

## **Child Protection Policy:**

To provide and maintain a safe environment is the main consideration of Children's Contact Services. It is the aim that we take preventative stance on Child Protect issues, by developing and maintaining an open and aware culture.

It is important for individuals to feel that voicing a concern is not viewed as an accusation and that staff and others have confidence that their concerns will be dealt with professionally and in a timely manner.

**Definitions of Child Abuse:** (Child: person under the age of 12 years old; Young person 12 up until 18 years old)

**Physical Abuse:** is any non-accidental injury or serious harm inflicted upon a child or young person by any person who is in a position of power over that child.

**Sexual Abuse:** occurs when anyone uses their power or authority to take advantage of a child or young person's trust or uses fear to involve that child in activity for the sexual gratification of the abuser.

**Neglect:** is failure to provide an adequate standard of nutrition, shelter, clothing, hygiene or medical care. It also includes inadequate supervision, which may result in exposure to dangerous or life threatening situations.

**Emotional:** is a chronic attack on a child or young person's self-esteem. It can take the form of name-calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child or young person. It also incorporates the impact of domestic violence on children and young people which impact on their development and wellbeing.

### **Mandatory Reporting:**

The Legal requirement to report a reasonable belief that a child or young person is experiencing or has experienced non-accidental physical injury or sexual abuse.

This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe a child is subject to emotional, physical or sexual abuse or neglect.

Our primer responsibility is the welfare and wellbeing of all children in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to report any suspicions of abuse to the local authority which has a duty to investigate such matters. The Agency will follow the procedures set out in the local Authority Child Protection Documents and as such will seek their advice on all steps taken subsequently.

#### **1. Physical Abuse**

Action will be taken under this heading if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Procedure

Any sign of a mark/injury to a child will be recorded.

The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer as appropriate.

Such discussion will be recorded.

If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury, the Child Protection Unit in the Local Authority will be notified.

## **2. Sexual Abuse**

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have witnessed occasions where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, and drawing or had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.  
Procedure.

The Observed instances will be recorded.

The matter will be referred to the Local Authority.

## **3. Emotional Abuse**

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have reason to believe that there is severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

Procedure

The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer, as appropriate.

Such discussion will be recorded.

If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority.

## **4. Neglect**

Action will be taken under this heading if the staff team have reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Procedure

The concern will be discussed with the parent/carer, as appropriate.

Such discussion will be recorded.

If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the Local Authority will be notified.

Should any member of staff have concerns for the welfare of any child they will immediately inform the manager / Cp co-ordinator at the agency. Contact Supervisors / Nursery Nurses responsibilities do not include investigating the suspected abuse. However, staff must keep accurate records of their observations and anything said to them by the child or others in connection with the suspected abuse. It is always important to listen to children. Strict confidentiality will be observed at all times.

The welfare of the children in our care is of paramount importance and any concerns we may have will be considered seriously by the agency.

The agency reserve the right to contact the Local Authority Child Protection team for advice without first seeking parental consent.

### **The Agency Aims To:**

- **Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of the staff.**
- **Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times**
- **Ensure that all staff are familiar with Child Protection issues and procedures.**
- **Regularly review and update this policy**

- **If an allegation is made against a member of staff Ofsted and the Local Authority Child Protection Unit will be informed and the disciplinary procedures will be followed.**