

The Hollies Childcare Facility Child Protection Policy

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
CIW	Care Inspectorate Wales
ISA	Independent Safeguarding Authority
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
UN	United Nations

Glossary

Term	Definition
The Hollies	Refers to The Hollies Childcare Facility

Table of Contents

1.0	Overview.....	4
2.0	Child Protection	4
3.0	Examples of the Types of Abuse	5
4.0	Protection Procedures	7
4.1	Route 1	7
4.2	Route 2	7
5.0	Making the Referral	8
6.0	Record Keeping.....	9
7.0	Local Authority Duty Social Worker	10
8.0	Further information	10

List of Figures

No figures.

List of Tables

No tables.

1.0 Overview

Children have the right to be properly cared for and protected from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents and anyone looking after them. (*Article 19 - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*).

In Wales this is further underpinned by the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011.

As an organisation working with children, The Hollies Childcare Facility has a responsibility to safeguard and promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. The child's welfare is always the paramount consideration and the protection of the child is The Hollies and the Registered Person's/Responsible Individual's first priority.

This policy has been developed in line with the:

- Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020 (www.awcpp.org.uk).
- Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004 (<http://gov.wales/topics/health/socialcare/safeguarding/?lang=en>).
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 – section 26

2.0 Child Protection

The Local Authority is the prime authority for dealing with child protection investigations, although concerns may be reported to a police officer or an officer of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

The Hollies Childcare Facility will take steps to protect children by:

- Ensuring that all existing injuries to children are recorded and parents will be required to sign the record to acknowledge the entry.
- Maintaining a child-centred ethos in The Hollies.
- Having a robust staff and volunteer recruitment procedure (this includes maintaining current enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures (and where relevant, Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) checks, referring to <http://www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk> for up to date information and requirements) and checks on fitness references and qualifications in line with relevant day-care regulations).
- Having an awareness of [The Protection of Children Act 1999: A practical guide to the Act for all organisations working with children](#) which relates to the Government's aim of establishing a framework of a coherent cross-sector scheme for identifying those people considered to be unsuitable to work with children.
- Having robust procedures for staff, students, visitors and volunteers.
- Ensuring no student, volunteer, visitor is left unsupervised at any time, and that a record of their attendance – including dates and times – is kept.
- Ensuring all staff are trained in child protection procedures (this includes recognition of signs of abuse).
- Maintaining appropriate staff: children ratios for the supervision of children (in line with, or exceeding, regulatory requirements).
- Implementing and maintaining a current risk assessment of all activity in The Hollies and ensuring adequate insurance cover is provided.
- Designating a suitable child protection officer who acts on behalf of The Hollies in any child protection matters.

- Informing all parents / carers of the child protection policy and procedures (including relevant contact numbers) as each family starts to use The Hollies Childcare Facility.
- Ensuring all staff are made aware of the Prevent Duty, including how to identify factors that can make people vulnerable to radicalization within 3 months of commencing employment.
- Under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, the Hollies has due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, known as the Prevent duty. (see our Prevent Policy). Any concerns of this nature must be referred to Counter Terrorism using the online referral form for Prevent at <https://digitalservices.south.wales.police.uk/en/all-wales-prevent-partners-referral-form/> If there are immediate concerns around an individual, then the police will need to be contacted via 999.

3.0 Examples of the Types of Abuse

Below are some examples of the categories of child abuse. For a more detailed description or for additional information, please refer to the NSPCC website (<http://www.nspcc.org.uk>)

- 1) Physical Abuse
- 2) Emotional Abuse
- 3) Sexual Abuse
- 4) Neglect

- 1) **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Signs, symptoms and effects of children who are being physically abused may include:

- Bruises
- Burns or scalds
- Bite marks
- Fracture or broken bones
- Other injuries and health problems

- 2) **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

There often aren't any obvious physical symptoms of emotional abuse or neglect but you may spot signs in a child's actions or emotions. Changes in emotions are a normal part of growing up, so it can be really difficult to tell if a child is being emotionally abused.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused or neglected may:

- be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, e.g. when being taken to or collected from nursery etc.
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect them to know for their age
- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends.

- 3) **Sexual abuse** involved forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs, symptoms and effects of children who are being sexually abused may include:

Staying away from certain people

- they might avoid being alone with people, such as family members or friends
- they could seem frightened of a person or reluctant to socialise with them

Showing sexual behaviour that's inappropriate for their age

- a child might become sexually active at a young age
- they might be promiscuous
- they could use sexual language or know information that you wouldn't expect them to

Physical symptoms

- anal or vaginal soreness
- an unusual discharge
- sexually transmitted infection (STI)

- 4) **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- a) provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment:
- b) to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger:
- c) ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers: or
- d) ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs, symptoms and effects of children who are suffering from neglect may include:

- Poor appearance and hygiene
- Health and development problems
- Housing and family issues

This list is by no means exhaustive and other forms of abuse does exist, such as online abuse and bullying, child trafficking, female genital mutilation, domestic abuse and grooming. It should also be noted that there is unlikely to be one single sign or symptom of abuse. But if a child demonstrates regular patterns or has several examples of the signs, symptoms and effects listed in the examples above, or the given explanations does not match the sign or symptoms as witnessed, then additional investigation should be undertaken.

4.0 Protection Procedures

There are two routes:

- Route 1: A disclosure about a child
- Route 2: A disclosure about professional abuse

4.1 Route 1

In the event of a member of staff having a concern/suspicion that a child has suffered abuse / neglect or if someone tells a member of staff that they or another child or young person is being abused / suffering neglect:

- 1) The member of staff acts without delay (and as is appropriate to the age/stage of the individual child):
 - Shows that they have heard what they are being told and that they take the allegations seriously.
 - Encourages the child to talk but does not prompt or ask leading questions.
 - Avoids making the child tell their story several times to different people.
 - Explains what actions they must take (using agreed procedures).
 - Does not promise to keep what they have been told a secret or confidential, but explains that they will share information only on a 'need to know' basis.
- 2) The member of staff:
 - Writes down, using the exact words, what they have been told and/or seen - this is done without delay and within 24 hours.
 - Makes a note of the date, time, place and people present in the discussion
 - Does not confront the alleged abuser.

- Reports the concerns to the Registered Person/Responsible Individual and /or designated child protection officer or in their absence their line manager as possible, but without delay.
- The written record is passed to the child protection officer and kept safely and confidentially.
- The Hollies Childcare Facility Registered Person/Responsible Individual / designated child protection officer reports the concerns immediately to the Duty Social Worker at the local office.
- The need to seek advice should never delay any emergency action needed to protect a child.

4.2 Route 2

If the behaviour of a colleague, adult (including members of the public) towards children or young people causes concern, it is important to differentiate between cases involving issues such as poor professional practice and cases that give rise to child protection concerns (including cases involving abuse of trust). Whilst the former may be handled through disciplinary procedures or other avenues, child protection concerns should always be dealt with through local child protection procedures in line with this guidance and, in particular, the guidance

contained in Chapter 8 (*Dealing with Individual Cases*). (*Safeguarding Children: Working Together to Safeguard Children under the Children Act 2004.12.3*) see also *working together act 2018*

- The procedure as above (Route 1) is implemented and adapted as appropriate to the person who is making the disclosure.
- The member of staff is informed and written records of discussions and decisions are made in line with the Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- The Hollies Childcare Facility Registered Person/Responsible Individual /management considers the options for removal /suspension without prejudice from duty of the member of staff pending decisions made at the Strategy Discussion, (which is arranged by Social Services).
- The Registered Person/Responsible Individual informs CIW of any allegations of serious harm to a child committed by any person looking after children in The Hollies, or by any person living, working, or employed on the premises, or any abuse alleged to have taken place on the premises.

5.0 Making the Referral

This applies for both Route 1 and Route 2:

- A referral to Social Services is made as soon as a problem, suspicion or concern about a child becomes apparent, and at least within 24 hours.
- Outside office hours, referrals are made to the Social Services Emergency Duty Team or the Police
- The Duty Social Worker taking the referral is given as much of the following information as possible by the Playgroup's referrer:
 - The nature of the concerns.
 - How and why those concerns have arisen.
 - The full name, address and date of birth (or age) of the child.
 - The names, addresses and dates of birth / ages of family members, along with any other names which they use or are known by.
 - The names and relationship of all those with parental responsibility, where known
 - Information on any other adults living in the household.

- Information relating to other professionals involved with the family, including the name of the child's school and GP.
- Any information held on the child's developmental needs and his / her parents'/caregivers' ability to respond to these needs within the context of the wider family environment.
- Any information affecting the safety of staff.

The Hollies Registered Person/Responsible Individual / designated child protection officer holds responsibility to ensure that child protection concerns are taken seriously and followed through, remaining accountable for their role in the child protection process.

If they remain concerned about a child they will re-refer the child and/or bring this to the immediate discussion of the Social Services senior manager with responsibility for child protection for the area.

6.0 Record Keeping

- The Hollies keeps accurate, concise and clear record keeping in straightforward language to underpin good child protection practice.
- The Hollies arrangements for retention, storage and destruction of electronic and paper records of child protection matters meet the relevant regulations (including Data Protection Act 1998, day-care regulations) and Social Services requirements where necessary.
- Any existing injuries to children must be recorded as soon as the child enters the setting and parents should be asked to sign this record to acknowledge the injury was sustained before the child arrived at The Hollies. Parents / carers and staff will be informed of this requirement.
- The Hollies Childcare Facility child protection records:
 - Use clear, straightforward language
 - Are signed, dated and timed.
 - Are concise, legible and comply with professional standards and requirements;
 - Are accurate in fact and distinguish between fact, opinion, judgement and hypothesis.
 - Are organised and include detailed recording and chronologies and summaries including all contacts.
 - Are comprehensive.
 - Clearly record judgements made and actions and decisions taken.
 - Clarify where decisions have been taken jointly across agencies, or endorsed by a manager.
 - Record both formal and informal supervision discussions.
 - Record directions given and agreements or disagreements made in consultation with managers.
- The Hollies representative (child protection officer) attends any multi-agency meeting held (e.g. Strategy Discussion) and provides reports as necessary and appropriate.
- The Strategy Discussion considers risk associated with any allegation and should determine whether or not a member of staff will be suspended from duty without prejudice.
- Decisions are recorded in writing.

7.0 Local Authority Duty Social Worker

Contact details for the Rhondda Cynon Taff Local Authority duty social worker are:

The duty social work team number for Taff Ely – 01443 743665

www.rctcbc.gov.uk/childrenscareandsupportservices.

The Emergency Duty Team number is 01443 743665 (5.00pm – 8.30am Monday to Thursday, 4.30pm – 8.30am Friday to Monday).

Website:

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/en/healthsocialcare/childrenandfamilycare/childprotection/childprotection.aspx>.

8.0 Further information

Each local authority in Wales has a Local Safeguarding Children Board, which coordinates what is done by its members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area of the authority. Each Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has a co-ordinator. Their details are listed at:

- <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/health/protection/lscb/contact/?lang=en>
[Accessed June 2011]