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**Pre- Existing injuries**

**Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection – Pre Existing Injuries 1.12** Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

**What is a pre-existing injury?**

A pre-existing injury is an injury that occurred when the child was in the care of a parent / carer or an injury that has occurred when the child has been in the care of another care professional for example another preschool setting/ or a childminder and arrives at the setting with this injury.

**Existing Injuries Policy**

If a child arrives at Woven Nursery with an existing injury parents/carers must inform staff on their arrival and will be asked to complete an ‘Accident, Incidents & existing injuries’ form which includes a body diagram, detailing how the injury occurred and ensuring staff members have current information about a child if they become unwell as a result of the injury. Each section of the form must be completed, the form must be dated.

If staff members notice a pre-existing injury, however, and were not made aware by the parents, staff must complete a pre-existing Injury’ form for parents to complete on their return.

The Pre-existing injuries form must contain the following information:

* Child’s full name,
* Child’s date of birth
* Date of injury
* Who was present at the time of injury
* Description of injury, (Where and what is injury)
* How did the injury happen?
* Any treatment or medical aid sought
* Any follow up treatment required
* Parent/carer signature,
* Staff member signature and date.
* Management signature

A Body diagram must be completed showing where the injury/injuries are and the size (use coins as a useful way to describe the size of a bruise for example.

The forms must be stored in the ‘Accident, Incident & existing injuries folder’. This is a confidential file.

This folder is reviewed termly (or more frequently if required) by our Designated Safeguarding Officer to identify any patterns of injury, absences or concerns can be picked up on and recorded or reported as required.

**All records must be completed in pen.**

If the child has been identified as having a pre-existing injury and is involved with CSC the injury must be reported to the child’s social worker, the date, time and social worker (or who it was reported to) is recorded on the conversation log and social worker advised the record will be kept on file should they wish to view it.

**What to consider when asking parents/carers for an explanation about how the injures/incident occurred.**

Are you placing the child at the centre?

* Do you understand the child’s daily life experiences?
* Do you listen to the child; never lose sight of his or her needs. If the child is too young to communicate verbally, what do observations tell you about the child’s relationship with the child’s parent carer? Consider changes in behaviour
* Do you have a professional relationship with the child’s parent/carer, friendly not friends?
* Is it safe to speak to the parents? Do you need two people present?
* Timing – you must speak to parents on the same day. You may need to speak to the parents on the telephone if someone different is collecting the child or may need to ask the parent to come into the setting if practitioners are concerned or if they need to determine if the child has received treatment.
* Consider tone - Not accusing. Not asking leading questions. Reminding parents of the policies and the duty of care (This procedure is discussed when the parent registers at the setting. Therefore this shouldn’t be a surprise to parents).
* Consider whether the explanation is plausible?
* Consider behaviour and body language of the parent. Are the parent’s reasons for the injury conflicting?
* If you are caring for children who are involved with children’s social care or other agencies they have already been identified as being ‘vulnerable’ or in need of additional support, you must consider the particular issues that surround these children when speaking to parents or deciding whether you should report your concern. Remember if a child is involved with CSC you must report the injury to the child’s social worker

**Why we record pre-existing injuries.**

* To safeguard children and the setting/staff by identifying suspected child abuse or neglect
* To ensure we are undertaking our duty - following our child protection responsibilities, policies and procedures effectively
* To consider whether the injury is non-accidental
* To consider whether there is likely to be child abuse or neglect taking place
* To help you to make a decision about whether an injury or concern should be reported
* To consider whether there is a pattern or a number of injuries that would give you cause to be concerned or doubtful about the explanation given by parents/carer, to prompt you to consider reporting it?

**What do we need to consider to determine whether a pre-existing injury should be reported? (Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership 0345 050 7666)**

**- ALWAYS REPORT ANY CONCERNS TO THE SAFEGURDING DESIGNATED OFFICERS** **FOLLOW SETTINGS SAFEGURDING POLICY & PROCEDURES.**

* Does the explanation from parent/carer appear to be plausible?
* Consider the age and stage of development of the child, could the injury have been accidental based on your knowledge of the individual child.
* Consider whether there are particular risk factors, such as the child has additional needs.
* Has there been a change in the families/child’s behaviour that has prompted you to have concerns.
* Consider the background of the child and family if the child is involved with CSC, you must inform the child’s social worker immediately
* Always consider the signs and symptoms of harm does the injury seem plausible based on your knowledge and understanding of the individual child and family circumstances

**Monitoring**

All accident, incidents and existing injuries form are checked termly by the Designated Safeguarding Officers who completes a monitoring form for each child to help identify any concerns.

**Storing pre-existing injury forms.**

All pre-existing forms are stored in a confidential file at the setting labelled ‘Accident, Incident & existing injuries folder’. After monitoring these are stored securely in the child’s personal file, easily accessible to appropriate staff (these forms are archived when the child leaves the setting and kept in accordance with our Children’s records policy).

**Monitoring**

These records will be checked on a termly basis by the Designated Safeguarding Officers