

**POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

# **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

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**Lower Covey Montessori Nursery  
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### 1. Allegations of Abuse

#### 1.1. Policy Statement

Ofsted requires all registered providers to have a policy regarding allegations being made against an adult working in the setting, whether they are a member of staff or a volunteer.

Appropriate policies and procedures, as well as following the principles of good practice, protect both children and adult members of the practice team. However, an allegation may be made, and in such circumstances these procedures should be followed.

#### 1.2. Procedures for allegations made against staff

The member of staff against whom an allegation has been made should always be:

- treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns and the processes involved,
- kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for themselves, eg disciplinary or related processes,
- kept informed about events in the workplace if they have been suspended.

Suspension does not need to be automatic. It should be considered in cases where:

- it is suspected that a child(ren) is at risk of significant harm,
- the police are investigating the allegation,
- there are grounds for dismissal due to the nature of the allegation.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) will contact the Local Childrens Safeguarding Board (LCSB) and the DSO will follow their advice with regards to any allegations made against a member of staff. **Patrick Crawford, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) may also be contacted for advice.**

If the individual returns to work following suspension, the employer should consider what help and support might be appropriate and how best to manage the staff member's contact with the child concerned if they are still attending the setting.

Any allegation should be treated seriously and objectively, with those concerned keeping an open mind.

They should not:

- investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification,
- make assumptions or offer alternative explanations,
- promise confidentiality (reassure that the information will only be shared on a "need to know" basis).

They should:

- make a written record of the information given, including the time, date and place of the incident(s), persons present and what was said; sign and date the written record,
- ensure that the setting's procedures are followed.



Should reporting concerns to the DSO produce unsatisfactory results then concerns should be raised with Partick Crawford, the LADO or a member of his team.

### 1.3. Procedures to help protect staff from allegations of abuse

Staff should follow the provision's Code of Staff Conduct, particularly ensuring the following:

- The safety and welfare of the child is always paramount.
- Staff must fulfil their responsibilities and duties towards children by working should work in partnership with parents.
- Staff relationships with children and families are conducted in a professional manner at all times.

All provision policies and procedures are followed, those listed below are particularly relevant:

- Parents as Partners
- Behaviour Management
- Equal Opportunities/Inclusion/Special Educational Needs.

Staff must be vigilant in health and safety matters, eg recording any bruises/marks a child has on arrival in their incident book (separate pages for each child to ensure confidentiality) and keep comprehensive and up-to-date records.

Comprehensive reporting of all children's' accidents should be made to parents, for their signature. Where possible any written account should be witnessed by a second staff member.

Any training needs identified in team members should be passed on to their Line Manager.

Advice, help and/or support is sought if they find a child's behaviour is persistently challenging or difficult to manage.

## 2 Whistleblowing

### 2.1 Policy Statement

This policy is designed to provide guidance to all those who work with or within the setting who may from time to time feel that they need to raise certain issues relating to the setting with someone in confidence.

Workers who in good faith raise genuine concerns under this policy will not under any circumstances be subjected to any form of detriment or disadvantage as a result of having raised their concerns.

### 2.2 Procedure

This policy will apply in cases where staff genuinely and in good faith believe that, within the setting:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed,
- a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject,
- a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur,



- the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered,
- the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged,
- information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

There is no need for an employee to prove that the breach or failure that they are alleging has occurred or is likely to occur. A reasonable suspicion will suffice, ie where the employee reasonably believes that the information disclosed is substantially true. Employees should, however, note that they are not entitled to make a disclosure if in so doing they commit a criminal offence.

Staff should be aware that the policy will apply where a disclosure is made in good faith and where they reasonably believe that the information disclosed and any allegation contained in it are substantially true. If any disclosure is made in bad faith (for instance, in order to cause disruption within the setting), or concerns information which staff do not substantially believe is true, or indeed if the disclosure is made for personal gain, then such a disclosure may constitute a disciplinary offence.

### 3. Child Protection

#### a. Policy Statement

Everyone employed by Lower Covey Montessori Nursery has a responsibility in relation to child protection and safeguarding children . In most cases this will be the referral of concerns to **Fiona Roberts**. In day-to-day contact with children and families – and particularly children identified as being at risk, staff have an opportunity to note concerns and to meet with parents and other associated adults.

This policy aims to outline the role that Lower Covey Montessori Nursery will have in relation to child protection, the procedures that staff should take and guidance on issues related to child protection generally. It is not exhaustive. All staff should use as a rule of thumb the needs and safety of the child as being at the centre of any decision they make.

#### b. The Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- to raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse,
- to provide a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting of concerns and cases,
- to provide guidance on recognising and dealing with suspected child abuse,
- to provide a framework for inter-agency communication and effective liaison,
- to identify strategies and interventions available to support children at risk.

#### c. Procedure

In order to safeguard children we will:

- adopt child protection guidelines as recommended by our Local Safeguarding Children Board and other appropriate professional bodies,
- implement appropriate procedures and code of conduct for the practice team,



- raise awareness with staff and parents that concerns about the welfare of a child and child protection are taken seriously, with appropriate action being taken,
- create an environment where children are listened to and their concerns taken seriously,
- share information with other agencies on a need-to-know basis,
- involve parents and children, except where doing so would put the child at greater risk of harm,
- follow safer recruitment guidance and procedures,
- provide effective staff management through access to supervision, support and training,
- review this policy at regular intervals to ensure it is updated and informs day-to-day practice.

### d. The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is **Fiona Roberts**. Her role is to help co-ordinate any concerns that are raised regarding the welfare of a child and to liaise with other professionals where appropriate, including the local authority social care for children. **The deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer is Julie Partridge.**

The DSO will:

- co-ordinate action within the provision and liaise with social care and other agencies over cases of abuse and suspected abuse,
- act as a source of advice within the provision,
- ensure that staff are familiar with the provision's policy and procedure,
- make child protection referrals, recording and reporting accordingly,
- liaise with agencies about individual cases,
- organise training on child protection and safeguarding children within provision,
- ensure that appropriate strategies for recording and reporting incidents are kept within provision,
- provide appropriate feedback to members of staff as and when necessary.

### e. Staff

Staff should:

- be alert to the signs of abuse as detailed in this policy,
- report any concerns immediately, where possible to the designated person,
- consult with the designated person if in any doubt as to how to proceed,
- follow the advice given in this policy in relation to how to handle disclosures.

### f. Partnerships with Parents

It is important that Lower Covey Montessori Nursery has an established approach to working with parents. Parents' and the children's need for privacy should be respected. However, the priority is the needs of the child and effective liaison is crucial for this.

It should be recognised that families from different backgrounds and cultures may have different approaches to child-rearing. These differences should be acknowledged and respected provided they do not place the child at risk as defined later in this policy.



Where possible staff should work with and share information with parents. Permission for liaison and information sharing with outside agencies should be sought unless it places the child at risk. In these cases it is preferable to seek advice from social care or make a child protection referral.

#### **g. Guidance on Recognising Abuse**

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed by someone often in a position of power. It is not the responsibility of staff to decide whether child abuse is occurring but to act on any concerns and report these to the appropriate party. The health, safety and protection of a child are paramount.

Abuse might fall into the categories of:

- Physical,
- Emotional,
- Sexual,
- Neglect.

Staff should respond appropriately to signs and symptoms in a child which gives them cause for concern. These include:

- significant changes in children's behaviour or appearance,
- frequent mood changes,
- deterioration in their general well-being,
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse,
- signs of neglect such as being unkept,
- comments children make which give cause for concern,
- not wanting to go home,
- seductive behaviour,
- a child who is quiet and withdrawn,
- a child who gives the impression of being unloved and unhappy.

More details on how to recognise signs of abuse are included in the staff handbook.

#### **h. Policy on Dealing with Suspected Abuse**

All staff should refer concerns to **Julie Partridge** or **Fiona Roberts** as soon as possible. In the meantime, they should:

- consider the child's welfare as paramount,
- believe the child and take them seriously,
- remain calm and caring,
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to them,
- make notes of the conversation as soon as possible, using the child's own words,
- explain what will happen next and who will be told.

Staff should not:

- promise confidentiality,
- postpone the discussion until a different time,
- interpret what they have been told,
- probe or ask leading questions.

Where the staff member suspects that a child is being abused they should:



- immediately tell their line manager or the designated person for safeguarding and child protection about their concerns,
- make factual notes of what has occurred, using the child's own words where relevant, and any action taken.

The DSO will follow the procedure below:

- a) Where possible, they will discuss concerns with the child and their parents and obtain agreement to making a referral to children's social care unless this discussion would put the child at increased risk of significant harm.
- b) Seek professional advice if unsure about whether or not to talk to parents first.
- c) When a referral is made, agree what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when. Inform the recipient of the referral what information has already been discussed with the child and their parents.
- d) If a telephone referral is made it must be confirmed in writing within 48 hours. Children's social care should acknowledge the written referral within one working day of receiving it, indicating the course of action chosen. If nothing has been heard back within three working days, contact children's social care again.
- e) Under no circumstances confront the abuser. There is a risk of forewarning the abuser and compromising any investigation or prosecution.

### **i. Confidentiality**

Relevant information about the protection of children must be shared with the investigative agencies, but only on a "need to know" basis.

Staff should be careful in subsequent discussions and ensure that information is only given to the appropriate person. All staff should be kept aware of issues relating to confidentiality and the status of information they may hold.

## **4. Physical Contact**

### **a. Background**

All adults who come into contact with children and young people in their work have a duty of care to safeguard them and promote their welfare. Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure.

There is no legal ban on physical contact between children and practitioners. The Children Act 1989 places the wellbeing of the child at the centre of keeping them safe and does not prevent staff from helping with ordinary basic physical needs. All staff working in Lower Covey Montessori Nursery know that inappropriate behaviour with or towards a child or children is unacceptable. However, it is unrealistic to suggest that staff should never touch a child — although physical contact to keep children safe and stop them hurting themselves or others should be minimal.

### **b. Aim**





The aim of this policy is to ensure that all physical contact between adults and children at Lower Covey Montessori Nursery promotes the child's/children's safety and welfare.

This policy is part of our Safeguarding Policy and should be used in conjunction with our Behaviour Management Policy. It also forms part of our Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers and is underpinned by the DCSF Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People, published in November 2007.

The principles underlying this policy are taken from this guidance:

- In accordance with the Children Act 1989, the welfare of the child is paramount.
- All members of staff in the nursery are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of each child attending.
- Each staff member is responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff work, and should be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- The same professional standards are always applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Staff continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance provided by the nursery.

All members of staff encourage children to take responsibility for their own behaviour, using a range of approaches which help to safeguard each child and promote their welfare. These approaches will include:

- positive role modelling,
- providing a range of planned interesting and stimulating activities,
- setting and enforcing appropriate boundaries and expectations,
- giving positive feedback.

There are occasions, however, when a child's behaviour presents particular challenges that may require physical handling. This policy sets out expectations for the use of physical handling.

There are three main types of physical handling that staff in the nursery may use; Positive Handling, Physical Intervention and Restrictive Physical Intervention.

### **c. Positive Handling**

The positive use of touch is part of normal human interaction and may be appropriate in a range of situations, such as:

- giving guidance to children, such as how to hold a paintbrush or use the climbing equipment,
- providing emotional support, for example placing an arm around a distressed child,
- giving physical care, such as assistance with toileting or changing a nappy or wet or soiled clothing,
- providing first aid.



Nursery staff will use appropriate care when touching children and will be sensitive to those children for whom touch may not be appropriate, such as a child who has a history of physical or sexual abuse, or is from a particular cultural group. In all such cases, discussion will take place with parents/carers about the most appropriate forms of promoting the child's welfare.

#### **d. Physical Intervention**

This may include mechanical or environmental means, such as a locked door, gate, or high chair. Such measures are used to ensure a child's safety and promote their welfare.

#### **e. Restrictive Physical Intervention**

Staff at Lower Covey Montessori Nursery will use restrictive physical intervention only:

- In the context of positive behaviour management,
- In the extreme cases to prevent a child hurting themselves or others or causing damage to property,
- Where to physically intervene is in the child's best interest.

#### **f. Recording and Monitoring**

All incidents requiring restrictive physical intervention will be recorded as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. This record will include:

- who was involved,
- the reason physical intervention was considered appropriate,
- how the child was held,
- the date and time of the incident,
- the length of time the physical intervention had to continue,
- any injuries or subsequent distress,
- the action taken.

Parents will be informed and asked to sign a copy of the record form.

Intervention will be monitored and any necessary adjustments made to keep the child/children safe and promote their wellbeing.

### **5. Staff Supervision**

#### **a. Aim of the Policy**

This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning this organisation's approach to staff supervision.

#### **b. Definitions**

This setting understands staff supervision to refer to a formal arrangement which enables each member of staff to discuss their work regularly with another experienced member of staff. The experienced member of staff, known as the supervisor, facilitates the discussion with the less experienced member of staff, the supervisee.



Lower Covey Montessori Nursery understands the aim of supervision to be to:

- identify solutions to problems,
- improve practice,
- increase understanding of work related issues.

All supervision practised in the setting should have three core functions. It should:

- provide support to staff in their work,
- promote personal and professional development,
- promote quality practice.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### **c. Policy Statement**

Lower Covey Montessori Nursery believes that staff supervision can play an important role in developing and maintaining high standards and in supporting and developing individual staff. The setting also believes that supervision has a key part to play in the safeguarding of children, in that effective staff supervision will contribute to the identification of poor, inappropriate or unsafe practice.

### **d. Models of Supervision**

A number of models of supervision exist, each having its own merits. Lower Covey Montessori Nursery recognises that one model may not suit all staff and encourages staff to agree with their supervisor the model of supervision which best meets their needs.

However, certain guidelines must be followed:

- Staff will be given a say as to who their supervisor will be where practicable although in some cases a supervisor may be allocated by the manager. All new staff will be allocated a supervisor.
- All staff should have at least one formal supervision session every three months. New staff should have at least monthly sessions through the first six months of employment.
- Supervision time should be planned, protected and uninterrupted.
- Supervision time should be taken while on duty but at a time that is convenient to other staff on duty and to the needs of the setting.
- An agreement should be made between supervisor and supervisee setting out how they will conduct their supervision sessions.

### **e. Basic Principles**

This setting is committed to ensuring that:

- supervision is available for all staff,
- the content of supervision sessions will be confidential, recorded only by supervisor and member of staff, but disclosure may be required where information contravenes the policies of the setting or the safety of children,
- supervision is a process distinct from appraisal and will not be used to assess performance or competence,
- supervision is distinct from managerial processes even when the supervisee wishes to have supervision with their line manager.



#### **f. The Supervision Process**

A preliminary session should be planned between the supervisor and supervisee to formally discuss supervision, how it might take place and what they hope to achieve. Confidentiality and its boundaries should be agreed as part of this discussion.

The supervisee is responsible for keeping his or her own record of supervision but it should be signed by both.

Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:

- discuss any issues – particularly concerning children’s development or well being;
- identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and
- receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness

#### **g. Training**

Training will be provided through an accredited supervision course for supervisors.

Providers must train all staff to understand their safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Training made available by the provider must enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- significant changes in children's behaviour;
- deterioration in children’s general well-being;
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- children’s comments which give cause for concern;
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child’s home; and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

## **6. Mobile Phone Policy and Procedures**

### **a. Company Mobiles**

All users issued with a company mobile phone must:

- keep the mobile phone in a secure place when not in use,
- use it for personal calls (incoming and outgoing) only in an emergency,



- keep the mobile phone clean and in good order,
- keep the phone suitably charged,
- immediately inform the manager or deputy manager if the mobile phone is stolen, lost or damaged,
- not use the mobile phone whilst driving.

### **b. Personal Mobiles - Staff, Student and Parent Helpers**

At Lower Covey Montessori Nursery we allow staff to bring in their mobile telephones and devices for their own personal use. They should be:

- on a silent setting during working hours and throughout any other contact time with the children,
- accessed only during lunch break periods – if staff have a personal emergency or need to make a personal call they are free to use the settings landline phone,
- left with other personal possessions whilst on duty. Staff bags should be placed in the store room (Montessori Staff) or in the utility room (baby/toddler staff and kitchen staff).

Members of staff are not permitted to take photographs of children/staff or the setting on their personal mobile or device and staff bringing their personal devices into the nursery must ensure there is no inappropriate or illegal content stored on it.

During group outings a nominated member of staff will have access to the settings nominated phone which will be used for emergency purposes only.

The setting does not allow a member of staff to contact parents/carers using their personal devices unless it is considered an emergency and the landline or company mobile phone can not be accessed.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns they may have regarding the misuse of Mobile Phones to the Nursery Manager or Nursery Supervisor. All concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately.

### **c. Personal Mobiles Used on Company Business**

Where an employee is authorised and willing to use their personal mobile phone with no camera or internet access on company business they will:

- keep the mobile phone in a secure place when not in use,
- whilst at work, respond to personal calls only during break periods,
- keep the mobile phone clean and in good order,
- keep the phone suitably charged,
- immediately inform the manager or deputy manager if the mobile phone should be stolen, lost or damaged,
- not use the mobile phone whilst driving.

### **d. Personal Mobiles – Visitors & Parents**

All visitors and parents are politely requested not to use their mobile phones whilst on the premises of Lower Covey Montessori Nursery. All visitors and parents will be asked to take their calls outside of the main building in the car park area or to turn the device off whilst within the setting.



### 7. Digital Images (Still and Moving)

It is important that the staff and volunteers of Lower Covey Montessori Nursery are fully aware of their duties with regard to digital images.

- All photographs and film taken of the children and families within the setting and while on visits, remain the property of the setting.
- All digital images will be taken with cameras owned by the setting.
- Staff/volunteers are not permitted to use personal equipment (cameras or mobile phones) to take images.
- Staff/volunteers must follow the parents' wishes with regard to photographs of their child.
- Staff/volunteers must be diligent in ensuring that photographs taken of children do not place themselves or the child at risk, for example the child is appropriately dressed.
- Images included in documents such as promotional materials, must never include the child's actual name.
- Images of children should only be stored on the nursery computer, laptop or memory sticks and the setting has the right to monitor the technology of staff in order to safeguard children.
- Photographs stored electronically must not contain information about the child in order to protect their identity.
- At social events such as sports day and the Christmas Nativity, parents are advised to only take photographs of their own child/ren and follow the social networking policy as detailed below.

### 8. Social Networking

Lower Covey Montessori Nursery realises that social networking has now become an integral part of every day life and that many people enjoy membership of social network sites such as Facebook or Twitter. These sites are becoming increasingly popular with sharing photographs with friends and family.

Ofsted continues to regard Safeguarding as a priority topic and places great emphasis on settings to maintain Safeguarding procedures. For the safeguarding of both yourself and for the children at Lower Covey Montessori Nursery, we therefore kindly ask all staff, parents/carers and volunteers not to publish photographs of other children on social network sites.