



# Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults Policy

**At Natural Choice Nurseries, we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.**

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. In our setting we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures. Please refer to our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Inclusion and Equality Policy for further information (EYFS3-09-001).

**Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. All staff, students, any supply staff and visitors are made aware of and asked to adhere to, the policy.**

Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the nursery's other policies and procedures (including but not exclusively Human trafficking and modern slavery (EYFS-01-040), Prevent Duty and Radicalisation (EYFS3-01-023), Domestic violence, Honour Based violence and forced marriages (EYFS3-01-041, Looked after child policy (EYFS3-01-035))

## **Legal framework and definition of safeguarding**

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Care Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early years, Education and Skills settings 2019
- Prevent Duty 2015

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

*(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2018).*

## **Our Policy Intention**

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct.

- Support staff to notice all signs of abuse, including the softer signs of abuse and know what action to take
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children.
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- Help children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion and role modelling.
- Always listen to children.
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need.
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.

The nursery staff are aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Staff working on the frontline with children and families are often the first people to identify a concern, observe changes in a child's behaviour or receive information relating to indicators of abuse. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care, health professionals or the police. All staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed.

At Natural Choice, we aim to:

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do, providing sensitive interactions that develops and builds children's well-being, confidence and resilience. We will support children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe, healthy and develop positive relationships.
- Ensure staff are trained right from induction to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse including the signs known as the softer signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour.
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable or isolated families and children.
- Be aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parent 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.
- Ensure staff understand how to recognise early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures.
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child, share information and seek the help that the child may need.
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures through Gloucestershire Council Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) briefing notes.
- Ensure staff, volunteers and regular visitors are directed to the South West Child Protection procedures ([www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk))
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the Gloucestershire Council Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) or if the child's residence is in a different County, then their LSBC.
- Make any referrals relating to extremism to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate.
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest.
- Keep the setting safe online using appropriate filters, checks and safeguards, monitoring access at all times and logging

- The setting keeps a log of all bullying and harassment incidents, including cyber-bullying recording on an incident form EYFS3-07-003 and incident log EYFS3-07-004. The data is collated, analysed and acted on.
- Ensure that children are kept safe while in the care of nursery staff.
- Identify changes in staff behaviour and act on these as per the Staff Behaviour Policy – EYFS3-01-033.
- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children or living or working on the nursery premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of our safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Gloucestershire Council Safeguarding Children Board.

We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. We will devise activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group and support them to learn how to keep themselves safe.

### Contact telephone numbers:

- **Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board: The Front Door**
  - **Children's Practitioner Advice Line:** 01452 426565 Option 1
  - Out of hours or weekends: 01452 614194 or 101
- **Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO):**  
01452 426994 or 01452 426320
- **NSPCC**  
0808 800 5000
- **Ofsted**  
0300 123 1231
- **Emergency Police**  
999
- **Non-emergency Police**  
101
- **Government Helpline for extremism concerns**  
020 7340 7264
- **For concerns over an adult's safety:**
- **Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Boards**  
01452 426868 – Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm or if its urgent and cannot wait until the next working day, call 101

### Types of abuse and procedures followed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children.

#### ***What to do if you're worried a child is being abused***

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

### Indicators of child abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones.
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies.
- Aggressive behaviour.
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff.
- Repeated injuries.
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries.

- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.
- Poor mental health

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

- Low self-esteem
- Wetting and soiling
- Recurrent nightmares
- Aggressive behaviour
- Withdrawing communication
- Habitual body rocking
- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness towards strangers
- Excessive clinginess
- Persistently seeking attention.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way as we do for adults abusing children and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area. We ensure staff understand what is appropriate behaviour for children, so that they recognise behaviour that is of concern.

### **Physical abuse**

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face.

All children can suffer injuries during their early years as they explore and develop. If an explanation of how a child received their injury doesn't match the injury itself or if a child's injuries are a regular occurrence or there is a pattern to their injuries, then we will report our concerns.

Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. Staff recognise the risk of any injury to non-mobile babies. These are all not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and/or nursery manager.

### **Female genital mutilation**

FGM can also be known as Female Genital Cutting. FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother; and/or death (definition taken from the Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation)

The procedure may be carried out shortly after birth and during childhood as well as adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy and varies widely according to the community.

FGM is child abuse and is illegal in the UK. It can be extremely dangerous and can cause:

- Severe pain
- Shock
- Bleeding
- Infection such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- Organ damage
- Blood loss and infections
- Death in some cases

If you have concerns about a child relating to this area, you should contact children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse. There is a mandatory duty for the professional who originally

identified the FGM to report to 101 (police) any case where an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. We will ensure this is followed in our setting.

### **Breast Ironing**

Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. Although this is unlikely to happen to children in the nursery due to their age, we will ensure any signs of this in young adults or older children are followed up using the usual safeguarding referral process.

Breast Ironing/Flattening is a form of physical abuse and can cause serious health issues such as:

- Abscesses
- Cysts
- Itching
- Tissue damage
- Infection
- Discharge of milk
- Dissymmetry of the breasts
- Severe fever

### **Fabricated illness**

This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness, e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support. Fabricated illness is a form of physical abuse and any concerns will be reported, in line with our safeguarding procedures

### **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. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children

Action needs to be taken if the staff member has witnessed an occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words.

The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes.

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child is being sexually abused you may see both emotional and physical symptoms.

Emotional signs:

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age

- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clingy
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a carer
- Becoming worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures or acting out actions inappropriate for their age
- Using sexually explicit language

Physical Signs:

- Bruises
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area
- Sexually transmitted infections

### **Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

*Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)* describes CSE & CCE as: Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. More information include definitions and indicators are included in Annex A.

Although more relevant to older children, we will be aware of the possibility of CSE & CCE and the signs and symptoms this may manifest as. If we have concerns, we will follow the same procedures as for other concerns and we will record and refer as appropriate.

### **Emotional abuse**

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines emotional abuse as 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 a child 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 a 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 cyber bullying), 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.

Signs and indicators may include:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders

- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Appear unconfident or lack self-assurance.

Action will be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. Children may also experience emotional abuse through witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them. Adverse childhood experiences are understood by DSLs, who are also Trauma informed.

### **Neglect**

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines Neglect as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the 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:

- a. Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- b. Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- c. Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- d. Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at nursery. They may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Action will be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child.

### **Private Fostering**

Staff are aware that Private Fostering exists and are vigilant for it. A private fostering arrangement is essentially one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989 i.e. a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child. The period for which the child is cared for and accommodated by the private foster carer should be continuous, but that continuity is not broken by the occasional short break. Exemptions to this definition are set out in Schedule 8 to the Children Act 1989. If it is believed that a private fostering arrangement is in place, the setting will seek advise to ensure that the necessary notifications are in place with the Local Authority.

## **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures (Child Protection Procedure)**

*Child protection is defined as "a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm."*

*(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2018).*

**All staff have a responsibility to immediately report safeguarding concerns and suspicions of any form of abuse. Never assume that someone else is taking action.**

These concerns will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible (and always the same day).

- The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk.
- Staff will report their concerns to the DSL (in the absence of the DSL they will be reported to the Deputy DSL). A DSL is always available to discuss safeguarding concerns
- Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded in a Safeguarding Form – EYFS3-01-013 and on a child body diagram EYFS-01-013.1
- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, which occurred outside the care of the nursery, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member – using form 'Accident at Home – EYFS-01-015.
- If appropriate, the incident will be discussed with the parent/carer, such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to these records on request

The designated safeguarding lead (with the support of other DSLs including the Company Director) will:

- Contact the Local Authority children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice. If it is believed a child is in immediate danger, we will contact the police. If the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children, then the DSL will follow the reporting allegations procedure (see below).
- Record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised and any disclosures from parents or professional on a Disclosure Form (EYFS3 -01-007)
- Create a red individual confidential safeguarding file where the completed Safeguarding form will be secured safely
- Speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by children's social care team)
- The designated safeguarding lead will follow up with the Local Authority children's social care team if they have not contacted the setting within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018). We will never assume that action has been taken.

Keeping children safe is our highest priority and if, for whatever reason, staff do not feel able to report concerns to the DSL or deputy DSL they should call the Local Authority children's social care team or the NSPCC and report their concerns anonymously

Staff should make an objective record of any observation and/or disclosure, supported by the Nursery Manager or designated safeguarding lead<sup>1</sup> (DSL). This record should include: (using form 'Safeguarding form – EYFS3-01-013' and/or Disclosure Form EYFS3-01-007). The following information should be recorded:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen.
- Exact observation of any incident including any other witnesses.
- Name of the person to whom any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed in accordance with Safeguarding Form EYFS3-01-013, dated and kept in a separate red confidential file.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the local councils most up to date child protection process as displayed in the building.

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<sup>1</sup> Referred to in the EYFS as a lead practitioner



**If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly, and disclosure is not forced, or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after, the disclosure details must be logged accurately.**

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned, the matter needs to be raised with the local authority children's social care team and Ofsted, and a Multi-Agency Service Request Form may need to be completed for referral. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regards to a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with the local authority children's social care, police, and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent or member of staff.

### **Informing parents**

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the LSCB/ local authority children's social care team/police does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

### **Confidentiality**

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Monitoring children's attendance**

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern. Parents should inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be called into the nursery on the day, so the nursery management are able to account for a child's absence by recording this on a register and completing an entry on the Child Attendance Contact Tracker (EYFS3-10-ADM011). If a child has not arrived at nursery within one hour of their normal start time the parents will be called to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the further emergency contacts will be used to ensure all parties are safe.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safeguarded.

This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children but enables children's attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe.

### **Support to families**

The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, students and volunteers within the nursery.

The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child.

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate in line with guidance of the LSCB with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

### **Children with special educational needs and disabilities**

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. 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 disability without further exploration;
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

### **Looked after children**

As part of our safeguarding practice we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this, we ask that we are informed of:

- The legal status of the child (e.g. whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order)
- Contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those with parental responsibility)
- The child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her
- The details of the child's social worker and any other support agencies involved
- Any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question.

Please refer to the Looked After Children policy (EYFS3-01-035) for further details.

### **Early Help**

Any child may benefit from early help, but our 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)
- 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
- 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
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is a privately fostered child

*(Definition taken from DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020)*

### **Honour Based Abuse**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA

*(Definition taken from DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020)*

## **Procedure for an allegation against employees, students or volunteers of the nursery**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below.

The allegation should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and manager. If this person is the subject of the allegation, then this should be reported to the Company Director instead. An internal investigation (involving the Company Director) will be immediately conducted to establish if there are any possible grounds for the allegation.

- The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations) will be informed for immediate advice and guidance including whether there is the need to immediately contact OFSTED.
- If as an individual, you feel this will not be taken seriously or are worried about the allegation getting back to the person in question, then it is your duty to inform the LADO yourself directly
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professional (LADO) to determine how this will be handled
- The nursery will follow all instructions from the LADO and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
- OFSTED will be advised as soon as is reasonably practical of any allegations, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Unfounded<sup>2</sup> allegations will result in all rights being reinstated. Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police
- Founded allegations will be dealt with as gross misconduct in accordance with our disciplinary procedures and may result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision
- The nursery will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated.
- All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
- Counselling may be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the nursery and the parents.
- **Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO):**  
01452 426994 or 01452 426320

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<sup>2</sup> Unfounded means there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made  
(Definition from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020)

## Suitable People Policy:

### Staffing and volunteering

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We only allow an adult who is employed by the nursery to care for children and who has an enhanced clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to be left alone with children. We do not allow volunteers or any other non-employee adult to be alone with children, regardless of whether or not they have a DBS clearance.

All staff will undertake child protection training during their probation (induction) period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery. During induction staff will be given contact details for the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations), the local authority children's services team, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

We have named persons within the business and at each nursery who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinate child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). There is always at least one designated person available during all opening hours of the settings, this will ensure that immediate action can be taken if concerns are raised. These designated persons will receive comprehensive training at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis.

The nursery's DSL's liaise with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the local authority children's social care team, undertakes specific training (as advised by LSCB), including a child protection training course, and receives regular updates to developments within this field. They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge update of all staff on the team. Staff training is recorded on the training summary EYFS3-03-041

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are **Nicky Edwards, Sophie Sands and Kimberley Wholey**

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) are **Emma Lusmore and Kate Greene**

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all children
- Applicants for posts within the nursery are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We give staff members, volunteers and students regular opportunities to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life such as child protection plans for their own children
- All permanent members of staff (over the age of 16) are required to have a DBS issued with the company's verification this includes Nursery staff, cooks and cleaners. Every 6 months after issue of the initial DBS, all staff will be required to sign a DBS Declaration Form stating that no changes have been made to the disclosure in those 6 months (EYFS3-01-025).
- We use the DBS update service (with staff consent) to re-check staff's criminal history and suitability to work with children
- We abide by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and suitability checks for staff, students and volunteers, to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers working in the setting are suitable to do so
- We ensure we receive at least two written references before probation can be successfully passed.
- All students will have enhanced DBS checks conducted on them before their placement starts
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006 in respect of any person who is disqualified from providing childcare, 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 nursery and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the nursery so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children

- All visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
- As a staff team we will be fully aware of how to safeguard the whole nursery environment and be aware of potential dangers on the nursery boundaries such as strangers lingering. We will ensure the children remain safe at all times
- The Staff Behaviour Policy (EYFS3-01-033) sits alongside this policy to enable us to monitor changes in behaviours that may cause concern. All staff sign up to this policy too to ensure any changes are reported to management, so we are able to support the individual staff member and ensure the safety and care of the children is not compromised
- All staff have access to and comply with the Whistleblowing Policy (EYFS3-01-017) which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner.
- Signs of inappropriate staff behaviour may include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images. This is not an exhaustive list, any changes in behaviour must be reported and acted upon immediately
- All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any needs for further support.
- We use ‘awesome moment’ and manager observations in the setting to ensure that the care we provide for children is at the highest level and any areas for staff development are quickly highlighted. These observations allow us to share constructive feedback, develop practice and build trust so that staff are able to share any concerns they may have. Any concerns are raised with the designated lead and dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner
- The deployment of staff within the nursery allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

### **Extremism – the Prevent Duty**

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to safeguard at risk or vulnerable children under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and refer any concerns of extremism to the police (In Prevent priority areas the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support).

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. Radicalisation is the way a person comes to support or be involved in extremism and terrorism. It’s a gradual process so young people who are affected may not realise what’s happening.

Radicalisation is a form of harm. The process may involve:

- Being groomed online or in person
- Exploitation, including sexual exploitation
- Psychological manipulation
- Exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- The risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts

We have a Prevent Duty policy in place (EYFS3-01-023). Please refer to this for specific details

### **Online Safety Policy**

Our nursery is aware of the growth of internet use and the advantages this can bring. However, it is also aware of the dangers and strives to support children, staff and families in using the internet safely.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 states “*The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:*

- ✓ *content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views*
- ✓ *contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and*
- ✓ *conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes,*

*harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.”*

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is ultimately responsible for online safety concerns. All concerns need to be raised as soon as possible to the DSL.


Within the nursery we aim to keep children (and staff) safe online by:

- Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software on all PC's
- Ensuring content blockers and filters are on all our devices or routers
- Ensure management monitor all internet activities in the setting
- Locking away all nursery devices at the end of the day
- Ensuring no social media or messaging apps are installed on nursery devices
- Management reviewing all apps or games downloaded to tablets/PCs to ensure all are age appropriate for children and safeguard the children and staff
- Using approved devices to record/photograph in the setting
- Never emailing personal or financial information
- Ensuring children are supervised when using internet device
- Integrating online safety into nursery daily practice by discussing computer usage 'rules' deciding together what is safe and what is not safe to do online
- Talking to children about 'stranger danger' and deciding who is a stranger and who is not, comparing people in real life situations to online 'friends'
- We encourage staff and families to read the NSPCC link <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/> and we promote this via our Facebook page.
- We abide by an Acceptable Use of Technologies Declaration (EYFS3-01-019), ensuring staff only use the work IT equipment for matters relating to the children and their education and care. No personal use will be tolerated
- Provide training for staff who need this to keep children safe online. We encourage staff to complete an online safety course which can be found on Noodle Now
- Ensuring children are supervised using internet devices, children's screen time is monitored to ensure they remain safe online and have access to material that promotes their development. We will ensure that their screen time is within an acceptable level and is integrated within their programme of learning.
- Under no circumstances should any member of staff, either at work or in any other place, make, deliberately download, possess, or distribute material they know to be illegal, for example child sexual abuse material
- The nursery is aware of the need to manage our digital reputation, including the appropriateness of information and content that we post online, both professionally and personally. This is continually monitored by the setting's management.

All electronic communications between staff and parents should be professional and take place via the official nursery communication channels, e.g. the setting's email addresses and telephone numbers. This is to protect staff, children and parents.

If any concerns arise relating to online safety, then we will follow our safeguarding policy and report all online safety concerns to the DSL.

**Our nursery has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the nursery manager and owner at the earliest opportunity.**

Date this policy was reviewed: August 2021	Date for review: Feb 2022
Signature:	
Printed name:	Nicky Edwards
Role of signatory:	Director and Responsible Person