



Cherubs Preschool

1. Child Protection / Safeguarding

Our designated member(s) of staff responsible for this area:

Name(s)

Managers

This policy was adopted on

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Child Protection

1.1 Children's rights and entitlements

- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- We work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

Our setting 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 Safeguarding Children Policy.

Key Commitment 1

Cherubs Preschool is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery. The Managers and staff fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children and that we have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm.

Staff

- Staff support children's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- We ensure all staff, students, visitors and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Disclosure and Baring Service checks for staff, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers, students or trainees do not work unsupervised.

- 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 un-authorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Key commitment 2

Cherubs Preschool 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.

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 setting leader or manager who is acting as the '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.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or staff observe 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 and 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 name of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept securely and confidentially.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team

The Havering Child Protection Committee details procedures for making a referral to the local social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral.

All members of staff are familiar with the Cherubs Preschool Child Protection Record and follow the procedures for recording and reporting.

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 Board 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 Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.

We have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.

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 authority social care department, 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.

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 follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.

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 Local Authority Designated Officer ('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 and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the management will suspend the member of staff on full pay, 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 staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Should there be an allegation against any employee's family members, that employee will be disqualified from work until guidance is given by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and an investigation is completed. Ofsted will be notified.

Staff members complete a DBS check which is updated every 3 years. Staff sign to say they have no allegations made against them or members of their family, or person sharing their home, annually at staff appraisal. At least 2 references are taken upon employment from previous employers/tutors as applicable.

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 or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Key commitment 3

Cherubs Preschool is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. 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 adults involved in the setting 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 rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone 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 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 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 / Learning Journals

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 procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. These are kept securely in the setting at all times.

Intimate Care

Where children attend the setting who are in nappies or require medication, or requiring a change of clothes that exposes their body, this is carried out by vetted/trained staff members only and is recorded by them and shared and signed by the child's parent/main carer. Privacy and respect is given to the child at changing times or where clothes are changed. Privacy and respect is given to the child receiving medication as appropriate.

Allergies / Intolerances

A record of all children with a food allergy or food intolerance is kept at the setting and all staff are made aware. Allergy bracelets are available for children to wear if applicable.

1.3 Looked after children

Early years settings are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of 'Looked after Children' (LAC): Children and young people become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being.

In our setting, we place emphasis on promoting *children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to*. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on these two important concepts, *attachment and resilience*. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives as the basis for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and are the basis in developing positive dispositions *for* learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Principles

The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.

We do not offer placements for babies and children under two years who are in care; we offer instead other services to enable a child to play and engage with other children where their carer stays with the child.

We offer places to two-year-old children in exceptional circumstances who are in care. In such cases, the child should have been with the foster carer for at least two months and show signs of having formed a secure attachment to the carer and where the placement in the setting will last a minimum of three months.

We offer places for funded three and four-year-olds who are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and has formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.

We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is two to five years old who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.

Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

Procedures

The designated person for looked after children is the designated child protection co-ordinator. Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child.

The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.

The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensures appropriate information is gained and shared.

The setting recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.

At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting that will determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates and the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.

The care plan needs to consider such issues for the child as:

- the child's emotional needs and how they are to be met;
- how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
- the child's sense of self, culture, language/s and identity – how this is to be supported;
- the child's need for sociability and friendship;
- the child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
- how any special needs will be supported.

In addition the care plan will also consider:

- how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
- what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;
- what written reporting is required;
- wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and
- with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings, fun-days etc. alongside the foster carer.
- The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a relationship with his or her key person sufficient to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.

In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.

Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to firm a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage 6 areas of learning.

Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.

If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker according to the setting's safeguarding children procedure.

Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.

Transition to school will be handled sensitively and the designated person and or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

1.4 Uncollected child

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session/day, the setting puts into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified practitioner who is known to the child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible.

We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

Procedures

Parents of children starting at the setting are asked to provide the following specific information which is recorded on our Admission Form:

- Home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.
- Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable).
- Mobile telephone number (if applicable).
- Names, addresses, telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
- Who has parental responsibility for the child.
- Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.

On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they must inform us of how they can be contacted.

On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they provide us with details of the name, address and telephone number of the person who will be collecting their child. We agree with parents how to verify the identity of the person who is to collect their child, for example a password.

Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number.

We inform parents that we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our child protection policy in the event that their children are not collected from setting by an authorised adult within one hour after the setting has closed and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises.

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we follow the following procedures:

- The child's file is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
- If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
- If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting – and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the Registration Form – are contacted.
- All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
- If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
- We contact our local authority children's social services care team, and their advice is followed.
- The child stays at setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker.
- Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- Under no circumstances do staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.
- Ofsted may be informed.

1.5 Missing child

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times both on and off premises. Every attempt is made through carrying out the outings procedure and the exit/entrance procedure to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Procedures

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the setting supervisor.
- The setting supervisor will carry out a thorough search of the building and garden.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray.
- Doors and gates are checked to see if there has been a breach of security whereby a child could wander out.
- If the child is not found, the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police.
- The setting supervisor talks to the staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and records this.
- The setting leader contacts the Managers and reports the incident. They carry out an investigation and may come to the setting immediately.

Child going missing on an outing

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The setting supervisor and managers are contacted immediately and the incident is reported.
- The setting supervisor contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The setting supervisor contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the setting supervisor. The setting is advised as the best place, as by the time the parent arrives, the child may have been returned to the setting.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting.
- The managers carry out an investigation.
- The setting supervisor, or designated staff member may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The setting supervisor together with the managers speak with the parent(s).
- The managers carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.

The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:

- The date and time of the report.

- What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
- When the child was last seen in the group/outing.
- What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
- The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed.
- The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.

The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.

Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Setting supervisors need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.

The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the setting supervisor. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the setting supervisor and the other should be the manager. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.

The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them. In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The managers will use their discretion to decide what action to take.

Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

1.6 Use of mobile phones and cameras

We take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

Procedures

Personal Mobile Phones

- Personal mobile phones belonging to members of staff are not used on the premises during working hours
- At the beginning of each individual's shift, personal mobile phones are stored away from the classroom.
- In the event of an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used outside of the setting, with permission from the Supervisor.
- Members of staff ensure that the telephone number of the setting is known to immediate family and other people who need to contact them in an emergency.
- If members of staff take their own mobile phones on outings, for use in the case of an emergency, they must not make or receive personal calls as this will distract them.
- Members of staff will not use their personal mobile phones for taking photographs of children on outings.
- Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones whilst on the premises.

Cameras and Videos

- Members of staff must not bring their own cameras or video recorders into the setting.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, i.e. to record their learning and development, or for displays within the setting.
- Photographs or recordings are only taken on equipment belonging to the setting.
- Camera and video use is monitored by the setting managers.
- Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events, permission will first be gained from all parents for their children to be included.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken of children if there is written permission to do so (found on the individual child's Admission Form).

1.7 Child Protection Whistle Blowing Policy

(For Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle Blowing) – see Employee Handbook page2 51 & 52)

In line with the London Safeguarding Children Board and the London Child Protection Procedures, Cherubs Preschool operates a whistle blowing policy.

All staff should be aware of this policy and feel confident to voice concerns about the attitudes or actions of colleagues; this includes contact and actions using mobile phones, social media, internet, email and chat.

If a member of staff has concerns that a colleague may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children;

The staff member must speak to the Manager(s) within one working day.

The Owner/Manager must report these concerns, within one working day, to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01708 434315 or 01708 433066.

Useful Contact Numbers:

Concerns relating to a child:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD
Telephone: 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

London Borough of Havering
Child protection team / Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm) - 01708 433222
Out of hours/weekends - 01708 433999

NSPCC
0808 800 5000

Allegations against a staff member

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):
Paul Goldsmith Telephone contact: 01708 433584/ 07580 757898
Email: LADO@haverling.gov.uk