



Acorn 2 Oak Support Services Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Acorn 2 Oak Support Services (A2OSS) is to provide a safe place and provide support to families following separation .

A2OSS believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognizes it has a responsibility in safeguarding and the welfare of all children and young people by being committed to promoting a practice that protects them .

A2OSS recognizes that

The welfare of the child is paramount

All children regardless of age, gender, disability, racial heritage, religion, sexual identity or sexual orientation should receive equal protection from all types of harm and abuse .

Working in partnership with children, parents, families, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's welfare .

Basic principles

- 1) A2OSS believes that children and young people need safe environments in which they can grow and develop in confidence .
- 2) A2OSS recognizes that organisations working and supporting children and young people have a duty to keep them safe .
- 3) A2OSS places Safeguarding children and young people and Child Protection at the centre of all of its activities .

- 4) A2OSS is committed to working towards the objectives as defined in the document Working Together To Safeguard and expects everyone working in the centre to do the same .
- 5) A2OSS believes that children and young people should not be exposed to negligence or any risks .
- 6) A2OSS recognizes that Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are emotive issues that need to be handled both sensitively and carefully .
- 7) A2OSS strongly believes that **safeguarding is everyone's responsibility** .Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe . No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time then everyone who comes into contact with them has a role in identifying concerns and sharing this information and taking prompt action .
- 8) For clarity A2OSS offers the following definitions to the following items :

Definitions of Safeguarding

Safeguarding is an action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm . Safeguarding means

Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment

Preventing harm to children's health or development

Ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care .

Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcome .

Definition of Child Protection

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process .It focuses on protecting individual children identified or likely to suffer significant harm .This includes child protection procedures that detail how to respond to concerns about a child .

Safeguarding children and child protection and guidance and legislation applies to children up to the age of 18.

Definitions of Child Abuse

Child Abuse is any action by another person -adult or child -that causes significant harm to a child .It can be physical,sexual or emotional but can be just about a lack of care ,love and attention .We know that neglect ,whatever form it takes can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse .

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose .It includes :

- Hitting with hands or objects
- Slapping and punching
- Kicking
- Shaking
- Throwing
- Poisoning
- Burning and scalding
- Biting and scratching
- Breaking bones
- Drowning

It's important to remember that physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child or young person .It also includes making up symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.

Behavioural signs for physical abuse include

- Flinching when approached or touched
- Afraid to go home
- Wary/frightened of adult contacts
- Difficult to comfort
- Becomes apprehensive when other children cry
- Extremes of behaviour ;aggressive ,complaint,impulsive ,withdrawn
- Hyper vigilant

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional treatment of a child . Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare ,humiliate,isolate or ignore a child .

Types of emotional abuse includes :

- Humiliating or constantly criticising a child
- Threatening ,shouting at a child or calling them names
- Making the child the subject of jokes or using sarcasm to hurt the child
- Blaming and scapegoating

Making a child perform degrading acts
Not recognising a child's own individuality or trying to control their lives
Pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations

Exposing a child to upsetting events like domestic abuse or drug taking
Persistently ignoring them
Being absent
Manipulating a child
Never offering words of kindness, congratulating a child on their successes or expressing positive feelings

Physical indicators

Failure to thrive
Delays in physical, mental or emotional development or progress

Behavioural indicators

A child who is experiencing emotional abuse may display these behaviours
Sucking, rocking, biting
Anti-social /destructive
Sleep disturbances
The child may be complaint and or passive or and or aggressive
Inappropriately adult or infant
Finds it very hard to regulate emotions

Sexual Abuse

It is important to remember that its never a child's fault they were sexually abused -its important that children know this

Types of sexual abuse -theyre are two typs of sexual abuse -contact and non contact abuse
Contact abuse is when an abuser makes physical contact with child .This includes

Sexual touching of any part of a childs body whether theyb are clothed or not
Using a body part or object to rape or penetrate a child .

Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities

Making a child undress or touch someone else .

Contact abuse can include touching, kissing and oral sex it isnt just penetrative .

Non contact abuse is where a child is abused without being touched by the abuser . This can be in person or online and includes

Exposing or flashing

Showing pornography

Exposing a child to sexual acts

Making them masturbate

Forcing a child to make ,view or share child abuse images or videos

Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities or conversations online or using a smart phone .

Physical indicators :

Difficulty in walking ,sitting down

Stained or bloody underclothing

Pain or itching in the genital area

Wetting/soiling

STD

Sickness

Bruising,bleeding,injuries to external genitalia areas

Excessive crying

Behavioural indicators :

Inappropriate sexual behaviour knowledge

Promiscuity

Sudden changes in behaviour

Wary of adults

Avoidance of places

Eating /sleeping disorders

Secretive behaviour

Unexplained money or gifts

Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse . A child may be left hungry or dirty or without proper clothing ,shelter ,supervision or health care .This can put children and young people in danger . This can lead to having a negative impact on their physical and mental well being

Types of neglect can be a lot of different things which can be hard to spot ,but broadly speaking there are 4 types of neglect

Physical neglect - a child's basic needs such as food ,clothing or shelter are not met or they aren't properly supervised or kept safe.

Educational Neglect -a parent doesn't ensure that their child is give an education

Emotional Neglect a child doesn't get the nurture and stimulation that they need ,this could be ignoring,humiliating, intimidating or isolating them .

Medical Neglect - a child is not given proper health care -this includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations .

Signs of neglect

Neglect can be really difficult to spot . Having one sign doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while they might indicate there's a serious problem . Children and young people who are neglected might have :

Poor hygiene and appearance

Health and development problems

Housing and family issues

Change in their behaviour

Responding and reacting to a child making allegations of abuse

It is vital that children and young people are able to speak out about abuse and whoever they tell takes them seriously and acts on what they are told .

Even if a child does not tell someone verbally about what's happened to them ,there may be indicators that something is wrong .People that work with children need to be able to recognize the signs and know how to respond appropriately .

If a child chooses to disclose to a member of staff of A2OSS they need to listen,understand and respond appropriately . NSPCC carried out research on how adults can respond better who is disclosing abuse (Baker et al 2019).They found three key interpersonal skills that help a child feel they are being listened to and taken seriously :

Show you care ,help them open up ; give your full attention and keep your body language open and encouraging . Be compassionate,understanding and reassure them their feelings are important .Phrases like “you've shown such courage today “

Take your time ,slow down: respect pauses and don't interrupt the child -let them go at their own pace .

Show you understand ,reflect back ; make it clear you're interested in what the child is telling you ,reflect back what they have said to check your understanding -and use their language to show its their experience .

MAKE SURE THEY KNOW THAT ABUSE IS NEVER THEIR FAULT .

Next steps after a child has disclosed

There is a reporting form that must be used to record information about a safeguarding concern. It can also be used to send information about the the concern to the Local Safeguarding Board within 24 hours of the concerns arising .

The Local Safeguarding Board number is

Intentions

Managing Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children withIn A2OSS has one named person who is responsible for the policy and how its process is implemented . This person is JULIE EVANS who is trained to Level 3 Designated Person in Safeguarding and whose DBS update service is checked by the Consultant Social Worker on a 6 monthly basis .

Recruitment

When A2OSS recruits employees who have unsupervised access to children there is a procedure set out fully in the Recruitment Policy which will be adhered to at all times .

This procedure will include making appropriate checks using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which will help A2OSS to make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups including children .

Further information is set out in the Recruitment policy .