

P13 Safeguarding Children Policy (child protection)

Updated September 2022

This policy should be read in conjunction with PC05 Guidance for Safer Working Practices as well as policies P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, P11, P12, P15, P17 and the Whistleblowing Procedure PC04.

Ridgeway Playgroup takes the necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Ridgeway Playgroup believes the health and safety of the child to be paramount. We plan to provide an environment that ensures children are safe from potential abuse, including bullying. All staff have been vetted by the Disclosure and Barring Service and are trained in local Child Protection Procedures. All new members of staff will be subject to an interview, acceptable references and work for a probationary period. If the staff have a concern, all actions are determined with the child's best interests in mind, respecting their rights and reinforcing the staff's responsibilities to them.

Employment of Staff

- Ridgeway Playgroup will follow a rigorous recruitment selection procedure. This will include an interview, DBS checks and the taking up of references for the successful candidate.
- All staff will be inducted on a recognised Child Protection Course at the earliest opportunity.
- All staff will update their training at staff meetings annually.
- All staff are expected to conform to an acceptable standard of behaviour. Only DBS/CRB checked adults will take the children to the toilet.
- The toilet door must be kept open at all times and no member of staff will be in a closed room on their own with a child.
- Ridgeway Playgroup is registered with the Child Protection internet update service and the trustees receive updates, as they are available so we are aware of the latest legislation.
- The Play Leader is the Designated Child Protection Officer but liaises continually with the trustees.

For more information about the employment of staff see the personnel policy.

Complaints Procedure

Please refer to separate complaints procedure (PC03)

Protection of Children Procedure

Staff must be vigilant at all times and the safety and protection of all children is of paramount importance.

- Staff will be aware of
 - Frequent bruising, or in unusual positions, finger and thumb marks
 - Burns and scalds
 - Bite marks, deep scratches
 - Frequent fractures, recurrent injuries
 - Inconsistent explanations
 - No explanations
 - Sudden changes in behaviour or withdrawal
 - Child, parent, witness report
 - Neglect
 - Emotional and verbal mistreatment
 - Vulnerability to radicalisation and extremist behaviour
 - Peer-on-peer abuse

If any concerns are raised the staff will meet and discuss them. The staff will then follow the Gloucestershire 'Safeguarding Children' procedures as below. For additional information see www.gsrb.org.uk and the [Gloucestershire Child Protection Procedures](#) flowchart.

Any welfare concerns to be raised with the Gloucestershire MASH on 01452 426565.

When raising a concern we will be directed to appropriate social work team, determined by area and we will speak directly with a social work practitioner.

We will be asked –

- the nature of concern
- information about previous welfare concerns, current and historical information we hold

The social work practitioner will –

- discuss what action may be necessary in light of information held by social care in conjunction with our information
- agree whether a referral may be appropriate to address issues raised
agree other possible ways forward to address concerns
- agree how parents will be informed of the contact made (parents will always need to be told of that information has been shared with MASH unless there is a judgement that to do so would put the child or anyone else at risk of harm or would hamper future police investigation)

AT ALL TIMES THE SAFETY AND WELL BEING OF THE CHILDREN WILL BE PUT FIRST

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

Supporting criteria

The protection of the child is the registered person's first priority.

The registered person has a written statement, based on the procedures laid out in the Government booklet 'What To Do If You Are Worried That A Child Is Being Abused – Summary' (or any national guidance which replaces this publication). This statement clearly states staff responsibilities with regard to the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with local Area Child Protection Committee [2] procedures and includes contact names and telephone numbers for the local police and local authority social services department. It includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer [1]. These procedures are shared with parents before admission to day care.

The registered person ensures that:

- a designated member of staff is responsible for liaison with local child protection agencies and with OFSTED in any child protection situation;
- other staff are aware of child protection issues and are able to implement the policies and procedures in the absence of the designated member of staff;
- all staff are aware of the possible signs and symptoms of children at risk and are aware of their responsibility to:
 - report concerns to the police or social services department of the local authority in accordance with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures without delay;
 - keep concerns confidential following the guidelines in 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused – Summary'.

Statement of responsibility

If any concerns are raised the staff will meet and discuss them. If the concerns are serious the Designated Child Protection Officer will, in most cases, speak to the parent and it may be reported to Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board and OFSTED. However if abuse by the parent is suspected then it will be reported straight to Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board. The Designated Child Protection Officer will follow the process set out in the Safeguarding Children Handbook available at www.gscb.org.uk/handbook.

If the concerns are not immediately a cause for reporting the staff will keep a record in a confidential file of any incidents that occur and date these; if more than three indications for concern arise this will then be reported.

If concerns are raised the Designated Child Protection Officer will talk to the parents and see if they can offer support or advice on where the parents can go for support. If it is of a

serious nature it will be reported and the Child Protection unit will decide what to do and this may be offering advice or supporting parents.

If a staff member is told something by a child they should report it immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer and then write out a report stating the facts of what was said or seen. If it becomes necessary the written evidence will be shared with outside agencies.

If it is necessary staff will be involved in case conferences and do what they can to support the family and to help them stay together. The Designated Child Protection Officer can contact outside agencies, who may be able to help the parents.

Promotion of British Values and Prevent Duty

Fundamental British Values are promoted by staff and extremist views will be challenged. Where a member of staff has a concern that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation whether in the family or outside, they will make a referral to the Channel Programme, as set out in the GSCB flow chart.

Early Help

Where a need is identified, Staff are able to provide information on a range of issues from parenting, language development, dietary advice, money management, toileting etc. This may be in the form of providing a list of contacts, link to appropriate web based resources or referral to other agencies.

More information on Gloucestershire's approach to Early Help and lists of contacts can be found at:

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/early-help-for-families>

<http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/kb5/gloucs/glosfamilies/family.page?newfamilychannel=5>

The Stroud Early Help team can be contacted by email stroudearlyhelp@gloucestershire.gov.uk or by telephone 01452 328130.

This policy was agreed by Trustees and Staff of Ridgeway Playgroup October 2017
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