

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Jollytots is committed to safeguarding the well-being of children in our care. All staff working in the nursery and afterschools have a duty of care towards the children attending and this brings with it the responsibility to ensure that all efforts are made to safe guard children from suspected and actual harm. This policy outlines the protection of children by identifying clear instructions in accordance with the legislative framework of The Children (NI) Order 1995, taking into consideration the five main principles of the Order: the first being “the welfare of the child is paramount”.

Policy

Everyone at Jollytots who comes into contact with children and their families have a duty to safeguard and promote the well-being of children. At Jollytots management/staff/volunteers will work with the children, parents/carers and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the best start in life.

● Jollytots promotes children’s right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, culture traditions and home background.

● Jollytots promotes children’s right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.

● Jollytots promotes children’s right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

● Jollytots helps children establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other children.

● Jollytots works with parents/carers to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding our children.

**Procedure**

In accordance with Minimum Standards and our duty of care we will endeavour to safeguard children by:

● Jollytots is committed to building a culture of safety in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery

● Our Designated Child Protection Officer is the Manager Jaclyn Robinson

● Our Deputy Child Protection Officer is the Deputy Manager Amy Luney

**At Jollytots we endeavour to ensure;**

● All staff and parents/carers are made aware of our safeguarding policy and procedures

● Jollytots provides adequate and appropriate staff resources to meet the needs of the children

● Candidates are informed of the need to carry out ‘enhanced disclosure’ checks with the current up to date vetting procedures before posts can be confirmed. No person will be placed in a position (either paid or unpaid) which involves contact with children without being properly and effectively vetted. Where this becomes unduly protracted we will contact social services for a resolution

● Where applications are rejected because of information that is disclosed, applications have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information

● The setting adheres to the Health and Social Care Trust requirements in respect of references and criminal record checks for staff/students/trainees and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children

● Students/trainees/volunteers do not work unsupervised

● Children will not be left alone with an adult that has not been vetted

● Strict confidentiality will be observed at all times

● Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgemental manner while investigations are taking place

● Jollytots adheres to the relevant guidelines in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern

● Jollytots has a procedure for recording the details of visitors to the setting

● There are security steps in place to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set out.

**Responding to suspicions of abuse**

● All those working with children are aware that abuse of children can take different forms- physical, emotional, sexual as well as neglect. It is also recognises that sexual exploitation is now deemed as a form of abuse.

● When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play

● Where such evidence is apparent, the staff member makes a dated record of the details of concern and discusses what to do initially with the supervisor and then with the DCPO. The information is stored on the child’s personal file

● Jollytots will refer concerns to the Gateway team and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation

● Those involved will take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking question of the children

● Management will use detailed procedures and reporting format when making a referral to Gateway

● Contact will be made to the Early Years Team in Carrickfergus

● Where a child is already known to Social Services and has a social worker, we will contact them

Contact details for –

Gateway, 028 94424459, out of hours 028 95049999

Early Years, Carrickfergus 028 93315112

**Recording suspicions of abuse**

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give concern (disclosure) or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, a member of staff will;

● Listen to the child, offer reassurance and give assurance that he/she will take action

● Not question the child

● Make a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes-

 -the child’s name, age and date of birth

- time and date of the observation or disclosure

- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible

- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time

- the name of any other person present at the time

- any discussion held with the parent/carer

These records are signed and dated and kept in the child’s personal file which is kept securely and confidentially

**Making a referral to Gateway**

● Jollytots will follow any procedures that the Gateway team has in place

● Jollytots will also inform our link social worker that we have made a referral to the Gateway team via UNOCINI

● Where the child already has a social worker the Manager will contact them directly

● Jollytots will retain a copy of any forms filled in for Gateway in the child’s personal file

● All staff are aware of the referral procedures for recording and reporting

**Informing parents**

● Parents are normally first point of contact

● If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where guidance does not allow this

●Where parental consent is not obtained for any referral, a written explanation will be given explaining the reasons why

●Where there is a child protection concern the DCPO will take the lead in informing parents

● This will usually be the case where the parent is likely the abuser. In these cases the investigating officer will inform the parents

**Liaison with other agencies**

● Jollytots will work with the Health and Social Care Trust guidelines

● All staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns

● Jollytots will notify the Health and Social Care Trust of any incident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children

● If a referral is to be made to the Gateway team, Jollytots will act within guidance in deciding whether we must inform the parents at the same time

**Allegations against staff**

● Jollytots ensures that all parents know the complaints policy if they have concerns regarding the behaviour or actions of staff/students/trainees/volunteers within the setting

● Jollytots will follow the guidance of the Health and Social Care Trust when responding to any complaint that a parent/carer has put forward

● Jollytots will respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff, student/trainee/volunteer within the setting, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident

● Management will refer any such complaint immediately to the Gateway team and the link social worker to investigate. Jollytots is aware that it is an offence not to do this.

● The Management of Jollytots will co-operate fully with any investigation carried out by the Gateway/Early Years Team.

● Where the Management team and Health and Social Care Trust agree it is appropriate in the circumstances; management will suspend the member of staff/volunteer/student/trainee, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as the children and families throughout the process.

**Disciplinary action**

● Where a member of staff/student/trainee/volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children, management will notify Gateway/Early Years of the relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable adults) can be identified and barred from working with these groups

Jollytots is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout child protection training for staff. Jollytots is also committed to empowering young children, through our planning, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

**Training**

● Management will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals for possible physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the guidelines for making referrals.

● Management will ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns within the setting

● Management will ensure that staff/volunteers are trained in Child Protection in line with current regulations and this will be reviewed annually at staff appraisals where training needs can be identified

**Planning**

● Jollytots will ensure that room planning is carried out to enable the development of all children in their care

● Jollytots creates a culture of value and respect for every individual within the setting, having positive regard for children’s heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.

● Jollytots will ensure that his is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for all children

**Collection of children**

● No child will be able to be collected by anyone under the age of 18 years unless they are a parent

● Jollytots will operate a password system and no child will be released unless the correct password is given

● Jollytots in Victoria Road will operate a coded door and only parents and regular collectors will have access to this code, which will be changed regularly

● The door in Kids R Cool afterschool clubs will be kept locked and only staff have permission to open the door

**Confidentially**

● All staff will be aware of the Confidentially Policy

● All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Health and Social Care Trust.

**Support to families**

● Jollytots believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff/students/trainees/ volunteers in the group

● Jollytots makes clear to parents our roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as reporting concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the Health and Social Care Trust.

● Jollytots follows child protection guidelines as set out by the Health and Social Care Trust in relation to the settings designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family subsequent to any investigation

● Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child’s parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child.

 This policy was adopted on\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Manager

Signed\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Director

Reviewed on\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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