**7. SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Children and young people have a right to protection from neglect, abuse and exploitation. The protection of children is our first priority and the needs of the children must come first.**

**Wavertree Christian Community Centre is strongly committed to the safeguarding of all children. All staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding issues.**

**Safety of your child is paramount and it is our duty to report any concerns we may have regarding your child’s wellbeing. Our designated Safeguarding Coordinators are Bev Stephenson and Kim Fishgold.**

**Children have a right to be listened to and heard. Their views, however communicated, should always be respected and taken seriously.**

**Wavertree Christian Community Centre will work with all agencies to ensure the safety of the children in the setting.**

* **If it is suspected that a child is being abused whether physically, emotionally, sexually or being neglected, the first point of contact would be the child’s keyperson` then the nursery Manager (Safeguarding Coordinator).**
* **Depending on the type of abuse the manager will then decide whether a diary needs to be kept for a period of time or the authorities need to be informed immediately (depending on the accusation) (please refer to WHAT TO DO – flowchart for referral)**
* **The Manager along with the child’s keyworker will discuss concerns with the child’s parents/carer at an appropriate time.**
* **A factual record will be kept of dates of incidents and all conversations with parents and authorities.**
* **In the case of physical or sexual abuse being suspected Care Line Service will be informed immediately. (Tel: 0151 233 3700 – 24 hour service 365 days per year)**
* **In cases of FGM (female genital mutilation) Care Line must be telephoned immediately.**
* **In cases of neglect health visitors/social workers will be informed and asked to make a visit to the child’s home.**
* **All information will be available for the parents and Care line Service to view, but will remain confidential to all other people who do not require to know about the case.**

**MANAGING ALLEGATIONS
If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or the Nursery Manager :**

* **Everyone has the responsibility to report suspected or alleged abuse (refer to whistle blowing policy).**
* **This will be referred immediately to Care Line Children’s Services, OFSTED by the Acting Manager.**
* **The LADO officer (Local Authority Designated Officer 0151 225 8101- Safeguarding unit) will be informed within 24 hours of any allegation being made. The named LADO officer is currently Ray Said.**
* **The member of staff involved will be suspended whilst investigations take place.**
* **The matter will be investigated by outside agencies**
* **Investigations must be conducted by staffs that are trained to carry them out.**
* **Care providers and staff must not jeopardise criminal or civil proceedings by making their own enquiries, particularly where evidence needs to be collected from young children.**
* **Only Social Workers, the police and the NSPCC have the statutory power to investigate when a child is considered to be at risk.**
* **Staff should take note of not only major incidents but also signals which make them feel concerned or suspicious.**
* **Staff should always discuss any concern with their designated Safeguarding Coordinator. Only through discussion and sharing concerns and action be agreed upon – whether to monitor the situation, to report or to take no further action.**
* **All concerns should be recorded**

**Policies and Procedures**

**We intend to create in our nursery an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. In order to achieve this;**

* **There will be a named Safeguarding Co-ordinator and a named deputy.**
* **Exclude known abusers. It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the nursery that the position is exempt from the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.**
* **A relevant enhanced DBS check will be made.**
* **All applicants who work within the nursery, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide two references. All such references will be followed up. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.**
* **All appointments both paid and voluntary will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the nursery is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.**
* **Seek and supply training. We will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognise symptoms/signs of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.**
* **Prevent abuse by means of good practise. Adults will not be left alone with individual children. An adult who needs to take the child aside eg. For time out after behaviour which needs improvement – request the presence of another member of staff.**
* **Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable the children to have self-confidence and vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.**
* **The layout of the playroom will permit constant supervision of children.**
* **Respond appropriately to suspicion of abuse.**
* **If the setting has any concerns about a child in their care, the Manager (Safeguarding Co ordinator) will contact Careline (0151 233 3700) to enquire whether there is already an EHAT (Early Health Assessment Tool formerly known as a CAF) in place. See policy on Common Assessment Framework and to ask for any advice that may be required.**
* **Changes in children’s behaviour/appearance will be investigated. Parents will normally be the first point of reference, although suspicions will be referred as appropriate to Careline (01512333700) or the local Police (Canning Street, Liverpool – 01517096010).**
* **All suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential and only shared with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff/keyperson, Manager and Chair and the parents.**
* **Keep records Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child’s behaviour , physical condition or appearance, a specific confidential record will be set up, quite separate from the usual on going records of the children’s progress and development. A check will be made with Careline to see whether a CAF is already in place. The record will include in addition to the child’s name and address and age, times and dated observations, describing the child’s behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation. Where possible the exact words spoken by the child, the date, name and signature of the recorder.**

**Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people other than the Manager, Chair and keyworker.**

* **Liaise with other bodies. The nursery operates in accordance with Local Authority guidelines. Confidential reports kept on children about whom nursery is anxious will be shared with the Careline and Social Services dept. if nursery feels that explanations for changes in the child’s condition have not been adequately provided. If a report on the child is to be made to the authorities, the child’s parents will be informed at the same time the report is made. The group will maintain on going contact with the registering authority, including names, addresses and telephone numbers of individual social workers, to ensure that it would be easy in an emergency for nursery and the social services dept to work well together.**
* **Support families Nursery will take every step in its power to build up supportive and trusting relationships between families and staff. Where abuse at home is suspected, nursery will continue to welcome the child and family whilst investigations proceed.**
* **Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child’s parents. Nursery’s commitment is that the care and safety of the child is always paramount and will support and work with the child’s family.**

**This policy is reviewed annually by Wavertree Christian Fellowship Nursery and Pre-school.**