



## Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

This policy applies to all staff whether permanent, bank staff, volunteer or students and including the company directors of Little Gulls and Buoys.

The Purpose of this policy:

- to protect at all times the children in our care.
- to provide staff with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Little Gulls and Buoys considers the welfare, safety and protection of all children as of paramount importance. We plan to provide an environment which ensures children are safe from harm and potential abuse in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures and will respond to any suspicion of abuse in a way which respects the rights of the child and their family.

### Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practise 0-25 years. Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities HM Government 2014.
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers: HM Government 2015

- Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children: HM Government 2015:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419595/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf)
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings: OFSTED 2016:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/547327/Inspecting\\_safeguarding\\_in\\_early\\_years\\_education\\_and\\_skills\\_settings.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/547327/Inspecting_safeguarding_in_early_years_education_and_skills_settings.pdf)

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

- Health and Safety policy and setting risk assessments
- Intimate Care and Physical Contact policy
- Prevent Duty and Promoting British Values policy
- Lost Child policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy
- Late Collection of a Child policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour policy
- Safer Recruitment and Selection policy
- Equality of Opportunities policy
- Special Educational Needs policy
- Risk Assessment policy
- Emergency Evacuation policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Visitors Record policy
- Complaints policy

As a setting we recognise that:

- no child or group of children should be treated any less favourably than others and all children should have equal access to services and resources which meet their individual needs.
- all children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- children with learning or physical disabilities, children under the age of 1 and those with communication difficulties are particularly vulnerable.
- following safer recruitment procedures is essential in ensuring staff are suitable to work with children and have sound working knowledge in putting safeguarding procedures into practise
- working in partnership with children, young people and their parents and carers as well as other agencies is essential in promoting children and young people's welfare.

In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance 2014 (EYFS), the lead practitioner for safeguarding is responsible for liaising with the LSCB and the Children's Social Care department, for support, advice and guidance. The lead practitioner is responsible for ensuring all staff are trained to the minimum level, and that they have a sound knowledge of the settings' safeguarding policies and procedures.

Our lead practitioner for safeguarding is **Lyndsey Bedford** and our deputy lead practitioner for safeguarding is **Laura Stevens**.

We follow the correct safeguarding and child protection procedures as advised by the local authority, and parents are informed about this when they have their induction at the setting. All parents are directed to our safeguarding policy available to view online or a hardcopy can be provided at the time of joining and are made aware of any changes to the policy as and when appropriate via our regular newsletter.

### **Responding to suspicions of abuse.**

Little Gulls and Buoys is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all concerns of abuse, and work with statutory agencies in accordance to the guidelines and procedures that are set out the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' document. All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by all staff, managers and directors.

We recognise and acknowledge that abuse can take place in different forms – physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. We understand that children who are suffering from abuse may convey signs in different ways, such as:

- Things they say directly or indirectly.
- Changes in their behaviour.
- Changes in their appearance.
- Ill-fitting or inappropriate clothing/shoes.
- Change in appetite.
- Unexplained marks or bruising.

*(this list is not exhaustive, and a child may display one or several signs or symptoms of abuse).*

Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person (or person who is concerned) must immediately inform the lead practitioner for safeguarding (or deputy lead practitioner in their absence), and they will be asked to complete a 'record of concern' form. If deemed appropriate, the concern will be shared with the child's parent(s), and their response will be recorded on the form. The lead practitioner, or deputy lead practitioner, and the director(s) must then sign the form, and any further actions will be decided and recorded on the form.

All completed forms will be kept in a confidential file and locked away.

Our staff are trained to manage situations where a child or young person may make a disclosure of abuse. We follow the 5 R's rule when managing disclosures:

- Recognise - staff will acknowledge the child's disclosure.
- Respond - staff will respond in a calm manner whilst listening to the child and providing reassurance that they will take action.

- Report - staff will immediately report the disclosure and information to the safeguarding lead practitioner or the deputy practitioner as appropriate.
- Record - the staff member will be asked to record the information as soon as possible to ensure accuracy. Information will be recorded on a factual basis and will be handed to the safeguarding lead practitioner.
- Refer - if appropriate a referral will be made to MASH or advice will be sought. The staff member should not question the child in a way which may 'twist' what they have said or confuse them. It may be appropriate to ask them questions such as "can you tell me what happened next?" or a similar open question.

We highly value our parent partnership and in most cases the parent(s) will be the point of contact if a concern about a child is raised and if a referral is to be made. However, in extreme or serious cases, or where the parent is the likely abuser we may be advised not to inform the parent. In these cases, it is likely that the investigating officer will inform the parent of the proceedings going forward.

### **Making a referral.**

If we have concerns that a child may be at the risk of harm, we will contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (01273 290400 or [mash@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mash@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk) ).

We may seek advice about how to offer more support to the family, or whether the concern warrants 'abuse,' we would contact the Early Help Hub (01273 292632 or [earlyhelp@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk)).

Alternatively, we would contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Darrell Clews, for advice about who to contact and the nature of the concern (01273 295643 or 07795 335879 or [LSCB@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@brighton-hove.gov.uk)).

We will ensure we follow the correct procedures and guidelines as set in the 'What To Do If You Are Worried a Child Is Being Abused' document, HMG 2006.

### **Allegations made against staff.**

The lead safeguarding practitioner must be made aware immediately of any concerns regarding a member of staff, (or the Deputy Lead if the allegations are against the Safeguarding Lead) they will ask the person who raised the concern to complete a 'record of concern' form, detailing as much as possible about what was heard or seen. The company directors will be made aware of this also. The Manager/Directors may make basic enquiries to determine whether there may be some potential foundation to the allegation. The enquiries are to be minimal to establish the facts of the allegation, if these were not established or were unclear at the time of the concern being raised.

- Was the employee at work that day?
- Did the employee come into contact with the child?
- ● Have any other potential witnesses come forward?

Following this the LADO must be informed on the same day as the allegation being made.

If an investigation is initiated, the alleged member of staff will be suspended whilst investigations take place, and the company's disciplinary procedure will be followed where appropriate.

After a full investigation has taken place, the employee concerned may be subject to a formal written warning or dismissal. If the decision is made that the employee shall be dismissed, we will inform Ofsted no later than 14 days after the event. We will also inform the Disclosure and Barring Service of our decision to dismiss this person on the grounds of suspected abuse.

While we will not discuss anything confidential with other members of staff, we will endeavour to inform the member of staff who raised the concern about the final outcome and what steps we took to reach our final decision.

### **Staff training.**

At Little Gulls and Buoys we strive to ensure that all staff are fully aware of our child protection and safeguarding procedures, and their responsibility to protect children from the risk of harm. We do this by:

- Asking all potential new employees to complete a safeguarding test during the interview process, demonstrating their knowledge and understanding about the signs and symptoms of abuse, and the procedures to follow if abuse is suspected.
- Ensuring that any updated or new safeguarding and child protection guidance is circulated to all staff as soon as possible.
- Using supervisions and appraisals to check staff's understanding about their role in helping to safeguard children, and for them to raise any concerns about a child's welfare if they have not done so previously.
- Attending safeguarding and child protection courses regularly and cascading new knowledge to the team, and changing policies and procedures to reflect any changes in legislation and/or recommended practice.
- Fostering a culture of openness and honesty, so staff feel they are able to speak to the lead safeguarding practitioner, manager or directors without feeling judged or discriminated by raising a concern.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. FGM is illegal in the UK. Should we suspect any child or young person is at risk of FGM we will deal with as part of the procedure outlined in this policy document. If a child were to make a disclosure or should we be concerned about a child's welfare we will:

- Use simple language and ask straight forward questions
- Use terminology that will be understood by the child or young person.
- Be sensitive to the fact that the child may feel a sense of loyalty to their parents, family members or community.
- Give them time to talk and take detailed notes.

- Gather accurate information about the urgency of the situation if they are at risk of being subjected to FGM.
- Give the message that they can come back to you again.
- Be sensitive to the intimate nature of the subject.
- Make no assumptions.
- Being willing to listen.
- Being non-judgemental (condemning the practice, but making it clear that they are not to blame)

We will refer any concerns to the MASH Team on 01273 290400, or email [accesspoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:accesspoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

### **Confidentiality.**

All safeguarding and child protection matters will be dealt with in the strictest confidence, and at no time should any concerns regarding a child, their family or alleged member of staff be discussed with anyone other than the lead safeguarding practitioner or the deputy in their absence, the setting manager and the company directors.

If a member of staff was found to be discussing such matters inappropriately, disciplinary procedures would be followed, and the employee may be subject to a formal written warning or dismissal for breach of policy.

### **Useful contacts.**

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)  
C/O Whitehawk Community Hub,  
179A Whitehawk Road,  
Brighton,  
BN2 5FL  
Tel: 01273 290400  
Email: [mash@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mash@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk)

Early Help Hub  
Tel: 01273 292632  
Email: [earlyhelp@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk)

Darrell Clews (LADO)  
Safeguarding Team,  
Children's Services,  
Moulsecoomb Hub North Building,  
Hodshrove Lane,  
Brighton,  
BN2 4SB  
Tel: 01273 295643 or 07795 335879  
Email: [LSCB@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

NSPCC National Whisteblowing Helpline

Tel: 0800 0280285

Disclosure and Barring Service [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/DBS](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/DBS)

Tel: 01325 953735

**References and further reading.**

- Children's Act 1989
- Children's Act 2004
- Children's Act 2006
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- [What To Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused \(HMG 2006\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

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