



Safeguarding Children Policy

Moorwell Miracles Children's Nursery takes safeguarding matters very seriously and does all it can to protect its children from harm, abuse and neglect.

Child Protection is provided by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). The Children's Services Duty Suite is for all referrals of any safeguarding issues. The number to call is 01724 296500 or 01724 296555 (out of hours).

All practitioners must be aware of the possible indications of abuse or neglect and of the procedure for dealing with suspected cases. Practitioners are kept up to date with safeguarding children training courses, so all staff are aware and kept up to date with any new information.

Staff must identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- significant changes in children's behaviour;
- deterioration in children's general well-being;
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- children's comments which give cause for concern;
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home; and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- Bullying, including online bullying or prejudice based bullying;
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse;
- Gender-based violence;
- Radicalization and/ or extremist behaviour;
- Child sexual trafficking;
- Witnessing domestic violence
- Female genital mutation (FGM);
- Forced marriage;
- Fabricated or induced illness;
- Poor parenting, in particular in relation to babies and young children;

Referrals of child abuse

If a child arrives with injuries the staff should:

- Ensure immediate medical attention, if necessary.
- If possible ask the parent/ carer how the injuries occurred.
- Explanations, however puzzling, should be accepted and accusations should not be made. Make a written record, including diagrams, of observations and explanations given. Have a witness wherever possible. This recording of information is to ensure that

reasonably full and clear information is obtained in order to be able to make an appropriate referral to the Duty Suite if necessary.

- If you suspect that the injuries have been caused by assault or by failure to protect the child you must tell the Safeguarding Coordinator or a member of the management team. That person will contact, without delay, the Duty Social Worker in the Children's Services Duty Suite for the district in which the child resides.

Suspicion of Abuse:

If through conversation or other contact with the child you have cause to suspect physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of a child in your care:

1. Listen to what the child says. Be comforting and sympathetic. Communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference this is especially important for children with special needs or whose preferred language is not English. Where concerns arise as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality. Ensure that the child feels as little responsibility as possible.
2. It is particularly important not to make any suggestions to the child regarding how the incident may have happened. Do not ask the child leading questions. Only ask questions to clarify what he/she is saying.
3. Write down exactly what the child says or what actions concern you, and what you have said in response. Sign and date it.
4. Do not make assumptions about whom the allegation might concern. If a member of staff may be involved, appropriate steps must be taken to ensure the safety of the child and other children.
5. Inform the Safeguarding Practitioner (or member of management) of your suspicions and that person will contact without delay the Duty Suite.
6. Once a child is referred to Children's Services Duty Suite they will ask a series of questions and make an assessment of the child's needs. Please make a note of who you spoke to, the time and date and a brief account of the conversation and advice provided by the Duty Suite.
7. Follow the advice provided by the Duty Suite. The Duty Suite will usually ask Practitioners to notify the parent/ carer of the referral unless it could put the child or another person at risk.

Confidentiality

The nursery has the right to share any information regarding child protection with other childcare professionals. All information will be kept confidential.

Managing Allegations against a Practitioner

The Children Act 2004 has introduced the **Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)** who is responsible for ensuring all safeguarding concerns are dealt with. The contact number for them is 01724 298293. If you have any questions or concerns please contact them.

If there is an allegation against a Practitioner:

1. Somebody receives information that an allegation has been made against an **employee, volunteer or professional working with/providing services for children**, in relation to harm to a child, a criminal act or behavior that would have implications for working with children.
2. The person receiving the allegation should immediately notify the Safeguarding Practitioner (or a member of the management team). That person then must notify **Ofsted and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** as soon as possible, within 24 hours. **If it is extremely serious** (i.e. current injury, risk of losing forensic evidence, imminent danger to the child/public/ staff, crime ongoing etc. – first contact the Police – then contact the LADO on 01724 298293 as soon as possible.
3. In all but the most serious cases the LADO and the Manager will initially consider:
 4. Whether or not it needs referring to the police;
 5. Whether it needs a strategy discussion;
 6. Whether any immediate action needs to be taken to make the child, other children and the nursery safe.
7. The LADO will consult with police/duty suite and the employer or senior of the accused person if that is different to the person referring it.
8. The LADO will then convene a strategy discussion if required or record the decisions and action agreed with the senior and coordinate the next steps.
9. The LADO will coordinate and review future action as necessary and ensure all parties required are involved, informed and record information as per regulations.

Unless the allegation is clearly unfounded, malicious or false (e.g. if the accused person was not even at work that day or has never met the child), it should still be reported to the LADO to decide:

- If the police need to take action against the person making the allegation.
- If the alleged victim has other needs underlying the false allegation.

Regardless of the nature of the allegation, regardless of who receives it, whether it appears of little importance or potentially very serious - it MUST be reported to the LADO.

If it goes through to the duty first by mistake or to the police first unnecessarily – duty or police should notify the LADO.

The nursery's complaints process is separate. The LADO must be informed of any allegations against practitioners so that they can advise of what to do next. This is in the best interests of the practitioner who has been accused and the setting. It is up to the police to investigate to prove if the practitioner is guilty or innocent. Any formal or informal investigation by any staff member could cause loss or distorted evidence that may damage the investigation. The implications of this could be that someone who is guilty could escape conviction for some reason e.g. because of lack of evidence (possibly from the person covering their tracks). On the other hand it could make a person look guilty when they are not. Only the police are trained to ascertain this.

If a parent or child informs a practitioner about an allegation, but does not want to make a written complaint a child, it does not mean there has not been an allegation. This should still be reported to the LADO.

Any allegations or reportable incidents must be notified to Ofsted and the relevant agencies in line with safeguarding policy. This is stated as 'notify as soon as reasonably practical but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made'.

Photos

It is against our policy to bring phones or cameras into the nursery. Only cameras provided by the nursery can be used. All photographs should be kept within the nursery and stored securely. Cameras containing pictures of the children are not to be taken outside the nursery in case the device gets misplaced.

Mobile Phones

All staff members' personal phones must be left in the staff room and turned off or put on silent. Mobile phones may be used in the staff room on lunch breaks only.

Personal mobile phones must not be used for any purpose in any of the rooms where children are present. Personal mobile phones should not be taken on outings either. The nursery will supply staff members with a phone to use. This is because it might distract a staff member's attention away from the children, which could potentially put the children at risk.

In special circumstances, for example, if a relative is seriously ill and in hospital, staff may leave their mobile phone in the office or reception. The office staff will be able to answer this for them should an important call come through. Permission for this is to be given at the discretion of the manager. Emergency phone calls can also be directed to the nursery landline as a means for family to contact staff.

For privacy and child protection photos must not be taken in view of or in children's toilets or nappy changing areas.

If a parent or visitor comes to nursery with a mobile phone then they should be asked to use it outside the rooms where the children are not present. They should be informed that this is in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding in line with the Prevent Strategy

As part of the nurseries commitment to safeguarding all staff will be given the training they need to identify children at risk of radicalisation and know where and how to refer them for further help if necessary.

Our Safeguarding Officer is Olivia Johnson. Staff that have any concerns relating to a child, parent, staff member or visitor to the nursery will be under obligation to inform the Anti-Terrorism Officer of their concerns.

Identification of concerns might include:

- Expression of views which are discriminately against protected groups or individuals
- Third party reports of concerns about behaviour e.g. plans to travel abroad or extremist activities
- Evidence of discriminately treatment of other groups or individuals
- Evidence of bullying behaviour or harassment
- Evidence of non-compliance with the providers expectations of behaviour
- Possessing, accessing extremist materials.
- Evidence of family concern about vulnerability to extremism
- Expression of extremist views including on Facebook.
- Use of extremist language
- Threats of violence

If a child, parent, staff member, carer or visitor makes a comment deemed to be inappropriate or concerning the Safeguarding Practitioner would be deal with this by asking the staff member to write a communications record detail what was said and when in as much detail as possible.

The nursery will then actively engages with the appropriate external agency including police, the safeguarding board and the Local Authority. Possible extremism is regarded as a safeguarding concern and therefore we may disclose information about vulnerable individuals without informing parents/carers if the child may be deemed at risk.

Such an approach is necessary to help ensure an environment that consistently promote positive values of equality, tolerance and respect for others.

Further information and support is available from the Prevent for Further Education and Training website <http://www.preventforfeandtraining.org.uk/>

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is "any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This abuse can encompass but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. This also includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Research suggests that children who witness domestic violence are at risk of developing emotional and behavioural difficulties as well as speech and language problems.

Young children who were victims of or witnesses to violence were more likely to become aggressive, have low self-esteem and do less well at school than their peers.

E-Safety

Children's use of the internet can pose significant safeguarding risks. The nursery follows a strict E-Safety Policy to protect children whilst at the setting. However, if practitioners have a concern that a child has had access to inappropriate websites outside the setting then the safeguarding procedure may need to be followed as appropriate.

For instance, if through conversation or other contact with a child you have cause to suspect any sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, radicalization, child grooming etc. through the internet then the Safeguarding Practitioner will need to be informed and they will contact the Duty Suite. If a practitioner has concerns that a child could have accidentally accessed inappropriate material because of neglect then the Duty Suite would also need to be informed.

For less serious concerns, practitioners should inform the parents of their concern and help them to understand that the websites are not appropriate. Practitioners should refer the parent to the Thinkyouknow website.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Abuse is not limited to harmful behaviours perpetrated by adults – children and young people can abuse too and this is known as peer-on-peer abuse. This is likely to include behaviours such as:

- Physical abuse includes hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person.
- Emotional abuse includes behaviour which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class).
- Sexual touching/assaults and sexting: Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse.

There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally, before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards.

Practitioners must deal with concerns over peer on peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the basic information as soon as possible to get a clear picture of what has happened. If from talking to a child, they express a concern, ask the child to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the child to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. Complete a Communication Record and if necessary an accident/ incident report.

If from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to Children's Services Duty Suite immediately, 01724 296500 or the out of hours 01724 296555. Where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also. If this is the case, once the duty suite has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps.

Parents should be informed face to face because the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

Points to consider:

- What is the age of the children involved? How old are the children involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? (In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise (see following)
- Where did the incident or incidents take place? Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?
- What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred? Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?
- What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred? Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?
- Repetition. Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?
- In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Services Duty Suite.

Any instances of peer on peer abuse communicated by children or parents must be taken seriously and correctly documented. To prevent the risk of peer on peer abuse children should be supervised at all times (they must be in sight, sound or hearing). Practitioners must spread themselves through all areas of the room/ garden area so that they can see the children. Children must be supervised whilst they are toileting to ensure that the children are safe.

Monitoring of Children

While it is not compulsory for children to attend nursery, practitioners have a duty of care to monitor every child's attendance. As part of this we may call parents/ carers to find out the reason for the absence. This will be recorded on the children's registers.

Special Educational Needs

Disabled children have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes as non-disabled children. Disabled children do however require additional support. This is because they can experience greater and created vulnerability as a result of negative attitudes about disabled children and unequal access to services and resources, and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/ or communication impairments.

The Working Together document says that safeguards for disabled children are essentially the same as for non-disabled children. Particular attention should be paid to promoting high standards of practice and a high level of awareness of the risks of harm, and strengthening the capacity of children and families to help themselves.

- Many disabled children are at an increased likelihood of being socially isolated with fewer outside contacts than non-disabled children
- Their dependency on parents and carers for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate personal care, increases their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour.
- They have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse.
- They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening
- They often do not have access to someone they can trust to disclose that they have been abused
- They are especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation
- Looked after disabled children are not only vulnerable to the same factors that exist for all children living away from home, but are particularly susceptible to possible abuse because of their additional dependency on residential and hospital staff for day to day physical care needs.

Reporting safeguarding concerns needs to be encouraged at all levels of professional involvement, and prompt and detailed information sharing is vital

Whilst at times, it is immediately apparent that a non-disabled child has suffered significant harm, it is not always so and lengthy enquiries are often necessary. Where there are safeguarding concerns about a disabled child, there is a need for greater awareness of the possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect, as the situation is often more complex. However, it is crucial when considering whether a disabled child has been abused and/or neglected that the disability does not mask or deter an appropriate investigation of child protection concerns.

Any such concerns for the safety and welfare of a disabled child should be acted upon in the same way as that for a non-disabled child, as set down in Working

Together to Safeguard Children (2006). Possible forms of abuse could be:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child, such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment
- Poor toileting arrangements
- Lack of stimulation

- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification e.g. deprivation of liquid, medication, food or clothing
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication
- Ill-fitting equipment e.g. calipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting; misappropriation of a child's finances
- Invasive procedures which are unnecessary or are carried out against the child's will.

The Safeguarding Children Policy will need to be followed in exactly the same way when practitioners suspect a disabled child has experienced or is at risk of abuse.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

One of the key factors found in most cases of child sexual exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (sexual activity in return for something); for the victim and/or perpetrator or facilitator.

Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or alcohol) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived receipt of love or affection). It is critical to remember the unequal power dynamic within which this exchange occurs and to remember that the receipt of something by a child/young person does not make them any less of a victim. It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the requirement for exchange, for example a child who engages in sexual activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family.

Whilst there can be gifts or treats involved in other forms of sexual abuse (e.g. a father who sexually abuses but also buys the child toys) it is most likely referred to as child sexual exploitation if the 'exchange', as the core dynamic at play, results in financial gain for or enhanced status of, the perpetrator.

Where the gain is only for the perpetrator/facilitator, there is most likely a financial gain (money, discharge of a debt or free/discounted goods or services) or increased status as a result of the abuse.

If sexual gratification, or exercise of power and control, is the only gain for the perpetrator (and there is no gain for the child/young person) this would not normally constitute child sexual exploitation but should be responded to as a different form of child sexual abuse.

The vulnerability of the child or young person and grooming process employed by perpetrators renders them powerless to recognise the exploitative nature of relationships and unable to give informed consent.

All children and young people are at risk of being sexually exploited, regardless of age, gender or where they live. We have a responsibility for keeping children who attend the nursery safe. We are also vigilant for signs of risk that indicate that (older) siblings may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Risk Indicators

The key to safeguarding vulnerable children and young people is the ability to recognise possible indicators of child sexual exploitation.

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from nursery, school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Children can be both experiencing child sexual exploitation and perpetrating it at the same time. Examples might include a child who is forced to take part in the exploitation of another child under duress, or a child who is forced to introduce other children to their abuser under threats to their

family's safety. These situations require a nuanced approach that recognises and engages with the young person's perpetration within the context of their own victimisation.

If we suspect this form of abuse to be taking place, or even threatened within any of our families then we will report this to the Local Children's Duty Suite, as set out in the Working Together document. It is our duty to safeguard our children and young people and to encourage the investigation and prosecution of criminal activity by those who coerce children and young people and abuse them through exploitation. If we believe a child is in immediate risk of harm, we will contact the police.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Criminal exploitation of children could include a situation where a child is forced to work on a cannabis farm or to commit theft.

One of the key factors found in most cases of exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (e.g. carrying drugs in return for something). Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or clothes) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived friendship or affection). It is important to remember the unequal power dynamic within which this exchange occurs and to remember that the receipt of something by a young person or vulnerable adult does not make them any less of a victim. It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the requirement for exchange, for example a young person who engages in a criminal activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family.

Criminal exploitation can be referred to as a 'county line' activity. Country line activities include but are not limited to;

- when individuals or gangs use vulnerable children and adults to transport and sell Class A drugs;
- when individuals or gangs use vulnerable children and adults to transport and hide weapons;
- when individuals or gangs use vulnerable children and adults to secure dwellings of vulnerable people in the area, so that they can use them as a base from which to sell drugs.

County lines is about modern slavery, human trafficking and exploitation, alongside drug supply and violent crime.

If we suspect this form of abuse to be taking place, or even threatened within any of our families then we will report this to the Local Children's Duty Suite, as set out in the Working Together

document. It is our duty to safeguard our children and young people and to encourage the investigation and prosecution of criminal activity by those who coerce children and young people and abuse them through exploitation. If we believe a child is in immediate risk of harm, we will contact the police.

Upskirting

The practice of "upskirting" typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks.

If a practitioner has any reason to believe this could have happened at nursery, the practitioner accused will be sent home immediately and the police will be called. Practitioners should write a statement of the incident and not do any form of investigation or attempt to question the child(ren) involved about it except to reassure them if they are concerned. This will become a police matter and any interference from staff could cause evidence to be impaired. The LADO will be informed as soon as is reasonably practicable within 14 days of the incident.

GDPR

Safeguarding records are kept in separate folders, within the children's files in the filing cabinet so that should a parent request to see their child's information this can easily be removed before the parents see it in cases where releasing the information could cause harm to the child or someone else.

If a member of staff suspects that a staff member is in breach of this policy they must inform the Manager or a member of the office immediately.