Curious Explorers Ltd

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Our Mission

Curious Explorers is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children in which to be cared and educated. It is our responsibility as Early Years professionals to ensure that no child should experience abuse of any kind and we recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide protection for all the children who are in our care
- provide all staff with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm – including how to make a referral.
- provide all staff with guidance on what will happen if an allegation is made against them.

This policy applies to all staff including nursery, office, regional and agency staff as well as students, volunteers and anyone working on within Curious Explorers.

Our Vision is that

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse and have the right to freedom from abuse
- working in partnership with children, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- all our staff need to be carefully selected and trained, and accept responsibility for safeguarding children in their care.

Our Procedures

Signs and procedures to follow regarding child abuse

We follow the statutory guidance What to do if a child is being abused. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Our nurseries have assigned Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and a deputy safeguarding lead that have had the relevant training to ensure the safety and protection of children and follow correct procedures.

If you need to raise a concern about a child, please follow attached flowchart.

Allegations of Staff and Volunteers

Concerns for the safety and well-being of children could arise in a number of different ways and in a range of settings. It is essential to act quickly and effectively if an allegation is made or if there is suspicion or concern about a professional or volunteer's relationship with a child, young person or group of children/young people, report it to the DSL immediately.
Following an allegation OFSTED should be notified within 24 hours and a written statement sent to them within 14 days.
OFSTED - Tel 0300 123 1231
Address OFSTED, Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

See whistle blowing policy and procedures.

If you need to raise a concern about a member of staff/volunteer, please follow attached flowchart.

SAFE STAFFING

All employees' temporary workers and volunteers are subject to a careful selection process, as follows:

Safer Recruitment and Pre-Employment Checks

- At short listing stage, application forms are assessed to ascertain whether the individual has the appropriate skills, knowledge and background to undertake the duties of the post for which they are applying. Applicants are required to complete self-disclosure about previous convictions. Any gaps in employment or inconsistencies are identified and investigated with the individual. Interviews are conducted with a minimum of two people and specific questions are asked about protection of children/young people/vulnerable adults to ascertain whether the individual is suitably aware of potential risks to those groups.
- Offers of employment are made subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks, and occupational reference checks are made simultaneous to the offer of employment. Individuals have to provide two referees, one of whom must be their last employer, training provider or education setting.

- We will not accept open references, or rely on an applicant to obtain their own references. As well as ensuring the referee is not a family member.
- Where electronic references are concerned, we will ensure they are from a legitimate source and the email address is from a company and not a personal email address.
- Applicants are unable to start their employment until we have a valid reference from their previous employment
- Where any information is falsely submitted or where information is provided which gives cause for concern, withdrawal of conditional offer of employment is considered, if necessary.
- Other checks include an individual's eligibility to work in the EU, their identity and the validity of their qualifications.
- Relevancy assessments for Disclosure and Barring (DBS) are carried out for all who routinely deal with protection issues or who may find themselves alone with children in the course of their duties. DBS checks are routinely repeated every three years. Where any offence is disclosed by the DBS, these are investigated fully, having consideration of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, Protection of Freedom Act 2012. Offers of employment or placement may be withdrawn; employees or volunteers moved or dismissed where necessary.
- Staff members required to have a DBS Regulated check and will be required to enrol on the DBS update service.
- Applicants are unable to start their employment until a valid DBS check has been obtained. We will not allow anyone to directly work with children until their suitability is checked.
- During the interview process, applicants are made aware that they need to disclose any relevant information that may affect their suitability to work with children, not limited to arrests, charges, cautions, reprimands, warnings, convictions and court orders.
- In the event of a Positive DBS check a risk assessment will be carried out to assess risk of the individual within the role.

Induction and Training

- During a 3-month supervised probationary period, information and training is provided about Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- Staff are made aware who the DSL and deputy DSL are within their setting during their initial induction
- Staff are shown where safeguarding information and important numbers can be found during their initial induction

- During their probation period there will be monthly supervisions to ensure any areas of concern is addressed.
- All new staff members must complete safeguarding courses within the first month of them starting
- All staff members are required to refresh their safeguarding courses every 2 years, including the DSL and Deputy DSL
- Staff members are routinely asked about our safeguarding procedures to ensure they understand them and any gaps in their knowledge are addressed to ensure they fully understand our safeguarding policies and procedures
- Those with specific responsibilities detailed within those Policies and Procedures are provided with specific training interventions associated with their role and responsibilities. These will ensure that they know and understand:

    - The signs and symptoms of physical, emotional, neglect and sexual abuse. Also, to be aware of indicators of where a child or carer is suffering from domestic abuse.
    - Other factors affecting children's vulnerability such as fabricated or induced illness; Female Genital Mutilation; Honour based violence and forced marriage.
    - Procedures to follow if they were concerned about a family member/child being exposed to extremist views/radicalisation.
    - How abusers behave
    - The Local Safeguarding Board's guidelines for dealing with concerns about abuse
    - Who to contact to ask for advice and to refer a case without delay where there are protection concerns.

<u>Intimate Care</u>

Intimate care tasks include:

- Dressing/undressing (underwear)
- Helping a child on the potty or toilet
- Changing Nappies
- Cleaning/washing/wiping intimate parts of the body

Personal care tasks include

- Feeding
- Administering medication
- Hair care
- Dressing/undressing Clothes

- Washing hands
- Prompting to go to toilet

To ensure good practice at **Curious Explorers** all staff follow the following intimate care procedures

- Staff wear fresh disposable gloves and aprons for each child they change
- Soiled nappies/pull ups are to be put in a nappy bag and disposed appropriately
- Nappy changing area to be wiped cleaned after each child has been changed
- Toilet areas checked and cleaned regularly
- Hot water and soap and also sanitiser are available to ensure hands are washed after changing is done
- Paper towels are provided to dry hands
- No member of staff will be permitted to carry out any intimate care routines unless they have a full DBS check
- Staff ensure that each child is treated as individuals and care is given as gently and sensitively as possible.
- Children are treated with respect and given privacy where appropriate to the child's age and situation.
- Children are encouraged to be independent in their own intimate/personal care where it is age and stage appropriate and in accordance with the EYFS curriculum.
- Staff work with parents and any intimate/personal care is agreed in partnership with them. This is agreed on the child's first settling session on an all about me form and is reviewed as the child develops.
- Staff work closely with parents when toilet training to ensure consistency of care and comply with parental wishes
- Staff are aware of the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child and notice any marks, bruises or soreness whilst changing them (see bruising flowchart)
- Children with SEND who require extra support with intimate/personal care will be treated sensitively and an individualised plan will be agreed with staff and parents.
- No child will be excluded from participating in our services due to them not being toilet trained, regardless of age. We will work with parents/carers to ensure we fully meet the needs of their children.
- We provide toilet and nappy changing facilities for children to be cleaned and changed and exercise good hygiene procedures.
- All staff involve with intimate care are DBS checked and inducted in intimate care procedures.

Please see also Nappy changing procedure

Online Safety

The internet and other digital and information technologies are beneficial tools to all children's learning and we support the children in our care to be made aware of how to use these tools appropriately and safely.

Mobile phone and use of cameras/tablets

Mobiles

The welfare, protection and safety of every child in our care is of paramount importance, and we take our responsibility to safeguard children seriously. We have procedures in place which we ask everyone to respect, to help promote the safety of the children in our care.

We believe our staff should be completely attentive during their hours of work to ensure all children in the nursery receive good quality care and education.

Mobile phones must not be used during working hours.

- Mobiles must be kept on silent or switched off during working hours and locked with staff belongings in the staff room
- Mobiles may only be used on a designated break and only in a child free area of the nursery
- Staff may use mobiles on outings for nursery/emergency use only
- Mobiles must never be used to take photographs of any of the children or any area of the nursery or the work or any member of staff at work
- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the Nursery Manager.
- Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately (see whistle blowing policy).
- The Manager or Deputy Manager in her absence reserves the right to check the image contents of a member of staff's mobile phone should there be any cause for concern over the appropriate use of it.
- Should inappropriate material be found then our Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted immediately. We will follow the guidance of the LADO as to the appropriate measures for the staff member's dismissal.

Ensure that parents or visitors do not use their mobile phones within the Nursery. If they do please ask them politely to turn off their phone and put it away. No use of mobile phones signs is up around the Nursery.

Smart Watches

Staff are permitted to wear smartwatches or a fitness tracker, on the basis these devices do not have a built-in camera. We advocate health, and well-being of our staff and understand this can be used to record daily physical activity and other data relating to fitness or health. Smartwatches and some fitness trackers have the ability to show notifications of calls and texts, but this feature must be turned off when worn by staff working directly with children.

If staff are wearing a smartwatch or fitness tracker at Nursery, then they must adhere to the following:

- All functionality which allows notifications or calls, texts and applications other than that associated with tracking personal fitness or health be turned off when in the Nursery.
- The camera functionality is not permitted or worn in the Nursery.
- The Manager and Deputy has the right to check if these functions are de-activated and if not, it could result in a dismissal.
- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the DSL.

Camera/Tablets

- All tablets and cameras are the property of Curious Explores Ltd and are not to be taken home or used for personal use.
- All tablets are electronically linked to setting's systems. They can be used without a password and may be storing picture and video images of pupils along with other personal information. This means you must fully comply with high standards of data protection.
- Photographs taken for the purpose of recording a child or group of children participating in activities or celebrating their achievements is an effective form or recording their progression in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- It is essential that photographs are taken and stored appropriately to Safeguard the children in our care.
- Only the designated nursery camera/tablet is to be used to take any photo within the setting or on outings.
- Images taken on this camera must be deemed suitable without putting the child/children in any compromising positions that could cause embarrassment or distress.
- Under no circumstances must cameras/tablet of any kind be taken into the bathrooms or toilets.
- Cameras/Tablets should be stored in the staffroom overnight and can at any time during the day the manager or deputy manager can ask to see photos or videos of children that is stored on the tablet.
- Tablets are used to observe, assess and plan for children. Some educational apps may be downloaded to support children's development.
- No social media sites to be accessed on the tablets.
- Loss or damage of a device should be reported to the manager immediately.
- Tablets are expensive and fragile items, and their use must be supervised at all times. Tablets should only be used when the teacher believes that all pupils present are capable of using them sensibly.

Failure to adhere to the contents of this policy will lead to a disciplinary that may even result in dismissal.

Social Networking

Due to the expansion of the internet community, the use of personal blogs and internet community pages has increased immensely.
Staff members are to consider the impact blogging or the publication of information about the company or ANY of its employees could have on Curious Explorers Ltd and ensure that they do not post details which could be potentially sensitive or damaging about our place of work, employer or a colleague.
Be aware that any derogatory comments made about the company, employer or a colleague may be viewed as bringing the company into disrepute, or harassment and may therefore result in disciplinary action.
It is an express term of employment that Curious Explorers staff are not permitted to be friends or followers of any customers (parents and families). This includes students on placement. Professional relationships are always expected.

- This is a clear statement that misuse of social media can be ground for discipline, up to and including termination.
- A prohibition on disclosure of the employer's confidential, trade secret or proprietary information.
- A request that employees keep company logos or trademarks of their blogs and profiles and not mention the company in commentary, unless for business purposes.
- An instruction that employees not post or blog during business hours, unless for business purposes.
- An instruction that employees bring work-related complaints to the manager and not blog or post about such complaints.
- A prohibition on using company e-mail addresses to register for social media sites.
- A prohibition on posting false information about the company or its employees, customers or affiliates.
- A general instruction that employees use good judgment and take personal and professional responsibility for what they publish online.
- A demand that all employees with personal blogs that identify their employer include a disclaimer that the views expressed on the blog are those of the individual and not the employer.

Prevent Duty

As a registered early year childcare provider, we are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to prevent people for being drawn into terrorism. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

This involves:

- Respond to the ideological challenges of terrorism
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism
- Work with sectors and institutions where there is a rise of radicalisation
- Prevent extremism (vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Also calls for the death of members of our armed forces.)

The Prevent Strategy is based on 4 areas of work:

- **Pursue:** to stop terrorist attacks
- **Prevent:** to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- **Protect:** to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- **Prepare:** to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

Prevent: Curious Explorers

- It is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation
- Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our safeguarding duties
- Build resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental **British Values**
- Promote community cohesion, equalities and well being
- Link with families and community groups

If you think a child is in danger of terrorism you should:

- Report it to the DSL straight away
- Phone police: 101 or 999 (flight risk) if an immediate risk is identified

Promoting British Values in the Early Years

At Curious Explorers we **always** promote British Values. We ensure British values are incorporated in our daily routines and we do not plan specific 'lessons' to teach children British values. They are included in everything we do.

See British Values in the Early Years document.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

Domestic violence and abuse (DVA) is the abuse of one person over another who is, or has been, in a relationship. The abuse may be verbal, sexual, physical, emotional, financial or psychological. Both men and women can be abused or abusers. It occurs in all groups and sections of society and may be experienced differently to, and compounded by racism, sexuality, disability, age, religion, culture or class.

The definition of 'domestic violence and abuse' was updated in March 2013 to include the reality that many young people are experiencing domestic abuse and violence in relationships at a young age.

Children may:

- Witness the outcome after the event, by seeing or hearing the violence.
- Be used by the perpetrator to intimidate/blackmail the victim.
- Think that they have triggered the violence.
- Be affected by the physical and emotional effects on the victim.
- Get drawn into violence towards the victim.
- Be physically, emotionally or sexually abused or neglected.

Staff at Curious Explorers acknowledges they may be working with children experiencing violence at home. Staff understand children experiencing abuse may be affected in a number of different ways.

We are committed to supporting the wellbeing and safety of children and acknowledge the profound and damaging effects of DVA on them.

Staff should be able to recognise the signs of DVA, which include:

- Victim tries to hide injuries, or minimises their extent or cause, appears frightened, overly anxious or depressed and/or is submissive or afraid to speak in front of the partner.
- Partner always attends unnecessarily and may refuse to leave, and/or may be aggressive or dominant.
- Children showing the signs and symptoms of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect.

We are committed to taking positive action against DVA and to actively support victims and protect children.

When any staff becomes aware of domestic abuse within a family, they should make an assessment as to the impact on the child. The member of staff should inform the DSL who should consider a referral to CSPA . In circumstances where there have been 3 known incidents of domestic abuse, a referral must be made to the CSPA team. (Details at end of document)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), is a form of physical abuse against children. FGM is also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting. FGM has no health benefits, and it harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue and interferes with the natural functions of girls' and women's bodies. FGM is defined by the World Health Organisation as "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons". FGM has no health benefits for girls and women and procedures can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating, and later cysts, infections, infertility as well as complications in childbirth.

FGM is classified into four major types:

- Clitoridectomy: partial or total removal of the clitoris and, in very rare cases, only the prepuce.
- Excision: partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora.
- Infibulations: narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, or outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris.
- Other: all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g. pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterizing the genital area

FGM is practised around the world in various forms across all major faiths. The majority of FGM takes place in 28 African and Middle Eastern countries, and also includes other parts of the world; Middle East, Asia, and in industrialised nations through migration which includes Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act was introduced in 2003 and came into effect in March 2004. It was made illegal to:

- Practice FGM in the UK.
- Take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country.
- Aid, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad.

If staff are concerned about a child who is danger of this procedure or suspect a child has suffered FGM they must:

- Report it to the DSL straight away
- Contact the CSPA team (Details at end of document) and in some cases where there is immediate harm contact the police101 or 999.

Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriages

Honour Based Violence (HBV) is a term used to describe **violence** committed within the context of the extended family which are motivated by a perceived need to restore standing within the community, which is presumed to have been lost through the behaviour of the victim.

Forced marriage is a **marriage** in which one or both of the parties is **married** without his or her consent or against his or her will. A **forced marriage** differs from an **arranged marriage**, in which both parties' consent to the assistance of their parents or a third party (such as a matchmaker) in identifying a spouse.

When any staff becomes aware of HBV/Forced Marriage within a family they should make an assessment as to the impact on the child. The member of staff should inform the DSL who should consider a referral to the CSPA team (Details at end of document) or contact the police 101 or 999.

Breast Ironing

What is breast ironing?

Breast Ironing is practiced in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to 3.8 million women across Africa.

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although, countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.
Breast ironing does not stop the breasts from growing, but development can be slowed down. Damage caused by the 'ironing' can leave women with malformed breasts, difficulty breastfeeding or producing milk, severe chest pains, infections and abscesses. In some cases, it may be related to the onset of breast cancer.

Concerns have been raised that breast ironing is also to be found amongst African communities in the UK, with as many as 1,000 girls at risk. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) mentions breast ironing on page 54, as part of the section on so-called 'Honour Violence'.

Staff concerned about a child who is danger of this procedure or suspect a child has suffered breast ironing they must

- Report it to the DSL straight away

- Contact the CSPA team (Details at end of document) and in some cases where there is immediate harm contact the police101 or 999

Child Sex Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is the coercion or manipulation of children and young people into taking part in sexual activities.

It is a form of sexual abuse involving an exchange of some form of payment which can include money, mobile phones and other items, drugs, alcohol, a place to stay, 'protection' or affection.

The vulnerability of the child or young person and grooming process employed by perpetrators renders them powerless to recognise the exploitative nature of relationships and unable to give informed consent.

All children and young people are at risk of being sexually exploited, regardless of age, gender or where they live.

We have a responsibility for keeping children who attend Curious Explorers safe. We are also vigilant for signs of risk that indicate that (older) siblings may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Banned dog breeds

The Dangerous Dogs Act covers both **specific banned breeds** and **any dog dangerously out of control**, regardless of breed. This means authorities can take action if *any* dog injures someone, acts aggressively, or causes a person to feel threatened. The Act also includes rules about dogs in public, private property, and how owners must keep their dogs under control.

As of 2026, the dog breeds banned in the UK under the Dangerous Dogs Act are the **Pit Bull Terrier**, **Japanese Tosa**, **Dogo, Argentino**, **Fila Brasileiro**, and the **XL Bully** (illegal to own without a Certificate of Exemption since 1 February 2024).

Curious Explorers Ltd is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children in which to be cared and educated.

All staff is trained in all areas of Safeguarding and updated on these aspects regularly.

It is our responsibility as Early Years professionals to ensure that no child should experience abuse of any kind and we recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership

CSPA contact

Tel – 0300 470 9100

Email – cspa@surreycc.gov.uk

During weekends/bank holidays the emergency duty team is available

Tel – 01483 517898

Email – edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk