

## Child Looked After (CLA) Policy

Springboard Nurseries is committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable a child looked after in their care to achieve and reach their full potential. Springboard nurseries recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and their family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being.

The designated person for children looked after in the setting is the Safeguarding Lead of each setting, which is the Nursery Manager, supported by the deputy manager.

Children and young people become looked after if they have been taken into care by the local authority or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most children Looked after will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative, or even placed back home with their natural parents.

The term 'children looked after' denotes a child's current legal status; this term will never be used to categorise a child as standing out from others. Staff will never refer to a child using acronyms such as "CLA".

### This policy has been developed using the following current national legislation:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Children Act 1989

Childcare Act 2004

### Aims

Springboard Nurseries aim to place emphasis on promoting Children's rights to be strong, resilient, and listened to. This policy and procedure for children looked after is based on two important concepts, attachment, and resilience. They are the basis in developing positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment, and new expectations.

### Objectives

- The setting will offer places to children looked after. In such cases, the child must have a secure attachment with their carer for them to feel secure whilst in the setting
- Where a child who normally attends the setting is taken into care and is cared for by a foster carer, we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

### Procedures

- Every child will be allocated a key person. The Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the key person has all the information, support, and training necessary to meet the needs of the child looked after.
- The Safeguarding Lead and the key person will liaise with other agencies, professionals, and practitioners involved with the child and his/her family and ensure appropriate information is gathered and shared on a need-to-know basis.
- The setting recognises the role of the local authority children's social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency for determining what takes place with the child. Nothing will change

with regard to the birth parents or foster carer's role in relation to the centre without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.

- At the start of the placement there will be a professionals meeting (TAC, Core Group, PEP, TAF meeting) that will determine the objectives of the placement and a care plan may be drawn up that incorporates the child's needs. This will be reviewed during professional meetings.
- The child's key person/safeguarding lead practitioners will contribute to the care plan by attending core group, TAC/TAF meetings this will enable the child's individual needs to be met.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker and other professionals through TAC/TAF and Core group meetings that will include the foster carer.
- If there are any concerns about the foster carer's treatment of a child, or if abuse is suspected these will be recorded and reported to the child's social care worker according to the Safeguarding children procedure.
- Transition to school will be handled sensitively and the key person will liaise with school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the child looked after birth parents.
- Concerns will be noted in the child's personal file and discussed with the carers and any other professionals that are involved on a need-to-know basis.

**This policy was implemented by Springboard Management Team: please note all policies and procedures will be reviewed on a yearly basis, unless there is a need to implement changes prior. Please note any updates and changes will be forwarded by email.**

**Date:** 01.09.2023