**Safeguarding Policy**

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At Flexi-Minder, the safety of the children who attend our setting is given the highest priority. We aim to create an environment where children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately dealt with in accordance with best practice and any relevant regulations and guidance. This includes the safeguarding and welfare requirements outlined in section 3 of the Early Years Framework.

‘Safeguarding’ is an umbrella term encompassing the whole safety and wellbeing of a child and recognizes the importance of the preventative agenda and early intervention. This policy aims to support *The Children’s Act* (2004) and ensure that staff members and parents are fully aware of Flexi-Minder safeguarding procedures.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Haylea Osborne, is the 'Designated Person' responsible for issues relating to the safeguarding of children. Haylea has attended Level 2 Designated Officer’s training and training in specific child protection matters. This is updated regularly. If a member of staff wishes to speak to Haylea regarding any concerns when she is not physically at the setting, she is available for staff members to contact at all times that the setting is open. Haylea is contactable via her mobile phone number which is stored in the Flexi-Minder phone or via our confidential email fleximinderpreschool@outlook.com. If Haylea is not on site, staff members are advised to first seek advice from Lucy the Manager or a member of the management team. If that senior member of staff then feels it appropriate, they may telephone Haylea for further advice.

Recruitment

Every staff member including the directors will be required to have a DBS check. All staff are required to provide to refences and these must be checked by the manager Lucy. During the interview process staff will be asked if they know of any reason why they can not work with children and also if they themselves have any health issues we need to be aware of. All staff appointments will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless Flexi-Minder is completely confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

Training

All staff will be made aware of the Safeguarding Policy. They will each receive a copy of the policy and be updated if any changes are made. Staff will receive Flexi-Minder safeguarding training as part of their induction. Staff conduct will be closely monitored by Haylea and further training and instruction will be provided if deemed necessary. Haylea will attend relevant training and information on current safeguarding issues will be shared with staff during staff meetings. All staff will have access to online training for their their level 1 safegurding traning, prevent training and Female Gential Mutilation Training.

Visitors

All visitors to Flexi-Minder will be required to sign in at reception and wear a visitor badge whilst on site. Visitors will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times if children are present.

Images

Please see our separate Multimedia Policy.

Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to safeguarding should be reported to the Designated Person (Haylea) immediately (or, in her absence, to Lucy). Flexi-Minder communicates readily with MARAT, Trafford’s Multi Agency Referral Assessment Team, whenever an allegation or disclosure of abuse is made.

All staff have the right to whistle blow and escalate their concerns if they do not feel they are being dealt with appropriately, or also if they have a concern regarding Haylea or Lucy. At the end of this document there is a lost of contact details for other agencies. Staff can also contact the other two company directors Leah Ainsworth and Bill Brown via a confidential email address fleximinderpreschool@outlook.com and request to speak to them in private.

Child Protection

‘Child protection’ is part of safeguarding and the promotion of children’s welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

However, staff members may become aware of child protection concerns in the course of their work. The concern may involve allegations or disclosures of a combination of one or more of the different types of abuse.

Recognising Possible Signs of Abuse

There are four main types of child abuse:

**Physical Abuse** Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

**Sexual Abuse** A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This doesn't have to be physical contact and it can happen online. Sometimes the child won't understand that what's happening to them is abuse.

**Emotional Abuse** Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. It’s sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child’s emotional health and development. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them.

**Neglect** Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is [the most common form of child abuse](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/neglect/child-neglect-facts-statistics/). A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care

Signs of possible abuse may be, but are not limited to:

* Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
* Significant change in the child’s behaviour
* Deterioration in the child’s general wellbeing
* Child’s comments which give cause for concern

All adults who work with children have a responsibility to protect them and report any concerns immediately.

Immobile Children

It is very rare for children who are immobile to have bruises, however in the event they do this may relate to a health condition or infection. All children aged 6 months and under and who are immobile must be immediately referred to MARAT if they show signs of bruising.

Prevent Duty

Registered early years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This is duty is known as the Prevent Duty. Flexi-Minder adheres to the Prevent Duty and staff members have a duty to report any concerns. Flexi-Minder staff members complete a general awareness training course to support them to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do if they are identified.

At Flexi-Minder we also build children’s resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values. These values form the foundation of our behaviour policy. Please see the behaviour policy for more information.

FGM

FGM stands for Female Genital Mutilation.  Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is also sometimes referred to as female genital cutting or female circumcision. FGM is illegal and must be reported immediately.

Signs and symptoms of FGM

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But she might talk about:

* being taken 'home' to visit family
* a special occasion to 'become a woman'
* an older female relative visiting the UK.

FGM is child abuse and against the law. It causes serious physical and emotional harm. Staff members who are worried a child is at risk must report it. They can also call the FGM helpline on **0800 028 3550** for more advice and support**.**

Complaints

We ensure that all parents at Flexi-Minder know how to make a complaint about a staff member or visitor in the setting, including any allegation of abuse (Please see the complaints policy). We follow the guidance of Trafford Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint relating to safeguarding.

Where it is considered that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm we refer the matter immediately (or, if this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable) to MARAT and OFSTED. We will then co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services and/or the police or with any other instructions issued by Family and Children’s Services. OFSTED will then be notified of any action taken in respect of allegations within 14 days of the allegations being made.

Whistle Blowing

Whistle blowing occurs when an employee or worker raises concerns or worries about wrongdoing or malpractice within the workplace. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees regardless of age and length of employment. Please see our Whistle blowing policy

As a first step, staff members should normally raise concerns following our usual *Reporting Concerns* procedure, however, if you feel that senior leaders are involved or cannot be objective about the matter staff can also refer complaints directly to Ofsted. The telephone number is 0300 123 1231, this can also be found on their website. If employees wish to write to Ofsted their contact address is The National Business Unit, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Employees may als

Injuries

If a child arrives at Flexi-Minder with an injury that they have sustained outside the setting then we will require the parents to complete an existing injury form. This is required for both the protection of the child and Flexi-Minder staff.

All injuries sustained whilst a child is at Flexi-Minder will be recorded using an accident form and will be reported to parents via the *Daily Connect* service, by telephone or on collection.

Useful Phone Numbers – this list is also displayed in out Staff toilet, staff room and Staff handbook.

Trafford MARAT…………………………………………………………………………………………0161 912 5125

Ofsted…………………………………………………………………………………………………..………0300 123 1231

FGM helpline……………………………………………………………………………….………………**0800 028 3550**

Trafford Prevent Lead ……………………………………………………………………………….0161 9123434

Trafford Safe Guarding Board………………………………………………….. <http://www.tscb.co.uk/>

Trafford - LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer ………………..0161 912 5125 or email LADO@trafford.gov.uk

Prevent helpline…………………………………………………………………………………………….020 7340 7264

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies:

* Uncollected child policy
* Outdoor policy
* Accident and injury policy
* Emergency policy
* Intimate care policy
* Lost child policy
* Complaints policy
* Whistle Blowing policy

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