



# **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY**

## **Policy Statement**

We believe children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS are reflected in this policy and are designed to help us create a high-quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We are committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and will do this by putting young people and vulnerable adult's right to be '*strong, resilient and listened to*' at the heart of all our activities.

The Early Years Alliance 'four commitments' are broad statements against which policies and procedures across the organisation are drawn to provide a consistent and coherent strategy for safeguarding children young people and vulnerable adults. The four key commitments are:

- We are committed to preventing harm and responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur. Working with statutory agencies to achieve the best possible outcomes for every child.
- We uphold a culture of safety in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its curriculum and service delivery.
- We are committed to empowering children, young people, and vulnerable adults, promoting their right to be '**strong, resilient, actively listened to, and heard**'.
- We are dedicated to increasing safeguarding confidence, knowledge and good practice throughout its training and learning programmes for adults, advocating support and representation for those in greatest need.

NB: A 'young person' is defined as 16–19-year-old. In an early years setting, they may be a student, apprentice educator, or parent/carer.

A 'vulnerable adult' (see guidance to the Care Act 2014) as: '*a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may need community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation*'. In early years, this person may be a service user, parent/carer of a service user, or a volunteer.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

### **Definition of Safeguarding**

In relation to children, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined in the government document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children from:

- neglect
- physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence, or violence against women and girls
- peer-on-peer abuse
- radicalisation or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- child criminal exploitation and county lines
- the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example 'sexting' and accessing pornography
- teenage relationship abuse
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- domestic violence
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- poor parenting
- homelessness
- so-called honour-based violence
- breast ironing
- cuckooing
- financial abuse
- abuse linked to mental health
- non-recent abuse
- upskirting
- witchcraft
- abuse due to a linked faith or belief
- disguised compliance
- any other issues that pose a risk to children, learners and vulnerable adults.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- children's health and safety and well-being, including their mental health
- meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs or disabilities
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care and emotional well-being
- online safety and associated issues
- appropriate arrangements to ensure children's security, taking into account the local context.

### **Key Commitments**

- ***"We are committed to preventing harm responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur, and to work with statutory agencies to achieve the best possible outcomes for every child."***
- ***"We provide a culture of safety in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our curriculum and service delivery."***
- ***"Any concerns about harm or abuse to children concerning a member of staff will be reported to our DSL, the LADO and Ofsted".***

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

**Cherry Buck, Pre-School Supervisor**

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Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

**Claire Parker, Deputy Pre-School Supervisor**

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The designated officer who oversees this work is:

**Colin Halliday, Chair of the Committee**

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## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- The DSL is responsible for carrying out child, young person, or adult protection procedures.
- The DSL is responsible for overseeing all child, young person or adult protection matters.
- The DSL ensures they have links with statutory and voluntary organisations regarding safeguarding children.
- The DSL must attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C of the EYFS. This training must be renewed every two years.
- The DSL ensures all staff are adequately informed and trained to recognise child abuse in the categories of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and neglect.
- The DSL ensures all staff are aware of the additional vulnerabilities that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture and that these receive full consideration in child, young person, or adult protection related matters.
- The DSL ensures that staff are aware and receive training in social factors affecting children's vulnerability including, but not limited to:
  - social exclusion
  - domestic violence and controlling or coercive behaviour
  - mental illness
  - drug and alcohol abuse (substance misuse)
  - parental/carer learning disability
  - radicalisation
- The DSL ensures that staff are aware and receive training in other ways that children may suffer significant harm and stay up to date with relevant contextual safeguarding matters:
  - abuse of disabled children
  - fabricated or induced illness
  - child abuse linked to spirit possession
  - sexually exploited children
  - children who are trafficked and/or exploited



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- female genital mutilation
- extra-familial abuse and threats
- children involved in violent offending, with gangs and county lines.
- The DSL ensures they are adequately informed in vulnerable adult protection matters.
- The DSL builds a safe organisational culture.
- The DSL develops and implements our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The DSL ensures safe recruitment.
- The DSL ensures internet safety.
- The DSL puts in place effective arrangements to:
  - identify children who may need early help or are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation;
  - help prevent abuse by raising awareness among children of safeguarding risks and how and where to get help and support if they need it;
  - help those children who are at risk of abuse and need early help or statutory social care involvement, keeping accurate records, making timely referrals where necessary and working with other agencies to ensure that children and learners get the help and support they need; and
  - manage allegations about adults who may be a risk and check the suitability of staff to work with children, learners and vulnerable adults.
- The DSL understands the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (BWSCP) safeguarding procedures, attends relevant training at least every two years and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding at least annually.
- The designated officer will support the DSL to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
- The DSL will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to children's social care, or where appropriate, the LADO, Ofsted or RIDDOR.
- The DSL provides support, advice and guidance to staff on an on-going basis and on any specific safeguarding issue as required.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

### **Procedures**

- All staff are trained in line with the Criteria set out in Annex C of the EYFS. Safeguarding training is renewed every two years. The DSL ensures support, advice and guidance for all staff to meet their safeguarding responsibilities by regular supervision and 1:1, team briefings, bulletins and group supervision.
- We consider whether any staff need to undertake annual refresher training during any two-year period to help maintain basic skills and keep up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures, or as a result of any safeguarding concerns that arise in the setting.
- We ensure all staff are supported and confident to implement our safeguarding policies and procedures on an ongoing basis.
- All staff should read 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'.
- We make parents aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility.
- All staff are aware of the role of the DSL and the identity the Deputy DSLs.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children's social care team.
- 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.
- We have regard to the government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and 'Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations'.
- All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All staff understand the thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm, according to arrangements published by the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (BWSCP).



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- All staff understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, and understand relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements and BWSCP requirements and ensure that any information they may share about parents and their children with other agencies is shared appropriately and lawfully.
- We will support families to receive appropriate early help by sharing information with other agencies in accordance with statutory requirements and legislation.
- We will share information lawfully with safeguarding partners and other agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.
- We will be transparent about how we lawfully process data.
- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard and know how to follow BWSCP safeguarding procedures to resolve professional disputes between staff and organisations.
- Staff receive regular supervision, which includes discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs are reviewed regularly.
- All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of cameras and mobile phones), whistleblowing and staff code of conduct at work.
- In addition to induction and supervision, staff are provided with clear expectations in relation to their behaviour in our 'Staff Code of Conduct Policy'.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age-appropriate way.
- All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- Children will not be taken to the toilet by any adult who has not had an Enhanced DBS Disclosure.
- 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 have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting. We check all visitors are suitable and monitor them whilst they are in the building.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- There is a set procedure in place to safeguard children and adults on arrival to and departure from the pre-school building.
- We ensure that children are only collected by known parents or carers, or another responsible adult that we have been informed about. This person must know the password that is stated on the Registration Form by the parent.
- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development, their participation in events organised by us and for displays in the pre-school building or notice boards. These photographs may be viewed by other parents.
- Parents' consent to this when they sign the Registration Form and have access to records holding visual images of their child. Any images of children are held securely.
- Children are only photographed or videoed on pre-school equipment and staff do not use personal cameras or filming equipment to record images.
- Personal mobile phones are not used where children are present.
- Please also see our separate "Mobile Phone, Cameras & Electronic Devices Policy" which gives further information about parent photography and videoing at "Pre-School Special Events".
- The DSL has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate online safety policy in place. We are aware that the internet provides children with access to a wide range of content, some of which is harmful. The internet safety policy used in our pre-school stops inappropriate content, including extremist content, being accessed. We have appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to protect children from potentially harmful online material. Please see our separate "ICT Policy" which gives further information.
- 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 and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.

### **Suitable People – Staff and Volunteers**

We ensure that staff and regular volunteers are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles and we have an effective system in place to ensure that any person who may have regular contact with children are suitable. This is as follows:



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) 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 based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Applicants are required to supply two references (See our Employment Policy).
- We record information about staff qualifications.
- Appointment is subject to a probationary period, usually two terms, and will only be confirmed once the pre-school is completely satisfied that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children. This will include both paid and voluntary staff.
- Volunteers must:
  - be aged 17 or over;
  - be considered competent and responsible;
  - receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings;
  - be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
  - be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.

### **Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Services Checks**

- We do not allow people whose suitability to work with children has not been checked, including through an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services Check with barred list information, to begin working or volunteering.
- We obtain a new Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services Check for all staff, including those who have lived or worked outside the UK, the Pre-School Supervisor, Committee members (via Ofsted) and regular volunteers to ensure that no disqualified person, a barred person or an unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- We record information about the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
  - the DBS disclosure reference number;
  - certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate;
  - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
  - the details of who obtained it.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- We require all new staff and regular volunteers to join the DBS Update Service (committee members via Ofsted)
- We require all staff, committee and regular volunteers to immediately disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their ongoing suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- 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.

### **Disqualification**

- As an early years setting that provides care for children, we ensure that all staff and volunteers working in our pre-school are not disqualified from doing so under the (Childcare Disqualification) Regulations 2018.
- We meet this requirement by asking all staff, committee and regular volunteers to:
  - regularly complete a declaration confirming that they are not disqualified; and
  - Immediately disclose any changes or new information regarding disqualification.
- From 31 August 2018, staff and volunteers in childcare settings that are not based on domestic premises are **not** required to notify their line manager if anyone in their household (including family members, lodgers, partners etc.) has any relevant convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or 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 care of their children.
- If we become aware of relevant information that may lead to disqualification of a member of staff or volunteer, we will take the appropriate action to ensure the safety of the children
- We notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with the children in our setting. The disqualification of a staff member could be an instance of a significant event.
- We notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable but at the latest within 14 days of the date we became aware of the significant event (or ought reasonably to have become aware of it if we had made reasonable enquiries).



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- In certain circumstances, Ofsted may grant a full or partial waiver, including a waiver that would allow an individual to work in a setting. Whilst a waiver application is being considered by Ofsted, the person that it relates must not continue to work in our pre-school. If the waiver is not granted, the staff member must be dismissed.

### **Incapacitated Parent or Carer**

Incapacitated refers to a condition which renders a parent or carer unable to take responsibility for their child; this could be at the time of collecting their child from the setting or on arrival. Concerns may include:

- appearing drunk
- appearing under the influence of drugs
- demonstrating angry and threatening behaviour to the child, members of staff or others
- appearing erratic or manic

### **Informing**

- If a member of staff is concerned that a parent or carer displays any of the above characteristics, they inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- The DSL assesses the risk and decides if further intervention is required.
- If it is decided that no further action is required, a record of the safeguarding concern is made.
- If intervention is required, the DSL speaks to the parent/carers in an appropriate, confidential manner.
- The DSL will, in agreement with the parent or carer, use emergency contacts listed for the child to ask an alternative adult to collect the child.
- The emergency contact is informed of the situation by the DSL and of the pre-school's requirement to inform social care of their contact details.
- The designated officer is informed of the situation as soon as possible to provide advice and assistance as appropriate.
- If there is no one suitable to collect the child social care are informed.
- If violence is threatened towards anybody, the police are called immediately.
- If the parent or carer takes the child from pre-school while incapacitated, the police are called immediately and a referral is made to social care.
- The DSL completes a safeguarding incident form with details of all agencies contacted,



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

### **Child Protection: Responding to Suspicions of Abuse**

- All staff recognise and know how to respond to signs and signals that may indicate a child is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. They understand that they have a responsibility to act immediately by discussing their concerns with the DSL or a Deputy DSL.
- The DSL is responsible for co-ordinating action taken by the setting to safeguard vulnerable children and adults. The DSL is also responsible for liaising with local statutory children's services and with the Local Safeguarding Partnership.
- All concerns about the welfare of children in pre-school, at home, or elsewhere should be reported to the DSL or Deputy DLS in their absence.
- We do not operate without an identified DSL at any time.
- Issues which require notifying to Ofsted are notified to the designated officer. The designated safeguarding lead and designated officer must remain up to date with Ofsted reporting and notification requirements.
- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or 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; and
  - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.

Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision, such as abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, including through internet abuse; Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation or extremism.
- We have procedures for minimising and dealing with peer-on-peer abuse.
- Staff are confident about what to do if a child reports that they have been sexually abused by another child.
- Staff understand the importance of considering wider environmental factors that may be present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.
- We understand that we should refer any child who may be at risk of significant harm to local authority children's social work services.
- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
- We understand how to identify children who may be in need of early help, how to access services for them
- We understand that we should refer a child who meets the s17 Children Act 1989 child in need definition to local authority children's social work services.
- We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers, and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police. We are also aware that early years practitioners should follow local authority published safeguarding procedures to respond to FGM and other safeguarding issues, which involves contacting police if a crime of FGM has been or may be about to be committed.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- We make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, 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.
- In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and BWSCP procedures on responding to radicalisation.
- The DSL completes online Prevent Awareness training and attends local WRAP training where available to ensure they are familiar with the local protocol and procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation.
- If we become concerned that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking, we will refer to the National Referral Mechanism, as soon as possible and refer and/or seek advice to the local authority children's social work service and/or police.
- We will be alert to the threats children may face from outside their families, such as that posed by organised crime groups such as county lines and child sexual exploitation, online use and from within peer groups and the wider community.

### **Child Absences**

- We are alert to signs that children who do not attend regularly or stop attending our setting might be at risk of abuse or neglect. We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected.
- If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or absent without notification from the parent or carer, we follow this up in a timely manner and we will attempt to contact the child's parents or carers and alternative emergency contacts.
- We consider patterns and trends in a child's absences and personal circumstances and use our professional judgment when deciding if a child's absence should be considered as prolonged.
- We give consideration to the child's vulnerability, the parent's/ carer's vulnerability and their home life.

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- If no contact is made with the child's parents and/ or the DSL has concerns or reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals and CSPA are contacted immediately and BWSCP procedures are followed. A police welfare check may also be requested.
- We coordinate our responses with the local authority to reduce the risk of harm and minimise the impact. Comprehensive records are held and shared between the relevant agencies to help and protect children.

### **Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures**

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give 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 she or he will take action;
  - does not question the child, although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification;
  - 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 the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
  - If marks or injuries are observed, these are recorded on a body diagram.
- Each member of staff/volunteer who has witnessed an incident or disclosure should also make a written statement.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in our Safeguarding File, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- We respond to any disclosures sensitively and appropriately and take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children (although we may check out/clarify the details of what we think they have told us with them).

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- 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 or neglect 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 in an age-appropriate way, 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.
- After the initial disclosure, staff speak immediately to the DSL and discusses what to do. They do not further question or attempt to interview a child.

### **Informing Parents when Making a Referral**

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are normally discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child or other person at risk or may interfere with the course of a police investigation, or may unduly delay the referral, or unless it is otherwise unreasonable to seek consent. Advice will be sought from social care, or in some circumstances police, where necessary.
- We inform parents where we make a record of concerns 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 Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA), parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the procedures of the CSPA or BWSCP does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk (or interfere with a police response) the DSL should consider seeking advice from children's social care, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.
- In most circumstances consent will not be required to make a child protection referral, because even if consent is refused, there is still a professional duty to act upon concerns and make a referral.

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- When a child protection referral has been made, DSL contacts the parents/carers (only if agreed with social care) to inform them that a referral has been made, indicating the concerns that have been raised, unless social care advises that the parent/carer should not be contacted until such time as their investigation, or the police investigation, is concluded. Parents/carers are not informed prior to making a referral if:
  - there is a possibility that a child may be put at risk of harm by discussion with a parent/carer, or if a serious offence may have been committed, as it is important that any potential police investigation is not jeopardised
  - there are potential concerns about sexual abuse, fabricated illness, FGM or forced marriage
  - contacting the parent/carer puts another person at risk; situations where one parent may be at risk of harm, e.g. abuse; situations where it has not been possible to contact parents/carers to seek their consent may cause delay to the referral being made
- The DSL makes a professional judgment regarding whether consent (from a parent/carer) should be sought before making a child protection referral as described above. They record their decision about informing or not informing parents along with an explanation for this decision. Advice will be sought from the appropriate children's social work team if there is any doubt.

### **Reporting Safeguarding Concerns**

- The DSL makes a professional judgement about referring to other agencies, including Social Care using the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) threshold document
- The DSL or Deputy DSL follows the LSP procedures for making a referral to the Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA).
- If the DSL or Deputy is not on site, the most senior member of staff present takes responsibility for making the referral to social care.
- If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, or an incident occurs at the end of the session and staff are concerned about the child going home that day, then the Police and/or social care are contacted immediately.
- If the child is 'safe' because they are still in the setting, and there is time to do so, the senior member of staff contacts the setting's designated officer for support.
- Arrangements for cover (as above) when the DSL and Deputy DSLs are not on-site are agreed in advance by the setting manager and clearly communicated to all staff.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- We follow our procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns and also following the BWSCP procedures.
- We follow the Reading Thresholds Guidance and refer concerns about children's welfare to the Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA), or in emergencies to the police.
- We co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases, this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or BWSCP.
- All staff are also aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.
- If a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the DSL in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral, they must follow escalation procedures.

### **Escalation Process**

- If a member of staff disagrees with a decision made by the DSL not to make a referral to social care they must initially discuss and try to resolve, it with them.
- If the disagreement cannot be resolved with the DSL and the member of staff continues to feel a safeguarding referral is required, then they discuss this with the designated officer.
- If issues cannot be resolved the whistle-blowing policy should be used, as set out below.
- Supervision sessions are also used to discuss concerns, but this must not delay making safeguarding referrals.
- If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly by the local authority or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the BWSCP escalation process.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.
- We will follow local procedures published by the BWSCP to resolve professional disputes.

### **Whistleblowing**

- We ensure that all staff are familiar with the whistleblowing procedure and feel able to raise concerns, and that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior management team.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- The whistle blowing procedure must be followed in the first instance if:
  - a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed.
  - a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject. This includes non-compliance with policies and procedures, breaches of EYFS and/or registration requirements.
  - an injustice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.
  - the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered.
  - the working environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged.
  - that information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding clauses has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.
- There are 3 stages to raising concerns as follows:
  1. If staff wish to raise or discuss any issues which might fall into the above categories, they should normally raise this issue with their manager/DSL.
  2. Staff who are unable to raise the issue with their manager/DSL should raise the issue with their line manager's manager/designated officer.
  3. If staff are still concerned after the investigation, or the matter is so serious that they cannot discuss it with a line manager, they should raise the matter with the Chair of the Committee, Colin Halliday.
- After a concern has been raised, the manager/line manager will decide how to respond in a reasonable and appropriate manner. Normally this will involve making internal enquires first, but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation. Whilst it is hoped that such disclosures will never be necessary, the setting management recognises that it may find itself in circumstances which are new to it. Each case will be treated on its own merits.
- Managers/line managers notified of concerns under this policy are expected to:
  - ensure that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the policy
  - ensure that concerns raised are taken seriously;
  - treat the matter in confidence, within the parameters of the case;
  - where appropriate, investigate properly and make an objective assessment of the concern;

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- keep the person raising the concern updated with progress, without breaching confidentiality;
  - ensure that the action necessary to resolve a concern is taken;
  - take appropriate steps to ensure that the employee's working environment and/or working relationship is/are not prejudiced by the fact of disclosure.
- 
- If an issue cannot be resolved and the member of staff believes a child remains at risk because the setting or the local authority have not responded appropriately, or where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with Micklands Pre-school, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, there are other channels open to them:
    - NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available on 0800 028 0285. Their email address is [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Alternatively staff can write to NSPCC, Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH.
    - Ofsted provides guidance on how to make complaints about a childcare provider.
    - General guidance on whistleblowing can be found at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

### **Liaison with Other Agencies and Multi-Agency Working**

- We adhere to and follow the guidance and legislation set out in the BWCSF Child Protection Procedures.
- We recognise our responsibility to contribute to local inter-agency working.
- There is a Designated Doctor for Child Protection (BHFT) matters within BWSCP. Contact can be made through BWSCP.
- Access and Assessment / Children's Social Care Duty Teams are available 9am to 5pm weekdays (excluding bank holidays) on 0118 937 3641.
- For urgent enquiries out of hours, we contact the Emergency Duty Team on 01344 351999.
- We have the current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available 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 child protection issues and concerns about children's welfare, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident together with any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children.
- We also inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by a member of staff, committee or volunteer (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). We notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations as soon as is reasonably practicable but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

### **Allegations against Staff and Volunteers (Volunteers includes Committee Members) and Persons in a Position of Trust**

- We ensure that all staff and parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the pre-school, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We ensure that all staff volunteers and anyone else working in the setting knows how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct or behaviour of other people including staff/colleagues.
- We differentiate between allegations, and concerns about the quality of care or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person working on the premises, 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 will recognise and respond to allegations that a person who works with children has:
  - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, 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

This includes allegations where it might indicate that the person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their current position. The allegations may relate to the person's behaviour at work, at home or in another setting.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- 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 disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone 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.
- An allegation against staff or volunteers should be reported immediately to the DSL without discussing it with anyone else. (In the absence of the DSL, refer to the Deputy DSL).
- The DSL will then refer the matter by telephone to the Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA) on 0118 937 3641 as soon as possible and within 24 hours. They will advise the DSL on the next course of action and whether the management of the allegation should be referred by them to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- We ensure that the LADO is informed the same day of a referral of an allegation against staff or volunteers who work with children so that the LADO can provide advice on the management of the allegation, including the organisation. (Please refer to our Safeguarding Children folder for the current LADO contact details).
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by LADO that this is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), 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.
- An allegation against the DSL should be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee (Colin Halliday on 07890 294436) without discussing it with anyone else. The Chair of the Committee will then follow the above procedure.
- An allegation against the Chair of the Committee should be reported immediately direct to the Children's Single Point of Access (CSPA) on 0118 937 3641 without discussing it with anyone else.
- Where the pre-school committee and the appropriate authority agree it is suitable in the circumstances, the member of staff (or volunteer) may be suspended 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. Where it is appropriate and practical and agreed with LADO, we will seek to offer an alternative to suspension for the duration of the investigation, if an alternative is available that will safeguard children and not place the affected staff or volunteer at risk.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

### **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 and 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.

### **Confidentiality**

- All records about allegations, suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the BWSCP and in line with the GDPR Data Protection Act 2018 and Working Together.

### **Key Commitment**

- ***“We are committed to empowering young children, promoting their right to be ‘strong, resilient actively listened to and heard’.”***

### **Training**

- All staff receive training in child protection matters and have access to the setting’s policy and procedures for reporting concerns of possible abuse and the safeguarding procedures of the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP).
- All staff have information on issues affecting vulnerability in families such as social exclusion, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse and parental learning disability, together with training that takes account of factors that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture.
- We train all staff to understand our safeguarding policy and to ensure they have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. This training enables staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond in a timely and appropriate way.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. Training opportunities should also cover extra familial threats such as online risks, radicalisation and grooming, and how to identify and respond to families who may be in need of early help, and organisational safeguarding procedures.
- We train all permanent staff with the use of an approved Local Authority eLearning Safeguarding Children course, Universal Safeguarding Children training courses and group training sessions. This is not only part of the induction process but training is also refreshed at least annually or as and when a training need is identified.
- All regular volunteers are required to complete the approved eLearning Safeguarding Children as part of their induction.
- Work experience students are trained in safeguarding children as part of their college course but we also make them aware of our Safeguarding Children policy as part of their induction.
- Committee members are requested to complete the approved eLearning Safeguarding Children course when they join the Committee.
- We ensure that all staff, volunteers and committee members know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.
- We ensure that all staff, volunteers and committee receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters, online training and/or discussion at meetings at least once a year.

### **Planning**

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.
- Staff must inform another member of the team (about where they are going and what they are doing) if they need to attend to a child, for example, take them to the toilet or change their nappy.

### **Curriculum**

- We adhere to the EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

- We use available curriculum materials for young children, taking account of information in the Early Years Foundation Stage, to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children to enable them to be *strong, resilient, and listened to and heard*.
- We seek to build the emotional and social skills of children and young in an age-appropriate way, including increasing their understanding of how to stay safe.
- We educate children to understand and express their feelings and at the same time, build up their confidence to refuse inappropriate attention.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background. We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

### **Key Commitment**

- ***“We are dedicated to increasing safeguarding confidence, knowledge and good practice throughout its training and learning programmes for adults, advocating support and representation for those in greatest need”.***
- There are procedures in place to ensure staff recognise children and families who may benefit from early help and can respond using local early help processes. Designated safeguarding leads should ensure all staff understand how to identify and respond to families who may need early help.
- Staff are supported to make the right decisions that enable timely and appropriate action to be taken.
- Designated safeguarding leads contribute towards local safeguarding arrangements to ensure that the views of the sector are heard at the highest level by:
  - Finding out how education and childcare are represented at a strategic level within their Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) structures.

Sharing their knowledge of the experiences of children in their cohort with LSP local leaders



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY (continued)**

### **Support to Families**

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- We will engage with any child in need plan or early help plan as agreed.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with our Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy and only if appropriate under the guidance of the BWSCP.

### **Other Policies:**

**The Prevent Duty** - Please see our 'Prevent Duty & British Values Policy'.

**Looked After Children** - Please see our 'Looked After Children Policy'.