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**Red Barn Community Pre-school**

**Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy**

**Statement of Intent**

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

1. Red Barn Community Pre-school is committed to building a ‘culture of safety’ in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.
2. Red Barn Community Pre-school is committed to responding 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 the government document ‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’ (DfES, 2015).
3. Red Barn Community Pre-school is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

**Aims**

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

* Promoting children’s right to be strong, resilient and listened to by:

Creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions, and home background.

* Encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
* Enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
* Helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults.
* Working with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all of our children.

The legal framework for this is:

*Primary Legislation*

The Children Act 1989 –s47

The Protection of Children Act 1999

The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Childcare Act (2006)

*Guidance*

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

What to do if you are worried a Child is being abused (revised 2015)

The Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and their Families (2000)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)

Information Sharing (2018)

Early Help Assessment (2014)

Prevent Duty (2015)

*Secondary Legislation*

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

Children and Families Act (2015)

Data Protection Act 1998

General Data Protection Regulations (2018)

Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2009)

Equality Act (2010)

Care Act (2014)

Serious Crime Act (2015)

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Liaison with other bodies

* We work within the Safeguarding Children Partnerships guidelines
* We have a copy of ‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’ for parents and staff. All staff are familiar with what to do if they have any concerns.
* We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues.
* We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
* If a referral is to be made to the local authority Children’s Services department, we act within the area’s Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child’s parents at the same time.

**Staffing**

Our Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead (EYDSL) who co-ordinates child protection issues is:

**Toni Harrison**

In the absence of the EYDSL all Safeguarding concerns should be reported to

**Christine Hayter**

Our designated officer who oversees this work on behalf of the committee is:

**Sam Way**

We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of the children.

All staff have up-to-date Safeguarding Training and the Policy is regularly reviewed at staff meetings.

**Staff and Volunteers**

Applicants for posts within 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 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed. Two relevant references are requested and must be returned before a person can be employed by the preschool.

Where applicants are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge correct information.

We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to children.

Volunteers do not work unsupervised.

We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:

-the DBS check reference number

-the date the disclosure was obtained

- the details of the person obtaining the disclosure.

-certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate.

Staff are aware that they must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children, either before or during their employment with us.

Staff are regularly reminded at monthly staff meetings and at each supervision meeting, that it is their responsibility to report to the manager any changes to their home life or living arrangements that may affect their suitability to work with children. This includes living with someone that has any relevant convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision or have had orders made in relation to care of their children. Although this may not affect their employment at the preschool, it is each staff members responsibility to disclose this information to their manager.

All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of mobile phones), whistleblowing and dignity at work.

All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children, racial or derogatory comments or any signs of child-on-child abuse. The preschool has zero tolerance to child-on-child abuse, with regards to both the children and the adults in the setting. Any signs of child-on-child abuse will be dealt with immediately and in an appropriate way. Parents will be informed if necessary and staff will work with them to rectify the situation.

We ensure that all staff understand other factors that may affect children’s vulnerability that may arise, such as abuse of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in witchcraft; sexual exploitation of children, including through internet abuse; female genital mutilation and radicalisation or extremism.

In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and HSCP procedures on responding to radicalisation.

All staff have completed online Prevent training to ensure they are familiar with the local protocol and procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation.

We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police.

We also make staff aware that some children and young people are affected by 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 we may come into contact with.

We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 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 child protection concern.

**Visitors**

We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting. All professional visitors must show I.D on arrival to the setting before being permitted entrance. No visitors are left alone with any child/ren at any time.

All staff understand the importance of keeping children safe and the need to protect themselves from suspicion.

We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in activities or events. **This will only be carried out using the preschool cameras or tablets. Photographs taken on the preschool tablets will be deleted at the end of each week. Photographs taken on the preschool camera will be deleted once used for the purpose they are intended.** Parents must sign a consent form before their child is photographed or videoed and agree to the use of the images.

**Mobile phones belonging to the staff are to be kept in the school office whilst children are present in the setting. All parents, volunteers and visitors are made aware that mobile phones cannot be used within the preschool when children are present. The only exception to this rule is when the use of a mobile device is required for health reasons e.g. to monitor health levels. This is further outlined in our Mobile phone, camera and electronic devices policy. The preschool office will be made available for any calls that need to be made by parents, staff or visitors.**

**Tapestry**

All tablets used by staff within the setting are password protected. The Managers must log out of Tapestry at the end of each day to ensure that security is maintained.

Staff sign an agreement before using Tapestry to agree to its proper use. They are permitted to log-in to their Tapestry account from home (with parental permission) and must abide by the rules of the agreement; having regard to the setting’s Confidentiality, Safeguarding and Data Protection Policies when using it to update their children’s learning journeys.

Parents sign an agreement during their child’s pre-visit to agree to the proper parental use of their child’s Tapestry account.

Parental permission is sought for:

* The use of Tapestry to record their child’s learning journey
* For photographs of their child to be added to Tapestry
* For photographs of their child to appear in other children’s Tapestry learning journeys
* For their Tapestry learning journeys to be passed on to other settings or schools for transition purposes.
* For staff to be able to log-in securely from their homes to update their child’s Tapestry learning journey

Parents refusal to any of the above is fully respected by preschool staff and alternative arrangements would be made for the collection of their child’s developmental progress.

**Responding to suspicions of abuse**

We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.

When children are suffering from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or if they may be experiencing neglect, it may be demonstrated through things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.

Staff are aware that it is good practice to mention even their low-level concerns as these may be part of a bigger picture that could indicate a child is a victim of abuse. Therefore it is important to know the children in their care very well so that they notice any small changes to their development, personality or appearance. These concerns should be reported to the EYDSL and recorded as any other safeguarding concern.

Children’s attendance is recorded and monitored to look for a pattern of absences that could be a sign that they are at risk of abuse. For children who stop attending unexpectedly the manager will make all efforts to contact the child’s parents. If contact is not made these concerns will be reported to Children’s Services.

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 refer concerns to the local authority children’s services department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.

Staff in the setting take care not to influence either the way they speak to the children or by asking questions of children.

**Allegations against staff**

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.

We follow the guidance of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.

Upon any allegation against a member of staff we will initially contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01962 876364 or by using the LADO initial enquiry form. We will then work with the LADO’s guidance to investigate the claims.

We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken place, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children on our premises. We will notify Ofsted of any actions taken, in respect of the allegations, as soon as is reasonably possible, but within 14 days of the allegations being made.

We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority’s Children’s services department to investigate. We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.

Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the incident has taken place but is to protect the staff as well as the children and families throughout the process.

**Disciplinary action**

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Disclosure and Barring Service so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

**Training**

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect, and ensure that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. This training is updated regularly, and new information is cascaded at regular staff meetings to keep the staff’s knowledge up-to-date.

We ensure that the EYDSL’s receive training every two years in accordance with that recommended by the Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP). The EYDSL also attends Safeguarding support groups run by Services for Young Children (SfYC) twice a year to keep up-to-date with correct Safeguarding procedures.

EYDSL are available at all times, while the setting is open, to support staff with any Safeguarding concerns.

All staff receive Safeguarding training as soon as possible after starting at the setting. Safeguarding certificates are renewed at least every 3 years. All Staff complete Prevent Duty training to enable them to recognise the children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or extremism. As a pre-school, we promote British Values in a way that the children understand them. We encourage mutual respect and the understanding that we are all unique individuals.

We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting. This is regularly discussed at staff meetings and half-termly supervision meetings. All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard.

**Room Planning**

The layout of the room allows for the constant supervision of the children. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others. The plan for staffing ensures that there are ample staff to be able to maintain ratios, and ensure that a staff member is always present with children both indoors and outside.

If children go to sleep whilst in the setting, they are regularly checked by their Key Person or buddy every 10 minutes, this is recorded on a sleep log and signed by the staff member responsible for checking them. Staff must ensure that the child is placed onto the sleep mattress, to ensure that they are on a flat surface. A light blanket can be placed over them if necessary, this must be placed across their chest but tucked under their arms. Any unnecessary layers of clothing must be removed to ensure that they do not overheat. Coats and outdoor clothing must be removed. Other children must be kept out of the area while the child is sleeping.

**Curriculum**

We introduce key elements of child protection into our 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 keep safe.

Within the setting we create a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children’s heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.

We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for all children.

**Disclosures**

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

* Offer reassurance to the child
* Listen to the child
* Give reassurance that she or he will take action.
* Make 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 used 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 child’s personal file which is kept secure and confidential.
* The member of staff acting as the designated person should be informed as soon as possible.

**The member of staff does not question the child, although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification.**

**Informing Parents**

* Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events, unless we feel that this may put the child in danger.
* When speaking to the parents we will make notes of our conversation with them.
* If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Safeguarding Children Partnership does not allow this.
* This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform the parents.

**Confidentiality**

* All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Safeguarding Children Partnership.
* The setting believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
* The setting makes clear to parents its role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local social services department.
* The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
* We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the social care department in relation to the setting’s designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation.
* ***Confidential*** records kept on a child are shared with the child’s parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Safeguarding Children Partnership.

**Transfer of documents**

Where a child leaves the preschool to either transfer to another Early Years setting, or to move onto Primary School, all safeguarding records are passed on to the settings Designated Safeguarding Lead. If possible, the documents will be taken to the new setting by hand and a signature will be requested by the person receiving them to confirm delivery. If this is not possible then the documents will be sent by recorded delivery in a securely fastened envelope marked ‘Confidential’ and addressed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. No Safeguarding documents are retained by the preschool.

**Child volunteering information**

***If a child volunteers information about abuse to a member of staff, it may be done obliquely, rather than directly, e.g. through role play etc. The role of the member of staff or volunteer hearing this, is to listen but not undertake an investigation of the potential abuse. That is the role of the child protection agencies.***

**When a child confides in you**

Things you should do:

* Give the child undivided attention
* Show concern, support and warmth but don’t show emotions, distress or negative reaction; be reassuring (you may say ‘that must have been sad/hard for you’; ‘it’s right to tell someone because you need help’; ask if the child has told his/her parents if the alleged abuse is outside of the home, or the other parent if one parent is implicated).
* Listen carefully
* Allow the child to tell what s/he wants to say but do not ask unnecessary questions or details except to be clear that the child is indicating abuse or neglect. It is important to know what the child is saying and if the child is hurt or might be in need of medical attention.
* Deal with the allegation in such a way that the child does not have to repeat the information to different people within the setting. It is important to know if an incident has happened recently and whom the child is saying has hurt him/her.
* Make careful records of what was said, straight away, record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said, using the child’s own language and colloquialisms.
* Negotiate getting help quickly.
* Do not malign the character of the alleged perpetrator.

Things you should not do:

* Jump straight to conclusions
* Try to get the child to ‘disclose’
* Ask for lots of details about the alleged event/s.
* Speculate or accuse anybody yourself
* Make promises you can’t keep, such as total confidentiality
* Pre-empt or prejudice an investigation by leading the child with closed questions

**Questioning skills**

Closed questions Open questions

Do Tell me………..where

Did Who

Can Describe

Would How

Could What

Are etc. When

 Show me

 Talk

Avoid using ‘Why?’ This can confuse a child and leads to feelings of guilt.

**Initial responses to the child**

***Do Say:***

‘Thank you for telling me’

‘I’m sorry it has happened to you’

‘I am going to help you, and will tell you what I’m going to do’

‘It should never have happened’

‘You are not to blame’

***When you are returning to see the child:***

What you will have done by then and/or who you will bring with you

Honestly what you believe may happen in the immediate future.

***Do not say:***

‘It will be alright soon’

Anything which you will not be able to fulfil

It is anybody’s fault

**Recognition of child Abuse**

**Physical abuse:**

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

**Emotional abuse:**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as, to cause severe and persistent adverse effects 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children feeling frequently frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and 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.

**Sexual abuse:**

Sexual abuse involve forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. 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.

**Child abuse – possible indicators**

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults to recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree.

**Sexual abuse**

* Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child’s age.
* Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases.
* Other extreme reactions such as depression, self-mutilation, and suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia.
* Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging.
* Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys.
* Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
* Being isolated or withdrawn
* Inability to concentrate
* Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder.
* Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
* Become worried about clothing being removed
* Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures.
* Trying to be ‘ultra-good’ or perfect; overreacting to criticism

**Physical abuse**

* Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
* Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
* Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
* Refusal to undress for gym
* Bald patches
* Chronic running away
* Fear of medical help or examination
* Self-destructive tendencies
* Aggression towards others
* Fear of physical contact – shrinking back if touched
* Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to ‘make him study’)
* Fear of suspected abuser being contacted.

**Emotional abuse**

* Physical, mental and emotional developmental lags
* Sudden speech disorders
* Continual self-depreciation (“I’m ugly, stupid, worthless”, etc.)
* Over-reaction to mistakes
* Extreme fear of any new situation
* Inappropriate response to pain (“I deserve this”)
* Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair-twisting, self-mutilation)
* Extremes of passivity or aggression

**Neglect**

* Constant hunger
* Poor personal hygiene
* Constant tiredness
* Poor state of clothing
* Emaciation
* Untreated medical conditions
* No social relationships
* Compulsive scavenging
* Destructive tendencies

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse.

It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone.

(KIDSCAPE)

**Helpful numbers:**

**Children’s services – hants direct 03005551384**

**Emergency services out of hours – 03005551373**

**Professional Line – 0300 5551381**

**LADO – 01962 876364**

This policy was adopted at a meeting Red Barn Pre-school held on:

Date:

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of the signatory (e.g. chairperson etc.)

This policy was reviewed on: