

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS / CARERS

This Safeguarding Policy applies to two different groups of SEN-den clients:

1. Autistic children and their siblings who access our activities.
2. Parents and carers of young autistic children who access our services.

Key principles

- The welfare of the families that are registered with us and access our services is paramount. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All of the children and adults we work with, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- SEN-den personnel are trained to understand the nature of abuse and to remain alert to matters of concern. They have a responsibility to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead available at all times during which SEN-den's activities are running at the Lancaster Centre.
- ***SEN-den's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Lubna Reid.*** She coordinates all safeguarding issues and liaises with external agencies as per the procedures outlined within this Policy.

SEN-den is committed to ensuring that:

- The designated DSL receives appropriate training in safeguarding and undertakes refresher training at least once every two years. (*Training last completed with ECYPS in January 2020*)
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new Directors and volunteers, which includes identity checks and DBS checks.
- All volunteers who have direct contact with children will have received basic safeguarding training.
- Any therapists with whom we work, that have direct contact with our clients must present a current DBS certificate before beginning their work with our families¹.

¹ This includes our counsellor, massage therapist and other autism specialists such as speech and language therapists, music therapists and play therapists that offer services to SEN-den clients.

- All Directors, volunteers and therapists with whom we have formal working arrangements understand the contents of this policy and are expected to be alert to signs of abuse and neglect when working with our clients
- All Directors, volunteers and therapists working with SEN-den are aware of their statutory duties with regard to disclosure, on discovery or suspicion of abuse, and will follow the procedures outlined below.

Our position regarding the use of mobile phones and cameras during our groups, play sessions and other activities organised by SEN-den²

- Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission.
- Photographs of children accessing SEN-den services will only be used for promotional purposes such as on Facebook or the SEN-den website, with explicit permission from the parents / carers of that child or children.
- The need for explicit parental permission to use photographs of SEN-den registered children applies to therapists with whom we have a formal working arrangement with.

Procedures if abuse is suspected or disclosed

In the event that a child, parent or carer makes a disclosure to a SEN-den Director, volunteer, or therapist with whom we have a formal working arrangement, we will:

- Reassure them that they were not to blame and were right to speak out.
- Listen to them but not question them.
- Give reassurance to them that SEN-den will take appropriate action.
- Record the incident as soon as possible.

If a SEN-den Director or volunteer witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the matter straight away using the Record Sheet for Safeguarding Concerns (*see Appendix 2.*)

If a third party expresses a concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they will not do so, we will explain that SEN-den is obliged to, and the incident will be logged accordingly.

² The majority of activities that are organised by SEN-den take place at the Lancaster Centre. However, on occasion, there may be activities or other events that are organised by SEN-den and our policy regarding filming or photographing children will still apply.

Procedures for logging a concern

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, will be recorded on the Record Sheet for Safeguarding Concerns form as soon as possible after the event.

The Record Sheet for Safeguarding Concerns will include:

- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern.
- date and time at which the record was made.
- name and date of birth of the individual involved.³
- a factual report of what happened.
- the individual's own words will be used.
- name, signature and position of the person logging the concern.

The record will be given to SEN-den's DSL, who will decide on the appropriate course of action as per the procedures below.

For concerns about child abuse, the DSL will contact Social Care. SEN-den's DSL will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours.

If for any reason, a SEN-den Director or volunteer thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly by the DSL, they may contact Social Care directly.

Procedure if an allegation is made against a SEN-den Director, volunteer or therapist with whom we have a formal working arrangement

- The allegation will be recorded on a Record Sheet for Safeguarding Concerns. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The allegation must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) via submission of an Enfield LADO Referral Form. Any queries regarding the form can be answered by the LADO / Duty LADO via telephone: The phone number is 0208 379 2850.
- The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and SEN-den will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the Director, volunteer or therapist pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If appropriate SEN-den will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- In the event that the allegation is made against the Designated Safeguarding Lead, then **SEN-den Director, Victoria Aseervatham**, will take on the duties of DSL and follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

³ SEN-den does not routinely collect the date of birth of parents and carers. However, we do routinely collect the dates of birth of children accessing our services as part of our family registration process.

APPENDIX 1: WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

There are several different forms of child abuse, including neglect:

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Physical abuse can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

APPENDIX 2: RECORD SHEET FOR SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS



Reporting Suspected Abuse - Confidential Recording Sheet

Name of person reporting

Name of child or parent / carer

Age and date of birth

Ethnicity (*if known*)

Religion (*if known*)

First language (*if known*)

Disability (*if known*)

If the concern pertains to a child, the parent or carer's name(s)

Home address / Telephone no:

Are you reporting your concerns or reporting someone else's. Please give details.

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include date, time, specific incidents.

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Have you spoken to the child / parent or carer? If so, what was said?

(IF APPLICABLE) Have you spoken to the parent(s) or carer? if so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, please give details?

Have you consulted anybody else? Please give details

Person reported to and date of reporting

Signature of person reporting

Today's date

Action taken

Notes

APPENDIX 3: CONTACT DETAILS FOR REPORTING CONCERNS

For minor concerns

Regarding a child:

The DSL will contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) by telephoning 0208 379 2767

Regarding a parent or carer:

If appropriate, the DSL will request early help and support for the family by contacting the Early Help Service Duty Team on: 020 8379 2002 / 020 8379 2525 or submitting a Family Support referral form on the Children's Portal. www.enfield.gov.uk/childrensportal

For more serious concerns

Regarding a child:

If a safeguarding response is required, the DSL will visit the Children's Portal and complete an online Child Protection referral www.enfield.gov.uk/childrensportal

Regarding a parent or carer:

The DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101)

For urgent concerns

Regarding a child:

The DSL will call Enfield Children's MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) by telephone on 0208 379 5555 and then submit a referral in writing ChildrensMASH@Enfield.gov.uk

If Out of Hours, the DSL can call the Emergency Duty Team via 0208 379 1000.

Regarding a parent or carer:

The DSL will contact the Police on 999.