

**Chuckles Day Care Wales LTD**  
**Safeguarding/Child Protection Procedure**  
*(What to do if you suspect abuse)*

Everyone has a duty to be alert to concerns about the abuse and neglect of children and young people and know to whom they should report their concerns. It is a requirement for any persons working with children to report any concerns about the welfare or safety of a child immediately.

Your first point of contact will be the Nursery Manager who is the designated child protection lead or failing that the Nursery Owner who will then make the necessary contacts. If this is not possible you must report your concerns to:

- Newport Children and Family Services on 01633 656656
- Caerphilly Children and family services on 08081001727
- Torfaen Children and family services on 01495 762200

After 5pm and on weekends and bank holidays please contact the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team on 0800 328 4432

If you think a child or young person is in immediate danger then contact the Police on 999.

**If none of the above are available, the following contact details can also be used:**

Police – 01633244999

CIW – 0300 7900126

Officer for the NSPCC - 08088005000

All telephone referrals must be followed up with a multi-agency referral form (MARF) within two days, these are kept in the black filing cabinet within the main office.

Team members must be aware that they are not allowed to remain anonymous when making a referral.

You must not undertake your own internal investigation or enquiry. If the concern involves a member of staff, the nursery will not make a decision about whether it is a disciplinary issue or a child protection matter. Considerations will only take place with the involvement of social services and the police.

**How to Handle a Disclosure of Abuse**

It is very important that whoever has the first disclosure of abuse gets as much information as possible because you should not go back and question the child again as the information may not be as accurate. Encourage the child to talk, but do not prompt or ask leading questions. Do not promise to keep what you have

been told a secret or confidential, as you have a duty to disclose information to those who need to know. Reporting concerns is not a betrayal of trust.

To hear information that may be child abuse will be unsettling for you too. You will worry about whether you are overreacting, what the repercussions could be if you are right or wrong and those thoughts may give you reservations about speaking up. **NEVER SIT BACK AND DO NOTHING BECAUSE YOU ARE UNSURE.** If you are right the abuse to that child will continue and as a person/professional, you cannot allow that to happen. Give them all the time they need but when this is finished contact the Nursery Manager immediately and explain what has happened. If the Nursery Manager is not available speak to the Director, who will decide on what further action to take. The manager will be responsible for producing a record of this meeting which will include the following information:

- Date and time of meeting
- People involved
- Notes regarding the nature of the discussion
- An explanation of the actions to be taken and by whom

If no further action is to be taken this should also be recorded with the reasons for this decision.

It is important that the need to seek advice should never delay any emergency action needed to protect the child.

Below are a set of **GOLDEN RULES** to follow if a child discloses information to you.

### **Do**

- Listen carefully
- Try not to interrupt
- Show that you understand the disclosure is serious to them and do not appear to dismiss it.
- Make accurate notes using a child's words.
- Inform the designated person immediately or A.S.A,P
- Tell the child that they have done the right thing by telling you.

### **Don't**

- Promise confidentiality
- Make promises that you may not be able to carry out.
- Investigate the concern yourself.
- Ask leading questions
- Use your own words to describe events/details given to you.
- Judge the outcome of what you've been told and assume if the person is or is not guilty.
- Approach the person / persons indicated in the disclosure.

### **Recording the information that you have been given**

You must ensure that you write up the incident as soon as you can and no later than 24 hours using the child protection recording sheets located at the back of the policy and procedures folder in the main office.

All information that you record **must be**

- **Legible**
- **Dated**
- **Signed**
- **Relevant**
- **Complete**
- **Contemporaneous (written at the time of incident/disclosure or within a reasonable time afterwards.)**
- **Stored safe and secure**
- **Kept confidential.**

Before telephoning to make a referral please ensure you have as much of the following information available by completing a record of concern and incident form.

1. The nature of your concerns
2. How and why the concerns have arisen
3. The full name, address, and date of birth (or age) of the child
4. Than names, addresses and dates of birth/ages of family members along with any other names they may use
5. The names and relationship of all those persons with parental responsibility
6. The name address and date of birth of parents' partners
7. The names of any other person's living in the household
8. The names of other professionals involved with the family
9. Any information you have of the child's development needs
10. Any information affecting the safety of staff.

Although you may not be able to give all of this information remember the more information you can give the quicker it will take to assess if the child needs help.

Once you have made the telephone referral you will now need to fully complete the multi-agency form and take it to the duty assessment team or email it securely using EGRESS within two days.

### **What happens next?**

The duty social worker will find out as much as possible about the family from:  
Children & Family Services records  
Other services which know the child & family (eg school; nursery; health visitor; GP)

Children and Family Services and the Police will discuss the information and what action needs to be taken:

The social workers and the Police will share the information you have given, together with all of the other details they have found out about the family, and with medical and legal advice if needed.

The two agencies will decide whether there is enough concern to make child protection enquiries (under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989) and if so, will plan carefully how these enquiries will be handled.

If agreed, enquiries will take place:

Parents are fully involved at all stages unless this would affect the child's safety. The child/young person will normally be seen

Any person making a referral may also be asked to be involved in any of the following tasks and should be willing and prepared to do so.

- Contribute to a strategy meeting or discussion
- Assist in the child protection section 47 enquiries
- Attend the child protection conference
- Provide a written report for the child protection conference
- Contribute to the initial and core assessments.

DON'T FORGET....it is your responsibility to ensure that your child protection concerns are taken seriously, you are accountable for your own role in the child protection process.

### **What to do if you feel your concerns were not taken seriously (not acted upon)**

If you feel the Manager has not acted upon your concerns, contact the owner immediately on 07930 838400. If you cannot contact her, go directly to Children & Family Services which is the body that the Manager should have contacted.

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### **What happens at the end of the enquiries?**

The outcome may be to:

- take no further action, because the child is assessed not to be at risk

or

- offer support & services to the family by Children & Family Services and other agencies

or

- hold a Child Protection Conference- *there are leaflets about this should the case go that far*

or

- In the exceptional circumstances of serious harm or risk of harm, remove the child from home, to other family members or to foster carers, while further work is carried undertaken

You should be told – as far as confidentiality allows – the outcome of the enquiries. If you do not hear anything, phone the person you made the referral to and ask them to check out what has happened. This may be particularly important where you are continuing to work with the child & family.

### **What to do if you have concerns about the behaviour of any adult or colleague, towards children or young people**

It is important that you do not ignore or dismiss your concerns about your colleague or another professional, and do not confront the person about whom you have concerns. You must act accordingly with the company's safeguarding and whistle blowing policies and report your concerns immediately to the manager or an outside professional.

### **How can I avoid being accused of abuse? (Safe Working)**

Anyone who looks after children is open to criticism and allegation. Take simple precautions to avoid this happening to you

- If children with whom you work have unexplained marks or bruises remember you are entitled to an explanation.
- If the child comes in with a visible injury or the parent points out an injury, complete an Off-Site Accident report and ask the parent to sign it. If you cannot find the sheet, simply write it into the handover diary and ask the parent to sign.
- If you notice a mark/injury during the day, make a note in the child's diary to make the parent aware, notify your Team Leader and note in the Reception Hand over diary
- If the parents do not co-operate or are unable to offer a satisfactory explanation you should tell them that you are unhappy and will seek further advice. Please do not accuse parents but try to involve them in discussion
- Do not put yourself in vulnerable positions by making comments in front of children, or using language that may be misunderstood by parents, should the child repeat what gets said at home
- Tell the parent if you are concerned about a child's health or behaviour and suggest they seek help

### **Example scenario showing the above is important:**

Child A comes in with Dad and has a bruise which had been done by the Mum who has been hitting the child. Dad is unaware of the bruise. You are unaware that the Mum is hitting the child. At the end of the day Dad collects the child again but this time notices the bruise and wants to know what has happened to his Child. You are now a suspect.

### **What happens if I am accused of abuse?**

If you are accused, the same procedure follows as above.

The person making the accusation will provide the information which they feel supports the allegation to Children & Family services.

You will be questioned by the Children & Family Services/Police.

You will be suspended from work until you have been cleared of the accusation.

### **Quick Review of what you can and should do**

#### **Can Do**

- Be vigilant
- Continue with the day to day support of the children
- Know who the designated member of staff is and their stand in if absent. Who you would refer to in times of concern.
- Know what and where the AWCPP folder is kept (in the downstairs office).
- Update your self on the nurseries Child Protection policy and procedure.
- Keep handy a concern reporting sheet/form

#### **Should Do**

- If you have a concern refer to the designated staff
- Do not discuss the concern as being too trivial to pass on.
- Record all your concerns as this is as essential as the many processes that follow.
- Identify when you might be in a vulnerable situation i.e. when a child wants affection, restraining a child etc.
- Follow up on your concern – ask for information – what’s happening. Some information may need to remain confidential, but you can be given the basics.

**\*All forms relating to safeguarding including reporting sheets, body maps, chronology forms and multi-agency referral forms are kept within the black filing cabinet in the main office.**