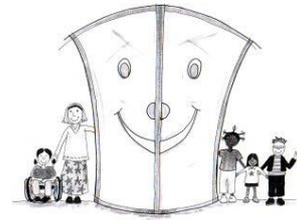


Happy Days Children's Centre Safe Guarding Policy



Statement of intent

Happy Days Children's Centre wants to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people* and vulnerable adults. Our paramount consideration is the protection of the child and giving them the very best start in life.

Aim

Our aim is to:

- Build a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm.

Methods

Staffing and volunteering

- We designate a named member of staff who coordinates child protection issues. Our designated officer is Nicola Heppinstall.
- When the setting is open and the Manager or designated officer are not on site, a suitably trained deputy is available at all times for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- The named person who oversees child protection is Terry Boughen.
- The designated person, the suitably trained deputy and the designated officer ensure they have relevant links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.
- The designated person (and the person who deputises for them) understands Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines safeguarding procedures, attends relevant training at least every two years and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding at least annually.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children's social work team or the NSPCC. They receive updates on safeguarding at least annually.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.
- All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2019) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- Staff understand Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm according to arrangements published by the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines.
- All staff understand their responsibility under the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, and understand relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements and local safeguarding partner requirements and ensure that any information

they share about parents and their children with other agencies is shared appropriately and lawfully.

- We will support families to receive appropriate early help by sharing information with other agencies in accordance with statutory requirements and legislation.
- We will share information lawfully with safeguarding partners and other agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.
- We will be transparent about how we lawfully process data.
- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard and know how to follow local safeguarding procedures to resolve professional disputes between staff and organisations.
- All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of cameras and mobile phones), whistleblowing and dignity at work.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age appropriate way.
- All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the Centre are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Volunteers must be aged 17 or over; be considered competent and responsible; receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings; be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures; be fully checked for suitability and do not have unsupervised access to children at any time.
- We record information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that has been completed including: the criminal records disclosure number, certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate; and the date it was obtained, and details of who obtained it.
- All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- Staff receive regular supervision, which includes discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs are reviewed regularly.
- In addition to induction and supervision, staff are provided with clear expectation in relation to their behaviour (outlined in the employee handbook).
- The Disclosure and Barring Service are notified of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Centre.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Centre so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- No person under the age of 16 is allowed to collect a child at any time.

- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development, their participation in events organised by us, or promotional use. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child. Staff do not use personal cameras or filming equipment to record images.
- Personal mobile phones are not used where children are present.
- We ensure that there is an adequate e-safety policy in place.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately to offer, advice supervision or support.
- The designated person will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern. However, this would not delay any referrals being made to the children's social care or where appropriate, the LADO, Ofsted or Riddor.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- Staff are committed to responding appropriately to any incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse, and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'what to do if you're worried a child is being abused.' (HMG 2015) and the Care Act 2014.
- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;
 - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We understand how to identify children who may be in need of early help, how to access services for them.
- We understand that we should refer a child who meets the S17 Children act 1989 child in need definition to local authority children's social work services.
- We understand that we should refer any child who may be at risk of significant harm to local authority children's social work services.
- We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.

- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
- We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session as expected. The designated person will take immediate action to contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately and Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines procedures are followed. If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; and Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation or extremism
- In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines procedures on responding to radicalisation.
- Staff complete online Channel training, online Prevent training to ensure they are familiar procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation.
- We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police. We are also aware that we should follow local authority published safeguarding procedures to respond to FGM and other safeguarding issues, which involves contacting the police if a crime of FGM has been or may about to be committed.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- If we become concerned that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking we will refer to the National Referral Mechanism, as soon as possible and refer and/or seek advice to the local authority children's social work service and/or police.
- We will be alert to the threats children may face from outside their families, such as that posed by organised crime groups such county lines and child sexual exploitation, online use and from within peer groups and the wider community.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection and child in need concerns and follow the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines procedures, or when they come into force replacing the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines, we will follow the local procedures as published by the local safeguarding partners.
- Where such indicators are apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.

- We refer concerns about children's welfare to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines.
- We respond to any disclosures sensitively and appropriately and take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children (although we may check out/clarify the details of what we think they have told us with them).
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse or neglect is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account in an age appropriate way, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- We have a whistle blowing policy in place.
- All staff know that they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they feel that appropriate action has not been taken to safeguard a child and this has not been addressed satisfactorily through organisational escalation and professional challenge procedures.
- Staff know they can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing dilemmas.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for 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; that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that they will take action;
 - does not question the child; although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the 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; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity, and always within one working day.

Making a referral

- We follow our Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines procedures when making a referral.

Escalation process

- If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership escalation process.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.
- We will follow local procedures published by Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership to resolve professional disputes.

Informing Parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are normally discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless we feel that this may put the child or other person at risk, or may interfere with the course of a police investigation, or may unduly delay the referral, or unless it is otherwise unreasonable to seek consent. Advice will be sought from social care, or in some cases the police, where necessary.
- Parents are informed if we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time as the referral is made, except where the procedures of the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed at risk.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser or where sexual abuse may have occurred.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk (or interfere with a police response) the designated person should consider seeking advice from children's social care, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Liaison with other bodies and multi-agency working

- We work within the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines (A full copy of the document can be found on <https://www.wakefieldscp.org.uk/>). The telephone number is 01924 306497
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- The contact number for Social Care Direct is: 0845 8503 503
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements, which affect the wellbeing of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere Notifications are made to the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer (LADO contact number 01977 727032) within 1 working day and Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. The address for Ofsted is: Ofsted Early Years, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.
The telephone number is: 0300 123 1231
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues and concerns about children's welfare, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Centre and social care to work well together.
- Records of the local NSPCC contacts are also kept.

- The contact number for the Police is 999 (101 for non-emergency). Our local Police Station is 01977 601077 and the non-emergency contact number for the local Police is: 0845 6060606.

Complaints & Allegations Against Staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We ensure that all staff, volunteers and anyone else working in the setting knows how to raise concerns they may have about the conduct or behaviour of other people including staff/colleagues.
- We differentiate between allegations, and concerns about the quality of care or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person working on the premises, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments;
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We will recognise and respond to allegations that a person who works with children has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may harm a child
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - behaved toward a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any complaints immediately to the Associate Principal (student safety & well-being) and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as necessary to investigate and/or offer advice, and also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by LADO that this is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried by relevant authorities.
- Where management and children's social care agree that it is appropriate in the circumstances the member of staff will be suspended, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process. Where it is appropriate and agreed with LADO, we will seek to offer an alternative to suspension for the duration of the investigation, if an alternative is available that will safeguard children and not place the affected staff or volunteer at risk.

Disciplinary Action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the Centre to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns. Training opportunities also cover extra threats such as e-safety and radicalisation.
- Designated persons receive appropriate training, as recommended by the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership, every two years and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually.
- We ensure that all staff receive updates on safeguarding via online training and/or discussion at staff meetings at least once a year.

Peer on Peer abuse

- If a member of staff thinks for whatever reason that a child may pose a risk of harm to himself or to others (this includes but is not limited to cases of bullying) the member of staff should report their concern to the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.
- All staff should be aware (a) that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse; and (b) that children are capable of abusing their peers. Such abuse should never be tolerated or normalised through the common myth that it is part of growing up. This is most likely to include but is not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence, grooming, inappropriate or harmful sexualised play (younger children), sexual assaults, sexting and gender issues within groups of girls and boys. Should an allegation of abuse be made against another pupil all children involved (whether perpetrator or victim) will be treated as being "at risk". Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, the allegation will be referred to Social Care Direct. The concern may indicate that one or more of the pupils concerned may be in need of additional support by local agencies and in those cases the Designated Safeguarding Officer should follow Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.

Planning

- The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff/volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being within sight and/or hearing of other staff.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the Centre a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, language spoken at home, cultural or social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- 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 Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership and in line with the GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and Working Together 2019.

Support to child/families

- Happy Days takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers.
- The Centre continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with Confidentiality and Access to Information and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership. We follow the child protection plan as set by the child's social worker in relation to the settings designated role and tasks in supporting children and families subsequent to any investigation.
- We will engage in any child in need plan or early help plan as agreed.

*A 'young person' is defined as 16 to 19 years old - in our setting they may be a student, worker, or parent.

Adopted by setting: October 19

Date Reviewed: _____