

ABC NURSERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**POLICY 14: Professional Abuse**

- 14.1 The ABC Nursery will endeavour to protect all children from abuse within the nursery environment. Suspicions of abuse will be promptly reported and responded to in the appropriate manner and through the correct channels.
- 14.2 The ABC Nursery will deter known abusers from working with children at the nursery by making it clear that applicants for positions at the nursery are exempt from the provision of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Staff will be subject to other suitability checks. Please refer to Recruitment and Staffing Policy
- 14.3 All applicants for positions at the ABC Nursery will be interviewed before an appointment is made and be asked to provide at least two professional references. At least one reference should be from the last employer. 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.
- 14.4 All appointments of trainees and new staff will be subject to a probationary period of three months and will not be confirmed unless the nursery is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.
- 14.5 Applicants for positions within the nursery will be checked on the Police National Computer prior to appointment. Documentation required for DBS checks will be required before appointment to position. If inadequate documentation is supplied then the applicant will be refused employment.
- 14.6 All staff will, when legislation requires, be subject to new necessary checks and procedures regarding the safeguarding of children. Staff, students and volunteers are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children- whether received before or during their employment/ placement at the setting.
- 14.7 Adults who have not been through the above checks will not be left alone with children or take children unaccompanied to the toilet or undertake nappy changing procedures. This will include employment trainees, work experience pupils, nursery nurse students, parents who come in to help and any other volunteers.
- 14.8 Staff will be observant to changes in children's behaviour and appearance. If any changes are noted they will be promptly reported to the Nursery Manager.
- 14.9 The ABC Nursery will seek out training opportunities for all staff to ensure they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.
- 14.10 The nursery will keep abreast of new legislation and update staff's knowledge where applicable.
- 14.11 If a member of staff has concerns or suspicions regarding a fellow worker then they must report their concerns immediately to the proprietor or, if not available, the Nursery

Manager. Staff should also consult the 'Whistle Blowing Policy' for further information, and follow the steps set out in the Allegation of Professional Abuse or Unsuitability Flow Chart, which can be found in Coventry City Council's Keeping Children Safe Toolkit. Further copy is attached to this policy.

- 14.12 The owners and manager will endeavour to ensure that a culture of whistle blowing where incidences of poor practice are observed by staff is accepted as the norm.
- 14.13 All suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know.
- 14.14 In the event of staff having concerns that the proprietors may be acting inappropriately with children then they should raise their concerns with Coventry's LADO and Ofsted.
- 14.15 Mobile phones must be kept in a staff locker or in the office if necessary and must not be taken into rooms where staff could be alone with children. (see mobile phone policy)
- 14.16 Staff must NOT AT ANY TIME take photos of the children on their mobile phone. This is considered as gross misconduct and could result in a staff member's dismissal.
- 14.17 Professional Abuse Policy and Procedure:**
- If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff in the child care setting the designated safeguarding officer (the Nursery Manager or Deputy Manager in their absence) will make contact the local Coventry LADO and Ofsted and liaise with the Police.
- 14.18 The member of staff concerned is likely be suspended until the investigation has been completed. This is both the child's and the member of staff's protection.
- 14.19 If the allegation is found to be true – the member of staff will undergo disciplinary procedures and will be dismissed under the grounds of gross misconduct. The details will be referred to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.
- 14.20 If the allegation is not proven or seen to be unfounded then the nursery will endeavour to support both the member of staff and the family concerned to find a way forward to enable the member of staff to return to work. In addition, we would offer an employee assistance programme, through our business consultants.
- 14.21 Updated information on procedures for reporting concerns and allegations can be found on the Coventry Local Safeguarding Children's Board web site.
<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/coventry-local-safeguarding-children-board/local-authority-designated-officer-lado>