

# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



The Little Wings Childcare, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is written in accordance with the principles established by the Children's Act 1989 and 2004, as well as being in line with other government publications which include "Working together to safeguard children," 2013, "Framework for the assessment of children in need and their families", 2000 and "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused", 2006.

As a childminder, it is my responsibility to ensure the safety and promote the welfare of all children in my care, in line with procedures laid out by the Local Safeguarding Children board. This means I have a duty to report any concerns to the Local Authority, if necessary.

In order to best protect children, I will follow the relevant government guidelines, which I have available for anyone to view, as well as following any procedures laid out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

As the Designated Officer for my Childminding setting, I work with other agencies to ensure I have adequate arrangements in place to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering harm. I can be contacted on 07835 827238 between the hours of 8am and 7pm.

I completed the Level 3 Safeguarding Children course in July 2023 and I am aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and those of neglect.

**Physical Abuse** – can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, punching, kicking scalding, burning, drowning and suffocating. It can also result when a parent or carer deliberately causes the ill health of a child in order to seek attention through fabricated or induced illness.

**Emotional Abuse** – is where a child's need for love, security, recognition and praise is not met. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of someone else such as in Domestic violence or domestic abuse. A parent, carer or authority figure is considered emotionally abusive when they are constantly hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining towards a child or other family member. It can also occur when children are prevented from having social contact with others or if inappropriate expectations are placed upon them.

Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse include:

- excessively clingy or attention seeking
- very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism
- withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness
- lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers, too eager to please
- eating disorders or self harm

**Sexual abuse** – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical contact, both penetrative and non-penetrative, or viewing pornographic material including through the use of the internet.

Indicators of sexual abuse include:

- allegations or disclosures
- genital soreness
- injuries
- sexually transmitted diseases
- inappropriate sexualised behaviour including words, play or drawing.

**Neglect** – is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which can significantly harm their health and development. Neglect can include inadequate supervision (being left alone for long periods of time), lack of stimulations, social contact or education, lack of appropriate food, shelter, appropriate clothing for conditions and medical attention and treatment when necessary.

I update my training as necessary.

Little Wings Childcare is a positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes social, physical and moral development of every individual child. I support children's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.

I am responsible for ensuring the acceptable and safe use and storage of all camera technology, images and mobile phones.

It is my aim to provide an environment where children and young people feel both valued and respected, and confident to approach me if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.

A copy of "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused" is kept with this document and an additional copy is available for you to read if required. This sets out the guidelines for how I must record any incidents and disclosures and the procedures I must follow.

I also have a copy of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children Board fact sheet for parents available for you to look at, or you can visit <http://www.safechildren-cios.co.uk> for a copy.

If I have reason to believe that any child in my care needs protection in any way, I will:

- Refer a child, if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO – 01872 326536).
- Referrals will be made in writing, following a telephone call. Under these circumstances I will share information relating to the child with LADO and the Police, if requested. If the concern relates to me, or another adult in my setting, I will follow my 'Allegations of Abuse' procedure.
- Keep written records of concerns about a child, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral. I will ensure that all such records are kept confidential and securely, separate from a child's records.
- Liaise with other agencies and professionals.

- Attend case conferences, or other multi-agency planning meetings, as necessary.
- Ensure that any child currently with a child protection plan, who is absent without explanation is referred to their Social worker or Social care team.
- I will notify my Local Child Protection Agency (MARU) and Ofsted of any serious accident, illness, injury or death of any child whilst in my care. Ofsted must be informed within 14 days.

If a child confides in me I will:

- Show that I have understood what they are saying and that I take their allegations seriously
- Encourage the child to talk, without asking leading questions or interrupting with a child is recalling a significant event.
- Record the concern and the child's comments in writing, in their own words, as far as possible. The record will contain - the child name, their date of birth, the date the record is made, a note of the child's non-verbal behaviour, a body-map, if appropriate, to record any visible injuries or marks and my name and signature.
- Inform the child that I cannot promise not to share this information but that everything I do will be in the interest of their safety
- Seek advice from LADO and if necessary, make a referral.

I recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding are confidential.

I will disclose any information about a child on a need to know basis only, referring to “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused” and the “Information sharing pocket guide”.

I am aware I have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

I am aware that I cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise their safety and well-being.

I undertake to share an intention to refer a child to MARU with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt I will consult with MARU.

## **Visitors to my home**

I record all visitors to my home during childminding hours with the time and nature of the visit. Children are not left unsupervised with visitors.

## **Allegations of abuse**

Please see separate policy.

## **Use of mobile phones and cameras**

I understand that if I store personal details about other people on my computer or any digital format (including mobile phones and digital cameras) I will need to notify the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for Data Protection.

## Mobile phones

As a registered childminder I recognise that it is important for me to be able to communicate with parents instantly.

Mobile phone technology has developed significantly to include internet access and wireless connections as well as camera, video and sound recording and sending and receiving messages. They are now extremely effective method of communication, which can only be an advantage regarding safeguarding children. However, i understand that there is a need to balance the advantages with the potential for misuse, and intend to protect the children in my care with the following procedures:

- ensuring ALL visitors to my home do not take photos of children in my care
- ensuring my phone is kept out of reach of children's
- permitting children from the age of 10 years of age (with parents permission) to have their phone about their person. However, it must not be used to take photos or videos. This policy extends to any electronic device capable a taking photo or video.

The use of photos to support observation, assessment and planning, and to provide a pictorial record for parents has become part of my practice. To ensure that everyone in my setting is protected I have the following procedures in place:

- Pictures are taken only by myself with the written permission of parents. Parents indicate if they are willing for photos of their children to be used for sharing with them, supporting observation, assessment and planning, children's records and advertising.
- Pictures are transferred to my password protected compute.
- Any stored photos are deleted once a child leaves my setting.

If you have any concerns I will be happy to discuss them with you.

### **For immediate referrals:**

MARU: 0300 123 1116

[multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk)

### **Emergency out of hours:**

01208 251300 – CIOS Emergency Social Worker