

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by “Working Together to Safeguard Children” March 2015, a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

As a registered Childminder I take seriously my responsibility to ensure the safety and promote the welfare of children in my care in line with the procedures laid out by the local Safeguarding Children Board. I have developed a structured procedure to be followed in the case of suspected abuse, which is regularly reviewed and updated.

As the Designated Officer for my Childminding setting I work with other agencies to ensure I have adequate arrangements in place to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm. I can be contacted on: _____ during the following hours:

I attended Group 3 Safeguarding Training on 04/05/2020 and I am aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse: physical, emotional and sexual, and those of neglect:

Physical Abuse - can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, punching, kicking, scalding, burning, drowning and suffocating. It can also result when a parent or carer deliberately causes the ill health of a child in order to seek attention through fabricated or induced illness. Female genital mutilation is a form of physical abuse.

Emotional Abuse - is where a child’s need for love, security, recognition and praise is not met. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of someone else such as in the case of Domestic Violence or Domestic Abuse. A parent, carer or authority figure is considered emotionally abusive when they are consistently hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining toward a child or other family member. It can also occur when children are prevented from having social contact with others or if inappropriate expectations are placed upon them. Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively clingy or attention seeking.
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism.
- Withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness.
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please.
- Eating disorders or self-harm.

Sexual abuse and exploitation

Sexual abuse - involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical contact both penetrative and non-penetrative, or viewing pornographic material including through the use of the internet.

Indicators of sexual abuse include: allegations or disclosures, genital /anal soreness, sexually transmitted infections, inappropriate sexualized behaviour including words, play or drawing.

Child Sexual Exploitation - involves children receiving something (e.g. food, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) in exchange for sexual activity. This doesn't always include physical contact and can occur via the use of technology.

Indicators (as well as the above) include: unexplained gifts; substance misuse; regular absence from school.

Neglect - is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which can significantly harm their health and development. Neglect can include inadequate supervision (being left alone for long periods of time), lack of stimulation, social contact or education, lack of appropriate food, shelter, appropriate clothing for conditions and medical attention and treatment when necessary.

How I aim to keep the children in my care safe:

I update my safeguarding training as necessary.

I provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. I support the children's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.

I take responsibility for ensuring the acceptable and safe use and storage of all camera technology, images, and mobile phones.

I provide an environment in which children and young people feel valued and respected, and are confident to approach me if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.

I have a copy of the Devon Domestic Abuse Support Services information leaflet available for parents / carers to look at. This is also available at: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/dsva/files/2014/03/SPLITZ-leaflet-Aug-2014.pdf> If a parent tells me that they are / have been suffering from Domestic Abuse I will provide them with information and phone numbers for support.

I ensure staff / volunteers are recruited safely and understand the Safeguarding Policy. (see separate Induction Policy and Student Placement Policy).

A copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' March 2015 is kept with this policy and an additional copy is available for parents / carers to read if required.

This sets out the guidelines for recording any incidents and disclosures and the procedures I must follow.

I have a copy of the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Factsheet for Parents available for parents / carers to look at. This is also available at:
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/mash-parentsfactsheet.pdf>

I have regard to the Fundamental British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs, which are implicitly embedded in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage. This is alongside my awareness of the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, according to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

If I have reason to believe that any child in my care needs protection in any way I will:

- Refer a child, if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the Children and Young People Services Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Referrals will be made in writing, following a telephone call. Under these circumstances I will share information relating to your child with MASH and the Police if requested. If the concern relates to me or another adult in my setting, I will follow my 'Allegations of Abuse' procedure.
- Keep written records of concerns about a child, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral. I will ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely, separate from a child's records. □ Liaise with other agencies and professionals.
- Attend case conferences, or other multi-agency planning meetings, as necessary.
- Ensure that any child currently with a child protection plan who is absent without explanation is referred to their Social Worker / Social Care Team.
- I will notify my local child protection agency (MASH) and Ofsted of any serious accident, illness or injury to or death of, any child whilst in my care. Ofsted must be informed within 14 days.

If a child confides in me I will:

- Show that I have understood what they are saying and that I take their allegations seriously.
- Encourage the child to talk, without asking leading questions or interrupting when a child is recalling a significant event. □ Record the concern and the child's comments in writing, in their own words as far as possible. The record will contain:
 - The child's name.
 - The child's date of birth.
 - The date the record is made.
 - A note of the child's non-verbal behaviour.
 - A body map, if appropriate, to record any visible injuries or marks. ➤ My name and signature.

- Inform the child that I cannot promise not to share this information but that everything I do will be in the interest of their safety.
- Seek advice from MASH and, if necessary, make a referral.

Confidentiality

- I recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding are confidential. I will disclose any information about a child on a need to know basis only, referring to 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' March 2015 and 'Information Sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.' March 2015.
- I am aware that I have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- I am aware that I cannot promise a child that I will keep secrets which might compromise their safety and wellbeing.
- I undertake to share an intention to refer a child to MASH with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, I will consult with MASH at Children and Young people's Services.

Visitors to my home

- Children are not left unsupervised with visitors and I have a procedure in place for checking the identity of all visitors to my home whilst I have minded children in my care:
 - I record **all** visitors to my home during Childminding hours with the time and nature of visit. The record is signed by the visitor.
 - If the visitor is unknown to me I ask for proof of identification and, if appropriate, which organisation they work for. e.g. identity badge; driving licence. If I need further verification I will contact the phone number of their organisation and ask to be put through to the visitor's manager. I record that ID has been checked.
 - If I know the visitor, they must have a valid reason for visiting during Childminding hours.

Allegations of Abuse

I will take precautions to protect myself from allegations of abuse against myself; my household members and staff (if applicable). I will aim to prevent this from happening by:

- Ensuring all household members aged 16 and over are CRB / DBS cleared.
- Ensuring all visitors to the house are recorded as above, and do not have unsupervised access to the children under any circumstances.
- Ensuring, where possible, that no workmen/women are in the house during minded hours, unless it is to repair an emergency service or for health and safety reasons.

- Documenting every accident and incident that occurs whilst children are in my care, informing parents of such events and requesting them to sign my records.
- Noting any noticeable marks on the children when they arrive and asking parents to inform me of any accidents that have occurred whilst outside my care.
- Ensuring the children are within sight and/or hearing at all times according to the child's age & ability.
- Ensuring that any occasion where physical intervention is used to manage a child's behaviour is recorded as an incident and parents are informed about it on the same day.
- Checking the behaviour of adults - for example inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; inappropriate sharing of images. The document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' March 2015 provides advice on this:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2>

However, if an allegation is made I will then follow the procedure detailed below in order to gain support and professional advice:

Inform:

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately to discuss the nature of the allegation and the appropriate action to be taken: 01392 384964.
- Ofsted as soon as possible but within 14 days to advise them of the allegation: 0300 123 1231.

Contact:

- My Insurance Company.
- Relevant Legal Advice Line or Family Solicitor.

I will write a detailed record of all related incidents, including what was said and by whom, with times and dates.

After seeking advice/approval from the LADO I will ask witnesses (if there were any) to also write a statement detailing the incident they witnessed and giving their contact details in case it needs to be followed up by the authorities.

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

I understand that if I store personal details about other people on my computer or any digital format (including mobile phones and digital cameras) I will need to notify the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for Data Protection.

Mobile Phones

As a registered Childminder I recognise that it is important for me to be able to communicate with parents instantly. I use my landline phone when I am at home and my personal mobile phone / a mobile phone designated for my business only if I am out.

Mobile phone technology has developed significantly to include internet access and wireless connections as well as camera, video and sound recording and sending and receiving messages. They are now an extremely effective method of communication,

which can be an advantage regarding Safeguarding children. However, I understand that there is a need to balance the advantages with the potential for misuse, and intend to protect the children in my care with the following procedures:

- Ensuring that ALL visitors to my home during Childminding hours are asked to leave their mobile phone in a safe storage area / switch off their mobile phone.
- Ensuring that any Assistant working with me will leave their personal phone in a safe storage area.
- Ensuring my phone is kept out of the reach of children.
- Permitting children from the age of 11 years (agreed with parents) to have their phone about their person. However, it must not be used to take photos or access the internet.

Taking of photos with a Mobile Phone or Camera

Either:

It is my policy not to take photos whilst Childminding.

Or:

The use of photos to support observation, assessment and planning and to provide a pictorial record for parents has become part of my practice. To ensure that everyone in my setting is protected I have the following procedures in place:

- Pictures are taken only by myself with the written permission of parents. Parents indicate if they are willing for photos of their children to be used for: sharing with them; supporting Observation, Assessment & Planning; children's records; advertising (in which case how and where.)
- I will avoid putting myself into any compromising situation which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- Pictures are printed as soon as possible and then deleted. **OR** Pictures are transferred to my computer which is password protected.
- I have registered with the Information Commissioner's Office for Data Protection.
 Any stored pictures are deleted once a child leaves my setting.

If you have any concerns regarding this policy I will be happy to meet and discuss them with you.

Childminder's signature: _____ Date: _____

Review date: _____

Phone Numbers

For Immediate Referrals:

MASH: 0345 155 1071
e-mail: mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk
Out of hours: (5pm-9am; weekends; public holidays)
CYPS Emergency Duty Service 0845 6000 388

In the case of an Allegation:

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) 01392 384964

For Advice & Guidance:

MASH Consultation: 0345 155 1070
(ask for MASH consultation)
Devon Early Years Commissioning Manager:
Exeter, East and Mid Devon Nikki Phillips 01392 385394
Northern Devon Melissa Filby 01271 388901
South, West & Teignbridge Sue Bolt 01626 324982

Local Safeguarding Children's Board 01392 386067

Devon Domestic Abuse Support Services 0345 155 1074
(ask for Domestic Abuse Helpline)
General e-mail: admin@splitzdevon.org
Secure e-mail: referrals.devon@splitz.org.cjsm.net
Website: www.splitz.org/devon