

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

Policy

The purpose of this safeguarding and child protection policy is to ensure every child who attends Early Learners Nurseries is safe and protected from harm. The Department for Education's (DfE) Keeping Children Safe in Education (sometimes referred to as KCSIE), defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The term 'children' includes everyone below the age of 18. The commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, however, will extend to all children who visit our setting.

The Management Team (Directors and Area Managers) take seriously their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our setting to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, harm. This includes child on child abuse and risks outside the home. This policy will give clear direction to all stakeholders (including children, staff, parents, owners, volunteers, and visitors), about our expectations and legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our setting in line with current legislation, guidance and best practice.

The policy aims to ensure that:

- All our children are safe and protected from harm.
- Other elements of our provision and policies are in place to enable children to feel safe and adopt safe practices;
- Staff, children, owners, visitors, volunteers and parents are aware of the expected behaviours' and the setting's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our children.

This policy has been written in line with the Department for Education (DfE) Keeping Children Safe in Education and is a requirement with reference to the following key documents and statutory guidance:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused
- Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers
- Prevent Duty
- Halton Safeguarding Children Partnership – Pan-Cheshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Procedures
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2022

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other policies relevant to the safeguarding and welfare of children.

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and, as such, this policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the setting. An allegation, disclosure or suspicion of abuse, or an expression of concern about abuse, could be made to any member of staff, not just those working directly with the children. Similarly, any member of staff may observe or suspect an incident of abuse. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Therefore, all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the setting will:

- Demonstrate an understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- Maintain and demonstrate a mindset of "it could happen here"
- Do all they can within the capacity of their role, to ensure that children are protected from harm
- Be fully aware of the importance of mental health in relation to safeguarding
- Be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Be clear that children can abuse other children, that it can happen both inside and outside of the setting and will have received training on recognising the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of challenging all inappropriate behaviours between peers, such as those listed within Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Do all they can within the capacity of their role, to ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care
- Do all they can within the capacity of their role, to ensure that children have the best outcomes
- Report cases of suspected abuse or concerns to the DSL. This will be done as soon as possible
- Report low-level concerns to the DSL
- Monitor all children, particularly those that are deemed vulnerable
- Report any concerns regarding adults conduct to the Manager (using the setting's agreed policy for managing allegations and low-level concerns policy)
- Be alert to emerging problems that may warrant early help intervention, particularly those identified in Part 1 of KCSIE. Be aware of the early help process and their role in it. All staff should be reporting emerging problems that may warrant early help intervention
- All staff, if they have concerns, should act immediately and should always speak to the DSL or Deputy, recognising that early information sharing is vital in keeping children safe. In exceptional circumstances, staff will consider speaking to relevant safeguarding referral teams to discuss safeguarding concerns if the DSL is not immediately available as all staff are aware that ANYBODY can make a referral.
- All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

(the Manager) who leads child protection is:

Name:
Number:

Designated Safeguarding Deputies (DSD)

(Senior staff) who support in co-ordinating child protection are:

Name:
Number:

Name:
Number:

Name:
Number:

Designated Safeguarding Area Officer

(Director / Area Manager) who oversees child protection are:

Name:
Number:

Name:
Number:

Roles and responsibilities

The Director/ Area Manager has responsibilities under section 11 of the Children Act and duties under Working Together to Safeguard children to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements exist within our setting to identify and support those children who are suffering harm or are likely to suffer significant harm. We recognise that all staff, volunteers and management have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm, and that the child's welfare is always our paramount concern.

We will also ensure the following:

- The setting prevents people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by following safer recruitment practices, ensuring the Manager, as well as other staff involved in recruitment and induction have completed 'Safer Recruitment' training.
- All staff and volunteers are properly checked to make sure they are safe to work with the children who attend our setting.
- The safe and appropriate use of mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities used in the setting.

- The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which places a duty on early years and childcare providers "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (The Prevent Duty) is implemented, taking into account the Local authorities 'Prevent' policies, protocols and procedures and ensuring the Fundamental British Values are implemented as stated in the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).
- Our procedures will be annually reviewed and updated.
- The policies, procedures and training for all staff are effective and comply with the law at all times, both at induction and throughout the duration of their time at the setting;
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are followed by all staff.
- The Director/ Area Manager appoint a DSL and Deputy DSL(s) and ensure that they are provided with appropriate support, training, resources and time to carry out their role.
- They nominate a person to act as a 'Designated Safeguarding member', who is sufficiently trained.
- The setting contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance; 'Working together to safeguard children.
- Safeguarding' procedures, take into account local guidance including local authority Levels of Need Framework.
- All staff undergo safeguarding training annually at induction. This includes registering all employees to access online training.
- All staff are aware of child-on-child abuse,
- DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and all staff, are trained and updated regarding safeguarding regularly.
- Children are safe online by ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place:
<https://www.earlylearnersnurseries.co.uk/policies-procedures>
- Safeguarding is embedded within the curriculum.
- All staff and volunteers maintain and demonstrate a mindset of 'it could happen here'.
- There are procedures in place to manage allegations against staff, managers, volunteers, owners and other staff, including supply staff, that may meet the harm threshold.
- There are procedures in place to manage low level concerns and allegations relating to adults in the setting, which do not meet the harm threshold.
- Staff in the setting are aware of, and policies reflect, an understanding of specific issues such as child on child abuse and safeguarding children with disabilities and/ or special educational needs. Eg, CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation), sexting, FGM.
- All practice and procedures operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.
- All staff are aware of safeguarding issues and vulnerabilities associated with Looked after children (LAC) and post LAC.
- All staff and volunteers understand the circumstances where it may be necessary to self-report incidents where they could have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or may appear compromising to others, or if they have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, they consider to fall below the standards set out in the code of conduct for staff.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies

The EYFS states:

'In every setting a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the Local Safeguarding Partners. All practitioners must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere'.

'The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) must provide support, advice and guidance to all practitioners on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The DSL must attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C'.

'Providers must ensure that all practitioners are trained in line with the criteria set out in Annex C. Providers must ensure that practitioners are supported and confident to implement the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures on an ongoing basis'.

It is essential that all members of staff and any volunteers know who the designated practitioner is, and what to do if that person is not available when an urgent safeguarding concern arises.

The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) include but are not limited to:

- To ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to any form of abuse.
- To ensure any concerns about a child/ young person are acted on promptly, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- To ensure records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, including the rationale for those decisions, are detailed, accurate and secure.
- To record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. This must be kept in a secure place and its contents must be confidential.
- To ensure any concerns about the actions of any member of staff, volunteer, or person living or working on the premises are acted on promptly, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- To liaise with the Registered Provider and ensure they are fully aware of any serious concerns within the setting.
- To ensure information is shared, when necessary, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance, and that information and records are passed on to the appropriate person if the child transfers to another setting or school.
- To take lead responsibility for online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems which are in place.
- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection;
- Act as a point of contact with any safeguarding partners.
- Manage referrals (including early help referrals and the use of local authority assessment toolkits – for example iCART), Police (including PREVENT) and other relevant agencies.
- Work together with other agencies in order to improve outcomes for children, acting as navigator (formally lead professional) where best placed to do so on Multi Agency Plans (MAPs).
- Undertake Prevent awareness training:
https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/prevent_referral/s/01-welcome.html
- Update their skills and knowledge on a regular basis.
- Raise awareness of safeguarding throughout the setting and act as a point of support for all staff.
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually and is available publicly.
- Ensure that parents are aware of the settings responsibilities regarding safeguarding and child protection, including child on child abuse and online safety.
- Maintain accurate safeguarding records that are stored securely;
- Be available during setting hours.
- Arrange cover of DSL role for any out of hours/ out of term activities;
- Represent the setting in multi-agency meetings and submit relevant reports in a timely fashion.
- Be provided with appropriate support and supervision in order to carry out the role safely and effectively.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation.
- Take a holistic view to ensure wider environmental factors are considered which may be a threat to safety and welfare of children (Contextual Safeguarding).
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the setting may put in place to protect them.
- Know how to escalate concerns.
- Know how to build a safer organisational culture.
- Ensure safer recruitment.
- Be responsible for the sharing of child protection files when a child moves to a new setting, or school within 5 days, of the child start at the new setting/ school in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

All Child Protection concerns need to be acted on immediately. If you are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you must tell the DSL immediately.

All adults working in this setting (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse, neglect or exploitation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

When an individual concern/ incident is brought to the notice of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they will be responsible for deciding upon whether or not this should be reported to other agencies as a safeguarding issue, or whether a single agency response would be more appropriate and proportionate.

Arrangements are in place to ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy is available at all times.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to your local safeguarding board and/ or the police immediately.

Safeguarding Children & Early Help

We are committed to providing our families with the right help at the right time. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Any child may benefit from early help, but ALL staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer;
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- Is frequently missing/ goes missing from care or from home;
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- Is in a family circumstance which is presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour' based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM);
- Is a privately fostered child;
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, disability, religion, gender identification, sex or sexual orientation;
- Has English as an additional language;
- Has returned home to their family from care;
- Is in care, previously looked after or any child not growing up with their birth family;
- Is showing early signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- Is an asylum seeker;
- Any other identified reason not listed above that requires extra support or intervention to improve outcomes for families and children.

We therefore ensure that:

- ALL staff and volunteers can identify the risk factors that indicate a family or child may benefit from early help
- ALL staff and volunteers will use the setting's agreed format for letting the DSL know about early help requirements
- All staff and/ or volunteers understand that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Staff are aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:
 - Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
 - These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.

- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
 - Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
 - Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/ behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.
 - At Early Learners Nurseries any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) and the SENCO.
- DSLs will undertake a MAP (Level 2) assessment, when appropriate, to identify what early help is required. A MAP is a Multi-Agency Plan (MAP).

In order to best support children and families, we name will participate fully in the Early Intervention/ MAP process and will take on the role of 'Navigator', where appropriate. To support this, we will ensure that a member of staff is fully trained to use an electronic MAP which sits within the Eclipse or Early Help database.

The MAP process is entirely voluntary. Consent is required of parents or a young person, where they are able to provide consent, is mandatory. We recognise that should a family not provide consent, this may require a review of the Level of Need, as refusal to provide consent may increase the risk to the child and subsequent consultation with your local integrated contact and referral team or relevant board would be required.

The Early Intervention Locality Teams develop and maintain strong links to universal services, offer named link workers to key services, direct family support and offer support advice and guidance to professionals. The Senior Early Help Officers and MAP Champions also offer oversight of MAPs to ensure the level of need is correct.

Council's 'Family Hubs' provide support for children and young people from birth until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and/ or disabilities). They will bring council, health and community services together so that families can access the right support at the right time.

Contact should be made with a Senior Early Help Officer, located within the Early Intervention Locality Teams or Children's Social Care, for advice and support around the MAP process and for help to identify the most appropriate support services for a family's identified needs. If a MAP is already open and risks are increasing or the plan is not progressing, to request a step up to social care, the setting should contact their local Children's Social Care team .

Local Family Hub:

Name:
Number:

Senior Early Help Officer: (Early Intervention Team)

Name:
Number:

Child in Need and Child Protection Procedures

We are committed to PREVENTING abuse, PROTECTING children from abuse and SUPPORTING those involved in cases of abuse. We therefore ensure that:

- ALL staff and volunteers understand the importance of teaching children how to keep themselves safe from all types of abuse, including child on child and domestic abuse.
- ALL staff and volunteers seek out opportunities that are relevant to their role, to teach children the skills to keep themselves safe.
- ALL staff and volunteers make and maintain positive and supportive relationships with children which enable children to feel safe and valued.
- Safeguarding has a high status throughout the setting by being on the agenda at staff meetings/briefings, information being readily available on notice boards, regular updates and training.
- ALL staff and volunteers feel confident in approaching DSLs to raise concerns.
- ALL staff and volunteers have an understanding of the four categories of abuse; NEGLECT, EMOTIONAL ABUSE, SEXUAL ABUSE, PHYSICAL ABUSE and know that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the setting, inside and outside of the home and online. Staff exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital in the early identification of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help and protection.
- ALL staff and volunteers understand that there are other ways in which children can be abused such as; Child on Child Abuse, Online, Child Criminal Exploitation (Including through County Lines), Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, Honour Based Abuse, Radicalisation, Trafficking, Slavery, Forced Marriage, Domestic Abuse (as either a direct victim or witness) and others.
- ALL staff and volunteers have the knowledge, skills and expertise to recognise the signs and symptoms of all types of abuse and staff understand that abuse, neglect and exploitation issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.
- ALL staff and volunteers, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. They know that extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.
- All staff, if they have concerns, know these should be acted on immediately: early information sharing being vital in keeping children safe. In exceptional circumstances staff should consider speaking to a member of the local authority referral team to discuss safeguarding concerns if the DSL is not immediately available.
- DSLs keep up to date with emerging and specific safeguarding issues and update training accordingly.
- DSLs update staff and volunteers' knowledge and understanding of such issues in order for them to be able to identify children who are at risk of such specific safeguarding issues.
- ALL staff and volunteers will maintain and demonstrate an attitude of "it can happen here".
- ALL staff and volunteers are always child-centred in their practice and act in the best interests of the child.
- ALL staff recognise and understand that behaviour can be a child's way of communicating distress and changes to behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.

Responding to Disclosures and Referrals to Children's Social Care

ALL staff and volunteers have the skills to respond appropriately and sensitively to disclosures or allegations of abuse. Staff, committee members/trustees, volunteers and other adults working in the setting know they must:

- Listen and keep calm. Do not interrupt.
- NOT promise the child that you will keep the matter confidential. Explain to the child who you will need to tell and why.
- Observe visible bruises and marks, but do not ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to view them.
- Keep questions to a minimum as your role is not to investigate. If you need to ask questions in order to ascertain whether this is a safeguarding concern, ensure they are open questions.
- Use the "TED" model for asking open ended questions: "Tell me about that", "Explain that to me", "Describe that".
- Make a record of what has been said immediately afterwards in words used by the child and yourself to the best of your memory. Use capital letters for the child's words to help distinguish between the two.
- Note anything about the child which is connected i.e., any visible injuries including the position and description, the demeanour of the child i.e., crying, withdrawn etc.
- Clearly indicate whether fact, opinion or third-party information
- Report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- If in doubt, seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

They will not:

- Ask leading questions, put words into the child's mouth or press for details;
- Rush the child;
- Examine the child;
- Investigate;
- Promise confidentiality;
- Summarise or use their own words to describe events;
- Delay sharing the information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Take photographs of any marks or bruises.

In addition, all staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/ or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

All members of the setting community have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. If any member of the setting community has a safeguarding concern regarding a child, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. Staff and owners should not investigate possible abuse, neglect or exploitation themselves.

Injuries noted should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and without delay as it is acknowledged that once an injury occurs, the body will start to heal and therefore evidence will start to diminish.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the information they have received and will determine what action should be taken by the setting. They will refer to the local authority Levels of Need framework to aid this decision making (see Appendix B). They must record the outcome of this decision-making process.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unsure as to whether the presenting concern reaches the threshold for referral to Children's Social Care, they should contact the Integrated Contact and Referral Team for advice (refer to flowchart).

Children's Social Care:

Name:
Number:
Email:
Times:

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team:

Name:
Number:

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead feels that the concern should be addressed via the Multi Agency Level 2 (MAP) or Levels 3 or 4 (Child in Need and Child Protection), then they should contact the child's parent(s) to request consent to proceed. If the parent(s) refuses to give consent, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should consider how to proceed, including if refusal increases the risk of harm to the child. (If required, appropriate translation will be provided, avoiding the use of family or local community members.)

Where the Designated Safeguarding Lead feels that the information indicates that a child is in need of protection (Level 4 – Section 47 only), they should still contact the parent(s) to inform them that they are making a referral to Children's Social Care and to gain consent, unless to do so would place the child at increased risk of harm; for example:

- Where sexual abuse involving a family member is suspected or disclosed;
- Where fabricated or induced illness is suspected;
- Where to do so would impede an existing criminal investigation.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and/ or Deputy will complete, in detail, the Children's Social Care multi-agency referral form. They will include as much detail as possible relating to the child, immediate and wider family, the allegation of harm, situation, context, environment, risks and protective factors to enable Children's Social Care to react in a timely way. This referral form must be completed within a maximum of 48 hours but sooner when requested. Referral forms where applicable must be accompanied by at least one assessment toolkit and screening forms.

If the referral to Children's Social Care results in a Single Assessment and a period of Child in Need (Level 3) or Child Protection (Level 4), or a Multi-Agency (MAP – Level 2) assessment and plan, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy will engage thoroughly with the relevant assessment and resulting plan. This includes Strategy Meetings, Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, Core Group Meetings and other CP meetings, or any meeting linked to a child's plan of support, past and present reports, liaison with staff, work with parents, work with other agencies and ensure the voice of the child is evidenced throughout these processes. If the referral to Children's Social Care results in level 2 support being requested and it is deemed that the setting is the best agency to navigate, then the DSL/DDSL will navigate a level 2 MAP offering support as identified in the assessment.

The DSL and Deputy/ies meet regularly to ensure that decisions made about children who are subjects of Child Protection Plans are agreed and a clear rationale for the decision is documented.

A copy of the child's CP Plan is included in the child's individual safeguarding file (Adapt to reflect practice).

Staff are offered appropriate support and/ or supervision that is relevant to their role or involvement in particular cases.

Communication and work with parents and carers will always be undertaken in a supportive manner and in the best interests of the child.

ALL staff understand that children who perpetrate abuse or display harmful behaviour (including harmful sexual behaviours) should be treated as victims first and foremost and supported in the same way a victim of abuse would be supported.

Specific programmes of intervention and support are offered to children and families who are vulnerable.

Risk Assessments will be undertaken where a child's behaviour poses a risk to others, themselves, or the environment.

Professional Challenge, Escalation and Resolution

We promote a culture which encourages constructive challenge within our organisation and between organisations; acknowledging the important role that challenge can play in safeguarding children.

If any member of staff is unhappy with the response they have received in relation to a safeguarding concern they have raised, it is their responsibility to ensure they escalate their concern.

Where professional disagreement occurs and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/ or Deputy are unhappy with the actions or decisions of another agency, they will escalate their concern in line with their local safeguarding partnership's formal escalation policy to ensure a timely resolution. Please refer to your local authority escalation policy.

Disclosure to a visiting staff member from another agency

Where a disclosure is made to a visiting staff member from a different agency, e.g. Early Years Consultants, Health Visitors, it is the responsibility of that agency staff to formally report the referral to the Setting's DSL in the first instance and to follow their organisations procedures. Any records made should be kept securely on the Child's safeguarding file.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities

The setting understands that children with Special Educational Needs and/ or Disability (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. All children have the right to be safe, yet research shows that disabled children are three times more likely to be abused. A number of factors have been identified as to reasons why these children are more at risk (see bullet points) and as a setting we are aware of these and endeavour to protect all our children.

- A general reluctance of people to believe that disabled children are abused;
- Limited opportunities to seek help from someone else;
- Inadequate teaching about personal safety skills e.g., NSPCC PANTS campaign;
- Issues relating to the child's specific disability or special educational need, e.g., difficulties in communicating or an inability to understand what is happening.

Incoming Injuries

If a staff member notices a mark or injury on a child, they must report the injury to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately and record that they have done so. Staff should use a body/ face map to record the details of an injury/ mark, and be as specific as possible about size, shape, location and colouration of any mark or injury.

If a staff member notices a mark or injury on a child on arrival at the setting, the staff member should complete an 'Incoming injuries' form (detailing the time the injury was noticed). This should be done with the person who has brought the child to the setting, the explanation of the injury should be recorded as described, and the form should be signed by the person bringing the child. The staff member should immediately report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If a staff member does not notice the mark or injury on arrival but later into the session, then they must complete an 'incoming incident or accident forms via NIAB' retrospectively (detailing the time the injury was noticed). The staff member should immediately report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The injury should be discussed with the parent when they return, explanation recorded, and the form signed retrospectively.

If the child with an injury has a Social Worker, then the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must immediately report it to them (by telephone and then followed up in writing). If the Social Worker is unavailable by telephone, concerns should be discussed with a duty social worker or a team manager. Please note: it is not appropriate just to email the social worker in these cases; contact must be made with the social worker/ duty worker/team manager by telephone, on the same day.

If the child with an injury does not have a Social Worker, then the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) would use their professional judgement to assess the situation. This may involve seeking advice from Social Care depending on the nature of the injury and any history of injuries, in most cases however the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) would usually ask the child's Key Worker/ Person to speak to the child's parent and ask how the injury occurred. This information given by the parent must be immediately shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and accurately recorded. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will then assess using their professional judgement if the explanation is plausible and consistent with the child's development level or whether it is a safeguarding issue (if it is safeguarding concern, this cause for the concern will be actioned accordingly).

When noting explanations from parents/carers regarding injuries staff should record whether a parent/ carer volunteered the information on arrival or whether the staff member had to ask for the explanation.

Where a staff member believes a parent/ carer may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs

If a parent/carer presents at a setting and a member of staff feels the parent/carer maybe under the influence of Alcohol or Drugs the staff member should immediately alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If it is felt that the parent/carer is impaired to such an extent that they are not able to care for the child, and letting the child leave the setting with them would put them at risk, the practitioner should ask if there is another family member who could collect and care for the child. If there is no other suitable and responsible adult available, the setting should contact Children's Social Care team, and if necessary to prevent the parent from taking the child, call the Police. If the parent/ carer is not presenting as impaired, the incident should be recorded and any repeat occurrences should be discussed with the parent, including undertaking an early help assessment and signposting to alcohol and substance misuse service where appropriate.

Safer recruitment (References)

We will follow part 3 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and the EYFS 2025 pay full regard to 'Safer Recruitment' requirements including but not limited to:

- Verifying candidates' identity and academic or vocational qualifications.
- Obtaining professional references.
- Checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job,
- UK Right to Work.
- Clear enhanced DBS check – including recording the reference number, the date it was obtained and details of who obtained it.
- Any further checks as appropriate to gain all the relevant information to enable checks on suitability to work with children, including an online search for shortlisted candidates.
- For individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK, in addition to the same checks as all other staff, the setting will complete any additional checks required to satisfy themselves that the individual is suitable to work with children. This may include obtaining a letter from the professional regulatory authority in the country (countries) in which the candidate has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and /or that they are aware of any reason they are unsuitable to teach where possible.

We will obtain two references before employment.

We will:

- Not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern.
- Not rely on applicants to obtain their reference.
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer, training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority.
- Not accept references from a family member.
- Obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed.
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children). If the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference is from their current employer, training provider or education setting (for example tutor).
- Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source.
- Contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided.
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate.
- Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post, and ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- Seek medical reference (to have a better understanding of suitability to work) from doctor if necessary. Authorisation to contact a doctor must be provided by candidate prior to contacting any medical professional.

Evidence of staff member's identity (including a birth certificate where possible), required qualifications and the right to work in the UK will be kept in individual personnel files.

All recruitment materials will include reference to the setting's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children.

We will ensure that written risk assessments are undertaken in situations where information provided on DBS certificates necessitates so. Written risk assessments are undertaken for all volunteers not engaging in regulated activity.

Safer Recruitment Officers are:

Name:
Number:

Name:
Number:

Name:
Number:

A recruitment officer must attend the appropriate training every two years.

At least two of the persons named above will be involved in all staff recruitment processes and sit within the interview process.

We will use the Employee Induction Checklist in Appendix D of this policy.

Assurances will be obtained from agencies and other employers that provide staff to work in setting to confirm that appropriate checks have been undertaken.

Induction

We use the Employee Induction Checklist when completing an induction. Please see Appendix D.

Our staff induction process will cover:

- The Safeguarding & Child Protection policy;
- The Online Safety Policy (historically known as 'e-safety');
- The Behaviour Policy;
- The Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called a Code of Conduct);
- The role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies);
- Whistleblowing Policy.

Copies of all these policies and procedure are provided to staff once their offer has been accepted. These are also provided at induction.

We recognise the importance of practice oversight and multiple perspectives in safeguarding and child protection work. We will support staff by providing opportunities for reflective practice including opportunity to talk through all aspects of safeguarding work within education with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

Staff and volunteers

- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- We ensure all staff are given a copy of the: Local Safeguarding Children's Board 'What to do if you have a concern about a child's welfare' flow chart and it is displayed in the setting.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding concerns are reported to the local authority children's social work team, the NSPCC and police.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and criminal record checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - The criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - The date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - Details of who obtained it.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- All staff and volunteers are required to notify us if anyone in their household (including family members, lodgers, partners etc.) has any relevant convictions, court orders, reprimands and warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision or have had orders made in relation to the care of their children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting. We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO (Information Commissioner Office).
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate e-safety policy in place. We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The Designated Safeguarding Area Officer(s) will support the Designated Safeguarding Lead to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision, training and support.
- The Designated Lead will support the Designated Safeguarding Deputies to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision, training and support.
- The Designated Safeguarding Deputies will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Area Officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern; however, this should not delay any referrals being made to the children's social worker services, the LADO, Ofsted or RIDDOR.
- Whilst the business will endeavour to provide a basic level and variety of training, all employees must take responsibility for ensuring their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding is kept up to date.



Whistleblowing - Allegations or Concerns raised against setting staff, supply staff and other adults in the setting

All staff will be aware of and work within the settings Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and procedures. The Staff Code of Conduct will include guidance for staff regarding the expectations of the use of mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities used in the setting.

Where allegations against a staff member, volunteer, committee member or supply staff are made, the Manager should be notified immediately in line with the procedures set out in the setting's Whistleblowing policy. In the event that the Manager is not available, or the allegation concerns them, the Area Manager/ Director/ Owner of the setting should be contacted. No other members of staff will be asked to manage an allegation about another professional.

Confidentiality

The setting has a confidentiality/ information policy which should also be referred to.

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

The Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead and/ or Deputy will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only. Guidance about sharing information can be found in the 2018 document "Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2024".

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise confidentiality to a child which might result in the child's safety or wellbeing being compromised.

We will always share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents/ carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.

We recognise that children's welfare is our paramount concern and therefore will use the principles set out in section 1 of the Children Act 1989 in order to inform some decisions regarding information sharing.

The setting pays due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow us to share personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We are aware of the processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which allow us to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and this is treated as "special category personal data". Where we would need to share special category personal data, we are aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 contains "safeguarding of children and individuals at risk" as a processing condition that allows us to share information.

This includes:

- Allowing the setting to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent,
- Or if gaining consent may/or would place a child/ren at risk.

Staff learning and development / training

We are committed to providing staff and volunteers with the skills and knowledge needed to safeguard children. We therefore ensure that:

- At induction, all staff and volunteers committee members/ trustees will receive Safeguarding Training in line with EYFS Annex C
- At induction, all new staff, will be required to complete the Local Authority Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- At induction, the following policies/ procedures are explained: Safeguarding Policy; Staff Code of Conduct; Staff Handbook; online safety policy, Whistleblowing Policy.

- All staff will complete the basic awareness safeguarding training at least every year.
- The DSL/s will provide ALL staff with regular safeguarding updates via notification.
- ALL staff will read and show an understanding of any updates that are provided.
- All DSLs and deputies will attend training in line with the criteria in EYFS Annex C
- DSLs and deputies will update their knowledge, skills and understanding of relevant safeguarding issues on a regular basis.
- DSLs and staff will access relevant levels of Prevent Awareness Training
- Ideally two, but at least one member of any recruitment panel will complete Safer Recruitment Training.
- ALL staff, will undertake any additional specialised training on matters such as, Prevent, Online Safety, FGM etc., as is deemed necessary by the Manager/ DSL and that is particularly relevant to the context and needs of our setting.
- Any staff member will discuss any specific training requirements or gaps in knowledge or understanding with the DSL/s and/ or through the supervision process.
- Detailed records will be held of staff safeguarding training within the staff files.
- Staff are to attend a face-to-face safeguarding training annually and further to this may be required to complete online training and tests to show their knowledge and understanding to an acquired company standard.

An Employee Induction Checklist is used as part of the induction process, and thereafter in the performance management process/ Supervisions need to ensure all compulsory learning has taken place.

Safeguarding is re-visited in staff appraisals and supervisions, to ensure staff are confident and competent in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities.

Our safeguarding arrangements are reported on an annual basis to our Director/ Owner and our Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/ legislation.

A variety of training and learning materials on safeguarding are made available to ensure staff continually develop their understanding and practice around safeguarding, these include:

- Online learning;
- Posters in the staff room detailing referral processes and key topics;
- Staff handbook;
- Staff induction email 'Welcome to the team';
- Safeguarding – Employee Induction Checklist;
- Standing agenda item staff meetings;
- Training;
- Video;
- NSPCC website;
- Professional organisations e.g., NDNA, EYLA, PACEY.



Health and safety, risk assessments and visitors

Day-to-day responsibility for health and safety issues in our settings will be delegated to a member of staff who is competent to carry out these duties and who has received the appropriate training.

We are committed to keeping children safe by ensuring that visitors do not pose a risk to children at our setting. We therefore ensure that:

- Visitors to the setting must sign the visitor's book on arrival and record the time of arrival.
- Visitors must sign out and record the time when they leave the setting.
- Visitors are made aware of who to speak to if they are worried about a child.
- Visitors are accompanied during their visit, when children are present, unless they have undergone relevant checks, and these are accepted and verified by the Manager or DSL.
- Visitors will behave in a way that is compliant with the settings code of conduct.
- Visitors will not use mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities.
- When visitors are undertaking activities with children, content of the activity will be agreed with the Manager or DSL, prior to the visit.

We also have a 'contractors working on site' policy which will be shared with contractors prior to them coming into the setting or working within the grounds.

Recording, maintenance & transfer of records

All safeguarding concerns should be recorded. Staff should ensure when recording information that they clearly distinguish between fact and opinion and whether the information is 1st or 2nd hand. Records will clearly evidence the voice of the child and will always be written contemporaneously (at the time the incident happened). If for any reason this does not happen the records should clearly state the time of the incident, the time the records were written up and the reason for any delay.

Records will be maintained by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy in a Child Protection File separate to the child's main file. Records will be maintained by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy – including actions and decisions made/ outcomes reached and the rationale behind these decisions.

Individual files should be clearly organised in chronological order and all entries should be signed and dated in a legible manner by the person making the entry. This should include their role at the setting. There should be a chronology of events kept on file to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy to have an immediate overview of the case. Such records will be kept securely locked or within a secure location.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
 - Listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that they will take action;
 - Does not ask the child leading questions;
 - Makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - The exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
 - The names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the named Designated Safeguarding Person is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity and within 1 working day.
- We adhere to the following Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) policies and procedures:

Halton Safeguarding Children Board's:

Link: www.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk

St. Helens Safeguarding Children Partnership

Link: <https://sthelenssafeguarding.org.uk/scp>

Wigan Safeguarding Children's Partnership

Link: <https://wigansafeguardingchildren.co.uk/>

When recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set by the local Safeguarding Children partnership/ board.

Transfer of Records

If a child transfers between settings or between settings and a school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for transferring the child's Child Protection File to the new setting/ school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will transfer the child protection records. See appendix E

- A child's safeguarding file will be transferred, in its entirety, to the educational establishment where the child moves to, unless there is ongoing legal action, within 5 days of the child starting at the new setting/ school.
- The safeguarding file will be sent securely to the DSL at the receiving setting/ school.
- A receipt will be obtained at time of transfer and the responsibility for the safeguarding records will pass to the receiving setting/school.
- The educational establishment where the pupil attends at statutory school leaving age (18) will securely retain the safeguarding records until the child's 25th birthday. Safeguarding records will then be destroyed securely.
- Settings will seek advice if any staff are unclear about any aspects of safeguarding record keeping.



Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multiagency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the setting may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.

Statutory guidance on Channel:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/651e71d9e4e658001459d997/14.320_HO_Channel_Duty_Guidance_v3_Final_Web.pdf

Mandatory reporting of FGM

KCSIE states 'Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police'.

Therefore, practitioners should personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, by calling 101. Unless the practitioner has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with their Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve Children's Social Care as appropriate.

If there are suspicions regarding FGM, it is essential that settings take action without delay. If there are concerns that a child is at risk of, or is a victim of, FGM contact the police via 999 (for immediate risk) or 101. Alternatively, the NSPCC FGM helpline anonymously 24/7 on 0800 028 3550 or fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Children not attending – Child absences

Even though it is not compulsory for a child to attend a day nursery, at the very least, good attendance practice promotes good outcomes for children and can lead to the early identification of more serious concerns for a child. Our setting has an attendance policy that we share with parents and/or carers.

Online safety

We are committed to keeping children safe online. We therefore ensure that:

- The setting's Online Safety Policy – please add link to your own Online Safety Policy details how we keep children safe when using the internet and mobile technology.
- There is a clear and explicit procedure for dealing with mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities that are brought into the setting by children (add link to your acceptable use policy / appendices).
- The setting has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place regarding use of internet as detailed in the Online Safety / E-Safety/ Safe use of electronic devices policy.

The appropriateness of any filtering and monitoring systems will in part be informed by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty as required by KCSIE.

As settings increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such our setting ensures that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place.

All staff recognise the additional risks that children with SEN (Special Education Needs) and/or disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.

Director/ Owners should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regularly updated safeguarding on-line training and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety that online safety training for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

Additional information can be found within Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Operation Encompass

We receive police notifications of children who have been involved in domestic abuse incidents via Operation Encompass. <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform relevant staff of any notification and agree what support (if any) the child should receive.

The definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

"any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional."

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/ or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

All staff understand the significant impact that Domestic Abuse can have on a child. The setting follows the guidance set out within this policy to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. Children who have experienced or witnessed Domestic Violence will be monitored and supported by the setting.



Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - Significant changes in their behaviour;
 - Deterioration in their general well-being;
 - Their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - Changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play;
 - Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
 - Any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse; and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and radicalisation, that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, child abuse linked to faith or belief or through forced marriage or honour-based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns and follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made by the designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral, they must follow escalation procedures.
- We refer concerns to the Local Borough Council's Children's Social Care Team and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation.
- NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Procedures.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- We have a whistle blowing policy in place.

Categories of child abuse

(refer to appendix A)

The following are the four main areas of abuse as defined in:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, Advice for practitioners (2015)

Physical abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also take the form of fabricating or deliberately inducing illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

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 or 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.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves 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.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a 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:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Communicating with parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child at increased risk of harm, such as suspected sexual abuse, fabricated or induced illness, forced marriage.
- We inform parents where we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to the Local Children's Social Care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed at increased risk of harm.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk the designated Lead or Deputy should seek advice from Children's Social Care, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of the current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on safeguarding issues, including maintaining contact details for the Early Intervention Locality Teams, Children's Social Care and the Emergency Duty Team and details of staff co-ordinating services where children are the subject of a Multi-Agency Plan (MAP), Child in need (CIN) Plan or Child Protection (CP) plan to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and Children's Social Care (CSC) to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. We display on our notice board a copy of Ofsted information which includes Ofsted's Whistleblowing Hotline telephone number.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Allegations against staff

This section sets out the specific requirements as per *Working Together to Safeguard Children* that apply to managing allegations against staff or volunteers who work with children.

- The range of allegations which are covered under this section of the policy are not limited to those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Allegations may also indicate that the staff member is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity.
- We follow the guidance of the local authorities Safeguarding Children Board(s) when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child. Local authority 'Allegations Against Adults' procedures will be instigated in all cases where it is alleged that a member of *the setting(s)* staff or volunteer has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child;
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child;
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.

- We ensure that all staff or volunteers know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, or any other person working with the children which includes:
 - Inappropriate sexual comments;
 - Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or
 - Inappropriate sharing of images.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- Staff and volunteers have access to our Whistle Blowing, when they start and form part of the induction and training process. These can be found via our Staff Portal.
- We refer any such allegation immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken in line with legal requirement contained in EYFS (Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements). We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.

Reporting Procedure:

- Where a member of staff has concerns about a colleague, they should inform the Manager immediately:
- Where a member of staff has concerns about the Manager, and/or their decision they should contact the Area Manager immediately.
- Where a member of staff has concerns about the Area Manager, and/or their decision they should contact the Director immediately. Details identified on Safeguarding Flow Chart.
- The local authority has a responsibility for providing advice and liaising and monitoring the progress of cases, to ensure that cases are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough process. Action should be taken to consult LADO directly.
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by Children's Social Care in conjunction with the police.
- Any investigation may consider the following three elements:
 - A child protection investigation;
 - Circumstances which may require a police investigation;
 - Disciplinary procedures.
- Where management and Children's Social Care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the Director will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure & Barring Service of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.
- Advice must be sought and any and all cases must be logged with our HR services. A Director must be informed prior to issuing any form of dismissal.

Legal framework & guidance

Primary legislation

- Education Act 2002
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act 2006

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- The Data Protection Act (2018)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015

Further Guidance

- Take account of any advice from the LSP or local authority on appropriate training courses.
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- The 2015 Counter Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on early years providers "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (the Prevent duty):
www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-englandand-wales
- Under section 175(4) of the Education Act 2002
www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

