

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



Bobtails Montessori Nursery is committed to maintaining a safe, secure and welcoming environment for both children and adults who may be on the premises as pupils, parents, staff, students or visitors.

Bobtails would like to emphasise that we expect the full co-operation of all employees, parents, students, visitors and children to ensure the success of school policies.

We offer a safe and secure environment where children are free to develop and progress at their own speed without anxiety or pressure. We consider that the welfare of every child is paramount.

If a parent is named on registration documentation they will be allowed to collect their child from the setting even in the event of separation or divorce. We cannot disallow this unless we have notice from a court or written authority from the parent who becomes the main carer for that child. It is the parents' responsibility to notify us of any changes in the access arrangements for any child.

We will ensure that:

- We have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- All staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- We notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- We develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- We keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. We will also ensure all records are kept securely and separately from the main pupil file, in locked locations.
- We develop, and then follow, procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. The first stage will be to suspend the member of staff pending an investigation.
- We always follow safe recruitment practices.

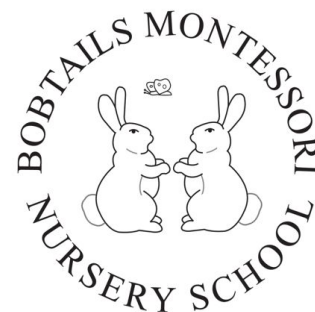
To support the above requirements, we will ensure staff have appropriate training, which will enable them to recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional or sexual abuse.

There are four main categories of abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY CONT'D...



More in depth information is held in 'The Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Handbook' (Volume 1).

Children who are in need of support can be categorised as either:

- A child in need or
- A child at risk

A child in need is defined as a child who is not in immediate danger of physical or emotional harm but the child or family may need support and guidance in order to avoid that child becoming a child at risk.

Signs and symptoms of a child in need are many and varied. This need may show itself in a change in the child's appearance and/or behaviour and may be linked to a significant event in the family's life or parental health issues. In this situation a "common assessment" may be appropriate. Examples of when to complete a "common assessment" are in the appendix.

A child at risk is in imminent danger of physical or emotional harm through social stresses and/or the personality of significant adults in the child's life or because of the exceptional vulnerability of the child.

Signs and symptoms of a child at risk are also many and varied. Once again this may show itself in the child's appearance behaviour or attitudes and may be linked to physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse or to neglect of the child.

Child abuse can be defined as physical, sexual, emotional or neglect of the child's needs. It will be characterised by actions or inactions, which have resulted in or are likely to result in significant harm or injury to a child.

Under the Children Act 1989, the responsibility of a child and their wellbeing lies with any person who cares for a child, their parents, carers, teachers and the local authorities to provide services and provisions for every child who needs to access services.

We will ensure that all adults working in the group are aware that such work is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We will work closely with all associated agencies in the interests of the child. We will continue to work with and support the child's family.

Any suspicion of mistreatment from any source will be promptly and appropriately responded to, with reference to Social Services Legislation and the Child Protection Act.

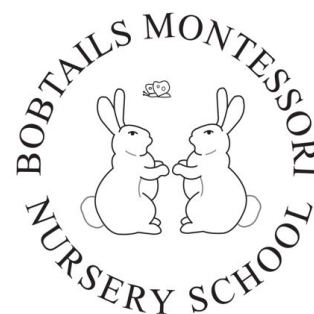
We will inform Social Services & OFSTED immediately of any allegation of abuse.

We are aware that some children who have additional support needs or language delays may be more vulnerable to abuse than others, especially with regard to personal and intimate care. Wherever practical such children will not be alone with an adult.

Any allegation made against a member of staff will be investigated according to the 'Procedure in the event of a complaint or allegation against a member of staff'.



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY CONT'D...



All injuries whether incurred at home or at school will be recorded in the accident file. For accidents at school the parent or carer will be asked to sign an accident record.

Concerns regarding a child's behaviour and/or appearance will be discussed only with parents.

Confidential records of any extraordinary behaviour, appearance or comments by the child will be kept. This information will include dates and times of observations.

Our primary duty is to the safety and well being of the child. Wherever possible no action will be taken without the consent and involvement of the parent.

Whereas confidentiality of information is maintained for all child records, in cases of suspected abuse action may be taken without the knowledge of the parent/suspected abuser. In child protection situations the degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the child. It must be accepted by anybody providing information that confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the child.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Horsham Social Services and the Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual. Please see 'Procedure in the event of an allegation of child abuse' in the operational plan.

A copy of 'Information for parents placing their children in registered childcare provision in West Sussex' is displayed on the door at the setting.

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Contact	Number
Police	0845 6070999
Social Services <i>If the child <b>does not</b> have a designated social worker</i>	01403 229900 Out of hours: 01903 694422
Social Services <i>If the child <b>does</b> have a designated social worker</i>	01403 229900 Out of hours: 01243 642555
Children's Information Service	01243 777807
Integrated Services Manager	01243 642962
OFSTED	0300 123 1231

