

Safeguarding Children Policy 2024

Our main responsibility at HAPPY STARS is the welfare of the children within our care, we believe we have a duty to the children, parents/carers, and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instances that cause concern.

We have a duty to report any suspicions we may have to the Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding Board (MARS board). This new board will be made up and overseen by three main safeguarding partners

- Clinical commissioning groups (health partners)
- Police
- Local Authority

The board will be responsible for overseeing and scrutinising how organisations safeguard children within North Lincolnshire. They will also continue to offer some training.

The new website www.northlincscmars.co.uk can be accessed for information on safeguarding children and how to access training and resources to support HAPPY STARS.

HAPPY STARS will follow the procedures set by the Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding Board (MARS board) and will seek advice on all steps taken.

Concerns regarding the possibility of sex offenders within our community can be discussed with the police, or any other non-emergency concerns, telephone 101.

We have a safeguarding file in place which contains the correct forms to be used in case of concerns arising and for use at Child Protection Conferences.

A copy of 'Working together to safeguard children February 2024', 'Information sharing for practitioners 2018 and Disqualification under the childcare act 2018' are all stored electronically on the main computer in the office.

(Throughout this policy any references to parents may also apply to an adult who has parental responsibility or local authority responsibility for a child)

Definitions of abuse and harm

Physical

This involves hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child's ill health also constitutes physical abuse.

Possible signs of this type of abuse: Frequent unexplained injuries (especially with pattern marks, e.g., handprint), hyper vigilance, inappropriate clothing to cover up, fearful reluctance to go home.

Common sites of non-accidental injury: Inner arms and thighs, torn frenulum (in mouth, skin between lip and gum), abdomen or chest, black eyes, ears, face, and spinal fractures. If it is believed a child was inflicted knowingly or not prevented to have been physically injured or poisoned this action must be taken:

Management must be informed immediately of any concerns.

Any mark/injury/concern will be recorded; however, a child must not be undressed to examine marks or bruising.

The incident will generally be discussed with the parent/carer and relevant others if appropriate.

Any discussion will be recorded.

A decision will be made as to whether a referral is or is not necessary, all reasons for the outcome of the decision will be recorded with the names of the people making the decision and the date the decision was made.

The North Lincolnshire Children's and Young people's Services duty officer will be informed, if necessary, dependent on the outcome of the decision to refer.

Sexual Abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse.

If a child has an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviors, staff have witnessed where a child has indicated through words, play or drawing sexual activities any physical markings or withdrawn (frozen awareness) this procedure will be followed:

Management must be informed immediately of any concerns.

The observed instances will be reported to management.

Any mark/injury/concern will be recorded; however, a child must not be undressed to examine marks or bruising.

The concerns would generally be discussed with the parent/carer and relevant others if appropriate.

The observed instances will be recorded.

Any information will be recorded.

A decision will be made as to whether a referral is or is not necessary, all reasons for the outcome of the decision will be recorded with the names of the people making the decision and the date the decision was made.

The North Lincolnshire Children's and Young people's Services duty officer will be informed dependent on the outcome of the decision to refer.

Emotional Abuse

This is present in virtually all child protection incidents but can also constitute abuse in its own right. It involves persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or torture causing, or anything that causes severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Emotional abuse also deeply affects children who witness or hear domestic abuse.

Possible signs of emotional abuse: Withdrawal, anxiety, hyper-vigilance, extremes of behaviour (including inappropriately adult or baby like), lack of attachment to parent/carer.

If staff have reason to believe that there is severe, adverse effect on the behaviour, willingness to thrive or emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional neglect or rejection, whether socially or mentally this action must be taken:

Management must be informed immediately of any concerns.

The concerns would generally be discussed with the parent/carer and relevant others if appropriate.

Any observations or information to be reported to management.

All information/observations are to be recorded.

A decision will be made as to whether a referral is or is not necessary, all reasons for the outcome of the decision will be recorded with the names of the people making the decision and the date the decision was made.

The North Lincolnshire Children's and Young people's Services duty officer will be informed, if necessary, dependent on the outcome of the decision to refer

If there are any queries or the abuse is thought to be on going the North Lincolnshire Children's and Young people's Services duty officer may be notified.

Neglect

Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical i.e. lack of food or clothing, emotional or psychological needs, so to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability.

Possible signs of neglect: Ill-fitting, dirty, or inappropriate clothing, poor hygiene, untreated illnesses, or injuries, is left unsupervised or allowed to play in unsafe situations. If staff have reason to believe there has been deterioration in a child's well-being, persistent or severe neglect which could result in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive, this action must be taken.

Management must be informed immediately of any concerns.

Any mark/injury/concern will be recorded; however, a child must not be undressed to examine marks or bruising.

The concern will generally be discussed with the parents/carer or other relevant person if appropriate.

Any observations or information must be recorded.

A decision will be made as to whether a referral is or is not necessary, all reasons for the outcome of the decision will be recorded with the names of the people making the decision and the date the decision was made.

If there are any queries the North Lincolnshire Children's and Young people's Services duty officer will be notified dependent on the outcome of the decision to refer

The staff at HAPPY STARS may be the first people to be confided in about abuse, it is not the responsibility of Happy Stars to investigate the suspected abuse.

Accurate records will be made of observations, and anything mentioned by the child or others in connection with the suspected abuse.

Our safeguarding children policy over rules our Confidentiality Policy, and any relevant persons will be notified if there is cause for concern.

All staff will receive training on the protection of children from abuse.

Safeguarding Policy

(Throughout this policy any references to parents may also apply to an adult who has parental responsibility or local authority responsibility for a child)

Happy Stars is committed to ensuring all children are safeguarded, and take all complaints, allegations, or suspicions seriously, including allegations made against staff members. All procedures are in line with Children's Multi-Agency and Resilience Safeguarding Board (MARS) guidelines.

All staff, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures during their induction, and their supervisor will ensure they understand the procedures to be followed by discussing these with them and asking them to sign and date to say they have read and understand them. In addition, all staff receive ongoing training on safeguarding issues. Understanding of issues relating to safeguarding will also be discussed during staff supervision meetings. All staff will have access to and be required to read 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Summary'. In addition, safeguarding information must be made available to parents as they may wish to make an allegation against a staff member.

Existing injury forms

Parents and families are required to inform practitioners if their child arrives with an existing

If a child has had an accident outside of nursery it must be recorded on Family as an incident form on the child's account: Please see example below

Child's account - Incident form

Tick the noticed on arrival box

Location - At home/grandparents/park etc

Date & Time

Nature of accident/incident

"Existing injury- Mum told P on arrival that **** had a bruised nose and eye. P questioned what had happened and mum told P that **** slipped at the top of the stairs and caught his face on the radiator at the bottom of the stairs. Mum took **** to the hospital on Thursday and they said to watch his breathing. The bruise is in the middle of his nose with a slight cut and his right eye is bruised".

First aid administered - taken to hospital

Witness -

When and how notified – Mum was told on arrival that an incident form would be put on Family

Other notes - Monitor throughout the day / form added by *****

All existing injury forms should be recorded on the Audit form

Parents will then acknowledge the form confirming all information given is correct.

Happy Stars designated Safeguarding Officers.

All concerns must be raised with the **Safeguarding Coordinator Clare Foster** who will follow the procedures set out by the Children's MARS board. In the absence of the first safeguarding officer the deputy safeguarding officers are –

Happy Stars Pre-school - Laura Catterick /Tracy Scott

Happy Stars Babies - Rebekah Short/ Tracy Scott

The designated safeguarding lead or deputy will be available during opening hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.

Training

The designated safeguarding coordinator and deputy will undertake safeguarding training every two years and knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, but at least annually.

Additionally, all staff, students and volunteers will be given appropriate training on safeguarding at induction, and this will be updated on a regular basis and at least annually for example via in-house training, emails, e-bulletins, online training, and newsletters.

Recruitment

Recruitment of staff is in line with the Children's MARS Standards for Safer Recruitment policy and procedures. The Children's MARS Board adheres to safe recruitment procedures, therefore ensuring that applicants are suitable to work with children. References will be sought for all staff who work directly with children or who are likely to have unsupervised access to children. All staff will be required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service check before starting work in the setting.

The setting must keep records to demonstrate to Ofsted that the checks have been done, including the DBS reference number, date of issue and details of who carried out the check.

All staff are provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures during their induction, and the Supervisor will ensure they understand the procedures to be followed. In addition, all staff receive ongoing training on safeguarding issues. All staff will have access to Working Together to Safeguard Children and be required to read '*What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Summary*' (Department for Education).

Mobile Phones, Smart watches, Cameras, Video Recordings

Happy Stars management, practitioners, students, volunteers, visitors, and parents must at no time have their mobile phone with them whilst with children. All personal mobile phones must be stored in staff's personal belongings. The only time when this would be used is in the case of supervising nursery outings and walks and during transition visits. In any of these cases the mobile phone must only be used in the case of an emergency or in the event of contacting the nursery. At no time should anybody connected with Happy Stars take

photographs or video recordings on their mobile phone. Both buildings have their own mobile phones to be taken with a staff member for any outings, these cannot connect to the internet or take photographs.

Smartwatches are not allowed to be worn by any member of the Happy Stars Team, students, and volunteers. Smart watches may be kept with personal belongings but out of sight/reach of children

The nursery does not mind if you check you phone whilst you have a comfort break being mindful of ratios. If you are expecting a phone call, then nursery's phone numbers may be given.

Photographs and video recording may be taken of the children if prior consent has been given by the family, this can be found in the child's individual circumstance form.

Families also give or decline their consent to their child being in other children's observation and group photos and to be shared with the Local Authority, these can be found in the child's circumstance form.

Practitioners **must not** use their own camera or download photographs on to their personal computers. Prior consent must always be gained from families for children's photographs to be used by the media, and local authority.

Photographs of children are taken to update children's progress, and these photographs are shared with the child's parents. Relevant permissions are obtained from parents that specify what the photographs can be used for.

All photographs taken are printed off for these purposes and then deleted from the camera. Photographs taken for use on digital tracking purposes are used only on the assessment app and are shared with child's parents only.

In line with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) images will only be used for agreed purposes and no images will be stored for any longer than necessary. Cameras will be stored securely on the premises. All other electronic devices used to take images or store photos (e.g., tablet or computer) will be password protected.

Disciplinary procedures will be taken against any member of staff who fails to comply with the above.

Visitors to the provision are not permitted to take photographs of the children in our care, unless previously agreed with the parents.

The provision is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Please see <http://www.ico.org.uk> for further information.

Online Safety

We ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place on all digital appliances to protect children from harmful online material.

Online safety information and resources will be shared with staff and parents and updated regularly to ensure that information is current and relevant to emerging themes.

Early Help Assessment

We may use an early help assessment to support families where there is reason to believe.

An early help form would only be completed with the parents and with consent shared with other professionals. The aim of the early help assessment is to support early intervention, improve joint working between Happy Stars, families, and outside agencies and to protect children and maximise their potential.

Assistance may be sought from other professionals and or specialists to provide support to ensure children's and their families' needs are met at the earliest opportunity.

Single point of contact team - 01724 296500 or out of hours, 01724 296555

If we wish to contact support for cases which are already active telephone 01724 742500, Faye Baker area contact for Scunthorpe South.

Assessing need and providing help

Practitioners should particularly be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether they have a statutory Education, Health, and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti- social or criminal behavior, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

Child Exploitation including Sexual Exploitation, Criminal Exploitation, County Lines and Risks Outside the Home

All staff members will be aware of how children can be exploited and will act on any concerns immediately. This also includes recognising where older children may be at risk. If a staff member has concerns, they will follow their normal safeguarding referral route or in an emergency call the police directly. Staff should be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.

It is recommended that a staff member should receive specific awareness raising sessions on CSE, CCE and County lines and disseminate to all other staff.

Prevent Agenda

All Happy Stars practitioners and staff are required to do the Prevent online training so that they are aware of the Prevent agenda and how to identify and assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism including extremist ideas that are part of the terrorist ideology.

Everyone should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which may indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who may be at risk of radicalisation and act accordingly.

Happy Stars promote fundamental British values of democracy, rules of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.

As and when possible, staff will receive specific training relating to the prevent agenda and the best ways in which to support children and their families.

Female genital mutilation

All staff should be aware of female genital mutilation and the risk factors for young girls. Staff should report any concerns immediately either through our normal safeguarding referral route or directly to the NSPCC FGM helpline 08000283550. Information and risk factors regarding FGM will be shared with all staff.

Breast Ironing/Flattening

Breast Ironing also known as breast flattening 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 breasts to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is conducted by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware.

The practice of breast ironing/flattening is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem 'childlike' for longer and reducing the likelihood of pregnancy. Once girls' breasts have developed, they are at risk of sexual harassment, rape, forced marriage and kidnapping; consequently, breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Cameroon has one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa and ensuring that girls remain in education is seen as an important outcome of breast ironing/flattening.

Infant Oral Mutation (IOM)/ (Ebinyo)

Infant Oral Mutation (IOM) is a widespread and dangerous traditional practice affecting twenty-five million children in East Africa. It involves the extraction of unerupted deciduous canine teeth in young infants owing to the corresponding swellings being mistaken as the cause of diarrhoea and fever. The rudimentary practice, undertaken by local healers, can sometimes be fatal. In 2018, a Call to Action was signed by a group of significant Eastern African influencers and policy makers, urging for a strategy for IOM eradication within 10 years.

If we recognise any signs of IOM, staff will contact Children's Services Immediately for guidance and advice.

Domestic Abuse

Seeing, hearing, or knowing of a parent being abused is traumatic for children and can have long-term damaging emotional and psychological effects. All staff should be aware of the impact of domestic abuse on children and where it is suspected that a child is at risk of harm by witnessing or hearing domestic abuse staff will follow our normal safeguarding referral route or in an emergency call the police immediately.

Operation Encompass - now set up in North Lincolnshire

Additional support for children and families in the Early Years age group.

What does this mean in practice for yourselves?

Where a child lives in or attends a household where there has been a domestic abuse incident that has involved the police being called and attending you will now be notified by North Lincolnshire Safeguarding team. This should usually be the next day or very soon after the incident takes place. No information of specific details will be shared of any incident, just that there has been some altercation or disturbance and a child in your setting was present at the time.

It is vitally important to remember that **You do not need to do anything different**. The purpose of the notification is purely so that you are aware that something has happened.

You can then be more mindful of any behaviours, feelings, or reactions that a child may display (for example they may be more tired, upset, withdrawn, aggressive) **Please do not independently instigate any conversations with the child or any parents about the incident.**

If you wish to log the call in your safeguarding file you only need to log the date, child's name and that an Operation Encompass Notification has been received (no specifics).

The following website has further information if you wish to read more about how this multi- agency operation is working., follow the link below.

www.operationencompass.org

Peer on peer abuse

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers and such abuse will be taken seriously by adults. We will not dismiss abusive behaviour as 'normal' between children (children's age and stage of development will be considered). We will monitor any incidences of peer-on-peer abuse and behaviour strategies will be followed and discussions will take place with families, however if ongoing incidents occur, we will respond to these within our normal safeguarding procedures.

Honour based abuse

Honour based abuse (HBA) can be described as 'a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour'; such as being held against their will, sexual or psychological abuse, threats of violence, assault or forced marriage.

Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

We aim to develop staff knowledge of recognising the signs and symptoms of HBA. These signs may include:

- Changes in how they dress or act, they may stop wearing 'western' clothing or make-up
- Visible injuries, or repeated injury, with unlikely explanations.
- Signs of depression, anxiety, or self-harm
- Frequent absences
- Restrictions on friends or attending events.

We will raise awareness of domestic abuse within our setting by:

- Sharing information with external organisations that can offer support with incidents of HBA.

- Organisations that offer advice and support for HBA are:
- Karma- Nirvana <https://karmanivana.org.uk>
- Supporting victims of HBA and forced marriage. 08005999247

Injuries to babies and non-mobile infants

Bruising to babies and non-mobile infants may be caused by medical issues e.g. birth trauma or birthmarks, however this is rare. Other unusual marks on the skin or unusual sites of bleeding (e.g., bleeding from the mouth in young children) without a clear explanation may also be a sign of non-accidental injury and should also give cause for concern.

There may also be occasions where an explanation is given that another child has caused the injury. This should still be further explored.

In all cases, unless the specific mark that has been identified has been confirmed as arising from birth trauma, birthmark or a medical condition, any practitioner who identifies a bruise/injury to an infant or child who is non-mobile or suspects that an injury to a child is non-accidental as a result of abuse or neglect should make a contact/referral to Children's Services Single Point of Contact.

Child Sexual Exploitation

All staff members will be aware of how children can be exploited and will act on any concerns immediately. This also includes recognising where older children may be at risk. If a staff member has concerns, they will follow our usual safeguarding referral route or in an emergency call the police directly. Staff will be provided with information regarding child sexual exploitation within our policies and procedures.

County Lines

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where urban gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns (Home Office, 2018). It can happen in any part of the UK and is against the law and a form of child abuse.

Cuckooing

Cuckooing is a form of county lines crime in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person to criminally exploit them as a base for drug dealing, often in multi-occupancy or social housing properties. Signs that this is happening in a family property may be an increase in people entering or leaving the property, an increase in cars or bikes outside the home; windows covered, or curtains closed for long periods, family not being seen for extended periods; signs of drug use or an increase in anti-social behaviour at the home.

If we recognise any of these signs, we will report our concerns as per our reporting process.

Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession or witchcraft

Happy Stars has taken guidance from Every Child Matters Safeguarding Children linked to a belief in Spirit Possession, the Government's good practice guidance.

Child abuse is not acceptable in any community, any culture, or any religion.

This includes child abuse that may arise through a belief in spirit possession or other spiritual or religious beliefs.

'Belief in spirit possession' is the belief that an evil force has entered the child and is controlling them. The term 'witch' is often used in these cases as it is believed the child is able to use an evil force to harm others. Any concerns about a child which arise in this context must be taken seriously and the SPOC team, further information can be found in our Safeguarding file.

Toxic Trio

The Toxic Trio is made up of three issues:

- Domestic Abuse
- Mental Ill- Health
- Substance abuse

These issues often co- exist and particularly in families where significant harm to children has occurred.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

This member of the toxic trio:

- Creates an inconsistent and unpredictable environment for children.
- May lead to parents or carers showing a lack of emotional warmth as well as elevated levels of aggression.
- Can be extremely distressing and cause the child serious harm. It can even impair the development of the brain in babies.
- Might cause children to become aggressive themselves or lead to them developing mental health problems.
- Is connected to neglect and physical/emotional abuse of children.

MENTAL ILL- HEALTH

This member of the toxic trio:

- Can inhibit a parent or carer's ability to respond to a child's basic and emotional needs and stop them giving consistent care.
- Can lead to parents being absent from home – For example, if they need to spend time at hospital.
- Can cause a parent to be 'intrusive and hostile' or 'withdrawn and disengaged.'
- Can lead to children experiencing emotional, psychological, and behavioural problems.
- Makes parents more likely to abuse drugs or alcohol.
- Can impact the family's financial situation - for example, if the parent can no longer work.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

This member of the toxic trio:

- Is a significant feature in cases where children have been seriously harmed or killed?
- Is linked with poor mental health, particularly depression.

Allegations against children in the setting

Ratios are maintained always as required by the EYFS Statutory Guidance and staff are deployed to meet the needs of the children always. In the case of an allegation being made against another child a chronology of events will be recorded. Information will be gathered from the child's family making the allegation and children's services will be informed. All children will be carefully monitored, and the children accused would not be left unsupervised. We would then take advice from children's services as to the next course of action to be taken.

Referrals

The setting must inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. These notifications must be made as soon as is reasonably practical, but at least within 14 days of the allegation being made (*EYFS statutory framework 2023 section 3.4-3.8*)

The setting must notify North Lincolnshire Council Children's Services Single Point of Contact of any concerns in relation to a child as identified by the Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board of allegations of abuse. The setting can seek advice from the Children's Services Single Point of Contact prior to making a referral.

Procedure for making a referral

Parents and Carers

It is at the discretion of Happy Stars as to whether the concerns are shared with the parent / carer although it is good practice to do so it will only be done when there is no risk of the child being put in significant harm. This is professional judgement and may only be made by a member of management.

All staff members are responsible for the safety and well-being of the children, including protecting them from harm. If any member of staff is worried that a child may be being harmed, or if a child discloses abuse, or if a third-party expresses concerns to a member of staff, they must adhere to the following procedures.

Children's services single point of contact
01724 296500 / 297000 (switchboard – select children's services option) Mon – Fri 9am – 4.30pm
01724 296555 up to 9pm or at weekends

Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding Board (MARS board).
Church Square House
Church Square
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
Tel: (01724) 296500
www.northlincsmars.co.uk

Safeguarding Children Procedure

Dealing with concerns regarding children in our care

1. Ask to speak with the Safeguarding Coordinator, in the first instance **Clare Foster**, if unavailable another designated safeguarding lead, in private, if possible, be mindful of staffing ratios.
2. The Safeguarding Coordinator and the staff member discuss the concern and decide what action needs to be taken. A decision will need to be made in relation to whether it is appropriate to make a referral to the Children's Services Single Point of Contact (SPOC). During this discussion full written details including dates and times, parties involved, any supporting information from staff or explanations from parents/carers, will be recorded.
3. If no referral is being made, then a written record is to be completed and stored on the child's file. This written record should then be shared with parents/carers on collection.

4. If a referral is to be made, then the Safeguarding Coordinator must ring North Lincolnshire Council Children's Services Single Point of Contact (SPOC) on 01724 296500 or if it is out of office hours 01724 296555. The Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for providing as much information as possible to Children's Services (SPOC) to aid their investigation. The referral must then be followed up in writing with 48 hours of making the referral.
5. Direction as far as what to do next will be taken from Children's Services (SPOC).
6. All records will be kept secure and confidential and must be signed and dated.

The following details will be needed: -

- the child's full name
- date of birth
- home address
- details of other siblings
- names of persons with parental responsibility
- details of the concerns

Wherever possible parents need to be made aware that a referral is being made to Children's Services, however in some instances this may not be appropriate. Consent should be gained from parents to contact Children's services (SPOC) unless that by doing so it may place the child at risk of further harm. Where consent is not given providers can still contact Children's Services (SPOC) if they have concerns that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

All concerns need to be kept as a clear written record, observations of the facts, not opinions. If a child confides in you, record what they said, try to use the exact words. Do not begin to question the child. This is important, for any investigations that may follow. Do not put pressure on the child to respond but allow the child to talk and always take what the child says seriously.

In the event of disclosure from a child:

- Listen to the child carefully
- Make no observable judgement
- Do not question the child
- Remain calm
- Do not make promises that cannot be kept, such as promising not to tell any one
- Reassure the child that it is not their fault

All concerns need to be kept as a clear written record, observations of the facts, not opinions. If a child confides in you, record what they said, try to use the exact words. Do not begin to question the child. This is important, for any investigations that may follow. Do not put pressure on the child to respond but allow the child to talk and always take what the child says seriously.

Other useful numbers: -

Childrens services single point of contact: - ring to make a referral

Tel: (01724) 296500

(9am – 5pm Monday to Friday)

Out of Hours Service Duty Suite

Tel: (01724) 296555

(5pm to Midnight and at weekends 9am to midnight)

Police: 101

Early Years & Best Start Team: Tel: (01724) 297953

OFSTED Tel; 0300 1231231

Dealing with concerns and allegations against staff members or any other person working with the children

This section of the Safeguarding Policy links to section 3.4 – 3.8 of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2023

The manager/safeguarding co-ordinator of Happy Stars with responsibility in respect of allegations against staff, volunteers or students is Clare Foster. The designated person must, where required

- Refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Gather information
- Take part in strategy meetings
- Progress and liaise jointly with the LADO

If the manager/safeguarding co-ordinator in this setting with responsibility in respect of allegations against staff, volunteers and students is not available or is the subject of such an allegation then contact LADO directly on 01724 298293.

Parents should also understand the procedure to follow if they have any concerns regarding a member of staff at the setting.

The concerns may be about the behaviour/language of a:

- Member of staff, student, or volunteer from the setting
- Member of staff, student, or volunteer from another service/setting received or attended by the child

The behaviour/language could take several forms, for example.

- Seeing an adult hit a child
- Observing an adult using inappropriate restraint or language
- Witnessing the neglect of basic care needs of a child
- Inappropriate sexual comments to children OR adults in the setting
- Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities
- Inappropriate sharing of images
- Any other inappropriate behaviour or language

If you have any concerns, the procedure is as follows:

First, do all you can to challenge the perpetrator's behaviour/language immediately without putting any child or yourself at undue risk

- Inform the perpetrator of your concerns
- Ask him/her to move to an area where there is no contact with children.
- Advise him/her that you will immediately inform the safeguarding coordinator/manager within the setting of what you have witnessed.

If the perpetrator continues; take any appropriate action you can to separate any children and the perpetrator, and call for assistance

It is essential that you stay with the child/ren until you can transfer them to the care of another responsible adult (ideally their key person).

In all cases where a concern has been raised, inform the Manager/Safeguarding coordinator or most senior person on site immediately. They will deal with the staff member in line with Children's MARS /Ofsted policies and procedures and/or disciplinary and grievance procedure (continue to ensure that ratios are always met)

Take notes of what you have heard or seen and what has been said - if it is not possible to take notes at the time, do so immediately afterwards. Keep the notes taken at the time, without amendment, omission or addition, whatever subsequent reports may be written. The notes should be dated and signed. The notes should cover what you saw, who said what, what action you took, and the details of date, time and location and name of child and perpetrator.

Allegation or Concern around quality of care and practice?

The manager/safeguarding co-ordinator should determine whether the incident is an allegation of potential or actual harm or alternatively a concern about quality and care/practice or complaint. Guidance around this can be found in Children's MARS Managing Allegations against people who work with children policy and procedure.

An allegation of potential or actual harm

If the information relates to a concern, allegation, or suspicion that a member of staff, manager, owner, committee member, student, volunteer, or carer who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

or where:

- Concerns arise about the person's behaviour regarding his/her own children
- Concerns arise about the behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

You should:

Report the matter immediately to the Manager/Safeguarding Coordinator. Where the Manager/Safeguarding Coordinator is the subject of the allegation reports should be made directly to the LADO.

If you are the person to whom the allegation of a staff member, student, volunteer, or carer who works with children harming a child is reported you must not investigate the matter by interviewing the accused person, the child, or potential witnesses, but should:

- Avoid asking leading questions
- Record the incident in writing, just recording the facts and include:
 - When the alleged incident took place (time and date)
 - Who was present
 - What was said to have happened
 - Sign and date the written record
- Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice about what to do next. Contact the LADO on 01724 298293. The LADO will then liaise with other agencies and advise the setting of next steps to be taken
- Ofsted must also be informed of any allegations on 0300 123 123 1 within 14 days at the latest. A registered provider who without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement commits an offence

- If the allegation or suspicion involves a child or young person suffering, or at risk of, significant harm, the Safeguarding Coordinator/Manager must also make a telephone referral to the Children's Services
- Following the telephone referral, the Safeguarding Coordinator/Manager must follow up the concerns in writing to Children's Services within 24 hours.

Please also see the Children's MARS Managing Allegations against people who work with children policy and procedure.

Whistleblowing

Staff have the right and individual responsibility to raise any matters of concern regarding colleagues associated with the provision. Managers have a responsibility to respond to any whistleblowing allegations accordingly. Additional information on whistleblowing responsibilities and procedure can be accessed via separate whistleblowing policy.

Happy Stars will make available to staff the following documents:

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Department for Education 2015

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education, and skills settings - Ofsted 2019

Working Together the Safeguard Children - Department for Education February 2024

Information sharing - advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers 2018

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Department for Education 2024

The Prevent duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers- Department for Education 2015

One Family Approach - Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire Document – North Lincolnshire Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board

Managing Allegations against adults who work with children – North Lincolnshire Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board

HAPPY STARS AIMS TO:

- Ensure children are never placed at risk while in our care
- Ensure all staff are familiar with Safeguarding children’s issues and procedures
- Regularly review and update this policy
- Ensure that concerns are kept confidential.
- Ensure each member of staff understands the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

Allegations against a member of staff

Dealing with concerns and allegations against staff members or any other person working with the children
This section of the Safeguarding Policy links to section 3.4 of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

The Manager/Safeguarding Coordinator in this setting with responsibility in respect of allegations against staff, volunteers or students is.

Name.....
Job title.....
Contact telephone number.....

If the Manager/Safeguarding Coordinator in this setting with responsibility in respect of allegations against staff, volunteers or students is not available or is the subject of such an allegation, contact; (deputy)

Name.....
Job title.....
Contact telephone number.....

All staff, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures during their induction, and the Supervisor will ensure they understand the procedures to be followed by discussing these with them and asking them to sign and date to say they have read and understand them. In addition, all staff receive ongoing training on safeguarding issues. Understanding of issues relating to safeguarding will also be discussed during staff supervision meetings. All staff will have access to and be required to read ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused - Summary’. In addition, safeguarding information must be made available to parents as they may wish to make an allegation against a staff member. Parents/carers should also understand the procedure to follow if they have any concerns regarding a member of staff at the setting.

The concerns may be about the behaviour/language of a:

- Member of staff, student, or volunteer from the setting
- Member of staff, student or volunteer from another service/setting received or attended by the child

The behaviour/language could take several forms, for example.

- Seeing an adult hit a child
- Observing an adult using inappropriate restraint or language
- Witnessing the neglect of basic care needs of a child
- Inappropriate sexual comments to children OR adults in the setting
- Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities
- Inappropriate sharing of images
- Any other inappropriate behaviour or language

If you have any concerns, the procedure is as follows:

First, do all you can to challenge the perpetrator's behaviour/language immediately without putting any child or yourself at undue risk

- Inform the perpetrator of your concerns
- Ask him/her to move to an area where there is no contact with children.
- Advise him/her that you will immediately inform the safeguarding coordinator/manager within the setting of what you have witnessed.
- If the perpetrator continues; take any appropriate action you can to separate any children and the perpetrator, and call for assistance
- It is essential that you stay with the child/ren until you can transfer them to the care of another responsible adult (ideally their key person).

In all cases where a concern has been raised, inform the Manager/Safeguarding coordinator or most senior person on site immediately. They will deal with the staff member in line with MARS board, policies, and procedures and/or disciplinary and grievance procedure (continue to ensure that ratios are always met) Take notes of what you have heard or seen and what has been said - if it is not possible to take notes at the time, do so immediately afterwards. Keep the notes taken at the time, without amendment, omission, or addition, whatever subsequent reports may be written. The notes should be dated and signed. The notes should cover what you saw, who said what, what action you took, and the details of date, time and location and name of child and perpetrator.

If the information relates to a concern, allegation, or suspicion that a member of staff, manager, owner, committee member, student, volunteer, or carer who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children in connection with his/her employment or voluntary activity, or where:
- Concerns arise about the person's behaviour about his/her own children
- Concerns arise about the behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

You should:

Report the matter immediately to the Manager/Safeguarding Coordinator or named deputy in his/her absence or where the Manager/Safeguarding Coordinator is the subject of the allegation

If you are the person to whom the allegation of a staff member, student, volunteer, or carer who works with children harming a child is reported you must not investigate the matter by interviewing the accused person, the child, or potential witnesses, but should:

- Avoid asking leading questions
- Record the incident in writing, just recording the facts and include:
- When the alleged incident took place (time and date)
- Who was present
- What was said to have happened
- Sign and date the written record
- Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice about what to do next. Contact the LADO on 01724 298293 or 298340 The LADO will then liaise with other agencies and advise the setting of next steps to be taken
- Ofsted must also be informed of any allegations on 0300 1231231 within 14 days at the latest. A registered provider who without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement commits an offence

- If the allegation or suspicion involves a child or young person suffering, or at risk of, significant harm, the Safeguarding Coordinator/Manager must also make a telephone referral to the Children and Families Services
- Following the telephone referral, the Safeguarding Coordinator/Manager must follow up the concerns in writing to Children and Families Services within 24 hours.

Please also see the [Children's MARS Managing Allegations against people who work with children policy and procedure](#) produced by MARS board their website is www.northlincsmars.co.uk

Concern around quality of care and practice

If the concern does not relate to harm and is deemed to be a care and practice issue, this should be documented and signed by the manager/DSL and person concerned. A copy of the concern and any subsequent actions should be kept in the provision and a copy given to the person concerned.

Cross Reference

Confidentiality
Record keeping
Safer recruitment
Arrivals and collections
Family
Chronological log policy

Additional Reading ALL SAVED ON ONE DRIVE AND UNDER SAFEGUADING ON COMPUTER

Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding Board (MARS board) Procedures
Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding to children, young people, parents, and carers.
Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults
Children and parents, Media use and attitudes
Operation Encompass

The toxic trio – there is a wealth of literature on this topic, including Cleaver et al. (2011), Guy et al. (2014), Harold et al. (2016), and Hedges and Kenny (2018), to name but a few. Besides this, these three central issues have been cited as causes of the increase of cases for children's services and numbers of children being taken into care (ADCS, 2016).

Happy Stars will make available to staff the following documents:

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Department for Education 2015

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education, and skills settings - Ofsted 2022

Working Together the Safeguard Children - Department for Education February 2024

Information sharing - advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers 2018.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Department for Education 2024

The Prevent duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers- Department for Education 2015

One Family Approach - Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire Document – North Lincolnshire Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board

Managing Allegations against adults who work with children – North Lincolnshire Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board

Reviewed-

February 2015 (Safeguarding co-ordinator, Early Help)

August 2015 (Prevent Duty)

August 2016, (child sexual exploitation, genital mutilation, domestic abuse, named persons, cross referencing)

October 2016 (online safety, peer on peer abuse)

February 2017 (Existing injury, allegations against a child)

May 2017 (allegations against a member of staff)

January 2018 Breast ironing

August 2018, assessing need and providing help, Safeguarding documents,

December 2018 - Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding Board (MARS board).

October 2019

January 2021 – changed safeguarding leads, added cuckooing and honour-based abuse

September 2021 – County lines and checking against relevant supporting documentation

February 2022- Infant Oral Mutation

July 2022 – changed safeguarding leads

September 2022 – Operation Encompass, Smart watches, Witchcraft, Toxic Trio

December 2022

April 2023 – change in Safeguarding leads

September 2023 – change in Safeguarding leads, and Statutory Framework 2023, documents available for staff.

December 2023 – Changes to Working Together to safeguard Children 2023

December 21st – Smart Watches

January 2024 – change in safeguarding lead

February 2024 existing injury forms, Calpol given at home

March 2024 – “Working together to safeguard children” update Feb 2024

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Department for Education
2024

Signature: Mrs Clare Foster

Procedure for making a referral

If it is believed that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, significant harm then Happy Stars will always raise their concerns with the Children's Services or the police.

North Lincolnshire Children's and Young people's Services Central Duty Suite
01724 296500 / 297000 (switchboard – select children's services option) Mon – Fri 9am – 4.30pm
01724 296555 up to 9pm or at weekends

Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding Board (MARS board).
Church Square House
Church Square
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
Tel: (01724) 296500
www.northlincsmars.co.uk

The following details will be needed: -

- the child's full name
- date of birth
- home address
- details of other siblings
- names of persons with parental responsibility
- details of the concerns

The Children's Services Department will assess the case and take the appropriate action.

Other useful numbers: -

Children and Family Service Duty Suite: - ring to make a referral

Tel: (01724) 296500

(9am – 5pm Monday to Friday)

Out of Hours Service Duty Suite

Tel: (01724) 296555

(5pm to Midnight and at weekends 9am to midnight)

Police: 101

Early Years & Best Start Team: Tel: (01724) 297953

OFSTED Tel; 0300 1231231