

# Pioneer Childcare

## Safeguarding Children and Mobile Phone Use Policy

Pioneer Childcare is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse and harm.

We will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur. Pioneer Childcare's Child Protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP).

Pioneer Childcare's designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) is Jo Wilkins. The CPO coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (e.g. Social Care, the WSSCP and Ofsted).

### Forms of child abuse and 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 a child from harm. The following are some signs often associated with particular types of child abuse and neglect. These types of abuse are more often found in combination than alone.

- **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 or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. 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, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, or non-contact activities such as showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. Neglect can involve a failure to:
  - provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
  - protect a child from physical and emotional harm
  - ensure adequate supervision
  - allow access to medical treatment

### If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- Reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to talk to them
- Listen to the child but not question them, or ask leading questions
- Give reassurance that the staff member will take action
- Record the incident as soon as possible (see below)

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the incident straightaway. If a third party expresses 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 we are obliged to and then the incident will be logged accordingly.

### Logging an incident

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure will be recorded as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- Date of the disclosure or of the incident causing concern
- Date and time at which the record was made
- Name and date of birth of the child involved
- A factual report of what happened. *If recording a disclosure, it is essential to use the child's own words.*
- Name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

The Club Manager will decide whether they need to contact Social Care or make a referral. If other staff feel that the incident has not been adequately followed up, they may call Social Care themselves.

### **Allegations against staff**

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded in the Incident Book. 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) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g. Police) should be informed, and we will act upon the advice.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.

### **Promoting awareness among staff**

At Pioneer Childcare we will promote awareness of child abuse issues throughout our staff training. We will ensure that:

- Our designated CPO has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all staff
- All staff are familiar with our Safeguarding Children policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse
- Staff are familiar with the 'Information for staff on possible signs of child abuse and neglect' poster
- Staff are aware of the Safeguarding documentation kept in the Manager's office box on site

### **Contact numbers**

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 01403 229900

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): Safeguarding Unit 01243 642420 / 642523

Out of Hours Emergency Service: 0330 222 6664

LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board): 01243 642965

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Police: 0845 607 0999

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

## Use of Mobile Phones

This part of the policy is part of Pioneer Childcare's wider commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children and is linked to our policies on Whistleblowing, Child Protection and Photography and the Use of Photographic Images.

At Pioneer Childcare we recognise that mobile phones are a part of everyday life but there are times and places where their use is inappropriate.

**Staff:** Staff working directly with children must not use mobile phones as it is inappropriate and can distract them from caring for the children in their group. Mobile phones are to be given to the Manager at the start of each session and will be kept in a secure place, out of sight, until the end of the session. The exception to this rule is for the club manager who will have a mobile phone on her/his person at all times - any member of staff expecting an urgent call during working hours at the Club premises should direct these to the manager's phone. Any member of staff leading an activity off the premises will also take a mobile phone with them when distance may not permit effective use of walkie-talkies. Staff involved in the dropping off and collection of children will be required to have a mobile phone so that they can be in regular contact with the club manager in case of queries or emergencies. Once they return to club, their phone should be handed to the club manager.

**Children:** At Pioneer Childcare we realise that a minority of children may have mobile phones on them. These are to be given to the manager to be kept in a locked box during Club hours and will be handed back to the children at the end of the session. If possible, such items should not be brought to Pioneer Childcare but left at home.

**Parents and Carers:** Mobile phones and conversations within groups can be very disruptive and they divert the parent/carers attention away from the responsibility of looking after their children. If urgent calls must be taken parents are asked to step outside and to have the conversation off the premises.

**Cameras and camera phones:** One of the key ways that practitioners support children's development in the Early Years and engage parents in their children's learning is through photographs that record their activities and achievements. Staff will always check with parents that they consent to the use of cameras for appropriate recording purposes in this way.

*No member of staff will be allowed at any time to photograph children using their personal mobile phones or cameras.* At Pioneer Childcare the "club camera/mobile phone" may be used for making photographic records with the permission of a senior member of staff.

This policy was adopted by: Pioneer Childcare	Date: 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2019
To be reviewed: 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2020	Signed: <i>D. McCaffrey</i>

Written in accordance with the EYFS welfare requirements: *Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare, Organisation and Suitable people.*