

The Meadow



Safeguarding

Safeguarding Policy

It is the responsibility of The Meadow to ensure the safety and welfare of children whilst in our care. We are committed to ensuring, through awareness and good practice, that the risks to children are minimised.

All staff are well informed, with relevant safeguarding knowledge, qualifications, or through attending training to ensure they can identify the signs of abuse and promote the safeguarding of children. We are familiar with the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures website, which gives full information on the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to respond.

Safeguarding Procedure

Key staff will attend regular Child Protection Training and train assistants.

We are aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse: physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect.

We would discuss concerns with parents at the earliest opportunity (unless we believe this puts the child at risk of harm) and record our discussion.

If after this discussion we remain concerned, we will make a referral to the Children and Families Duty Assessment Team or call them on (01454) 615165 out of hours. We would normally inform parents that we have done this and would record this referral.

We can also contact the Children and Families Assessment Team for advice on whether to make a referral if we are in doubt.

If an allegation is made against us or by any person living, working, or looking after children alongside us, we will follow the Child Protection Procedures, contacting CFDAT if a child appears to have been harmed or is at risk of significant harm. Additionally we will contact the Bath Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Tel 01225 396819.

We will only share concerns or records with those that need to know, unless we have concerns about a child's safety or our own or family's safety.

We are also aware of the need to monitor for peer to peer abuse.

Children's safety online is also under our responsibility - the most important protection is education, supported by monitoring and parental controls on devices as appropriate.

The Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

We are aware that phone cameras, and photographs in general, can be used inappropriately and we will supervise or veto, if necessary, the use of any mobile phone or camera within the vicinity of the children attending The Meadow.

We will seek permission from parents to take photographs of their children's experience, and make it clear how we take and share those photographs.

Staff & Assistants

The Meadow recruits any facilitators or assistants safely because they have been vetted by gathering: references / employment history / record of qualification / or because we have had prior personal knowledge of the person.

All supervising adults are checked against the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), to determine whether they have any criminal convictions that may make them unsuitable to work with children. Only people with suitable DBS disclosures will be employed by The Meadow.

The Meadow maintains an up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues and understands the procedure to be followed in the event of any concern being raised. Staff will be supported to discuss any issues concerning a child's well-being.

Visitors & Volunteers

There may be occasional visitors to The Meadow, such as prospective families or other groups, for the purpose of training, skill sharing, volunteering or work experience. The identity of any visitor will be established and children will never be left unsupervised with a visitor.

Volunteers will be asked to produce a valid DBS check if they have one. If they don't, they won't be left in situations where they are alone with children.

The Prevent Duty

This is a safeguarding responsibility to protect children/teenagers from being radicalised into a criminal act of violence, or from being affected by the radicalisation of those around them.

(Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015)

There isn't a single way of identifying an individual who is being radicalised; but causes of concern could be someone who is viewing extreme, violent propaganda online or expressing extremist views which may lead to an act of terrorism. We will be alert to changes in children's behaviour or circumstances which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

If we observe any behaviour of concern, we will make a referral to the Children and Families Duty assessment team or call them on (01454) 615165 out of hours and also the local Prevent Team.

Disclosures, Recording & Reporting

Appropriate steps will be taken where concerns arise regarding the safety of children and incidents or concerns will be reported to a designated safeguarding person.

We will ensure that disclosures are responded to sensitively and appropriately, in line with current best practice. This means adults will:

- Take seriously any concerns raised by adults or children;
- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns;
- Support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns;
- Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation;
- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of children;
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children.
- Disclosures may happen directly or indirectly, and will be recorded on the same day by the adult who witnessed the disclosure. It must include the date and time of the disclosure, the child's name, and the witness's signature to state that the document is a true and accurate reflection of the disclosure.
- A direct disclosure means that a child has told a witness in person about an incident of abuse. An indirect disclosure may occur when a child is overheard talking or seen, through role play or re-enactment, acting in a way that suggests they may be the victim of abuse.
- Children must not be questioned about disclosures, and adults should respond sympathetically, never in disbelief or shock. Adults should never promise to keep secrets – it is best to tell the child that you will tell 'only the people you think that will be able to make sure you are safe'.

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