

Portobello Toddlers Hut Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Issue Date:

Review Date:

At Portobello Toddlers Hut we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, helped to thrive and be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

Legal framework and guidance

- Child Protection Guidelines and Policies for Early Years Providers (SPPA)2009
- The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2007
- Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014
- The Early Years Framework
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Children's Charter.

Policy intention

To promote children's welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Provide positive role models
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Always listen to children.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. Child protection is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the other nursery policies and procedures.

The playgroup is aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff may often be the first people to identify that there is a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. All staff will work with other agencies, including as part of a multi-agency team where needed, in the best interests of the child.

The playgroup aims to:

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of playgroup staff
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to share information and seek the help that the child may need
- Ensure staff are trained to understand the child protection policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour

- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection issues and procedures including the local Child Protection Committee's guidelines. The playgroup will ensure that staff complete child protection training every 3 years.
- Ensure that staff who's role involves interacting with children have the relevant Disclosure or PVG checks in place. This will also apply to the Chairperson of the committee.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the playgroup and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Regular volunteers or students will have a PVG or Disclosure provided by their organisation or place of study. Parent volunteers will not be allowed to help children, other than their own to the toilet or be left in sole charge of children.
- Make any referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the local Child Protection Committee's guidelines
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Child Protection Board.

We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. We will offer diverse activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group.

Whose responsibility is it to protect children?

Everyone is responsible for protecting children. Most children grow up in homes where they are loved and well cared for. However, for a variety of reasons sometimes a child may be harmed or mistreated in a way that is abusive. It is important that the child and their family receive help and support to ensure that the child is properly cared for and protected. All children have a right to grow up in a caring and safe environment.

What is child abuse?

There are different types of abuse, for example

- Physical injury – being hit, kicked, punched
- Physical neglect – not being properly fed, clothed, cared for or poor hygiene
- Sexual abuse - inappropriate sexual behaviour or language by an adult towards a child
- Emotional abuse – constantly criticised, ignored, humiliated

What might make you worried about a child?

Children rarely tell if they are being abused. However, there may be signs that concern you, which may be an indication of a child being abused or neglected.

The child may:

- Have unexplained bruising or bruising in an unusual place
- Appear afraid, quiet or withdrawn
- Appear afraid to go home
- Appear hungry, tired or unkempt
- Be left unattended or unsupervised
- Have too much responsibility for their age
- Be acting out in a sexually inappropriate way
- Be misusing drugs or alcohol

It is important to remember that not all children who are abused or neglected will display these signs and equally a child may display some of these signs and symptoms for other reasons. There may be other reasons why you are worried about a child.

The adult may be:

- Acting in a violent or sexual manner towards a child
- Misusing drugs or alcohol while caring for a child

What should you do if a child fails to attend playgroup

If a child does not attend playgroup and staff have not been informed of absence by a parent/carer for 3 sessions staff will make contact by phone.

If there is no reply or contact made staff will leave for 1 working day and try again and record this. (CP3)

If there is still no contact made staff will discuss with management and decide to contact other agencies and record this.

What should you do if you have general concerns about a child?

It can sometimes be difficult to know if a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse. If you are worried, you should report your concerns to your manager or to the designated child protection person for your organisation (playgroup manager).

Check your child protection procedures or if you are unsure you can contact any of the following for advice on what to do next:

- Social worker
- Health visitor
- Family doctor
- Teacher or nursery staff
- Police officer
- Care Inspectorate
- Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)

What do you do if a child tells you something has happened?

Do

- Stay calm
- Listen to the child
- Keep any questions to a minimum
- Reassure the child they were right to tell
- Tell the child what you're going to do next
- Record in the child's own words what has been said
- Act promptly and immediately report to your line manager or designated child protection officer

Don't

- Ask too many questions
- Make any false promises
- Express shock or anger at what is being said to you
- Interpret what the child is saying to you – just record and report
- Delay listening to the child or passing on your concerns
- Carry out an 'investigation' into the allegation

What do you do if a child tells you or you suspect a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse?

If a child tells you something, or you suspect a child is being abused, you must report your concerns to your manager immediately. If there are child protection concerns, a referral should be made to social work or in an emergency, to the Police. This will either be made by your manager or yourself. (In the absence of the playgroup manager)

The following details are required when a referral is made:

- The child's name, address and date of birth
- Parent's names and current whereabouts
- Child's present whereabouts
- Your details, for example, your involvement with the child
- What the concerns are and why they have arisen

- Any recent changes in the child's behaviour or presentation
- If the child said anything that concerns you
- If there are any other children in the household
- If there are any other agencies currently involved with the family (if known)
- If there have been any previous concerns about this child or other children in the household
- If the child has any additional support needs
- If there are any cultural or religious factors which need to be taken into account
- If the parents are aware of the concerns and if so what is their reaction

A referral should be made even if some of the above information is unknown. Parents should usually be notified of the concerns prior to referral, however in situations where this may place the child in a more dangerous situation the social work or police will advise on when the parents should be informed.

- Where allegations of abuse have been made, the allegations must be recorded exactly as told to you on form CP1.
- This form must be given and discussed with your manager immediately.

Once all information is gathered the following actions must be carried out:

- Concerns allayed no further action required however full report is kept
- Continue to monitor. (listen, observe, record, consult and report using CP1)
- Completion of CP2 and referral made to social work and Police

How do I make a referral to social work or the police?

When making a referral to the social work department or Police you will be asked to give as much information as possible. When the social work department or Police receive information about possible child abuse they must act on this information.

Social work and the Police will want to:

- Speak to the referrer
- Speak to the child
- Speak to the parent/carer
- Speak to any other relevant person – other family members, teacher, and health visitor etc
- Make further enquires if necessary
- Take further action if necessary – arrange medical examination, etc.

Throughout the process it is important that children and their families are listened to and consulted and given the necessary information, support and help required.

This policy shall be reviewed every 3 years.

Who should I contact?

Social Care Direct

0131 2202324

Out of hours :0800 7316969 (Mon-Thurs 5pm-8.30am Weekends Fri 3.55pm-Mon 8.30am)

Police

0131 311 3131

In an emergency call 101/999

www.policescotland.police.uk

Health Visitor

See individual files for contact numbers

NHS Lothian

0800 224488

www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Care Inspectorate

0131 653 4100

0845 6009527

Childline

0800 11 11

Parentline

0808 800222

Protection of Vulnerable Children

CP1

INCIDENT RECORD FORM

Name of person reporting incident:
Position:
Child's/ person's name: (or initials if suspicion only)
Child's/ person's date of birth:
Child's/ person's address:
Parent's/ carer's name and address:
Date and time of any incident:
Your observations:

Protection of Vulnerable Children

INCIDENT RECORD FORM

Exactly what the child/person said and what you said:

(Remember, do not lead the child/ person- record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Action taken so far:

Signature – Staff Member:	Signature – Child/Young Person (if disclosure):
Print name:	Print name:
Date	Date
The report should now be passed to your Manager	

Data Protection

The personal data contained in this form will be held in confidence, subject to any statutory obligations which may require the Playgroup to release it.

Protection of Vulnerable Children

CP2

REFERRAL RECORD FORM

Please attach Incident Record Form (CP1)

Name of child/person:	Date of birth:
-----------------------	----------------

External agencies contacted by Playgroup manager

POLICE	YES/NO
If yes - please give details including date & time:	
Name and contact number:	
Details of advice received:	

SOCIAL SERVICES	YES/NO
If yes - please give details including date & time:	
Name and contact number:	
Details of advice received:	

Protection of Vulnerable Children

REFERRAL RECORD FORM

Please attach Incident Record Form (CP1)

<i>Notes</i>	
Signature – Manager	Signature – Child/Young Person
Print Name:	Print Name:
Date:	Date:
Copy to: Police <input type="checkbox"/>	Social Services <input type="checkbox"/>

Remember to maintain confidentiality to protect the child. Only discuss this incident with those who need to know.

Data Protection

The personal data contained in this form will be held in confidence, subject to any statutory obligations which may require the Playgroup to release it.
