



**What happens if an allegation of abuse
is made against a member of Staff or volunteer**

August 2024

Unfortunately, child abuse does occasionally take place in day care settings, so we have introduced this separate policy to remind staff of the measures that can be taken to reduce the risk of any allegations being made against them or another member of staff or volunteer. It also contains the procedure, which will be undertaken if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. This complies with both the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and Kent Safeguarding Children Board Procedures.

**Please note Committee Members are Volunteers*

How we can protect ourselves?

- If a child sustains an injury whilst in our care, we will record it on an accident report on Famly as soon as possible. We will then make sure that the accident report has been acknowledged by a parent/ carer when the child is collected
- If a child arrives with an injury sustained elsewhere, we will ask for an explanation and again record this on an accident form on Famly, stating that the injury happened away from the setting. This again will need to be acknowledged by a parent/ carer after they have received a notification.
- We will ensure that all staff undertake regular child protection training.
- We will ensure that all parents understand our role and responsibility in child protection. Within the nursery this will be to parents in writing within the welcome pack before the child begins to attend Woodpeckers Preschool CIO.
- Our behavioural management policy states that no physical sanctions will be used and we will ensure that everyone complies with it in all rooms within the setting.
- We will try to avoid situations where an adult is left alone with a child. If this does occur, we will make sure that the door is left open and there are other people around.
- We will avoid engaging in rough physical play with children- as this may be misconstrued and could cause accidental injury to a child.
- We will avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
- We will take up references, including one from the candidate's last employer, and will always question any gaps in employment history.
- We will encourage an open-door ethos, to enable staff to talk to senior managers if they have concerns about the conduct of any of their colleagues.

What happens if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff in the Setting?

- If anyone makes an allegation of abuse against a member of our staff or volunteer, Mandy Swift (the Designated Person) will be informed immediately and will contact the LADO, on 03000 410 888.
- They will assess whether the allegation reaches the threshold for referral to Police/Children's Social Services and advise accordingly regarding further action to be taken in respect of the child and the member of staff.
- The Designated Person (Mandy Swift) will complete the attached form for recording allegations or complaints made against staff.
- The Designated Person will not discuss the allegation with the member of staff concerned, unless advised to do so by Children's Social Services.
- **All staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt – consult.**
- If Children's Social Services and/or the police decide to carry out an investigation, **it may be possible that we will be advised to suspend the member of staff, whilst enquiries are carried out.** Woodpeckers Preschool CIO could also invoke their disciplinary procedure.
- We will not carry out an investigation ourselves **unless** Children's Social Services and the Police decide it is not necessary for them to do so. We understand that Ofsted may wish to undertake further investigations in some circumstances.

Always remember: The welfare of the child is Paramount.

Guidance for managers completing Checklist for handling and recording allegations or complaints of abuse made against a member of staff/volunteer regarding a child/children in their care

1. Record the name and position of member of staff or volunteer against whom the allegation or complaint has been made.
2. Verbal complaints should be backed up in writing by the complainant if appropriate; some may require immediate action that does not allow time for this to happen.
3. It is important to identify who made the complaint and whether it was received first hand or is a concern that is passed on from somebody else. If this is the case it is better that you receive the information first hand. If a parent, carer or a member of staff at the Woodpeckers Preschool CIO makes a complaint against you it must be passed immediately to your line manager.
4. Record the full name, age and date of birth of the child.

5. The address recorded should be the address at which the child lives with the main carer.
6. If there are one or more alleged incidents, be specific as possible about dates that they are alleged to have happened.
7. Check the attendance register/ diary of work to see if the child was present/seen on that day and the shift patterns of the staff member involved to see if they were working at that time. This will confirm the likelihood of the incident having taken place.
8. If you have received the complaint in writing attach it to the checklist. You can then summarise it on the form.
9. Any other information should be factual. It will be helpful if you can confirm things such as the level of contact that the staff member has with the child and any other minor concerns that may have been raised previously. **Do not attempt to investigate the complaint yourself unless the LADO has handed back this responsibility to the employer.**
10. Remember that if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of our staff or a volunteer you must inform the *Designated person (Mandy Swift)* who will contact the LADO for further advice.
11. **Ofsted must be informed** if an allegation is made against a member of our staff or a volunteer even if the LADO decides no further action is required. Ofsted may do their own investigation to ensure that registration requirements are being met.
12. Make a note of any actions the LADO or Ofsted advise you to take and the date or times at which you implemented them.
13. If the allegation is against the Designated Person (Mandy Swift) then you should speak to Hazel Leah (Committee Chairperson) who will follow the procedures above.

This policy was adopted on 17th August 2021 and will be reviewed annually

Signed

Chelsea Groome (Chair Person)
Trustee of Woodpeckers Pre School CIO

Checklist for handling and recording allegations or complaints of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer regarding a child/children in their care

1. Name and position of staff who is the subject of allegations/complaint:

2. Is the complaint: Written or verbal? (delete as necessary)

3. Complaint made by: _____ Relationship to child _____

4. Name of child _____ Age and date of birth _____

5. Parent's/carers name(s) and address

6. Date of alleged incident/s _____

7. Did the child attend on this/these date/s: _____

8. Nature of complaint (if received in writing see guidance)

9. Other relevant information (continue on a separate sheet if needed):

10. Social Services _____

11. Ofsted contacted at (date and time) _____

12. Further actions advised by Social Services Department and Ofsted

Your name and position _____

Signature _____

Today's date and time _____

County Local Authority Designated Officer Contacts

The County LADO Service deals with allegations against staff who work with children either in education or the wider children's workforce.

If you need to speak to the LADO Service regarding an **allegation** against a member of staff **please make contact with one of the Contact & Referral Officers on the below number or complete a referral form**. Your details will be taken and passed to the LADO on duty that day. The same LADO will support you through the process until the matter has been resolved. Please note that the LADO service no longer works on an area basis.

LADO Team contact number: 03000 410 888 Email: kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk

If your call is urgent i.e., a child is in **immediate danger and you cannot be connected to the team, call the Integrated Front Door on 03000 411 111**

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