



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Colourbox is committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff in our nursery are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Children become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most looked after children 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 parent(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being.

Procedures

- The designated staff members for looked after children are our safeguarding Officers (Sandra Copping, Joanne Bradbury, Sally Gammon, Sharon Holloway, Simone Nel and Abigail Clark).
- Every child is allocated a Key Person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the Key Person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- The designated person and the Key Person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family in order to ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.
- Colourbox 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 nursery without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting that will determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed regularly.
- The care plan needs to consider such issues for the child as: the child's emotional needs and how they are to be met; how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed. The child's sense of self, culture, language(s) and identity – and how this is to be supported; The child's

need for sociability and friendship; The child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway and how any special needs will be supported.

- In addition, the care plan will also consider: how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored; What contact the child has with his or her birth parents and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact.
- 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 and reported to the child's social worker according to our safeguarding children procedure.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.