

Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

Policy Statement

Bluebell Childcare works with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Bluebell Childcare aims to create an environment in our setting which is safe and secure for all children enables children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

We work to ensure children have the abilities to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults. Children are supported in developing a sense of autonomy and independence. Bluebell Childcare works with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.

All staff are willing to voice any concerns where he/she suspects any case of child abuse or radicalisation/extremism. Staff are aware that this should be voiced to the Designated Officer

Procedures

Bluebell Childcare adheres to the following procedures and are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service and delivery.

Staff and Volunteers

- We designate each setting a Safeguarding Children Officer who coordinates all child protection issues. Our designated officer is:

_____ Name

- Our designated officer from the Management Team who oversees this work is:

_____ Name

- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that the parents are aware of them too.
- All staff are required to keep their knowledge of safeguarding issues up-to-date. Annual online training is to be completed through www.centralbedscpd.co.uk; full training days are undertaken every three years. Designated officers attend enhanced safeguarding training on a two yearly basis. Executive Manager Robbie Keats has completed 'Train the Trainer' training and attends annual updates to ensure knowledge is kept up to date.
- Applicants for posts with the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out "Enhanced Disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau now known as Disclosure and Barring Service, before any post or position can be confirmed.

- Where applicants are rejected because of obtaining information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and suitability checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- We follow guidance set out in the disqualification under the childcare act (2006 updated Feb 2015). All staff must complete a disqualification by association declaration form and update management if there are any changes with regards to their suitability to work. Where their suitability is in question due to someone living in their household advice will be sought from both Ofsted and our Local Designated Officer, this guidance should be recorded and followed.
- Students and volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We keep a record of information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including, CRB/DBS reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and the details of who obtained it.
- All staff are aware of the expectation to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us). (This applies to anyone who shares an address with the staff member.)
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- We have a copy of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) available for staff to use if required and for parents to see if they wish.
- All members of staff know the setting's procedures for recording and reporting incidents.
- All staff are familiar with Bluebell Childcare's Safeguarding procedures and all cases of suspected child abuse and extremism/radicalisation are reported immediately to the designated officer who is responsible for referring to the Access and Referral hub.
- In consultation with parents we are able to refer children for additional help through the Early Help Assessment.
- We have a procedure for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events and activities organised by us, parents sign consent and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Bluebell Childcare has clear policies with regards for children or young people who go missing from education, particularly those who have consistently low attendance. All staff are aware and alert to

these signs as they could indicate a child being at an increased risk of abuse or neglect. The lead practitioner is responsible for monitoring and notifying this and would hold discussions with parents to record attendance patterns. Appropriate action is taken if a child stops attending and where a family is in receipt of Nursery Education Funding the local authority would be notified.

- Bluebell Childcare responds promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015).
- In reference to Bluebell Playgroup and After School club and Little Bluebells playgroup and After school club; when a staff member leaves employment, keypad codes are changed to ensure that there is no access to the setting. Any key holders are required to surrender their keys. Any staff member who holds a set of keys must sign an acknowledgement form agreeing to their safe keeping and proper usage. Bluebell Childcare clearly states that no copies of the keys are to be made without the senior management teams approval. If keys are lost this must be reported immediately.

Responding to suspicions of abuse:

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – Physical, Emotional, Sexual as well as Neglect.
- Where a child protection or safeguarding concern is regarding suspected harm or risk of harm to a child, the referral would be made to the local authority. Where the concern is an allegation regarding a member of staff within the setting, or another type of safeguarding issue which affects the children and young people within the setting, the matter would also be referred to the the local authority for guidance and clarity.
- When children are suffering from any form of abuse this may be demonstrated through:
 - Significant changes in their behaviour.
 - Deterioration in their general well-being.
 - Their comments, which may give cause for concern, or the things, they say (direct or indirect disclosure).
 - Changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play.
 - Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
 - Any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse, female genital mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by radicalisation/extremism, gang activity by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who come into our care.

- Bluebell Childcare monitors children who have been identified as being at risk. Records are kept secure to maintain confidentiality.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedure below for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the staff are to make a dated record of the details of the concern and are to discuss these concerns with the 'Designated Person'. The information is stored in the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and cooperate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either way through the way we speak to children or by asking questions to children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children's Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work experience placements, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but Bluebell Childcare may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
 - Listens to the child, offering reassurance and gives assurance that she he will take action.
 - Does not question the child.
 - Makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes, the date and time of the observation or disclosure, the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible, the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the Safeguarding file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'Designated Person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

- Bluebell Childcare follows guidance from 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015). We follow procedures of referral set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and in the case of any referral would check the website for any new legislation.
www.bedfordshirelscb.org.uk

- In cases of concern we would contact:
 - Central Bedfordshire local Social Care Children's Teams directly on 0300 300 8000 or 0300 300 8149 (during office hours).
 - Access and Referral Hub 0300 300 8585 Emergency out of hours 0300 300 8123
 - If help is urgently required outside of office hours we would contact the Social Care Emergency Duty Team on 0300 300 8123.
 - Bedfordshire Public Protection Referral Unit 01234 846960.
 - NSPCC 0808 800 5000.
- In a case where a child is not in immediate danger we try to discuss the matter with parents before making any referrals. However it is the welfare of the child, which is paramount, and this is at the forefront of all our actions. We are aware that many children have suffered because of lack of communication between agencies, and that government guidance now encourages the full sharing of information. We shall therefore use our professional judgment in sharing information with the agencies that "need to know", being open and honest with parents and children as to why we feel we need to share the information.
- Full records of conversation will be maintained when any referrals or discussions are held with any other agencies or with parents prior to a referral. These records will include dates and times of the conversation, who we speak to, and the advice we were given.

Informing Parents

- We will always aim to involve parents in any referrals before they are made. However, if a suspicion of abuse is recorded, and the child is considered at risk, an immediate referral will be made to the Local social care children's team and we will take their advice on informing parents.
- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events, unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.
- We inform parents when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding the concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where guidance of The local safeguarding children's board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform the parents.

Liaison with other Agencies

- Bluebell Childcare works within the local safeguarding children board guidelines.
- We follow guidance from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: 2015 A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children'. www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk
- We keep an up-to-date version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff to ensure that all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.

- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency for the setting and children's social care team to work together.
- We would notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements, which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff. Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practical, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegation being made.
- Contact details for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Bluebell Childcare is committed to promoting awareness of child abuses issues throughout our training and learning programmes for staff. We are also committed to empower children through our early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise signs and signals of possible Neglect, Physical, Emotional and Sexual abuse, and they are aware of the local authority's guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure the designated officer has received training in accordance to the local authorities guidelines and that the Local safeguarding children's board recommends it.
- We ensure the staff know the procedure for reporting and recording concerns they may have about the provision.

Planning

- The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our planning programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to be safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individuals having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their ethnicity, spoken language, and cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

- We introduce key elements of Safeguarding Children into our foundation stage curriculum, or activity planning so that children can develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe (e.g. Stranger Danger, Road Safety).

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. If there are concerns within a setting it is important that the Manager is made aware of them. However, children will work with a number of different adults in a setting and they should also be made aware that there are concerns about an aspect of well-being of the child in question. Any information shared with external agencies is done under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- All staff are aware that they cannot promise confidentiality to a child.

Support to families

- Bluebell Childcare takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- Bluebell Childcare continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
- Confidential reports kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- With the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We follow the child protection plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.

Support to staff

- Bluebell Childcare understands that cases regarding safeguarding and child protection can be upsetting, stressful and uncomfortable. All staff are offered support and counselling or further support can be offered if needed. Staff should talk through their concerns with the designated officer.

Legal Framework

Primary Legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47).
- Protection of Children Act (1999).
- Data Protection Act (1998).
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004).

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006).
- Safeguarding Children and Young People and Young Adults Policy (2015).

Secondary Legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003).
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000).
- Equality Act (2010).
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance.

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2006 – Under revision 2012).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2013).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2015).
- What to do if you’re Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006).
- What to do if you’re Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015).
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000).
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010).
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007).
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008) (HMG 2006).
- Prevent Duty Guidance (March 2015) (updated March 2016).
- Early Help: Whose Responsibility? (HMG 2015).
- Independent safeguarding Authority: www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk

This policy was adopted by Bluebell Childcare on 01/09/2014
11/04/2016

Evaluated, reviewed and updated 11/04/2016
Bluebell Childcare updated this policy on 28/04/2016

Signed

Evaluated and reviewed.....

Signature sheet

Staff and students must sign this sheet to confirm that they have read and understood the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

Signature

Print Name

Date