

This procedure is in line with the West Yorkshire Interagency Consortium Safeguarding Procedures [www.proceduresonline.com/westyorksbc](http://www.proceduresonline.com/westyorksbc) and applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of directors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Bright Beginnings. This procedure is supported by our Safeguarding policy.

## **Designated safeguarding lead officer**

Within Bright Beginnings, the General Manager has overall responsibility for Safeguarding and is the designated lead practitioner.

The designated lead practitioner is the practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the setting and is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies and with the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP). The lead officer provides support, advice and guidance to all staff members on a regular basis and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. If there is any concern regarding a child's wellbeing this must be passed on to the designated lead practitioner in order that the appropriate level of support and record keeping is assured.

## **Identifying concerns**

Adults within the Centre may be the first people to identify a concern with a child or a family and it is of vital importance that any and all concerns be raised immediately and recorded appropriately. Should a member of staff have a concern about a child or family they must:

- Share their concern with their supervisor and the lead officer
- Make a record of their concern and any consequential conversations regarding the concern
- Speak to the child's parent/carer, unless doing so would be seen to be putting the child at increased risk of harm
- Ensure all records are stored securely and confidentially in accordance with GDPR
- Maintain a professional level of confidentiality only sharing information with practitioners who need to know in order to safeguard the child

## What should staff members report?

Some examples of what would need reporting in terms of safeguarding might be:

- Significant changes in a child's behaviour and/or development
- Any unexplained bruising or marks
- Comments which give cause for concern
- A deterioration in a child's wellbeing
- Irregular attendance and/or frequent time away from the setting
- Concerns about the behaviours/language of parents/carers during drop of/collection
- Children continually appearing unkempt, hungry or without appropriate dress for the weather
- Language or behaviour of a sexual nature

## Recording concerns

Staff members will complete the following forms when necessary:

- Existing injury form – will be completed if a child arrives at the Centre with an injury occurred away from the Centre
- Accident form – will be completed if a child is involved in an accident whilst at the Centre or in our care. This will be shown to and signed by parents/carers on collection
- Incident form – will be completed for any and all significant incidents involving a child within the Centre. This should be shown to and signed by parents/carers on collection unless sharing the information may put the child at risk of harm

All incidents must be dated and contain a full account of the incident, including the child's own words where applicable.

All records are securely stored and monitored/audited regularly to check for trends and/or commonalities.

## Supporting a child through a disclosure

If a child discloses information to a member of staff, it is important that staff members:

- Say and do things to show they are listening
- Say things to reassure the child and acknowledge their feelings
- Say you know someone who will be able to help

- Comfort them and tell them it's good that they have told you
- Observe behaviours and record exactly what is said and done
- Ensure any actions do not further endanger the child
- Treat the child as before, as an equal

Staff members must not:

- Show visible shock or disbelief
- Give an interpretation
- Give or suggest information that the child hasn't offered
- Agree to keep a secret
- Make a promise the abuse will stop

## **Making a referral**

At Bright Beginnings it would usually be the designated safeguarding lead who would make a referral, however, anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare can and must ensure a referral is made to local authority children's social care and should do so immediately if there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so.

Referrals can be made to The Duty and Advice Team (0113) 376 0336 who are available Monday to Friday 8:00 – 6:00pm

Alternatively, for out of hours referrals or advice please contact the Children's Emergency Duty Team on (0113) 376 0469

Practitioners who make a referral should always follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the response

## **Allegations against a staff member**

In order to manage allegations against child care professionals, every Local Authority appoints a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases within 24 hours, in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child, or

- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk to children. (Working Together 2018)

In this context, the term “professional” includes paid employees, volunteers, casual/agency staff and self-employed workers who will have contact with children as a part of their role. The LADO ensures that all allegations or concerns about professionals or adults working or volunteering with children are recorded appropriately, monitored and progressed in a timely and confidential way. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. The LADO provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process

Any allegation must be reported immediately to a member of the management team who will inform the designated safeguarding lead practitioner. The LADO must also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer’s attention or that are made directly to the police.

- All cases will be subject to an initial joint evaluation between the LADO and referring agency, involving relevant sectors as and when appropriate including, the Police, Children’s social work services, employers and regulatory bodies .The assessment will focus on the nature of the concern, safeguarding for the particular child/children and appropriate consideration for the professional/volunteer involved. An allegations management meeting will be convened where necessary to agree an appropriate way forward.
- The protection of a child/young person will be the prime consideration in the process of managing an allegation .The child/young person’s involvement in the process including support and feedback will be given careful consideration with the LADO ensuring that the child’s voice is heard.
- For the professional involved, the assessment and subsequent action will be stressful whatever the outcome and support for each individual must be considered and acted upon.
- If an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The contact details for the Local Authority Designated Officer are: (0113) 2478652/2478651



# Safeguarding and Protecting Children Procedure

This procedure has been written in line with the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018 and has regard for the EYFS – Safeguarding and welfare requirements. These documents should be referred to, to support all safeguarding practices and issues within the Centre.

Further advice can also be sought from the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership: [www.leedsscp.org.uk](http://www.leedsscp.org.uk)

Flow charts for the procedure around referring a child are displayed throughout the Centre

<b>Reviewed by</b>	Louise Fairbrass
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