



Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy: Including managing allegations of abuse against a practitioner

Wick Pre-School will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Procedures

Our designated person who co-ordinates child protection issues is: [Tia Harris \(Manager\)](#)

Our designated officer who oversees this work is: [Dan Skellett \(Chairperson\)](#)

- Wick Pre-School ensure all practitioners and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures and provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children;
- Applicants for posts within Wick Pre-School 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 Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed;
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information;
- Wick Pre-School abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for practitioner and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children;

- Volunteers do not work unsupervised;
- Wick Pre-School abide by the Protection of 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;
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to Wick Pre-School; visitors are required to sign a visitor's book upon entry and exit of Wick Pre-School; and
- Wick Pre-School take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into Wick Pre-School so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. At Wick Pre-School we ensure this by bolting gates and doors, only practitioners are allowed to unbolt such gates and doors (allowing entry to only those whom are authorised to enter).

Responding to suspicions

- Wick Pre-School 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 may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with Wick Pre-School Manager who is acting as the 'designated person.' The information is stored in Wick Pre-School's Child Protection folder which is securely stored in a locked drawer;
- The designated person decides on the next step to be taken;
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation; and

- Practitioners at Wick Pre-School will take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking the children questions.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Where a child makes comments to a practitioner that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect. The practitioner will:

- listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action, but does not promise confidentiality;
- not question the child;
- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes;
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time;
- the names of any other person present at the time;
- will speak immediately to the Pre-School's designated person;
- these records are signed and dated and kept in Wick Pre-School's Child Protection folder, which is kept securely and confidentially in a locked drawer; and
- In the event that a child sustains an accident at home, parents are asked to inform Wick Pre-School and complete an accident at home form. Details of the nature of the injury and when the accident happened must be recorded, signed and dated. This is to assist the Pre-School to ensure all injuries are accounted for.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact as more often than not there are extremely reasonable explanations for the concerns;
- 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 Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this; and
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Liaison with other agencies

- Wick Pre-School have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns. This document is displayed on notice board 1 in the office;
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Pre-School and child protection agencies to work well together. (These can be found in the child protection folder). Our first port of call is the Social Services Team on: [01454 866009](tel:01454866009);
- Wick Pre-School notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children by calling: [0845 601 4772](tel:08456014772); and
- If a referral is to be made to the Local Authority Social Care Department, Wick Pre-School will 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.

Allegations against practitioners

- Wick Pre-School ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within Wick Pre-School, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by Wick Pre-School, which may include an allegation of abuse;
- We respond to any disclosure by children or practitioners that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within Wick Pre-School, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by Wick Pre-School, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident;
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social care department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this;
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police; and
- Where the Management Committee and Children's Social Care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the Chairperson will suspend the member practitioner on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the practitioner as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a practitioner or a volunteer is dismissed Wick Pre-School because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Independent Barring Board administrators so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List by calling: [0845 601 4772](tel:08456014772).

Training

- Wick Pre-School seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in Wick Pre-School to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals; and

- We ensure that all practitioners know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in Wick Pre-School.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with practitioners or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others; and
- All practitioners at Wick Pre-School are aware of the importance of child to adult ratios; children under the age of 3 will be 1:4 ratio and children over the age of 3 will be ratio 1:8.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe 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 that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe;
- We create within Wick Pre-School 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; and
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- Wick Pre-School believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, practitioners and volunteers;
- We make clear to parents our 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 Children's Social Care Team;
- We will continue 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 child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation; and
- 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 Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Legal framework

At Wick Pre-School we are aware of the legal framework that underpins the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy; these can be found alongside the policy.