

### **Child Protection Policy and Procedure**

*In conjunction with Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedure*

Monty's Day Care Child Protection Policy and Procedure has been developed in accordance with the principles established by The Children Act 1989 and 2004, The Early Years Foundation Stage, Sections 175 and 176 Education Act 2002 and related guidance including The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (1999), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006), What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2006) and Working Together 2010.

The staff at Monty's Day Care take their responsibility seriously to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to their care.

Emma Taylor (Nursery Manager), Kerry Allen (Deputy Manager & Designated Child Protection Officer) are the nominated Person's who are responsible for Child Protection, in their absence it will be Rachel or Nick Whitley (Nursery Owners).

As part of the ethos of the setting we are committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern.
- Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
- Using learning at the setting to provide opportunities for increasing self awareness, self esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that young children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
- Working with parents/guardians to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the setting's procedures and lines of communication.
- Monitoring children who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection, keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- Maintain a secure environment within the setting to protect children's privacy. This includes secure entrances with camera and peep hole identification, exterior door passcodes and exclusion of personal mobile phones and personal cameras within the setting. Staff are prohibited to "friend" parents on social network sites and cannot identify themselves as employed by the nursery or discuss information about a child at the setting. Please refer to the Mobile phone and social networking policy for specific details.

Everyone involved in the care of young children has a role to play in their protection. As a member of staff at Monty's Day Care, you are in a unique position to observe any changes in a child's behaviour or appearance. If you have any reason to suspect that a child in your care is being abused, or is likely to be abused, you have a 'duty of care' to take action on behalf of the child by following the setting's Child Protection Policy.

*Emma Taylor, Kerry Allen, as designated Child Protection Officer's, are responsible for:*

- Co-ordinating child protection action within the setting

- Liaising with other agencies
- Ensuring the locally established procedures are followed including reporting and referral processes
- Acting as a consultant for other setting staff to discuss concerns
- Making referrals as necessary
- Maintaining a confidential record system
- Representing or ensuring the setting is represented at inter-agency meetings in particular Strategy Discussions and Child Protection Conferences.
- Managing and monitoring the setting's part in child care and child protection plans
- Ensuring all setting staff have received appropriate and up to date child protection training.
- Liaising with other professionals.

### **What is child abuse?**

The Children Act 1989 refers to "Significant Harm" rather than abuse. However, abuse is any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. A child may be abused by parents, other relatives or carers, professionals and other children, and can occur in any family, in any area of society, regardless of social class or geographical location.

Abuse falls into four main categories:

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical Abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to the child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces injury in a child.

- **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse affects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. May include interactions beyond the child's developmental ability, overprotection, limitation of exploration or learning, prevention of normal social interaction. Seeing or hearing ill-treatment of another, serious bullying (including Cyber-bullying) causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or exploitation and corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts on sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect**

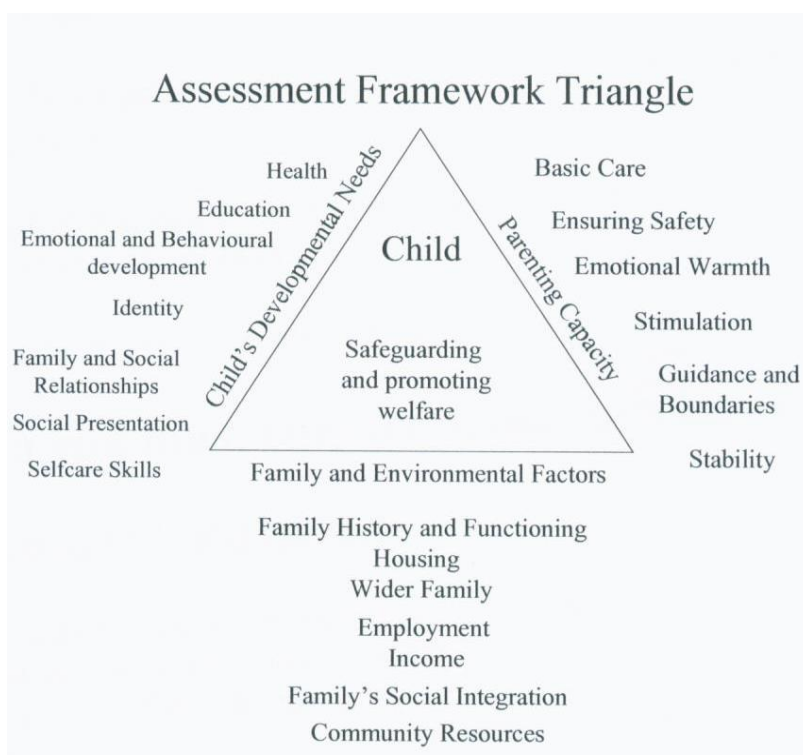
Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may occur in pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

### What may give cause for concern?

- Bruising on parts of the body which do not usually get bruised accidentally, e.g. around the eyes, behind the ears, back of the legs, stomach, chest, cheek and mouth (especially in a young baby), etc.
- Any bruising or injury to a very young, immobile baby.
- Burns or scalds
- Bite marks
- Any injuries or swellings, which do not have a plausible explanation.
- Bruising or soreness to the genital area.
- Faltering growth, weight loss and slow development.
- Unusual lethargy.
- Any sudden uncharacteristic change in behaviour, e.g. child becomes either very aggressive or withdrawn.
- A child whose play and language indicates a sexual knowledge beyond his/her years.
- A child who flinches away from sudden movement.
- A child who gives over rehearsed answers to explain how his/her injuries were caused.
- An accumulation of a number of minor injuries and/or concerns.
- A child who discloses something which may indicate he/she is being abused.

### Understanding the child's world

As a member of staff at Monty's Day Care, you are familiar with the many factors, which can affect how children learn, how they react, and how they develop. When you are concerned about any child, it is helpful to be familiar with government guidance to help agencies to work together in taking a common approach to assessment and service planning: the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (1999). A child's developmental needs are affected in different ways by the parenting capacity of carers, and by the family and the environmental situation of the child.



**How to share your concerns**

Keep a factual note of any concerns, i.e. what you have observed and heard. Discuss your concerns with Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen. If there are serious concerns immediate advice can be sought from:

Our local Children's Social services contact person for West Kent who is Helen Windiate 01732 525035 or 07740 183798 if she cannot be contacted ring the social services Head Office on: 01622 696366 and ask for the duty social worker.

Sign and date your records for future reference.

If appropriate share any initial concerns with the child's parents/guardians, as there may be a perfectly innocent explanation for changes which you have observed, for example:

- A sudden change in behaviour could be due to the death or illness of a close family member or a pet.
- Weight loss and/or failing to thrive could be a symptom of an illness.
- A sibling or another child could have inflicted an injury accidentally.

**However, if:**

- You suspect sexual abuse. Or
- You do not get an explanation which you feel is consistent or acceptable from the parents/guardians. Or
- You feel that discussing the issue with parents/guardians may put the child at further risk of significant harm. Or
- You think a criminal offence has been committed.

Then you must discuss your concerns with Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen and/or Lauryn Knapp and/or Kelly Miller and/or Leighann Hemelryck without delay.

**Concerns or uncertainties**

There may be occasions when you have concerns about a child, which do not appear to justify a referral of suspected child abuse, but nonetheless leave you feeling uncomfortable. In these circumstances, following consultation with the Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen you must telephone either:

- Helen Windiate or if she is uncontactable Children's Social Services for advice, and ask for "A consultation with the Duty Social Worker on a child protection issue" to talk through your concerns.

You do not need to give the child's name at this point. The Duty Social Worker will advise you whether or not your concerns do justify making a child protection referral.

The Social Worker may consider the child to be 'a child in need' rather than 'a child at risk of significant harm'. In this case, a referral to Children's Social Services should be made but only with the parent's agreement.

Families sometimes have a negative perception of the role of Children's Social Services, and are reluctant to contact them, fearing that their children may be taken into care. The reality is

that Children's Social Services can offer a lot of help, both directly and through other agencies, to families who are experiencing difficulties, so your influence and support in the referral process will be very important. Children's Social Services will assess the family, probably along with other agencies, and put in a support package if appropriate, of which the representative from Monty's Day Care may well be part.

If the family concerned is reluctant for Children's Social Services to be contacted and following a discussion with Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen, you could ask the parents/guardians permission to contact another relevant agency on their behalf such as the Health Visitor. It is important to document that parental consent had been obtained.

### **Serious Concerns**

If you are reasonably confident that the child concerned is likely to be at risk, you must immediately discuss with Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen. She will then telephone the Children's Social Services office immediately, and ask to speak to the Duty Social Worker stating that she has serious concerns about a child in our care.

### **Telephone numbers:**

Helen Windiate: Office no: 01732 525035 or mobile no: 07740 183798

Kent Social Services Head Office: 01622 693366

Out of Hours Social Services: 08458 247102

When making a referral, Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen will need to provide the following information, and will have it to hand when telephoning:

- The name, address, date of birth, ethnic origin and gender of the child.
- The names and contact telephone numbers of parents/guardians and other carers or close family members if known.
- The name, address and telephone number of the child's Doctor, and Health Visitor if applicable.
- The incidents which gives rise for concern with dates and times
- The nature of the injuries observed, and/or the reason for your concerns.

Following a telephone referral, we will be expected to follow this up in writing, within 24 hours by completing a multi-agency referral form, we keep these in our safeguarding file.

Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, Local Authorities have a statutory duty to make enquiries, where they have "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm". The Children's Social Services Department carries this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority. Once we have made a referral, we have fulfilled our responsibility to the child. It is at this point that Children's Social Services will take over and a decision will be made on what happens next. All referrals are taken seriously, and the needs of the child and family will be assessed, so that appropriate enquiries are followed up and support can be put into place where relevant. Enquires will be made to other professionals and the child's family. Monty's Day Care may be included in these enquiries, and we may be part of any on-going support for the child. Under Section 47(9) all staff at Monty's Day Care have a duty to co-operate with these enquiries if required to do so.

### **What will be the outcome?**

Having made a referral about a child, you will probably want to know the outcome of the investigation. You should receive some information, but for reasons of confidentiality, this will be on a 'need to know' basis. Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen should be invited to participate in any meetings set up for the child.

**How to respond to a child who discloses something to you.**

If a child tells you something, it is important that you respond appropriately:

- Do listen to the child and avoid interrupting except to clarify.
- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way.
- Do not interrogate the child. It is alright to ask for clarification, but you should not ask leading questions. Misguided or inappropriate questioning in the first instance can do more harm than good, and may contaminate evidence, which could be needed in an investigation. The interviewing of children must be undertaken by the trained Social workers or Police Officers.
- Do not make any promises to the child about not passing on the information – the child needs to know that you have to talk to someone who will be able to help them.
- Record the information as accurately as you can, including the timing, setting and those present, as well as what was said. Do not exaggerate or embellish what you have heard in any way.
- Inform the Designated person.

### **Record Keeping**

Staff can play a vital role in helping children in need or at risk by effective monitoring and record keeping. Any incident or behavioural change in a child or young person that gives cause for concern should be recorded on an incident sheet, copies of which are kept in the Safeguarding Children's File. It is important that records are kept factual and reflect the words used by the child or young person. Records must be signed and dated with timings if appropriate.

*Information to be recorded:*

- Child's name and date of birth
- Child in normal context
- The incident with dates and times
- A verbatim record of what the child or young person has said
- If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on body map.
- Action taken.

### **What to do if you need to take emergency action to protect a child**

On very rare occasions, it may be necessary to act quickly, for example, to protect a child from a drunken or violent parent/guardian. In these circumstances, it would be appropriate to discuss this with Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen immediately who should telephone the police.

In an unlikely event that a child is brought to the setting with serious injuries, it would be appropriate to discuss this with Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen immediately who should telephone for an ambulance.

However, it is important to remember that these types of scenarios are very unlikely to happen.

### **What support is available to you?**

Any member of the team affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen.

Emma Taylor and/or Kerry Allen can put staff and parents/guardians in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they wish so.

*This policy was revised at a meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Emma Taylor (Nursery Manager) and Kerry Allen (Deputy Manager) & (Safeguarding & Child Protection officers) were present.  
(Policy and procedure to be revised in the month of October 2015).*