

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Noah's Ark is committed to following the procedures detailed within this policy in relation to the safeguarding of children within our care.

We recognise the following definitions, the Wales safeguarding procedures:

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Wales safeguarding procedures provides the following definitions in relation to safeguarding children :

A child

The [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#) and accompanying Guidance define a 'child' as a person who is aged under 18.

A child at risk

S.130 (4) of the [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#) defines a **child at risk** as a child who:

1. Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm;
2. Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).

It is important to note:

- The use of the term 'at risk' means that actual abuse or neglect does not need to occur, rather early interventions to protect a child at risk should be considered to prevent actual harm, abuse and neglect;
- The two conditions necessary to demonstrate a child is at risk of abuse or neglect ensures that protection is provided to those with care and support needs who *also* require actions to secure their safety in the future;
- Risk of abuse or neglect may be the consequence of one concern or a result of cumulative factors.

Harm

Harm is defined as:

- ill treatment this includes **sexual abuse**, neglect, **emotional abuse** and **psychological abuse**
- the impairment of physical or mental health (including that suffered from seeing or hearing another person suffer ill treatment).
- the impairment of physical intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development (including that suffered from seeing or hearing another person suffer ill treatment).

Types of harm

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples for each of the categories of harm, abuse and neglect included in [vol 5 Working Together to Safeguard People: Volume 5 – Handling Individual Cases to Protect Children at Risk](#)

- **physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **emotional/psychological abuse** - threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others
- **sexual abuse** - 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, including: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- **financial abuse** - this category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be:
 - not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or
 - complaints that personal property is missing.
- **neglect** - failure to meet basic physical, emotional or psychological needs which is likely to result in impairment of health or development.

Risk from other actual or potential harm to a child or young person may also result from:

- **Criminal exploitation such as county lines (CCE)**
- **Child sexual exploitation**
- **Radicalisation**
- **Female genital mutilation**
- **Modern slavery**

Significant harm

Concerns about likely or actual **significant harm** to a child is the threshold for initiating [s47 enquiries under the Children Act 1989]

There is no statutory definition of significant harm. Therefore, practitioners must:

'Where the question of whether harm is significant turns on the child's health or development, the child's health or development is to be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child ([Section 31\(9\)](#), Children Act 1989.)

The nursery/club provides a safe environment for children to be cared for and the welfare of the child is our priority. We make every effort to ensure children are free from abuse of all forms in the following ways:

- We ensure all staff whether paid or unpaid are interviewed, have DBS checks carried out (and rechecked three yearly) and have two good references. All appointments of staff are subject to a probationary period of six months where their performance is reviewed before offering a full contract.
- Children are always supervised by employees who have clear DBS checks under no circumstances are they left alone with anyone who has not been cleared.
- If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, it will be thoroughly investigated whilst the employee is suspended on full pay, a hearing will take place and if the allegation is proven immediate dismissal will take effect.
- If an allegation is made in relation to a person in charge they will also be suspended on full pay until all procedures are followed and appropriate action taken, in the event that an allegation is upheld the person in charge will step down from PIC and appropriate arrangements will be made for cover.
- In no circumstances will children be smacked, slapped, shaken, humiliated, tormented, threatened or frightened by an adult in the nursery.
- No unauthorised adults are allowed contact with any of the children in our care.
- Visitors to the setting are asked to sign in and are escorted around the nursery by a member of staff at all times, identity passes will be asked to be viewed where applicable.
- Staff are asked to attend regular safeguarding training to keep information up to date, any member of staff in charge is required to attend level 2 training in addition to the level 1 training required of all staff.
- Any concerns made by staff are properly investigated and documented on the correct form, with as much detail recorded as possible and kept confidential, any follow up action is documented and any referral to social services, these files will be only accessible by the manager and staff who made the observation or carried out the investigation. Accurate up to date records will be kept on all.
- Parents will be the first point of contact when there is any concern and discussions will always be held with parents wherever possible.

The welfare of the child is our first priority! We will do all we can to support the child and their family and will endeavour to build relationships between families and staff.

If a child makes a disclosure whilst in attendance at Noah's Ark relating to their safety, well-being or anything that raises concerns in relation to safeguarding staff MUST listen and respond appropriately. Any attempt to ask a child a leading question or an attempt to investigate the allegation yourself may jeopardise any further action, so please be mindful of the words you use and ensure you do not make any promises you cannot keep.

Please be aware on the 21st March 2022 physically punishing children became illegal in Wales, meaning that children have the same protection from assault as adults do.

This means anyone who physically punishes a child:

- will be breaking the law
- risks being arrested or charged with assault
- may get a criminal record which is the same for any criminal offence

Guidance states that if you are concerned a child is being physically punished by a parent or carer then you can:

- Contact your local social services department.
- You can also call the police in an emergency or if a child is in immediate danger.

As a setting if a child makes a disclosure or a child displays any signs or symptoms of physical abuse which gives you cause for concern staff should create a report of their concern on the child protection form.

This form will be assessed and discussed promptly and if it falls under the physical punishment a referral will be made to social service via a MARF form (Multi Agency Referral Form).

If a concern raised does not fall under the physical punishment category however falls under other known abuse categories, advice may be sought from social services as and when needed by phoning the duty officer. Any advice given must be followed.

Parents provide consent on registration to raise concerns where needed.

Child protection

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare, this forms a small part of safeguarding. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

The child Protection lead officer is :Hayley Barnett – Manager

Charmaine Davies – Deputy Manager as PIC is lead officer when Hayley is not in the workplace.

All staff have tier 1 safeguarding training as a minimum and the following staff have also received tier 2 safeguarding training, Jodie Dickinson - Over 2's team leader, Francesca Lewis - Under 2's team leader, Danielle Bolas – Play Leader (after school club)

For the purpose of prompt referral when identified concerns are made, the relevant contact details for Pembrokeshire in case of concerns are:

Child Care Assessment Team
Pembrokeshire County Council
County Hall
Haverfordwest
Pembrokeshire
SA61 1TP

Duty social worker: 01437 776444

Duty Manager:01437 776688 or 775373

Out of hours: 03003 332222

Police in an emergency: 999, non emergency 101

Email: CCAT@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

As some children attending the setting live in Carmarthenshire, the relevant contact details for Carmarthenshire in case of concerns are:

Childcare assessment team (advice) 01267 228944 9am-5pm

Carmarthen referral Team 01554 742320

Out of hours /additional support

Social Care Out of Hours Team 08708 509508

NSPCC cymru / Wales child protection helpline 0808 800 5000

Police 0845 3302000 or 101, 999 in an emergency

If an allegation is made against a member of staff

If a safeguarding allegation is made against a member of staff or responsible individual whilst in the workplace, the allegation will be investigated in line with our disciplinary procedure and processes and referral will be made to the local authority safeguarding team in line with this process. Please see our managing allegations against Staff procedure for more detail.

Looked after children

If a child attending our setting is considered to be a child who is 'looked after', on the child protection register or on the at risk register then additional controls/arrangements may be in place for that child. Each case will be individual dependent on the background of each case and therefore the manager will inform staff when needed of any additional circumstances, controls, play plans , meetings or contact with foster carers, families and social workers as and when needed.