



Child Protection Policy and Procedures - May 2017

Solomon Browne Memorial Hall - 'Pipsqueaks' Playgroup

Pipsqueaks Playgroup intends to create an environment where children are safe from abuse and where any suspicion of abuse is responded to immediately and appropriately.

Pipsqueaks Playgroup will create an environment in which children are safe from harm and abuse; in which the welfare of the children is paramount and any suspicion of abuse is responded to promptly and appropriately. Pipsqueaks playgroup have appointed Tamsin Harvey as their Child Protection officer.

In order to do this Pipsqueaks Playgroup will:-

- exclude known abusers;
- prevent abuse by means of good practice;
- respond appropriately to suspicion of abuse;
- keep accurate records;
- liaise with other bodies;
- support families;
- offer training;
- Follow procedures in the event of an allegation of abuse against a member of staff.

Exclude Known Abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for any posts, both paid and unpaid, within Pipsqueaks Playgroup, that they will be asked to sign a statement giving details of any criminal offences against children, including any "spent" convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All staff will have to have a current DBS check, interview and references before appointment to their post.

All appointments, both paid and unpaid, will be subject to a 3 month probationary period and will not be confirmed unless Pipsqueaks Playgroup is confident the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

Prevent Abuse by Means of Good Practice

Children will be supervised at all times by their parents/ carers and staff that have fulfilled strict criteria and are registered and vetted by Pipsqueaks Manager Tamsin Harvey. Adults who have not been vetted and do not hold a full DBS check will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet. Under no circumstances will there be any picture taking device in the toilets/ changing area, this includes mobile phones. Mobile phones must be left in an area out of the reach of children and used for emergency purposes only.

- Staff will not discuss a child/ren within any social networking site; any member of staff found to be doing so will be immediately disciplined.
- Staff will listen to and respect children and actively encourage children to participate in their own well being and personal safety.
- There are no circumstances in which children will be punished by smacking, slapping or shaking. Neither will humiliating and/or frightening methods of punishment be used.
- Children will not be left alone with visitors to Pipsqueaks Playgroup.
- Children must only attend Pipsqueaks playgroup with their parent or carer.
- Pipsqueaks Playgroup will ensure all staff and volunteers have knowledge

of, and access to these Child Protection Guidelines, and encourage accurate record keeping.

- Pipsqueaks Playgroup will hold regular meetings with all staff and volunteers working in the Playgroup to facilitate the raising of any concerns
- Children are accompanied at all times by registered adults when taking part in external activities, e.g. walks, visits etc.

Respond Appropriately to Suspicion of Abuse

- Changes in a child's behaviour or injuries will be investigated by the manager.
- Members of staff are advised to report their concerns to the manager/child protection officer this will be recorded and a referral may be made by the manager.
- If there are grounds for suspecting abuse, these will be referred to the Social Services Duty Officer, NSPCC or the Police.
- All such suspicions/investigations/referrals will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. These would usually be a member of staff and the trustees.
- If a parent/carer has concerns about a child, they will be advised to contact the local Social Services department directly.

This applies to the following circumstances:

- If a child or young person displays recognised signs of abuse
- If someone tells a member of staff that they or another child or young person is being abused
- If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children or young people causes concern

The governments Child Protection guidelines will be followed in the event of suspected child abuse.

If the behaviour of any adult toward children or young people causes concern:

- Do not dismiss your concerns
- Do not confront the person about whom you have concerns
- If it is a member of staff discuss the concerns with the manger. If you feel this is inappropriate, or you are not satisfied with the response that you get, contact Social Services. It is very important that you do not ignore or dismiss suspicions about another professional.

Keep Accurate Records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour or physical condition, or if there is an injury, a confidential record should be set up. The record will include (in addition to the child's name, address, age and date) observations of the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation. Exact words spoken by the child may also be recorded, timed, dated and signed by the recorder.

Such records will be kept confidential and should not be accessible to anyone in the Playgroup other than the supervisor and other member of staff as appropriate.

Liase with Other Bodies

Pipsqueaks Playgroup will operate within the local authority guidelines. Confidential records kept on children about whom there is concern, should be shared with the Social Services Department if it is felt that adequate explanations for the child's condition have not been provided, or if the Social Services Department requests access. If a child is identified as a child in need the registered person, with parent's permission, will give appropriate information to referring agencies.

Support Families

Pipsqueaks Playgroup will do all in its power to build trusting and supportive relationships between families, staff and volunteers within the Playgroup. Where abuse is suspected at home or

elsewhere, Pipsqueaks Playgroup will continue to welcome the child and family whilst investigations proceed. Confidential records on a child will be shared with the child's parents. Pipsqueaks Playgroup believes the care and safety of the child are paramount and will do all it can to support and work with the child's family

Offer Training

Pipsqueaks Playgroup will ensure all staff and volunteers have access to training and they will be encouraged to attend, this including Child Protection training sessions to enable them to recognize signs of abuse and first aid.

Allegations of abuse against a staff member

In the event that an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, the manager will inform social services and or the police. The social services child protection officer and the police will decide if the immediate suspension of the staff member is required in order to safeguard any child/ children.

At the earliest opportunity, after consultation with the police, the staff member should be advised verbally and in writing, by the person in charge, that an allegation of abuse has been made. The staff member must be advised that an investigation will be carried out in accordance with child protection procedures and they have the right to be accompanied at all meetings by a friend or solicitor. Such proceedings will be confidential as far as is possible.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the staff member will be given a written statement of the allegation together with the conclusion of the investigation and be either reinstated or dismissed. If the staff member is dissatisfied by the outcome they should be given details of the grievance, complaints or appeals procedures which may be applicable.

Risk of illness or injury to a child

All toys and floor-mats will be cleaned with an anti-bacterial wipe after each playgroup session

All children should be encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating

Pipsqueaks Playgroup will follow 'Public Health England's Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare Settings'. Parents should be made aware of these guidelines; Pipsqueaks staff and volunteers should advise parents whether their child is or is not able to attend, based on these guidelines.

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Cornwall Council Children's Services - Multi-Agency Referral Unit
0300 1231 116

Cornwall Social Services Department
0300 1234 121

NSPCC Helpline
0808 800 5000

Childline
0800 1111

Police - Devon and Cornwall (West Cornwall)
01392 420320

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