



### Safeguarding Children Procedure

- Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd. is committed to an environment in which children are safe from abuse and where any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd. will work within the guidelines laid down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and current government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.
- All staff will be aware of their responsibility as early year's practitioners to share any concerns they have about a child with the designated named person, Tina Simpson at Bearhugs Nursery Horncastle, and Tina Simpson and Becky Wiltshire at Bearhugs Nursery Tattershall. If a staff member feels that their concern is not being taken seriously they have every right to share their concerns with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Customer Service Unit or the police without affecting their terms of employment (see Whistle Blowing Policy).
- Staff members also have the right to share concerns directly with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Customer Services Centre (Tel: 01522 782111 or Out of Hours 01522 782333) or the police if they feel this is appropriate.
- All staff will be aware of possible indicators of child abuse and procedures for recording and reporting through staff training, both internal and external. All employees will have completed online training with regards to safeguarding within 6 months of employment commencing. Within one year all employees will have complete Stage 1 and within two years all management will have completed Stage 2.
- All parent/carers will be shown our safeguarding policy and procedure and made aware of the fact that Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd. has a legal obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in their care and that the child's needs will be our first concern.

#### **Records will be kept as appropriate**

Whenever concerns are raised or worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific record will be set up. All

concerns will remain confidential and shared on a need to know basis and the guidance set by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board will be followed.

#### **Where a disclosure is made or is suspected**

- Reassurance will be given to the child.
- The child will be listened to.
- The child will not be asked leading questions.
- Promises will not be made to the child regarding sharing any of the information made in the disclosure.
- The designated person responsible for safeguarding children will be informed immediately and procedure followed under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- A referral to Children's Services on 01522 782111 will be made without delay.
- This will be followed by the relevant referral forms.
- Parental permission may or may not be sought depending on the nature of the situation.

#### **Records will be made to include**

- The child's name, full address, date of birth.
- Date and time of the disclosure/observation.
- Exact record of disclosure (in child's own words).
- Name of the person to whom disclosure was made.
- Name of any third party present.
- Records will be kept separately and securely from the child's main records with limited access.
- Referral form completed (as far as possible with all information) signed and sent to the relevant Officer (Children's Services will advise on this) within 24 hours of the telephone referral or headed letter dependent upon advice from the CSC.
- NB: Failure by the Staff and Management team to follow the above procedures will be taken very seriously and deemed as gross misconduct which could possibly result in the revoking of the contract with immediate effect. (see Disciplinary Procedure)

#### **Where an allegation is made against a staff member**

- The setting will cooperate fully with any enquiry.
- Detailed records will be taken.
- The setting's disciplinary procedure will be followed where necessary.

- Ofsted, LADDO, and LSCB will be informed within no later than 14 days of the event.
- This will be initially via phone call, following in writing.

### **Procedures for dealing with allegations against staff.**

If an allegation against a member of staff is received that causes concern in that they have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The Local Authority Designated Officer for managing allegations through the Local Safeguarding Children's Board Customer Service Centre (Tel: 01522 782111 or Out Of Hours 01522 782333) will be contacted.

Suspension should not be an automatic response to an allegation, however, the seriousness and plausibility of the allegations, the risk of harm to children and the possibility of tampering with evidence, as well as the interests of the person concerned and the organisation will be considered.

Ofsted and LADDO will be notified upon suspension.

### **Physical and Behavioural Signs of Abuse.**

Concerns about a child may come to the attention of staff/volunteers in a number of ways.

- Through observation of the child. A child's behaviour may indicate that it is likely that he/she is being abused.
- The child may disclose abuse.
- Information may be given by parents, other people or agencies.
- A child may show some signs of physical injury of which there seems to be no satisfactory explanation.
- Something in the behaviour of one of the workers or young person, or in the way the worker or young person relates to a child alerts them or makes them feel uncomfortable in some way.
- Observing one child abuse another.

**There are 4 types of abuse, the main signs are listed below.**

- **The signs of physical abuse**
  1. Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body, especially on hard to reach areas such as neck and ears for example.

2. Bruising which reflects hand marks or fingers (from slapping or pinching).
3. Cigarette burns.
4. Bite marks.
5. Broken bones.
6. Scolds.

**Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse.**

1. Fear of parents being approached for an explanation.
2. Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
3. Flinching when approached or touched.
4. Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
5. Depression.
6. Withdrawn behaviour.
7. Running away from home.

• **The physical signs of emotional abuse may include**

1. A failure to thrive, or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances e.g hospital or away from parents.
2. Sudden speech disorders.
3. Development delay, either in term of physical or emotional progress.

• **Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include**

1. Neurotic behaviour, eg. hair twisting, rocking.
2. Being unable to play.
3. Fear of making mistakes.
4. Self harm.
5. Fear of parents being approached about their behaviour.

• **The physical signs of sexual abuse may include**

1. Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas.
2. Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas.
3. Sexually transmitted disease.
4. Vaginal discharge or infection.
5. Stomach pains.
6. Discomfort when walking or sitting down.

• **Changes to behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:**

1. Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, eg, becoming aggressive or withdrawn.

2. Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
3. Having nightmares.
4. Running away from home.
5. Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or development level.
6. Sexual drawings or language.
7. Bedwetting.
8. Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.
9. Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts.
10. Saying they have secrets that they can't tell anyone about.
11. Substance or drug abuse.
12. Suddenly having unexplained sources of money.
13. Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence).
14. Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

- **The physical signs of neglect may be**

1. Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.
2. Constantly dirty or 'smelly'.
3. Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight.
4. Inappropriate dressed for the conditions.

- **Changes to behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:**

1. Complaining of being tired all the time.
2. Not requesting assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.
3. Having few friends.
4. Mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised.

If Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd. have reason to suspect abuse of any kind then our Safeguarding Policy will be followed. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board Customer Centre (Tel: 01522 782111 or Out Of Hours 01522 782333) will be contacted, with or without parental permission depending on the nature of the situation. This phone call will be followed by the completion of a Referral Form, which may be completed with or without parental permission depending on the nature of the situation.

### **Supporting Families**

- We acknowledge that parents will be the first point of contact and they will be informed of any suspicions **unless** this is deemed likely to put a child at risk.
- We will follow the guidelines laid down by the area Safeguarding Children's Board.

- Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd, through the Safeguarding Children Policy will inform parents of their role and responsibility regarding safeguarding children.
- The setting will continue to welcome children and work with parents throughout any investigation.

Signed on behalf of Bearhugs Nurseries Ltd by:

Manager/Owner .....

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Review Date: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021