****Child Protection Policies and Procedures and Vulnerable Persons Protection Policy

It is the responsibility of the Lead Facilitator and the accompanying staff to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults whilst in our care. We are committed to creating an environment which is safe from abuse and any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately dealt with.

Our first responsibility and priority is towards the children in our care. If we have any cause for concern we will report it, following the All Wales Child Protection Procedures and referring to Child Protection – ‘Information and Guidance for Childcare Providers & Voluntary Organisations in Carmarthenshire’ booklet. Everyone who comes into contact with children has a moral and legal responsibility and the protection of that child is the first priority.

The induction training completed by staff helps us understand the categories of abuse:

* Physical
* Sexual
* Emotional
* Neglect
* Bullying

We have also had training to understand the types of signs and symptoms, which may include a child at risk of abuse. We must report to Social Services of any allegations of abuse, which are alleged to have taken place while the child is in our care and notify Care Inspectorate Wales.

We regularly attend training and update courses to keep up to date with child protection issues and any changes in legislation, and by reading relevant publications for example, Who Minds? This helps us to be aware of possible signs of abuse or neglect and also what to do if we have any concerns. If we are concerned about a child’s welfare, we may contact the local authority, the NSPCC, PACEY CYMRU, or other relevant support services for advice, providing this does not affect confidentiality.

We are also able to contact our local Safeguarding children’s board or partnership who are able to give us advice. We understand their role is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our local authority to ensure effectiveness in the tasks of the representatives on the board.

Child protection concerns that could identify a particular child are kept confidential and only shared with people who need to know this information.

Parents must notify us of any concerns they have about their child and any accidents, incidents or injuries affecting the child, which will be recorded.

We will work with parents to make sure the care of their child is consistent.

We will ensure that children are protected from seeing things and doing things online that are unsuitable for them or inappropriate for their age, by setting parental controls, privacy settings and safe searches. We will also be aware of children facing dangers of cyberbullying, chatrooms and social networking and try to prevent this.

If we notice:

* Significant changes in behaviour
* Unexpected bruising or marks
* Any comments made which give me cause for concern
* Deterioration in general wellbeing which causes concern
* A child showing signs of being radicalised, spiritualised or if we have concerns regarding extremism within a family.

**We will implement the All Wales Child Protection Procedures without delay to minimise any risk to the child. We will call the local social services duty desk and follow it up with a letter within 48 hours. We will keep a factual record of the concern and will ask the parents for an explanation, providing it would not put the child at risk.**

The National Minimum Standards require us to let Social Services know of any concerns that we may have and we must report them without delay.

If a child tells us that they or another child is being abused, we will:

* Show that we have heard what they are saying and that we will take their allegations seriously.
* Encourage the child to talk, but not prompt them or ask them leading questions. We will not interrupt a child when they are recalling significant events and will not make the child repeat their account.
* Explain what actions we must take, in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child.
* Write down what we have been told using exact words where possible.
* Make a note of the date, time, place and people who were present at the discussion.
* Then report our concerns immediately to the duty social worker who has experience and responsibility to make an assessment of the situation.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, including the Person in Charge(PIC) or Responsible Individual (RI), we will report it to Social Services, who are responsible for investigating and then Care Inspectorate Wales will be notified, following the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. In the case of an allegation being made against the RI, the core group will decide on whether suspension is required and they will nominate a temporary RI for the length of the investigation.

In all instances we will record:

* The child’s full name and address
* The date and time of the record
* Factual details of the concern, for example bruising, what the child said, who was present
* Details of any previous concerns
* Details of any explanations from parents
* Any action taken such as speaking to parents.

**It is not our responsibility to attempt to investigate the situation ourselves.**

**Useful telephone numbers**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Local social services duty desk** | **01554 742322**  **01558 825485** |
| **Out of Hours Number** | **01558 824283** |
| **Central Police Station** | **0845 3302000** |
| **CIW** | **0300 7900126** |
| **Pacey Cymru Regional Office** | **0845 8801299** |
| **NSPCC Child Protection helpline – 24 hour helpline for people worried about a child** | **0800 800500** |
| **Family Information, Childcare and Play Team** | **01267 246555** |

**Notification of significant events**

In order that impacts on children’s welfare are made known, we will notify CIW immediately of any significant event in line with the regulations and as listed in the National Minimum Standards. We will use the notification form available from the CIW website.

The lead Facilitator and staff focus on:

* Minimising the risk of abuse taking place through good planning and best practice
* Empowering those they work with to stay safe and speak out
* Taking appropriate action when any allegations arise