



## Safeguarding children

### 1.3 Looked after children policy and procedures

#### Policy

- School House Nurseries is committed to providing high quality care for every child at the nursery. We want children to achieve their full potential, irrespective of their background.
- We recognise that children who have been taken into the care of the local authority have often experienced traumatic situations such as physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that this is not true in every case and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken into care.
- Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being.

#### Principles

- The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- We offer places to two-year-old children in exceptional circumstances who are in care. In such cases, the child should have been with the foster carer for at least two months. They should have formed a secure attachment to the carer and the placement in the setting will last a minimum of three months.
- We offer places for funded three and four-year-olds who are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early years' education. The child should have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and have formed a secure attachment to the carer. The placement in the setting should last a minimum of three months.
- Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer nursery care for the child.

#### Procedures

- School House Nurseries has a Safeguarding Lead (please see Roles and Responsibilities).
- Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child.
- Our Safeguarding Lead and the child's key person liaise with agencies, external professionals, other staff, and the child's family to ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The setting recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child.



- Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parents' or foster carer's role in relation to the setting, without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- The settling-in process for the child will be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is important that the 'proximity' settling-in stage is continued until the child has visibly formed a relationship with his or her key person. The relationship with the key person will act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.
- Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.
- If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker according to our safeguarding children procedure.

**This policy was updated and reviewed in:**

<b>Reviewed date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>
September 2015	Stuart Watt	
May 2016	Stuart Watt	
August 2016	Stuart Watt	
September 2016	Stuart Watt	
April 2017	Stuart Watt	
April 2018	Lindy Baldwin	
August 2018	Lindy Baldwin	
April 2019	Lindy Baldwin	
May 2019	Stuart Watt	
January 2020	Stuart Watt	
January 2021	Stuart Watt	
January 2022	Stuart Watt	
March 2023	Stuart Watt	