# Chirpy Chicks Pre-School

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

Chirpy Chicks Pre-School is committed to building a ‘culture of safety’ in which the children in our care are protected from abuse and harm. Chirpy Chicks Pre School takes all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and are alert to any issues of concern in the child’s life at home or elsewhere.

In North Northamptonshire, the Children’s Trust was established to deliver high quality social care services to children and young people with resources made available to the Trust by the Council.

The North Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) ensures the safeguarding and welfare of children as a partner agency within the Children’s Trust.

Chirpy Chicks Pre School will respond promptly and appropriately to all concerns and will make referrals to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which is a coordinated service provided by the NSCP.

The setting’s designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are **Samantha Wildman and Chloe Thompson**. The DSL coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (e.g. MASH, the Partnership Support Services and Ofsted). The DSL is always contactable via email or, during opening hours, on the number that is displayed at the front of the building and in the Kitchen area. All staff have the DSL’s mobile phone numbers and they are contactable at all times. **Samantha Wildman 07824558299** or **Chloe Thompson 07702066054.**

**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 them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below. Staff must immediately report any concerns regarding the welfare of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with the manager.

* **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 including Female Genital Mutilation.
* **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.

**Staff must have regard to the settings Peer-Peer abuse policy.**

**Signs of child abuse and neglect**

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

* significant changes in a child's behaviour
* deterioration in a child’s general well-being
* unexplained bruising or marks
* comments made by a child which give cause for concern
* inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, child sexual exploration, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

**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 speak out
* Listen to the child but not question them
* Give reassurance that the staff member will take action
* Record the incident immediately on a Logging a concern form, which can be found by staff on the wall in the office or in the red folder next to the children’s entrance in the main room.

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, you must use the child’s own words.
* Name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

The concern will then be handed, immediately, to the DSL of the setting who will:

* Use the Thresholds Guidance document ( <https://www.nctrust.co.uk/help-and-protection-for-children/Documents/NSCB%20Thresholds%20Guidance.pdf>) to decide what level of need the concern is.
* DSL will then contact MASH directly by ringing 0300 126 7000 for an Urgent concern or submitting an online referral via <https://nctrust.co.uk/report-a-concern-or-request-support/>
* If the concern was meeting level 1,2 or 3 on the Thresholds guidance then the DSL would contact Local Partnership Support Services, Jennifer Purdy Jennifer.Purdy@NCTrust.co.uk for support for families, Early Help Assessment plans (EHA), guidance and advice.

**Informed Consent**

All referrals must have informed consent from families, where possible. If you believe that gaining consent from a parent will put a child at immediate risk, then a referral can be made without consent.

If a child is not in immediate danger but a referral is still needed then consent must be gained from the family. It is important to note that a referral can still be made without consent, however you must be able to give a rationale for why consent has not been given. This may be due to the family refusing, worried it may put a child in danger or the family has been uncontactable. Once the referral has been made it is then the responsibility of the DSL to inform the family.

If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact MASH directly via their email nctrust.co.uk giving their name, setting, details of when the referral was made and their rational for their concern.

* 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 MASH directly on 0300 126 7000 or nctrust.co.uk. If they will not do so, we will explain that the setting is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.
* Chirpy Chicks Pre-School defines peer-peer abuse as the *repeated* harassment of others through emotional, physical, psychological or verbal abuse. Refer to the Peer-Peer abuse policy.
* If abuse is suspected or disclosed then children will be told their rights and what to do if they have concerns in a way appropriate to their age and capacity.

**Allegations against staff**

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

* The allegation will be recorded on an **Incident record** form and logged in the safeguarding folder in the top filing cabinet. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
* The allegation must be reported to MASH and to Ofsted. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will advise if other agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and the setting will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to MASH will be followed up in writing within 24 hours.
* Following advice from MASH, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.
* If appropriate the setting will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

**Suitable Persons**

* In the event of the disqualification of a registered provider, the provider must not continue as an early years provider – nor be directly concerned in the management of the provision.
* The setting has a procedure relating to disqualification of the registered provider or employees, including notification to Ofsted. Staff will report any issues relating to the suitability of a member of staff to work with children to the manager immediately. Notifications must be made as soon as possible but at the latest within 14 days.

**Promoting awareness among staff**

The setting promotes awareness of child abuse issues through its staff training. The setting ensures that:

* Its Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
* Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
* All staff have a copy of this Safeguarding Children policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect and receive regular training, through weekly staff meetings, and updates and reflect on practice during professional discussions.
* All staff are aware of their statutory requirements with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse
* Its procedures are in line with the guidance in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)’ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> and the Prevent Duty Guidance 2015 (updated 1st April 2021) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>. Staff are familiar with how to identify different forms of abuse and have completed Channel Awareness training.
* Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003. It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

**Staff have a mandatory duty to report 'known' cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the Police (101) or (999) if appropriate**.

If you suspect FGM then staff must ring the Police immediately.

Once the report has been logged with the Police, the member of staff must then inform the family of the girl of what has been reported and why. If the member of staff feels that by telling the family it will result in serious harm to the girl or result in the family fleeing the country then it should not be discussed and the staff member should seek advice from the DSL, who will then refer to the Local Partnership Support Services or MASH depending on needs of referral and advice given by Police.

* Staff to report any incidents of private fostering (care outside of the home by any person for longer than 28 consecutive days) to the Children’s Trust at nctrust.co.uk.

**Use of mobile phones and cameras**

 (Please refer to **Mobile Phone and Cameras Policy**).

**All children are potentially vulnerable from attack(s) from dog(s);**

* Young and very small children are likely to be at greatest risk;
* A young child may be unaware and unprepared for the potential dangers they could face;
* A young child may be less able to protect themselves and more likely to be of a size that leaves especially vulnerable parts of their body exposed to any 'assault';
* Consideration should be given to whether the injuries caused are "non-accidental injuries“

**A referral to MASH should be considered if any of the following criteria apply:**

* The child injured is under two years of age;
* The child is under five years of age and injuries have required medical treatment;
* The child is over five years and under 18 who have been bitten more than once by the same dog;
* The child/young person is under 18 years of age, injuries have required medical treatment and initial information suggests the dog responsible could be prohibited and/or dangerous;

A prohibited and/or dangerous dog is reported and/or treated, and is believed to be living with and/or frequently associated with children under five years

**Contact numbers**

Emergencies

If a child is in immediate danger, left alone or missing, you should contact the police directly and/or an ambulance using 999

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Telephone: 0300 126 7000

National Children’s Trust: Nctrust.co.uk

Non-emergencies

If there is no immediate danger but you are concerned about a child’s welfare, contact us using the below services:

National Children’s trust: nctrust.co.uk

Partnership Support Service – Jennifer Purdy (Partnership Coordinator) Jennifer.Purdy@NCTrust.co.uk or 07787 266211.

**Out of hours**

If you need to contact Northamptonshires Children Trust urgently during the evening, at night or at the weekend, the out of hours number is 01604 626938 or the Police.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Child Protection Team
Children, Families and Education
Criminal Justice Centre
700 Pavilion Drive
Brackmills
Northampton
NN4 7YL

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| This policy was adopted by: Chirpy Chicks Pre-School | Date: 17th April 2024 |
| To be reviewed: 17th April 2025 | Signed: S.wildman |

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements Safeguarding policies and procedures [3.4-3.90].*

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s statutory guidance**, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2024,** and the **Governance Handbook**.

**Related policies**

See also: **Mobile Phone and Camera Policy**

 **Peer – Peer abuse**