

# SAFEGUARDING POLICY – April 2016

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Marble Hill Playcentres (“MHPC”) Safeguarding Policy is to establish our responsibilities with regard to children’s safety and welfare.

We recognise it is our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- It is the setting’s responsibility to take all reasonable steps to safeguard and protect the rights, health and well-being of all children who are in our care.
- The setting will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all activities.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm in accordance with this policy.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an earlier review date.
- All children and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support from the manager of the setting who will follow the procedures set out in this policy.

## Aims

Our aims are to:

- To provide staff with the necessary information to enable us to meet our statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the setting.
- To demonstrate the setting’s commitment to safeguarding children.

## Context

- The Children Act 1989 states that the child’s welfare is paramount and that every child has a right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- This policy seeks to promote effective multi-agency working in the light of the Children Act 2004 and 2006 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.
- We will ensure every staff member and governing body or committee members know the name of the Safeguarding and Child Protection designated person.

## Key Personnel

The **Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection** person in this setting is:

Name: Kevin Stinton                      Job title: Playcentres Manager

Contact details: 0208 891 0641

The **Committee Member responsible for safeguarding** in this setting is:

Name: Barbara Morton

Contact details: 07877 134 964

# THE PROCEDURE

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, Marble Hill Playcentres agrees to the following standards of good practice:

- To treat all children with respect.
- To be a good listener.
- To ensure staff are positive role models to children and other members of the team and never engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- To maintain appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoid the use of sexualised or derogatory language.
- To be alert to changes in a child's behaviour.
- To recognise that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.
- To raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills they need to keep themselves safe.
- To involve children in decision-making which affects them (taking into account their age and stage of development).
- To ask the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing or administering first aid.
- To read and understand all of the setting's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example, physical intervention and information-sharing.
- To be aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.

## Responding to specific child protection concerns about a child at risk of significant harm

### Taking action:

- Report any concerns we have to the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person or deputy immediately.
- If the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person or deputy is not available, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the setting that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children's social care.
- Inform the parent/carer about what has been observed, so long as it does not put the child at increased risk. We will also ask the child if he/she is old enough, and note what they tell us and how they behave.
- If we decide not to discuss our concerns with the child's parents we will record this and the reason why we made that judgement.
- Take action to obtain urgent medical attention for the child, if required.
- Record what we have heard or seen, what has been said, and what we did. We will use a body map, but will not take photographs.
- Keep the notes taken at the time, without amendments, omissions or addition, whatever subsequent reports may be written (dated and signed on each page).
- If the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person has any reason to believe that a child is subject to either physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, he/she will immediately report these concerns to the **Richmond SPA team on 020 8891 7969** or out of hours the **Emergency Duty team on 020 8744 2442** who will refer to a duty social worker. However, if we are seriously concerned about a child's immediate safety, we will dial 999. The setting will keep records of all decisions or actions agreed in discussion with SPA.

**LBRuT Single Point of Access (SPA)** Telephone: 020 8891 7969 : Email: spa@richmond.gov.uk

**RBK Single Point of Access (SPA)** Telephone: 020 8770 5000 : Email: SPA@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

### Use of mobile phones

Mobile phones have a place in settings, especially those without a landline, and on outings. They are often the only means of contact available in settings and can be helpful in ensuring children are kept safe. To protect children we will:

- Only use mobile phones appropriately, and ensure staff have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse and know how to minimise the risk.
- Ensure the use of a mobile phone does not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children.
- Ensure all mobile phone use is open to scrutiny.
- Ensure staff are vigilant and alert to any potential warning signs of the misuse of mobile phones.
- Ensure staff are responsible for their own behaviour regarding the use of mobile phones and should avoid putting themselves into compromising situations, which could be misinterpreted and lead to potential allegations.
- Ensure the use of mobile phones on outings is included as part of the risk assessment, for example, how to keep personal numbers that may be stored on the phone safe and confidential.

### Work mobiles

To protect children we will ensure that the work mobile:

- Is only used by allocated people.
- Is protected with a password and clearly labelled.
- Is stored securely when not in use.
- Is not used in areas such as toilets, changing rooms, nappy changing areas and sleep areas.
- If used for taking photographs, the images are deleted regularly and written parent/carer permission obtained.

### Personal mobiles

To protect children we will ensure that personal mobiles:

- Will be switched off or on silent whilst staff are on duty. In the event that a member of staff needs to answer or make a call urgently they will be required to ask permission of senior staff and must take the call in the office.
- Are not used to take pictures of the children attending the setting.
- Are staff's responsibility and no liability for loss or damage will be accepted by the setting.
- Belonging to visitors either turned off or stored securely on entering the setting.
- Will not be used to take photographs, video or audio recordings in our setting without prior explicit written consent from the setting and parents and carers.
- Are not used to contact parents or children except in the event of an emergency.
- Belonging to older children have signed consent from their parents giving permission for the child to have a mobile and agreeing that they will stored securely and be switched off or on silent whilst in the setting.

Updated on 14.04.2016	By Kevin Stinton  Playcentres Manager
Reviewed on 26.4.16	By Barbara Morton  Marble Hill Playcentres Committee

# APPENDIX

## **If you have a concern about a colleague**

All staff have a duty to disclose any concerns they have about the conduct of other staff or adults in contact with children. An allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff (within the work environment or outside of work) or other adult in contact with children in the setting may come from a parent, another member of staff or from a child's disclosure.

The setting will:

- Treat the matter seriously.
- Avoid asking leading questions.
- Keep an open mind.
- Make a written record of the information that includes: when the alleged incident took place (time and date), who was present, and what was said to have happened.
- Sign and date the written record.
- Report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person, or named deputy, where the designated person is the subject of an allegation.
- Contact Single Point of Access (SPA) for advice and further guidance, who will contact The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and cooperate fully with the process of the SPA team and with any Police investigations (The LADO will offer advice and guidance in relation to members of staff working in Richmond upon Thames regardless where the child lives).
- Follow the settings disciplinary procedure. Due to the serious nature of the concerns, staff may be suspended until a full investigation has taken place. The setting will support and treat with respect the member of staff whilst suspended.
- Await the outcome of the investigation before taking further disciplinary action.
- Ensure, if it appears from the results of the investigation that the allegations are justified, that disciplinary action will follow, taking legal advice where necessary.
- Where it seems likely that 'on balance of probabilities' abuse may have taken place, be able in law to dismiss the individual and refer them to The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- If the result of the investigation is that it was a false allegation, give the individual appropriate support.

## **Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

- We will support the children, their families and staff by:
- Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously.
- Responding sympathetically to any request from a member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety.
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies.
- Storing records securely.
- Offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support.
- Following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- Cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.