**Safeguarding And Child Protection Policy** -

**Written By**: Joshua Morgan (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Little Stars Childminding is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect the children from harm, abuse, and exploitation. For the purpose of this policy and associated procedures: a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years old.

Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

* The welfare of children is the primary concern
* All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of abuse or harm.
* Child protection is everyone’s responsibility
* Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
* We will work in partnership with organisations together with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health, and development of children.

Little Stars Childminding will: -

* Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in activities safely.
* Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children
* Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse.
* Recruit, train, support and supervise our staff members and volunteers to adopt the best practice of safeguarding and protect the children from abuse and to reduce the risk to themselves.
* Require staff and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
* Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
* Observe guidelines issued by the Local Authority for the protection of children
* Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy and these procedures.

**Definition of Abuse:**

There are many different types of abuse, Children can be abused by an adult’s direct actions (e.g., beating a child) or because of an adult’s inaction (e.g., not feeding or bathing a child), and even an adult’s indirect action (e.g., domestic abuse, etc).

Children can be abused by adults as well as by other young people or children.

The authorities will be notified if any professional suspects that a child is either suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

Sometimes a single traumatic event constitutes ‘significant harm’ to a child; and, sometimes, a build-up of concerns or a series of incidents over time also gives rise to ‘significant harm’.

The law recognises the following categories of abuse under the Children Act (1998):

**Physical:**

* Where adults physically hurt or injure a child by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, etc.
* Giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison is also considered physical abuse.

**Sexual:**

* Where adults use children to meet their own sexual needs
* This might be full intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling.
* Showing children pornography and using sexualised language with children is also sexual abuse.

 **Emotional Abuse:**

* When there is a persistent lack of love and affection that damage children emotionally.
* Being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted can make a child very nervous or/and withdrawn.
* Seeing or hearing another person being harmed also constitutes emotional abuse, as in Domestic Violence and parental Substance Misuse.

 **Neglect:**

* Where adults fail to meet a child’s basic needs, for example for clothing or food.
* Children might also be left unsupervised and alone
* Sometimes adults fail or refuser to give children their love and affection

**Responsibilities and Expectations -**

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Alice McPherson.** The DSL is mostly available and if not then please contact our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who will deal with any safeguarding concerns. **Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Joshua Morgan.**

It is the responsibility of the DSL and Deputy DSL to ensure that all safeguarding issues are effectively responded to, recorded, and referred to the appropriate agency. They are also responsible for arranging the whole settings safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with the children. These training courses will take place at least every year, which they can be deliver within the setting provided they are linked into the support and quality assurance process offered by the local authority.

The DSL and Deputy DSL is required to attend and assure that a senior member of staff who has the relevant training and access to appropriate supervision, attends where appropriate, all child protection case conferences, reviews, core groups or meetings where it concerns a child at our setting and top contribute to multi-agency discussions to safeguarding and promote the child’s welfare to the best of our ability.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring the acceptable, safe use and storage of all camera technology, images, and mobile phones through the implementation, monitoring and reviewing the appropriate policies and procedures. This includes the E-Safety Policy.

All child protection concerns need to be acted on immediately. If you are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you must tell the DSL or Deputy DSL if the DSL cannot be contacted.

**The Prevent Duty -**

In Line with section 26 of the counterterrorism and security act (2015) we understand the importance of staff members being able to recognise and identify vulnerable children and to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

We recognise the importance of protecting children from the risk of radicalisation and promoting British Values in the same way we would protect and safeguard children from any other abuse.

We will ensure all staff members are able to notice changes in children’s behaviour as we would do with any kind of safeguarding matter as there is no single way of being able to identify a child who is at risk of being vulnerable or susceptible to radicalisation/extremism.

All staff members are also aware of the appropriate time to make a referral to the “channel programme”.

**Making A Report –**

Child abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, domestic, or a mixture of these. We have regular training on how to spot the signs of abuse and have a duty to refer any concern to the Local Authority.

We must notify Ofsted of any allegations of abuse that are alleged to have happened in the setting.

Parents, Carers and Guardians must notify the Safeguarding Team or the childs Key Person of any concerns they have about their child, and any accidents, incidents or injuries affecting the child, which we will record and ask parents to sign. Unless we believe that it would put the child at risk of further harm. We will discuss concerns with a child’s parent if the following are met:

* Significant changes in behaviour
* Deterioration in child’s general well-being
* Unexplained bruises, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
* Children’s and parent’s comments which give cause for concern, including expressing extremist views
* Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting; for example in the child’s home
* Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other staff members, and any person working with children.

Where a child fails to attend unexpectedly, we will take all necessary action to attempt contact with their parents. If contact cannot be made after one hour, we will attempt to contact via other means. Either a house visit or email home.

Any unexpected absence will be reported to the police and/or The Local Authority via the correct channels, if we cannot contact you after all attempts have been made.

If a child tells us that they are experiencing, or another child is experiencing abuse; we will:

* Show that we have listened to what they have said; and take the allegation seriously.
* Encourage the child to talk, but will not prompt them or ask questions that are leading. We will not interrupt when a child is recalling significant events and will not make a child repeat themselves.
* Explain the actions we must take, in a way that is appropriate for their age and understanding of the child.
* Record what has been said; word for word to the best of the staffs ability, and make a note of time, date and people present, including the child.
* Refer the concern to the Safeguarding Team: DSL and Deputy DSL

The Safeguarding Team will contact the Local Authority with the concern details and gain advice from the appropriate services.

In all instances of making a referral to Local Authority, we will provide personal details about the relevant child such as full name, date of birth, address and other personal information that is requested via Local Authority to assist in their enquiry.

All referrals and documents regarding the concern will be kept via hard copy in a secure folder which we will keep until the child leaves the setting.

**Monitoring -**

This policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every two years, or in the following circumstances:

* Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
* As required by the Local Authority
* As a result of any other significant change or event

**Policy Review Date**: 6th September 2022

**Last Review:** 6th September 2021