

Safeguarding Children Procedure

Thorpe on the Hill Playgroup is committed to an environment in which children are safe from abuse and where any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to in accordance with The Governments Statutory Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2013' and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

- We will stay up to date with Inter-agency procedures by accessing the following web link:
<http://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>
- All staff are aware of their responsibility as early years practitioners to share any concerns they have about a child with the designated lead safeguarding person.
- Staff members also have the right to share concerns directly with the Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services Customer Services Centre (CSC) (Tel. 01522 782111 or Out of Hours 01522 782333) or Lincolnshire Police if they feel this is appropriate. Lincolnshire Police can be contacted on 0300 111 0300.
- All staff will be made aware of possible indicators of child abuse and the procedures for recording and reporting through staff training, both internal and external.
- The staff will be made aware of the importance of recognising and reporting 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 through staff training, both internal and external. In addition staff will be made aware of the whistle blowing policy.
- All parent/carers will be provided with a copy of the setting's safeguarding policy and procedure and are made aware of the fact that Thorpe on the Hill Playgroup has a legal obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in their care, and that the child's needs are be our first concern.

Records will be kept as appropriate.

Whenever concerns are raised or changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific record is set up. Our records include; pre-existing injuries, incidents, accidents and observations. All concerns remain confidential and shared only on a need to know basis. The guidance set by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board will be followed.

Where a disclosure is made:

- Reassurance is given to the child.
- The child is listened to and taken seriously.
- Caution will be exercised in responding to a disclosure; it may or may not be appropriate to ask the child questions such as 'tell me more about that' and 'who else was there'. (Staff will be mindful that 'leading' the child could jeopardise an investigation or subsequent court case).
- Promises are not made to the child to not share any of the information made in the disclosure.
- The designated person with responsibility for safeguarding children is informed immediately and procedures under the guidance of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board are followed.

- A referral is made without delay to Lincolnshire County Council Children's Service Customer Services Centre (CSC) on 01522 782111 or Out of Hours 01522 782333.
- Advice and guidance will be taken from the CSC with regard to next steps.
- Up to date information and guidance on making a referral will be sought from http://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_refer_proce.html#making_refer

Records are made to include:

- The child's name, full address, date of birth.
- The date and time of the disclosure/observation.
- The exact record of disclosure (in child's own words).
- The name of person to whom disclosure was made.
- The name of any third party present.
- The Single Assessment Form, completed (as far as possible with all information) signed and sent to the relevant officer (Children's Services will advise on this) within 24 hours of the telephone referral.

All records are kept separately and securely from the child's main records with restricted access.
(For more information on the Team Around the Child (TAC) and the Single Assessment Form (SAF) please refer to www.lincolnshirechildren.net)

Allegations against a staff member:

In accordance with requirements our procedures for dealing with allegations against staff complies with Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board policies.

Examples of inappropriate adult behaviour may include

- staff that have behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Staff that have possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Staff that have failed to execute their duty to safeguard a child/ren at the setting or elsewhere
- Staff that have behaved towards a child/ren in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Our procedure is as follows:

- The setting will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for managing allegations through the Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services Customer Service Centre (CSC) on 01522 782111 or out of hours 01522 782333 / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - direct contact 01522 554674.
- The setting will liaise with the LADO prior to any investigation commencing and the setting will fully cooperate with all investigations under the advice and guidance of the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). The LADO should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to the employer's attention or that are made directly to the police. (Working together to safeguard children March 2013, p49).
- Ofsted will be informed of the allegation as soon as is reasonably practical but at least within 14 days of the allegation being made. Ofsted will also be notified of the action taken in respect of the allegations. (EYFS 2012, 3.8). Ofsted will be contacted on telephone number 0300 123 1231
- Details will be recorded and stored securely.
- The setting's disciplinary procedure will be followed where necessary.

For further information and guidance we will refer to

http://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_alleg_pers_wk_child.html

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation, however, we will consider the seriousness ('and plausibility' has been removed) of the allegation, the risk of harm to children and the possibility of tampering with evidence, as well as the interests of the person concerned and our organisation.

Where a member of staff leaves our employment during an investigation the investigation will continue and the setting will in accordance with current legislation make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Where a member of staff is dismissed as a consequence of an allegation being upheld a referral will also be made to the DBS.

Referral guidance and form:<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/services/dbs-referrals/>

Supporting families:

The Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 have extended the rights of individuals and families to confidentiality and professionals as a general rule should seek the agreement and consent of parents/carers before making a referral to the local authority.

Where our designated lead is in doubt as to whether consent is necessary, the facts of the case will be discussed with the Customer Service Centre.

- We acknowledge that parents will be the first point of contact and they will be informed of any suspicions **unless** this is deemed likely to put a child at risk.
- We will follow the guidelines laid down by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board.
- The setting, through the Safeguarding Children policy and other sources of information will inform parents of their role and responsibility regarding safeguarding children.
- The setting will continue work with families throughout any investigation.