. It is essential that we work closely together with other agencies if we suspect a child has suffered or is likely to suffer FGM. This is reflected in the Multi-Agency Practise Guidelines.

If a child in our care shows signs and symptoms of FGM (see website link)

<https://www.northyorkshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fgm/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>, or we have good reason to suspect the child is at risk of FGM, we must refer the child using our existing standard safeguarding procedures as it is a form of abuse. When a child is identified as “at risk” of FGM, this information must be brought to the attention of the child’s GP and health visitor.

Information on how to report concerns of FGM can also be found at:

<https://www.northyorkshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fgm/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

Staff are required to complete individual, annual training on this form of abuse to keep their knowledge and understanding up to date.

#### Witchcraft and Breast ironing:

Although very rare in our area and culture, we must be aware of the risks, signs, and symptoms of these two types of abuse. Advice on noticing signs of this abuse and how to record and report them can be found at: <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/procedures-practice-guidance-and-one-minute-guides/child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief-including-witchcraft/>

Staff are required to complete individual, annual training on this form of abuse to keep their knowledge and understanding up to date.

#### E-safety:

At Happylands Nursery, we use technology such as cameras and the nursery mobile phone to record learning and experiences. See the separate mobile phone policy for our procedures and safeguarding in relation to this.

When children are using the internet on tablets and the nursery mobile phone, staff supervise them at all times and parental controls are applied to the devices to ensure the children do not access inappropriate content.

Staff also support and signpost parents/carers with ways of how to help keep their children safe online, as well as advise against uses of technology and media that inappropriate to children of nursery date. All staff keep up to date with the local authority key messages for early years settings, that provide updates on information and training in this area. Guidance can also be found in the Keeping Children Safe In Education (2024) document, that all staff read and sign annually to say they have understood its content.

#### How to deal with accusations and disclosures:

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child/young person, or says something to give you cause for concern, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else.
- Do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret.
- Inform your nursery manager/designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which you must sign, date and record your position on the report of concern.
- Record all subsequent events up to the time of seeking specialist advice.

#### Professional Abuse Procedures (allegations against professionals/members of staff).

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers that are working or may encounter children whilst in our setting.

Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. This could include inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or other persons working with the children. Inappropriate behaviours could be saying sexual comments, excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements of their role and responsibilities, inappropriate sharing or images. Allegations and disclosures can be made by children, young people or other concerned adults.

Allegations are made for a variety of reasons:

- Abuse has actually taken place.

- Something has happened to the child that reminds them of a past event – the child is unable to recognise that the situation and people are different; children can misinterpret your language or your actions.
- Some children recognise that allegations can be powerful and if they are angry with you about something, they can make an allegation as a way of hitting out.
- An allegation can be a way of seeking attention.

If an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust, whether they be members of staff or volunteers, this should be brought to the immediate attention of the Nursery Manager/designated safeguarding lead or deputy, who will investigate the allegation further and make a record in the concerns book.

The Nursery Manager/designated safeguarding lead or deputy will need to discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the nature of the allegations made against the adult, in order for the appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion, depending on the allegation made.

The Nursery Manager or deputy will refer to the LADO immediately and follow up in writing within 48 hours. They must also:

- Consider safeguarding arrangements of the child to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser.
- Contact the parents/carers of the child if advised to do so by the LADO.
- Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation.
- The suspected person shall be instantly suspended on full pay until the matter has been resolved through an investigation process.
- Advise Ofsted of allegation within 14 days of the allegation.
- Act on any decision made in any strategy meeting.
- Advise the Independent Safeguarding Authority where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of an allegation being founded.

Full disciplinary measures will be taken against any member of staff found to be undertaking any form of abuse on children. Any proven incidents will be treated as a matter of gross misconduct and immediate dismissal without notice will be sought. The right to full pay whilst on suspension will be withdrawn at this time.

#### Abuse to professionals:

If any member of the setting staff is subjected to abuse by either:

- Another member of staff
- A parent/carer
- Anyone else concerned with the nursery

Then they should report this abuse immediately to the Nursery Manager or deputy. In the unlikely event that a parent/visitor or other person starts to act in an aggressive or abusive manner at the nursery, our policy is to:

- Direct the person away from the children and into a private area
- Ensure that a second member of staff be in attendance where possible, whilst ensuring the safe supervision of the children

- Act in a calm and professional way, ask the person to calm down and make it clear that we do not tolerate aggressive or abusive language or behaviour
- Contact the police if the behaviour does not diffuse
- Once the parent calms down, the member of staff will then listen to their concerns and respond appropriately
- An incident record will be completed detailing the date, time and action taken
- With incidents like this, staff may require support and reassurance following the experience, management will provide this and seek further support where necessary
- Management will also signpost parents/carers and children to further support if applicable