



Safeguarding Children Policy

At The Nurture Circle Ltd. we work with many different sites, early years settings, children and parents and commit ourselves to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. We strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures (please refer to our inclusion and equality policy for further information). Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. At **The Nurture Circle** all staff, settings & parents are made aware of and adhere to the policy.

Legal framework and definition of safeguarding

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Data Protection Act 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early years, Education and Skills settings 2019
- Prevent Duty 2015

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2018).

Policy intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- Ensure all staff are able to identify the signs and indicators of abuse, including the softer signs of abuse, and know what action to take
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- Help children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion and role modelling
- Always listen to children
- Provide an environment where staff are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.

The company is aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our staff have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Staff working on the frontline with children and families are often the first people to identify a concern, observe changes in a child's behaviour or receive information relating to indicators of abuse. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse. This has been identified as particularly relevant in outdoor focused settings where children may feel freer to share and disclose their experiences.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for Children's Social Care, family support, health professionals including health visitors or the police. All staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed.

Reporting Procedures

All parents and staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns and suspicions of abuse. These concerns will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible.

- Parents / Staff will report their concerns to the DSL **Geri Weeks**, who will be available on site or by telephone at all times.
- Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded and stored securely.
- For children who arrive at sessions with an existing injury it is the duty of the parent or setting to inform us so we are aware of the injury and can monitor the child as necessary across the session. Staff will have professional curiosity around any explanations given, any concerns around existing injury's will be reported.
- If appropriate, any concerns/or incidents will be discussed with the parent/carer and discussions will be recorded. Parents will have access to these records on request in line with GDPR and data protection guidelines.
- If there are queries/concerns regarding the injury/information given, then the following procedures will take place:

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- Contact the Local Authority children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice immediately, or as soon as it is practical to do so. If it is believed a child is in immediate danger we will contact the police. If the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children then the DSL will follow the reporting allegations procedure (see below).
- Record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised
- Speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by LA children's social care team)
- The designated safeguarding lead will follow up with the Local Authority children's social care team if they have not contacted the setting within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018). We will never assume that action has been taken.

In the event of concerns being raised regarding a member of staff from a client setting the safeguarding concern will be reported to the Manager or designated safeguarding lead the setting for them to follow their own safeguarding procedures.

In the event of a child disclosing to a client setting staff member whilst out in the woods, they must follow their own safeguarding protocol on return to setting.

In the event of a child disclosing to a parent during a session please report your concerns to Geri as soon as possible so we can follow procedure.

Keeping children safe is our highest priority and if, for whatever reason, staff do not feel able to report concerns to the DSL or deputy DSL they should call the Local Authority children's social care team, the Police or the NSPCC and report their concerns anonymously. These contact numbers are sent out to Parents & Clients in the introduction to the nurture circle information. Please see the numbers below;

Contact telephone numbers

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Site | Oaks Park | Bentley Copse |
| Local Authority | Sutton | Surrey |
| Social care | 020 8770 4799 | 0345 600 9009 |
| LADO | | 0300 123 1650 |
| CFCS Referral team | 020 8770 6001 | 0300 470 9100 |
| Out of hours | 020 8770 5000 | 01483 517898 |

NSPCC **0808 800 5000**

Local Safeguarding Children Partnership *[insert number]*

Local Early Help services *[insert number]*

Ofsted **0300 123 1231**

Emergency police **999**

Non-emergency police **101**

Government helpline for extremism concerns **020 7340 7264**

Child exploitation and Online protection command (CEOP)

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

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 authority children's social care team/police does not allow this to happen. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the local authority. All staff, students and volunteers are bound by confidentiality and any information will not be discussed out of work, or this will become a disciplinary matter.

Staff, parents & early years clients must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent, child or member of staff.

The Company has due regard to the data protection principles as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)¹. These do not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal information, even without consent if this would put the child at further risk. We will follow the principles around data collection and information sharing, and ensure any information is recorded and shared in an appropriate way.

Allegations against adults working or volunteering with children

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who lives or works on the nursery premises regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below. The allegation should be reported to the company owner. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to the local authority instead. At The Nurture Circle we will follow our own local safeguarding partnership website information relevant to each site about how to report an allegation in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly.

Peer-on-peer abuse

We are aware that peer-on-peer abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way we do for adults abusing children, and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area; to support for both the victim and the perpetrator, as they could also be a victim of abuse. We know that children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves.

Whistleblowing

Our nursery has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. If you wish for more information on safeguarding please ask for our full Safeguarding Children Policy. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the company owner at the earliest opportunity.

| This policy was adopted on | Signed on behalf of the company | Date for review |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 07/06/2021 | <i>Geri Weeks</i> | 07/06/2022 or before |

