

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Procedures

Emergencies:

If a child is in immediate danger, left alone or missing, contact the police and/or ambulance service directly on **999**.

If a child is at immediate risk you should call **MASH on 0300 126 1000** and make a telephone referral, you will subsequently be required to put this in writing.

Non-emergencies:

If there is no immediate danger, you will need to establish the level of need and risk before you take action. Thresholds and Pathways will help you to do this using the vulnerability matrix. **(Thresholds and Pathways document pg.36)**

If you need advice about the levels of need and whether to make a referral, please contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

In all other circumstances to make a referral to the MASH please complete the online referral form.

Out-of-hours:

Outside of normal office hours (Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 6:00pm) please contact the Out-of-Hours Service:

- **Telephone 01604 626938**

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet three key commitments:

Key commitment 1

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

- Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is, and is always available:
Katy Emms and Clarissa Revitt
- Our designated officer (a member of the management team) who oversees this work is:
Clare Slater (Chair)
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding concerns are reported to the local authority children's social work team or the NSPCC. Signs and symptoms of abuse are:

Bullying and Cyber-Bullying - Where a child is a victim of being called names, having their property damaged, things being stolen, rumours being spread about them or a victim of cyberbullying.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) - where a child or young person is being exploited - see the Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Toolkit for Schools & Education Settings.

For help for parents and carers contact details are: Call or text 116 000 - young people's CSE helpline.

Domestic Violence - When one adult in a family or relationship threatens, bullies or hurts another family member e.g. physically, psychologically, emotionally, sexually or financially.

Emotional Abuse - This would happen, for instance, when a child is all the time being unfairly blamed for everything, or told they are stupid and made to feel unhappy.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or 'cutting' - where girls have their genitals partly or fully removed. This mutilation is carried out on girls of all ages, from babies to young women. If FGM is suspected it must be reported straight away to: <file:///D:/Safeguarding/FGM/FemaleGenitalMutilationLeaflet-PrintVersion.pdf>

Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 028 3550

In an emergency dial 999 or contact your local Police Station

For further information

Living with someone who is not a parent or close family - there is a duty to notify social services if you become aware of a child who is living with someone who is not their parent or a close family member. This situation is called '**private fostering**'. If a child under the age of 16 (or under the age of 18 if disabled) is living in a private arrangement with someone who is not their parent, step-parent, grandparent, aunt/uncle or adult sibling, for 28 days or more, then the local authority must be notified, as this is likely to be a 'private fostering' arrangement.

At Greatworth Pre-School we routinely ask, record and maintain up-to-date records of who has parental responsibility for each child. This is completed on children's registration forms and is up-dated annually at the start of each academic year.

All staff are aware of what private fostering arrangements are and how to report it.

Parental responsibility and private fostering arrangements are included in the safeguarding training/or discussed at a staff meeting if appropriate.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing - when a child or young person is depressed, anxious or suffering with other mental or emotional problems.

Neglect - Where a child is not being looked after properly, for example, being left at home alone at a young age, often hungry, tired and unkept.

Physical Abuse - When an adult deliberately hurts a child, such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning or suffocating.

Resistant Families / Disguised Compliance - information for professional experiencing resistant families or working with disguised compliance.

Self-harm - when a child or young person deliberately hurts or cuts themselves.

Sexual Abuse - An example of sexual abuse would be where a child has been forced to take part in sexual activities or exposed to images, films or acts of a sexual nature.

Young Carers - When a child or young person has to take on the role of the carer for a sibling or parent because of mental or physical health issues, or because the adult has alcohol or drug abuse issues.

If you think a child may be suffering abuse or is in a situation where they are at risk, if you're not sure what to do about it, contact Northamptonshire MASH or in an emergency call 999.

- 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.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced 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.
- Enhanced DBS checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises. Greatworth Pre-School use Milton Keynes Play Association for both staff/volunteers and committee members in order to obtain an enhanced DBS. Once the DBS has been processed staff are required to sign up to the DBS update service to allow the management committee to complete termly checks on each member of staff and committee. <https://www.gov.uk/db-update-service>
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:

- the criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - details of who obtained it.
- All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
 - All staff and volunteers are required to notify us if anyone in their household (including family members, lodgers, partners etc.) has any relevant convictions, court orders, reprimands and warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision (see above questions), or have had orders made in relation to care of their children.
 - 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.
 - Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
 - Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
 - Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
 - Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO
 - The designated person in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate e-safety policy in place
 - We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to. This book is stored in the office if staff need to record any complaints.
 - We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
 - The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
 - The designated person will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to the children's social worker services, the DO, Ofsted or Riddor.

Key commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.

- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or 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.
- We consider factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of disabled children; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; and Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation; that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and follow the LSCB procedures.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the MASH team.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

- We have a whistle blowing policy in place. **The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line can be reached on 0800 028 0285.**

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;
 - 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.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity, and within 1 working day.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

- We use the Pre-School Learning Alliance book (CIF Summary Record) which gives us a template form for recording concerns and making a referral.
- We keep a copy of this document alongside the procedures for recording and reporting set down by our Local Safeguarding Children Board, which we follow where local procedures differ from those of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Escalation process

- If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCB escalation process.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child in greater danger.
- Parents are informed when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.

- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk the designated person should seek advice from children's social work services, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- 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 they need to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues, 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 children's social care to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person living or 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 follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child. Where an allegation has been made the Designated Officer will be informed of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child; or
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, for example if their conduct falls within any of these categories of abuse:
 - physical
 - emotional

- sexual
- neglect
- Allegations made against workers who are paid, unpaid, volunteer, agency, casual and self-employed as well as foster carers, and adoptive parents of children on Placement Orders will all be reported to the Designated Officer. This is done within 24 hours of the incident.

<http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/childcare/eycm-referrals-eha/designated-officer/>

- When making a referral to the Designated Officer, we email the referral form to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) at: MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk
- We ensure that all staff or volunteer know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with my/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 living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Designated Officer (DO) to investigate:

Andy Smith - Tel: 01604 367862

Jackie Shaw - Tel: 01604 362633

(name and phone number)

- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will 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.

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.

Key commitment 3

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- 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 and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.

- Designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Board.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision. Staff are informed about the safeguarding procedures during inductions as well as on an ongoing basis by discussing up-dates, changes during meetings and all staff are signed up to the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Board to get regular up-dates.

Planning

- The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, 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.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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.
- 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 the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)

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

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015

Further guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (DfE 2015))
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2015)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)
- www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk
- www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/parents-carers/signs-of-child-sexual-exploitation
- <http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/parents-carers/children-privately-fostered/>

This policy was adopted by _____ *(name of provider)*

On _____ *(date)*

Date to be reviewed _____ *(date)*

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Safeguarding Children (2013)

- Safeguarding through Effective Supervision (2013)