



# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

## Policy statement:

Acacia 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.

## Procedures:

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

## Key commitment 1:

The Alliance & Acacia Pre-school are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

## Staff and volunteers

- Our designated person who co-ordinates child protection issues is:  
**Leigh Smith (Manager)** or in her absence **Suzanne Peacock (Deputy)**
- Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is:  
**Rhiannon Elvin Speller (Chair)**
- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 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 & Barring Service (DBS) checks before posts can be confirmed.
- Failure to disclose information to the Manager &/or Committee will result in immediate termination of the probationary period.

- 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 Disclosure & Barring Service checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised at any point during the session.
- 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 led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern. In these circumstances the DBS are informed.
- 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.

### **Key commitment 2:**

Acacia Pre-school is 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 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006) .

### **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.
- 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 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.

- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person with the support of the Manager or Deputy will make a dated record of the details of the concern and discuss what the appropriate course of action should be. The information is logged.
- We will initially contact the RBK based SPA team to seek advice on how to proceed and ask for further information e.g. if the child is known to other agencies, before making a final decision.
- 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. 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.

### **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 initially in the Safeguarding file.

### **Informing parents:**

- Parents are normally the first point of contact, though staff may wish to seek advice from the SPA team before contacting parents. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events, unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- All conversations with parents regarding a concern are logged.

- 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. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.

### **Liaison with other agencies:**

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have details readily available for both parents & staff regarding the function of the SPA team.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff.

### **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 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 LADO to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and 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 committee and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff, or the volunteer, 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 member of 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, we will notify Ofsted and the DBS of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children, can be identified and barred from working with children.

### **Key commitment 3:**

Acacia Pre-school is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for all staff & volunteers. It is 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 staff to ensure that they are able to 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 all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

### **Planning:**

- The layout of the room & outside allows for constant supervision.
- No child is left alone with a volunteer 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 are 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 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, 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 will follow a Child Protection Plan as set by a 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 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)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

#### **Secondary legislation:**

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

#### **Further Guidance:**

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)
- What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2015)
- 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 (2015)
- Independent Safeguarding Authority: [www.isa.gov.org.uk](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk)

This policy was adopted at a meeting of

**Acacia Pre-school**

Held on

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

Signed on behalf of the management  
committee

Name of signatory

**Alison Berryman**

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

**Chair Person**