



**Green Shoots
Day Nursery**

Safeguarding children Policy

Introduction

This policy is based on the Lambeth Primary Care Trust Policy which has been amended to take into account the findings of the Victoria Climbié and Baby P (Peter Connelly) enquiry and the government guidance, "Working Together to Safeguard Children"

Employment

All staff working for the nursery must be fully cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau before undertaking unassisted duties that involve direct work with children. All staff must be trained in our procedures and agree to follow them.

Procedures

These procedures set out how professionals within the nursery should work together to promote children's welfare and protect them from abuse and neglect whether this is within the nursery, from other children, a stranger or within their own family. Nursery staff are well placed to recognise when a parent or other adult has problems which may affect their capacity as a parent or carer, or which may mean they pose a risk of harm to a child.

Staff must remember that their paramount duty at all times is to protect the child within the framework of current legislation and statutory guidance, including: -

- ❖ The Children Act 1989 (Provides a comprehensive framework for the care and protection of children)
- ❖ Working Together to Safeguard Children (DoH 1999) updated 2024
- ❖ London Child Protection Procedures 2006. Updated 3123
- ❖ Education Act 2002 (places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies of schools to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children) updated 2024
- ❖ Victoria Climbié and Baby P inquiry (highlighted the lack of priority status given to safeguarding children)
- ❖ The Children Act 2004 (underpins the Green Paper Every Child Matters and requires local authorities to set up Local Safeguarding Children Boards, to lead an integrated delivery through multi agency children trusts and for all agencies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children)
- ❖ The Common Assessment Framework - Children with additional needs, such as those with disabilities, those whose parents have mental health problems, or those who need to be protected from harm, should have:

1. A high quality multi agency assessment,
2. A wide range of specialist services close to home
3. Effective case management by a lead professional, working as part of a multi-disciplinary team

The Common Assessment Framework offers a basis for early referral and information-sharing between organisations

Due regard should be given to issues of race, culture, gender and disability when working with families to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

HM Government has published a guide "Working Together to Safeguard Children" a guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. See also "London Child Protection Procedures".

The following internal procedures and guidelines should be read in conjunction with the above.

This document is designed for all staff working in Green Shoots Day Nursery and all independent contractors and their staff. It is the duty of all staff to read and be able to act in accordance with the policy. Regular training is provided to the whole staff and in particular to newly appointed staff.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe

These aspects of safeguarding and promoting welfare are cumulative and all contribute to the five outcomes that are key to children's wellbeing:

- stay safe
- be healthy
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution achieve economic well being

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and refers to actions undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm. It is an essential part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, but all agencies and individuals should aim proactively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

Children in Need

The criteria for defining who is in need is set out in Section(10) of children act 1989: Children who are defined as being 'in need' are those whose vulnerable is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health on a development will be impaired, without the provision of service(of the Children Act 1989); plus those who are disable.

The critical factors to be taken into account in deciding whether a child is in need under the Children Act 1989 are:

- what will happen to a child's health or development without service being provided and
- the likely effect the services will have on the child's standard of health and development.

LA's have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need.

Key messages arising from research around children in need including:

- Support to families under stress may help prevent problems developing into abuse

- Child Protection processes should always consider the wider need of the child and the family, whether or not significant harm concerns are substantiated
- All work with children and families should maintain a paramount focus on the welfare and safety of the child.

Significant Harm

Some children are in need because they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of children and gives LA'S a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of the child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

A court may make a care order (committing the child to the care of the LA) or supervising order (putting the child under the supervision of a social worker or probation officer) if it is satisfied that:

- the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm; and
- the harm, or likelihood of harm is attributable to a lack of adequate parental care or control.

Significant Harm Criteria

There are no absolute criteria when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill treatment may include the degree and severity of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation, and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism and bizarre and unusual elements. Sometimes a single or traumatic event may constitute significant harm e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often it is a compilation of significant events, both acute and long standing, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them the long-term emotional, physical or sexual abuse causes impairment which constitutes significant harm. It is necessary to consider any maltreatment alongside family's strengths and supports.

Under the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002:

'harm' means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including, for example seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

'development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

'health' means physical or mental health

'ill-treatment' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

To determine whether harm suffered by a child is significant, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

To understand and identify significant harm it is necessary to consider

- the nature of harm
- the impact on the child's health and development
- the child's development within the context of the family and wider environment
- any special needs, such as medical condition, communication impairment or disability, that may affect the child's development and care within the family

- the capacity of parents to meet adequate the child needs
- the wider and environmental family context

This depends on effective communication with children including those who find it difficult because of age, impairment or other psychological or social situation. It is essential that accounts of adverse experiences are as accurate and complete as possible.

What is abuse and neglect?

They are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, or in an institution or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. A parent may also feign symptoms of or cause ill health to a child they are looking after. Signs may include injuries to the body in places not normally exposed to falls or games, unexplained bruising marks, cigarette burns, bite marks, broken bones, scalds, injuries which have not received medical attention, under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care and repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Emotional abuse

This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that causes severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. The child may be made to feel worthless, unloved, inadequate, valued only in so far as the meet the needs of another person or having age or developmentally inappropriate expectations imposed on them. Some level of emotional abuse involved in all types of ill treatment, but it may occur alone. Signs may include a failure to thrive or grow, sudden speech disorders, persistent tiredness, developmental delay of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour can also indicate emotional abuse including obsessions or phobias, sudden under- achievement or lack of concentration, inappropriate relationships with peers and adults, being unable to play, attention seeking behaviour, fear of making mistakes, self-harm and fear of parent being approached concerning their behaviour.

Sexual abuse

This 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. It may involve physical contact (penetrative e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts) or may include non-contact activities (looking at or producing pornographic materials) or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include pain or itching in the genital/anal area, bruising or bleeding near the genital/anal area, vaginal discharge, stomach pains and discomfort when walking or sitting down. Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include suddenly becoming withdrawn or aggressive, fear of being left with a specific person or group of people, having nightmares, running away from home, sexual knowledge beyond their age or developmental level, sexual drawings or language, bedwetting, eating problems and acting in a sexually explicit way with adults.

Neglect

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. It may involve this parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger ensure adequate supervision
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic needs.

The physical signs of neglect may include constant hunger, constantly dirty or smelly. less of weight or being constantly underweight, inappropriate dress for the conditions. Changes in behaviour which can indicate neglect include complaining of being tired all the time, failing to attend appointments and mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

Roles and responsibilities

An awareness and appreciation of the roles of others is essential for effective collaboration between organisations and their practitioners. All organisations that work with children share a commitment to safeguard and promote their welfare.

All staff at Green Shoots Day Nursery have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils (under the Education Act 2002 and where appropriate under the children act 1989); by

- Putting away mobile phones during working hours and using nursery camera only when taking photos of children for use in profile books and displays. Also, Smart watches that have cameras should not be worn during working hours.
- Creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children by having effective arrangements in place to address a range of issues including statutory requirements: child protection arrangements, pupil health and safety and bullying as well as first Aid and nursery security.
- Identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate. Staff should refer concerns to the appropriate organisation, normally the local authorities' children's social care department, contributing to the assessment of a child's needs. If allegations of serious harm or abuse are made against a child in the nursery OFSTED must be informed. Staff **should NOT** themselves investigate possible abuse or neglect but should refer concerns to the children's social care, providing information for police investigations and or enquiries under S47 of the Children Act 1989, and by contributing to assessments.
- The **designated persons** who take the lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues are **Mrs Assitha Fofana-Nursery Manager**
- If a staff member has concerns about another member of staff but cannot raise it with the manager or deputy, or if the concerns are about the manager or deputy, they will

need to raise their concerns with the manager of St Stephen's Children's Centre and Lambeth's referral and assessment team on 0207 926 6508.

Guidelines to be followed

Key Principles

- The following principles and ways of working should underpin the practice of all professionals working to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

1. Confidentiality

In order to keep children safe from harm we need to share information with other professionals. Normally this is done with the consent of parents/carers but it is not always possible to obtain this consent. Consent is obtained where discussion and agreement-seeking will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm. Under the Data Protection Act information can be passed to a third party without explicit consent when this is necessary to achieve the objective of child protection. The reason for passing on information without explicit consent should then be documented in the child's notes.

2. Partnership

We need to work openly with parents, and information and concern will be shared with parents and carers and children according to age and understanding. Family members should know that the children's safety and welfare must be the first priority. This will include reporting for child protection case conferences and other meetings. Children should be given the opportunity to explain what has happened to them but probing and confrontational, disclosure interviews should not be carried out.

Assessment of Children in Need and their Families

Children who are defined as in need under the Children Act 1989 are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health and development their health and development will be significantly impaired without the in of services.

The assessment requires a systematic approach, gathering and analysing into on about children and their families and a thorough understanding of:

- The developmental needs of children including health, education, emotional and behavioural development, identity, family and social relationships, social presentation and self-care skills.
- The capacity of the parents/carers to respond appropriately to these needs, providing for the child's basic care, ensuring their safety, providing emotional warmth stimulation, guidance and boundaries and a stable family environment.
- The impact of the wider family and environmental features on parenting.

If you are concerned that a child is at risk of significant harm or may be a child in need you must inform the designated persons -see above. These named persons will assess the circumstances and information known about the child. The assessment must take into account the nature severity of the abuse and whether the child is in imminent danger. Where there are clear allegations, evidence or strong suspicion of abuse, there must be NO DELAY in making a referral to the referral and assessment team.

The designated person must then make a decision about sharing the information with parents/guardians to explain the need to make the referral. It will be inappropriate in cases where it would increase the risk of significant harm to the child e.g. sexual abuse cases or where a member of staff would be physically endangered. The same process applies if you are concerned about the welfare of a child.

Referral to the referral and assessment team must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours by the designated persons using the Lambeth Inter-Agency Referral Form. The designated person must consider whether it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. The referral and assessment team may need to put safety measures into effect.

The sequence of events must be fully documented and outcomes recorded and kept in a secure place. The discussion with the referral and assessment team will also be recorded and the referrer will clarify with them who will be taking what action or that no further action will be taken.

If a member of the public contacts any employee of Green Shoots Day Nursery with information regarding possible abuse of a child, they should be encouraged to contact Lambeth's referral and assessment team directly on 0207 926 6508. They should be encouraged to give their name and told that you will have to inform the referral and assessment team to pass on information received. The designated person should contact the duty social worker and make clear that the information is from a third party, naming the informant, if permitted.

Where allegations of abuse are made against a staff member or volunteer at Green Shoots Day Nursery

- The matter is referred in the first instance to the manager
- The person is suspended
- The referral is made to the assessment team in social care and Ofsted is also notified.
- An investigation is carried out by the team in social care and Ofsted independently.
- They will make the decision regarding the alleged abuse

When allegations are made, early consideration is given to the distinction between an allegation and a complaint. Multi-agency consultation should take place so that the accuracy of the process is safeguarded and doubts clarified.

We aim to protect children from abuse and our staff from false allegations. If a child needs a change of clothes a member of staff will do this in open view or in the children's toilet where they can be viewed by other members of staff. Where possible children will be encouraged to undress and dress themselves. Photographs for Profile books or displays will only be taken on nursery cameras. Mobile phones will not be used.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully to what is being said
- Explain that you will have to share the information you have been given.
- Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only and avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next

- Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words, note the date, time and any names mentioned, sign and date the record.
- Report your discussion to the designated person. (If any of these people are implicated, report to the others.) If all are implicated report to Lambeth Safeguarding Children's Board.

After a child has disclosed abuse, the designated person will record the concerns and, where appropriate, inform the parents that the concerns have been recorded.

All staff should be aware of the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

The manager should enable staff to prioritise child protection work by identifying staff resources, allowing time for case conference preparation and report writing. She can support staff during interviews by police, guardian -ad -items and legal representatives. It is the manager's responsibility to identify training needs of staff.

Recruitment and appointment of staff

When recruiting and appointing staff we will confirm identity, ask for a police check and ensure that the successful applicant obtains an Enhanced Criminal Record Certificate (ECRC). We work with BDS online check as our agents in obtaining DBS certificates. We will request at least two references should be obtained for new candidates before offering the job and ask the referee to comment on the applicant's suitability for working with children.

Staff who leave because of a child protection issue.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board and OFSTED are informed. The Early Years Child Care Inspector is informed of the following at the earliest opportunity:

- Any changes in the registered person or person in charge
- Allegations of abuse by a member of staff or a volunteer, or any abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises
- Any other significant events

Safeguarding Children Procedures

1. If appropriate e.g. with an obvious physical injury, speak to the parents/carer to establish the cause of the injury. If inappropriate or explanation does not allay concerns report to the designated person
2. Any anxiety by any member of staff that may arise about a child must be referred immediately to the key worker for that child - anxiety may be as a result of something seen, said or in any way observed. In the case of physical injury, a member of staff should informally question the child or parent as to the cause of the injury. It is not part of the adult's role to investigate in depth.
3. In the case of neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse, it is inappropriate to question the child.
4. If there is still cause for concern then the key worker should discuss the problem with the manager.
5. The manager will then talk to the parent to ascertain circumstances and /or obtain more information.
6. If there is still cause for concern the manager will consider involving the appropriate outside agencies e.g., Doctor, Health Visitor, the referral and assessment am (addresses and telephone numbers are situated in the office.)

7. Steps 2-4 should all happen on the day of the incident where possible.
8. Keep dated records of all incidents, however trivial, which have given cause for concern. These records are then filed into a locked cabinet in the office. All staff should understand issues of confidentiality.
9. It is vital that the key worker is involved from the beginning and takes responsibility for dealing with any anxieties
10. The team working with the child have more knowledge of the family and the interference of other staff may jeopardise that relationship.

USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

Referral and Assessment Team

Child Protection Register:

Custodian

Independent Reviewing Services Manager

392-394 Brixton Road

London SW9 7AW

Office Hours: **02079264526**

Fax: **02079265105**

Child Care and Child Protection Officers: **02079264698**

Emergency Duty S/W (outside office hours) **02079261000**

The referral and assessment team Area Offices:

North District

446-46 Offley Road

London SW9 OLS

Office Hours: **02079265410**

Fax: **02079265478**

South District Hopton House

243a Streatham High Road

London SW16 6EY

Office Hours: **02079266752/6752**

Fax: **02079266516**

Lambeth Hospital Social Care Departments:

King's College Hospital

Denmark Hill

London SE5 9RS

Office Hours: **02073463176**

Fax: **02073463391**

St Thomas' Hospital Lambeth Palace Road

London SE1 7EH

Office Hours: **02079228080**

Fax: **02079280351**

Lambeth Police Child Protection Team:

Detective Inspector Paul Maddock

5th Floor Ambassador House

Brigstock Road Thornton Heath

Surrey CR7 7JG

Office Hours (8:00am - 7:00pm) **02086491752**

Fax: **02086491790**

Out of office hours through Streatham Police **02086492220**

Community Child Health:

Lambeth Primary Care Trust

Mary Sheridan Centre for Child Health

5 Dugard Way, Off Renfew Road

London SE11 4TH

Office Hours: **02074141400**

Fax: **020 7414 1371**

Lambeth Education Social Inclusion

5th Floor, International House

Canterbury Crescent

London SW9 7QE

Office Hours: **02079269590**

Fax: **02079269504**

Probation Service:

London Probation Area

117 Stockwell Road

London SW9 9TN

Office Hours: **02072747854**

Fax: **02077384720**

National Society for the Prevention of cruelty to children:**NSPCC Regional Office**

Croydon CPT

28 Addiscombe Grove

Croydon

Surrey CRO 5LP

Office Hours: **020 8681 3418**

Review: July 2026

By: Nursery Manager-Ms Assitha Fofana