

Safeguarding Policy

My childcare setting is a home where children feel safe, secure and confident. My first responsibility and priority is towards these children and I take their well being and any allegations of abuse very seriously. It is my legal duty as a Childminder to protect children and to report any form of abuse to Children's Services.

I understand that there are several types of child abuse, which can be physical, emotional, sexual, neglect or a mixture of these. I am aware of the common signs of these and it is my legal duty to protect children and to report any suspicions of abuse to Ofsted and children's services.

I keep up to date with child protection issues and relevant legislation by taking regular training. This will keep me up to date and to be aware of the signs of abuse or neglect and what to do if I have any concerns.

If I am worried about a child's behaviour and think there may be signs of abuse, I will initially monitor the child closely and make a confidential written log of my concerns. Following that, if I have any founded cause for concern I will contact Children's services for advice at the contact centre on 0300 200 1006.

As a Childminder I am vulnerable to allegations of abuse and I will notify Ofsted and Children's Services of any such accusations that are alleged to have taken place while the child is in my care. This includes anyone working or living at my setting. I will notify Ofsted of these allegations as soon as is reasonably practicable, and at the very latest within 14 days from the date the allegation was made.

If an allegation is made against me or my family I will call the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

I will also contact NCMA's safeguarding children service for advice and support.

If I am concerned about a child's welfare, I will contact the local authority, the NSPCC, NCMA or other relevant support services for advice. Confidentially will be assured only when it is clear that there is **no risk** of harm to a child.

Child protection concerns that could identify a particular child are kept confidential and only shared with people who need to know this information.

I work together with parents to make sure the care of their child is consistent.

I expect parents to notify me of any concerns they have about their child and any accidents, incidents or injuries affecting the child, which will be recorded in detail and signed in the incident book.

If a child arrives at my setting with an injury I will:

- Ask the child how and when the injury occurred
- Record the injury and the child's explanation in their own words in the incident book and also using a skin map
- Ask the parents for an explanation – I will call the parent for an explanation as soon as any injury is discovered
- The parent will need to sign the incident book to confirm that the injury took place whilst outside of my care

If I notice:

- Significant changes in children's behaviour
- Suspicious, unexpected or unexplained bruising or marks
- Any comments made which give me cause for concern
- Deterioration in general wellbeing which causes concern
- Extreme anger, sadness and/or being withdrawn or having low self esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression/anxiety
- Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Signs of neglect

I will call Children's Services immediately to minimise any potential danger to the child, especially if it is known that a child is at risk of harm. I will follow it up with a letter within 48 hours. I will keep a factual record of the concern and will ask the parents for an explanation, providing it would not put the child at risk.

The standards for registered Childminders in both England and Wales require me to let Ofsted know of any concerns that I have reported without delay and I will do this within 14 days.

If a child tells me that they or another child is being abused, I will:

- Show that I have heard what they are saying, and that I take their allegations seriously
- Encourage the child to talk, but I will not prompt them or ask them leading questions. I will not interrupt when a child is recalling significant events and will not make a child repeat their account
- Explain what actions I must take, in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child
- Write down what I have been told in the child's own words
- Make a note of the date, time, place and people who were present at the discussion
- Report my concerns immediately to Children's Services who has the experience and responsibility to make an assessment of the situation.

If an allegation is made against me, I will report it to Ofsted within 14 days of the allegation and any action taken. I will also contact NCMA's Information Line on 0800 169 4486 for advice and support.

In all instances I will record:

- The child's full name and address
- The date and time of the record
- Factual details of the concern, for example bruising, what the child said, who was present
- Details of any previous concerns
- Details of any explanations from the parents
- Any action taken such as speaking to parents.

It is not my responsibility to attempt to investigate the situation myself.

Safer Working Practices and Whistleblowing

In my role as a Childminder it is my duty to report unacceptable behaviour from the following professionals to the relevant authorities:

- Assistants who may be working for me
- Other Childminders
- Childcare workers
- Other professionals working with children

I may need to take action when:

- The behaviour is detrimental to children
- Has placed them at risk
- Has caused actual harm to them
- Is illegal

In these situations I may be required to contact the police, social services and or Ofsted to pass on information that I have witnessed.

I am also required to report it if I become aware of persons who are childminding without being registered.

Protecting your children as well as myself and my family

- To ensure the safety of children in my care my husband and I have both obtained DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks.
- I will only hand over children to parents or carers I have been introduced to by the parents. In an emergency, parents can use a password system which will have been agreed in writing and signed upon registration
- All visitors will be people I know and trust and will never be left alone with children in my care
- I will keep a record of everyone who enters my home during working hours by ensuring all visitors sign a visitor book
- I will obtain identification from any unknown visitors to the house – for example a gas or electricity meter reader
- All my child records, incident books and any information regarding the children and business will be kept strictly confidential and locked in a secure place
- For data protection I will keep any photographs in a password-protected folder on my computer. Sometimes I take photos of the children working on projects or playing in the garden to show their own parents and to keep a record of the child's achievements. Signed permission will be obtained from parents before any photographs will be taken
- Visitors will be asked to keep their mobile phones and/or cameras in the kitchen when they come to my house to make it easier to ensure they are not using any recording devices

- I use my mobile phone for work purposes and have it with me at all times in case of emergencies. I do not use the camera on my phone to take any photos during my work hours and have a separate camera to use with the children
- I am aware of the risks involved with social networking sites and do not share any information regarding my business, parents, or children in my care on sites such as Facebook. I do not connect with any parents (or children) who use such sites as it is important as a professional Childminder to keep my personal and work life separate
- I will record all non-attendance and lateness so I am able to recognise any future patterns in frequent absences
- I will ensure children have respect and privacy when it comes to intimate care and toileting.
 - Babies will be changed in an area that is discreet.
 - Nappy changing and toilet training will be carried out with respect and regard the child's right to dignity and privacy
 - Children will be encouraged to use self-help skills with regard to toileting but I will be aware of their abilities and be available to offer help if necessary

Physical intervention –

- This will only be used to prevent your child from an accident or from coming in contact with a potential hazard. Physical intervention can be justified when:
 - Someone is injuring themselves or others
 - Someone is damaging property
 - There is a suspicion that, although injury, damage or crime has not yet happened, it is about to happen

Any physical intervention will be carried out with reasonable minimal force.

Any instances where I have had to use physical intervention will be discussed with the parents and recorded in the incident book and a signature obtained from the parents.

Transitions – sharing information between other settings:

- It is not my role to pass on any formal information about the child or their achievements but I will have these resources available to give to the parents who can then pass this on to the new school/nursery
- I must adhere to keeping the child's records confidential and will not pass on any information to the school – I will tell them to ask the parents for such details
- I keep a secure and confidential copy of all child's records for 20 years and 4 months
- I will work in partnership with the child's parents and schools/nurseries to support them through any transitions.
- This support will vary, depending on the individual needs of the child and their previous experiences of change.
- Support that I can provide to help children prepare to start at a new setting can include:
 - Sharing books about starting school
 - Visits to the new setting
 - Talking about the new setting and routine
 - Looking at photos of the new setting/Internet site
 - Helping them to develop the skills they will need at the new setting, for example undressing and dressing themselves, independent toileting etc.

As with all my policies, the information will be updated regularly in line with any changes in law or procedures.

Useful telephone numbers

Note the numbers are designated to specific areas in Surrey.

Concerns about a child or young person

NE - Children's Services Referral Hub - 0300 123 1610

SE - Children's Services Referral Hub - 0300 123 1620

NW - Children's Services Referral Hub - 0300 123 1630

SW - Children's Services Referral Hub - 0300 123 1640

Concerns about an adult working with children

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) - 0300 200 1006 - option 4 then option 3

- Ofsted - 08456 404040
- Local Police Station – 101 or 01483 571212.
- NCMA Information Line – for help and support for with all areas of childminding, including allegations of child abuse. - 0800 169 4486
- NCMA Legal advice line – offers free, professional advice to NCMA members on any legal problem related to their childminding business. - 01253 777468
- NSPCC child protection helpline – 24-hour helpline for people worried about a child - 0808 800 5000
- Local early years team - 01372 833833
- Whistle Blowing hot line – 0300 123 3155 – whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
WBHL
Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
- Emergency Duty Team: 01483 517 898 for out of hours urgent referrals and child protection enquiries
- Surrey Safeguarding Children Unit: 01372 833 308 – Enquiries about children who may be subject of a Child Protection Plan