

SG Safeguarding children who use services from abuse

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Document Control

Statement of Intent


This document covers the company's policy on safeguarding children from abuse. At Fernbees 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.

We 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.

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. Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. At Fernbees all staff, students, supply staff and visitors are made aware of and adhere to, the policy.

Ownership

<i>Owner:</i>	<i>Signed:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
Louise Claffey		07/10/2023
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Date of original issue:	07/10/2023	Periodic review interval: Annual

Designated safeguard lead

<i>Role:</i>	<i>Name:</i>	<i>Contact:</i>
Designated Safeguarding Lead		
Deputy Safeguarding Leads		

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Monitoring and Preventing 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, family support, health professionals including health visitors 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.

We will act in accordance with the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Manual which has been adopted by Stockport Local Authority which can be found at <https://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/>.

1. Monitoring and preventing abuse

We will 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. We will do this by:

- a. providing parents with a copy of this policy on registration and keeping them informed of any updates or changes when they occur
- b. regularly reviewing and updating this policy to ensure it complies with current legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) Child Care Services.
- c. ensuring our staff are aware of and familiar with child protection procedures and are kept updated where there has been changes to local or national procedures.
- d. never placing a child in our care at risk of abuse and neglect.
- e. maintaining staff awareness of and encouraging them to stay alert to the signs of abuse and neglect.
- f. maintaining staff awareness to the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), isolated families, vulnerabilities in families, including the impact of domestic abuse, substance abuse and mental ill health (the toxic trio), and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).
- g. encouraging staff to be alert to changes in the behaviour of children and their parents/carers, to question the changes and to not take what they are told at face value.
- h. constantly remind staff that they have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the child and report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or the deputy DSL, who will escalate it to the appropriate authorities where it is suspected that the child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger.
- i. ensuring our induction process includes safeguarding awareness training.
- j. designing our training programmes to ensure all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interests of our children, maintain professional curiosity around the welfare of children, and share information and seek the help that the child may need at the earliest opportunity.
- k. ensuring all staff are provided with regular child protection and safeguarding training, at least annually.
- l. Ensuring staff have access to, and comply with, our whistleblowing policy which provides information on how they can share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner. We encourage a culture of openness and transparency, and all concerns are taken seriously

2. Disclosure

We understand that children may disclose abuse in one or more of several different methods, each of which is likely to be very difficult for them and so when working with children, it is important that all staff know how to support a child through what is likely to be a distressing time. A disclosure can take many forms, such as:

- **Direct disclosure:** this is a specific statement made by a child about the abuse that is happening to them.
- **Indirect disclosure:** one or more ambiguous statements, which imply that something is wrong.
- **Behavioural disclosure:** deliberate or inadvertent behaviour that indicates that something is wrong.
- **Non-verbal disclosure:** writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in any other way than verbal to let someone know that something is wrong.



Sometimes, a partial disclosure of abuse will take place, but this does not mean that it should be taken less seriously than a full disclosure.

In all types of disclosure staff must raise any concerns with the DSL.

3. Monitoring children's attendance

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents, we will monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern.

- a. Parents should inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all incidents of sickness absence should be reported to the nursery the same day, so the nursery management are able to account for a child's absence. This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children, by keeping us informed parents can help us to meet our statutory requirements and let us know that children are safe.
- b. 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.
- c. If the parents are not contactable then the emergency contact numbers listed will be used to ensure all parties are safe. Staff will work their way down the emergency contact list until contact is established and we are made aware that all is well with the child and family.
- d. It is a parent's responsibility to keep their emergency contact details updated.
- e. 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 safe and well.

4. Incapacitated parent/carers

Incapacitated refers to a condition which renders a parent 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
- a. If a member of staff is concerned that a parent/carers displays any of the above characteristics, they must inform the DSL as soon as possible
 - b. The DSL must then assess the risk and determine if further action is required
 - c. If it is decided that no further action is required, a record of the incident will be made
 - d. If it is decided that further action is required, the DSL will speak to the parent in an appropriate and confidential manner
 - e. The DSL will, in agreement with the parent, use emergency contacts listed for the child to ask an alternative adult to collect the child
 - f. The emergency contact will be informed of the situation by the DSL.
 - g. If there is no one suitable to collect the child social care should be informed.
 - h. If violence is threatened towards anybody, the police must be called immediately.
 - i. If the parent takes the child from the setting while incapacitated the police must be called immediately and a referral must be made to social care.
 - j. The incident will be recorded in all circumstances along with any subsequent updates, notes, conversations, and telephone calls
 - k. If there are safeguarding concerns in relation to the matter, the reporting procedures will be followed

5. Reporting Procedures

We will ensure that effective reporting procedures are in place that are designed to protect our children and enable staff discuss concerns and escalate any suspicions of abuse or neglect quickly and effectively. We will do this by:

- a. ensuring all staff are aware who the DSL is and when they are not on duty who deputises for them.
- b. ensuring all staff understand it is not our role to investigate any suspected abuse or neglect, this is the role of the statutory services, but we have a duty of care to report any suspicions to the DSL and appropriate authorities.
- c. constantly remind staff that they have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the child and report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or the deputy DSL, who will escalate it to the appropriate authorities where it is suspected that the child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger.
- d. continuing to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made. 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.
- e. ensuring all staff understand the stages of our reporting procedures. There are four stages to follow to assist in identifying and responding appropriately to neglect and abuse (see figure 1). It may not always be appropriate to go through all stages sequentially. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, we will immediately refer the matter to the child's social care team and/or the police.

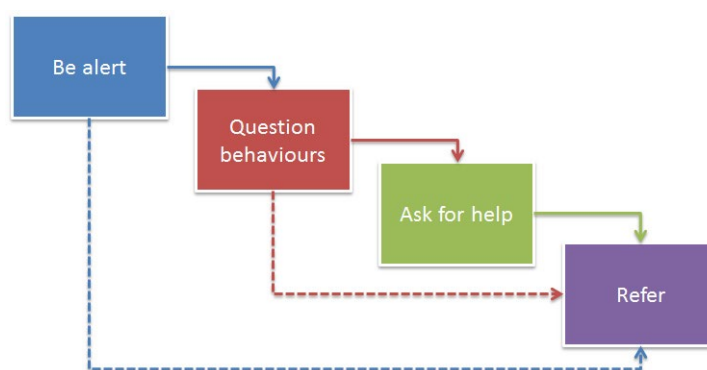


Figure 1 (What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015)

- f. ensuring that where children arrive at nursery with an existing injury, a form is completed along with the parent's/carers explanation as to how the injury happened and signed by the parent. Any details of injuries will be recorded chronologically and stored in the child's file. Staff will have professional curiosity around any explanations given and any concerns they have will be reported to the DSL.
- g. escalating any safeguarding concerns in a timely and effective manner. The DSL will:
 - contact the Local Authority children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice immediately, or as soon as it is practical to do so.
 - contact the police if it is believed a child is in immediate danger.
 - follow the reporting allegations procedure where the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children at the nursery
 - record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised in accordance with our recording policy
 - speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by the children's social care team)
 - follow up with the Local Authority children's social care team if they have not contacted us within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018). We will never assume that action has been taken.
- h. ensure the DSL will make a professional judgement about referring to other agencies, including Social Care using the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) Threshold document issued by Stockport Local Authority.
 - **Level 1:** Child's needs are being met. Universal support.
 - **Level 2:** Universal Plus. Additional professional support is needed to meet child's needs.
 - **Level 3:** Universal Partnership Plus. Targeted Early Help. Coordinated response needed to address multiple or complex problems.

- **Level 4:** Specialist/Statutory intervention required. Children in acute need, likely to be experiencing, or at risk of experiencing significant harm.
- i. make any child protection referrals in a timely and effective manner, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the SMBC. Any information shared will only be shared with those people who need to know to protect the child and act in their best interest
- j. notify Ofsted where they are required to do so. The DSL must remain up to date with Ofsted reporting and notification requirements
- k. make all staff aware that keeping children safe is our highest priority and if, for whatever reason, they do not feel able to report concerns to the DSL or deputy DSL they should call the Local Authority children's social care team, the Police or the NSPCC and report their concerns anonymously. The contact numbers can be found at the end of this policy and are displayed in the manager's office and the snack kitchen.
- l. ensuring that all staff involved in a safeguarding case may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard 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.
- m. If a concern is raised anonymously and we have no contact details, we will treat the concern as valid and follow the procedures as above. If a malicious call is suspected, the procedures will still be followed: a child may be in danger. The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) will be contacted to ensure permitted data sharing.

Informing parents

- n. Parents are normally the first point of contact.
- o. 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.
- p. 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 local authority children's social care team/police does not allow this to happen. 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.
- q. Parents will not be informed of 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 puts another person at risk; situations where one parent may be at risk of harm, e.g. domestic abuse; situations where it has not been possible to contact parents to seek their consent may cause delay to the referral being made
- r. The DSL will make a professional judgment regarding whether consent should be sought before making a child protection referral as described above. They will 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.
- s. If appropriate, any concerns/or incidents will be discussed with the parent/carer and discussions will be recorded and signed by all parties. Parents will have access to these records on request in line with GDPR and data protection guidelines.

6. Responding to a direct disclosure from a child

Any disclosure made by a child will be taken seriously and never dismissed. Where a child starts to talk openly to a member of staff about abuse it is important that the child is reassured and can express their experiences in a safe, secure and understanding environment. Where a child makes a disclosure staff must:

- a. Act upon the disclosure, not delaying for any reason.
- b. Find an appropriate environment. If a member of staff takes a child somewhere quiet on their own, another member of staff will be informed of the location.
- c. Give their full attention to the child and encourage them to express their feelings by:
 - Keep body language open and encouraging



- Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important.
 - Take time and slow down: respect pauses and do not interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace
 - Recognise and respond to their body language
 - Show understanding and make it clear they are interested in what the child is saying
 - Reflect back what they have said to check understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience
 - Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in disclosing the information. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault
- d. Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the child's disclosure.
 - e. Never promise complete confidentiality as this promise will not be possible to uphold.
 - f. Report any disclosure to the DSL immediately, who will refer to the children's social care team if there is any suspicion of abuse or neglect.
 - g. Record the disclosure by following our recording procedures.

7. Responding to allegations against a member of staff

If an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against a member of staff (including full or part time staff, volunteers, or agency staff) or any other person who lives or works on the nursery premises we will ensure the correct procedures are followed to ensure the safety of our children regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises.

An allegation may relate to a person who 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 he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Where an allegation is made, we will follow the procedures as follows:

- a. The allegation should be reported to the DSL. If this person is the subject of the allegation, then this should be reported to the directors or responsible person instead. All allegations will be investigated even if the person involved resigns or ceases to be a volunteer
- b. The DSL must take steps to ensure the immediate safety of children, parents, and staff on that day within the setting.
- c. If, as an individual, any person feels this will not be taken seriously or are worried about the allegation getting back to the person in question then it is their duty to inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) directly.
- d. The LADO will be contacted as soon as possible and within one working day. If the LADO is on leave or cannot be contacted advice must be sought from the Multi-Authority Safeguarding and Support Hub contact.
- e. The DSL will ask for clarification from the LADO on the following areas:
 - what actions must be taken next and when and how the parents of the child are informed of the allegation
 - whether or not the LADO thinks a criminal offence may have occurred and whether the police should be informed and, if so, who will inform them
 - whether the LADO is happy for the setting to pursue an internal investigation without input from the LADO, or how the LADO wants to proceed. Staff will **not** investigate the matter unless the LADO has specifically advised them to investigate internally.
 - whether the LADO thinks the person concerned should be suspended, and whether they have any other suggestions about the actions the DSL has taken to ensure the safety of the children and staff attending the setting
- f. The DSL will record details of all discussions and liaison with the LADO including dates, type of contact, advice given, actions agreed, and updates on the child's case file
- g. The LADO may decide to refer the allegation to children's social care.

- h. If notification to Ofsted is required the DSL will inform Ofsted as soon as possible, but no later than 14 days after the event has occurred. The DSL will liaise with the LADO about notifying Ofsted.
- i. We will follow all instructions from the local authority children's social care team and Ofsted and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- j. Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with local authority children's social care team support and advice.
- k. The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation. Legal advice will be sought to ensure compliance with employment law.
- l. All relevant information regarding the allegation will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
- m. 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 along with notifying the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated.
- n. All safeguarding 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.
- o. Where allegations are deemed unfounded the staff member will have all their employment rights reinstated. A return-to-work plan will be put in place for any member of staff returning to work after an allegation has been deemed unfounded. Individual support will be offered to meet the needs of the individual staff member and the nature of the incident; this may include more frequent supervisions, coaching and mentoring and external support.

8. Low level concerns

- a. On occasion, inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour by staff or other adults is observed but does not meet the threshold for significant harm. This may be classed as a 'low-level' concern, although this does not mean that it is insignificant.
- b. We define a low-level concern as:
 - Any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working with children may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our Staff behaviour policy, including inappropriate behaviour outside of work
 - A concern that may be a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' and does not meet the harm threshold or is serious enough to refer to the LADO.
- c. We encourage a culture of openness, trust and transparency, with clear values and expected behaviour, monitored and reinforced by all staff. All concerns or allegations, however small, will be shared and responded to. All concerns will be shared with the DSL, or other nominated person, as in our reporting procedures. We encourage concerns to be shared as soon as reasonably practicable and preferably within 24 hours of becoming aware of it. However, it is never too late to share a low-level concern.
- d. It is not expected that staff will be able to determine whether the behaviour in question is a concern, complaint or allegation before sharing the information. If the DSL is in any doubt as to whether the information meets the harm threshold, they will consult the LADO.
- e. Occasionally a member of staff may find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted or appear compromising to others. If this occurs, staff are encouraged to self-report to the DSL. Equally, a member of staff may have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, falls below the standards set in our Staff behaviour policy. If this occurs, staff are encouraged to self-report to the DSL. We encourage staff to be confident to self-refer and believe it reflects awareness of our standards of conduct and behaviour.
- f. When the DSL receives the information, they will need to determine whether the behaviour:
 - Meets, or may meet, the harm threshold (and so contact the LADO)
 - Meets the harm threshold when combined with previous low-level concerns (and so contact the LADO)
 - Constitutes a 'low-level' concern
 - Is appropriate and consistent with the law and our Staff behaviour policy.
- g. The DSL will make appropriate records of all information shared, including:

- With the reporting person
 - The subject matter of the concern
 - Any relevant witnesses (where possible)
 - Any external discussions such as with the LSP or LADO
 - Their decision about the nature of the concern
 - Their rationale for that decision
 - Any action taken.
- h. This constitutes a record of low-level concern. We retain all records of low-level concerns in a separate low-level concerns file, with separate concerns regarding a single individual kept as a chronology. These records are kept confidential and held securely, accessed only by those who have appropriate authority. Records will be retained at least until the individual leaves their employment.
- i. If the low-level concern raises issues of misconduct, then appropriate actions following our Disciplinary procedures will be taken. Records will be kept in personnel files as well as in the low-level concerns file.

9. Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

We understand the importance of accurate and up to date recording of child protection or welfare concerns is essential practice and will ensure that all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing.

Good record keeping ensures we can identify child protection or welfare concerns at an early stage, help use identify patterns of concerns, enable us to record seemingly minor issues to build a more complete picture of what life may be like for our children, helps us to monitor and manage safeguarding practices, including decision making, actions taken and agreed joint strategies with other agencies, can provide evidence to support professional challenge, both within educational settings and when working with external agencies, can support us to demonstrate action taken to reduce the impact of harm to a child, and help us to evidence robust and effective safeguarding practice in inspections and audits.

Well-kept records will assist and support the DSL in meeting their key responsibilities to respond appropriately to welfare concerns and to keep our children safe. Effective record keeping will also support monitoring, risk-assessment, and will enable informed and timely referrals to be made when necessary.

We will ensure our recording procedures support this by taking the following actions:

- a. Written records will be made in an appropriate and timely way and will be held securely where adults working with children are concerned about their safety or welfare
- b. Records will be shared appropriately and, where necessary, with consent. 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 and in line with guidance of the local authority with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount.
- c. Records of any referrals are retained and there is evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the child further harm.
- d. Records are kept to support the early identification of children and families that would benefit from support.
- e. Factual records are maintained in a chronological order with parental discussions.
- f. Records are reviewed regularly by the DSL to look holistically at identifying children's needs.
- g. Where staff are in doubt about recording requirements, they should discuss this with the DSL
- h. Where children arrive at nursery with an existing injury, a form is completed along with the parent's/carers explanation as to how the injury happened and signed by the parent. Any details of injuries will be recorded chronologically and stored in the child's file. Staff will have professional curiosity around any explanations given and any concerns they have will be reported to the DSL.
- i. Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure on form SG01 SafeguardingObservation. Completion should be supported by the DSL. The record should include:
 - Child's name
 - Child's address
 - Age of the child and date of birth
 - Date, time, and location of the observation or the disclosure, the observer and their relationship to the child

- Exact words spoken by the child (word for word) and non-verbal communication including emotions and signs of distress
 - Exact position and description of any injuries or marks seen including position, appearance, colour, shape, and size – where relevant, a body child protection map will be used
 - Images of an injury should **never** be taken
 - Exact observation of any incident including any concern that 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)
 - The feelings or impressions of the person recording should not affect the records. Records should strictly be made in accordance with factual information and should be written 'as told'.
- j. These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the DSL, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.
- k. Where staff suspect abuse of any form, a record should be formed immediately. Delay in recording information may result in information becoming less reliable in the case of an investigation.
- l. Any staff members who have witnessed an incident or disclosure should make a written statement.
- m. Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent, child or member of staff.
- n. All records relevant to the matter will be kept and stored securely and confidentially including records of follow up conversations with parents (where appropriate) and external organisations.

Confidentiality

- o. 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 authority. All staff, students and volunteers are bound by confidentiality and any information will not be discussed out of work, or this will become a disciplinary matter.
- p. The nursery has due regard to the data protection principles as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). These do not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal information, even without consent if this would put the child at further risk. We will follow the principles around data collection and information sharing, and ensure any information is recorded and shared in an appropriate way.



Staffing

We will ensure, through effective and robust staffing procedures, that our team are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles and do not present a risk to our children. We are an equal opportunities employer and will ensure that any person must be accepted as he/she is, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity. Whether likeable, tantalising or socially deviant, this should not make a difference to the professional attitude of our staff. People being cared for, working in, or visiting this nursery will be treated with respect for their individuality and human rights.

10. Designated safeguarding lead

We have named persons within the nursery who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinate child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), there is always at least one DSL on duty during the opening hours of the setting. The DSLs will receive comprehensive training at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year.

The DSL will liaise with the Children's social care team, liaise with the LADO, undertake specific training, including a child protection training course, and receive regular updates to developments within this field. They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge of the staff team with regular safeguarding updates.

The role of the designated safeguarding lead can be made available on request.

11. Recruitment and selection

A robust and rigorous recruitment process is implemented that will ensure only suitable persons are appointed to work with our children. Each applicant will have an audit trail that defines the recruitment process and shows it has been fair, consistent and ensures decisions are based on their individual capabilities and skills regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity.

We will follow safer recruitment practices including obtaining two references and requiring all staff employed to work with children to have enhanced criminal record checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before being able to carry out intimate care routines or be left unsupervised with children.

For more information on our recruitment and selection policy please refer to our [QMS document Management of Human Resources](#).

- a. We abide by 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
- b. Applicants for posts within the nursery will be informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information

12. Training and induction

- a. All staff will attend regular child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period.
- b. During induction staff will be given contact details for the local authority children's social care teams, the local safeguarding children partnership and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

13. Monitoring suitability of staff

- c. Our Open-Door Policy and regular supervisions 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.
- d. We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018) in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS)
- e. All staff are aware of the signs to look for of inappropriate staff behaviour, this 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
- f. All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training, safeguarding concerns and any needs for further support or training
- g. Regular peer-on-peer and manager observations occur 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 identified. Peer observations allow us to share constructive feedback, develop practice and build trust so that staff are able to share any concerns they may have. Concerns are raised with the designated lead and dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner
- h. 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.
- i. 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 at the earliest opportunity.

Staff medication

- j. Staff members must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children
- k. Staff taking medication must inform their manager. The manager must be made aware of any contra-indications for the medicine so that they can risk assess and take appropriate action as required.
- l. All nursery staff have a responsibility to work with children only where they are fit to do so.
- m. Staff must not work with children where they are infectious or too unwell to meet children's needs. This includes circumstances where any medication taken affects their ability to care for children, for example, where it makes a person drowsy.
- n. If any staff member believes that their condition, including any condition caused by taking medication, is affecting their ability they must inform their manager and seek medical advice. The nursery manager will decide if a staff member is fit to work, including circumstances where other staff members notice changes in behaviour suggesting a person may be under the influence of medication. This decision will include any medical advice obtained by the individual or from an occupational health assessment.
- o. Where it is determined that the medication is likely to impair the staff members ability to look after children properly, the staff member will not be permitted to work in the nursery for the duration of the time they are taking the medication
- p. Where staff may occasionally or regularly need medication, any such medication must be kept in the person's locker/separate locked container in the staff room or nursery room where staff may need easy access to the medication such as an asthma inhaler. In all cases it must be stored out of reach of the children. It must not be kept in the first aid box and should be labelled with the name of the member of staff.

Early help services

When a child and/or family would benefit from support but do not meet the threshold for Local Authority Social Care Team, a discussion will take place with the family around early help services.

Early help provides support as soon as a concern/area of need emerges, helping to improve outcomes and prevent escalation onto local authority services. Sometimes concerns about a child may not be of a safeguarding nature and relate more to their individual family circumstances. The nursery will work in partnership with parents/carers to identify any early help services that would benefit your child or your individual circumstances, with your consent, this may include family support, foodbank support, counselling or parenting services.

When a referral for early help is necessary, we will always seek consent from the child's parents to share information with the relevant agency.

If consent is sought and withheld and there are concerns that a child may become at risk of significant harm without early intervention, there may be sufficient grounds to over-ride a parental decision to withhold consent.

If a parent withholds consent, this information is included on any referral that is made to the local authority. In these circumstances a parent should still be told that the referral is being made beforehand (unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm).

Online safety

We recognise that in a modern environment, use of the Internet and multimedia devices are part of everyday requirements. A child's safety will remain the priority of the nursery. We are aware of the growth of the internet and the advantages this can bring. However, we are also aware of the dangers it can pose and we strive to support children, staff and families to use the internet safely.

Keeping Children Safe in Education¹ categorises online safety 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.

Guidance

- a. Risk assessments in relation to e-safety are completed and reviewed regularly
- b. All devices have appropriate anti-virus and anti-spyware software and will be updated regularly.
- c. Content blockers and filters are installed on all devices which are accessible to children. Content blockers and filters must not be overridden by staff without the express permission of the nursery manager.
- d. All devices are password protected. Passwords are stored safe and securely, changes regularly, and not written down
- e. Internet usage is monitored across the setting
- f. Any usage by children of devices with a capacity for internet connection must be supervised
- g. No social media, or messaging apps are installed on any nursery devices and all apps shall be reviewed to ensure they are age and content appropriate. Only reputable sites with a focus on early years will be used
- h. All nursery devices will be securely stored at the end of the day in the manager's office
- i. Children will be taught to stay safe online, the principles of 'stranger danger', and to report any concerns they may have
- j. Children are taught the following stay safe principles in an age-appropriate way:
 - only go online with a grown up
 - be kind online **and** keep information about me safe
 - only press buttons on the internet to things I understand
 - tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet
- k. Mandatory, regular staff training will include online safety and how to keep children safe online
- l. If any online safety concerns arise, the observation should be recorded following our recording procedures
- m. If any concerns arise relating to online safety, these will be reported to the DSL who will:
 - Ensure all staff know how to report a problem and when to escalate a concern
 - Ensure all concerns are logged, assessed and actioned
 - Support parents to develop their knowledge of online safety
 - Support parents to talk about online safety with children
 - Direct parents to appropriate sources of support regarding online safety at home
 - Ensure staff have access to information for supporting online safety
- n. If staff become aware that a child is the victim of cyber-bullying at home or elsewhere, they must discuss this with the parents and refer them to help, such as: **NSPCC Tel: 0800 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk** or **ChildLine Tel: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk**

¹ Keeping Children Safe in Education : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>



Use of personal mobile devices

We will ensure that our children are not put at risk through the use of personal mobile devices

- a. Personal mobile phones and internet enabled devices should not be used by staff during working hours. This does not include breaks where personal mobiles may be used off the premises or in a safe place. Personal mobile phones must be switched off and stored securely during working time.
- b. In an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in the privacy of the office with permission from the person in charge.
- c. Staff should ensure that contact details of the nursery are known to family and people who may need to contact them in case of an emergency.
- d. Staff must not take their personal mobile phones on official nursery outings. A dedicated mobile phone will be provided for this use.
- e. Members of staff must not use any personal equipment to take photographs of children.
- f. Parents and visitors must not use their mobile phones on the premises. There is an exception if a visitor's company/organisation operates a policy that requires contact with their office periodically throughout the day. Visitors will be advised of a private space where they can use their mobile.
- g. If any item capable of internet connection that belongs to a member of staff is brought onto the nursery grounds, it is the responsibility of that staff member to ensure that these items contain nothing of an inappropriate nature.
- h. Under no circumstances should any member of staff, either at work or in any place make, deliberately download, possess, or distribute material they know to be illegal, for example child sexual abuse material.
- i. All electronic communications between staff and parents should be professional and take place via the official nursery communication systems.

Cameras and video devices

- j. Members of staff must not bring their own cameras or video recorders to the setting. Only approved nursery devices will be used to photograph or record children in the setting.
- k. Photographs/recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, e.g. to record learning and development, or for displays, and are only taken on equipment belonging to the setting.
- l. Any equipment provided by the nursery which have the capacity for picture/video taking or storage must remain on the nursery site and must not be taken home.
- m. Camera and video use will be monitored by the nursery manager.
- n. Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events, general permission must first be gained from all parents for their children to be included. Parents will be told they do not have a right to photograph or upload photos of anyone else's children.
- o. Photographs/recordings of children must only made if relevant permissions are in place.
- p. If photographs are used for publicity, parental consent must be gained, and safeguarding risks minimised.

Reporting of bad practice and whistle blowing

Each member of staff understand they have a duty to report any incidents that compromise the safety of our residents or suspected abuse and have the confidence that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated fully

Our philosophy

Our philosophy states

- We will maintain the highest standards of ethical behaviour, professional conduct, transparency and openness and promote a culture that fosters a sense of mutual accountability across the organisation.
- We will communicate honestly and openly with our people and establish loyal professional relationships, based on mutual respect, by showing a strong desire to discuss their views and opinions so they can become an active part of our organisation

To support these values, our staff must feel that they can challenge negative behaviour and report bad practice.

Responsibilities

It is the duty of all staff to report any concerns or suspicions of bad practice, abuse or neglect to their team leader, the person in charge or the nursery manager. Where the issue concerns one of their leaders then they should report the issue to a more senior member of the leadership team or to head office.

It is the responsibility of the general manager to create a culture where employees feel confident that they can approach the management team to raise any concerns or suspicions of bad practice, abuse or neglect. All employees must feel that any concerns raised are taken seriously and investigated fully.

It is the responsibility of the nursery manager to:

- ensure that concerns raised are taken seriously;
- where appropriate, investigate properly and make an objective assessment of the concern;
- keep the employee advised of progress; and
- ensure that the actions necessary to resolve a concern is taken.

Guidance

- a. Where an incident of serious concern is alleged the person must report this directly to the general manager or senior management (the manager). He/she will be assured that appropriate enquiries will be made to establish the nature/reality of the incident, and that such enquiries will be carried out discreetly and in confidence. Wherever possible, the identity of the person reporting the incident will be kept anonymous.
- b. Where preliminary enquiries show that further investigations need to be made, then the manager will inform the staff member against whom the allegations have been made.
- c. Where the alleged offence is of a serious nature, the staff members at the centre of the allegation will be suspended immediately pending the outcome of an investigation. The staff member will be informed of the necessity for this action and will be assured that, at this point, there is no inference of guilt.
- d. Where the allegation concerns a member of staff, please refer to section 7 Responding to allegations against a member of staff in this document.
- e. A full investigation will be undertaken, interviewing all parties concerned in the allegation. This may include other staff and, where appropriate, the child's parents/carers.
- f. Following completion of the investigation, if the allegations are justified the staff members concerned will be subject to the disciplinary procedure. If the allegations are not proven, the staff member will be restored to full duties. Where the allegation is not proven but has proven to be a malicious action on the part of the accusing party, then the accuser will be subject to company's disciplinary procedure.

Useful Contacts

<u>Contact</u>	<u>Online</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Multi-Authority Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH)	https://www.stockport.gov.uk/contacting-the-massh/contacting-the-massh	0161 217 6028
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	https://www.stockport.gov.uk/contacting-the-massh/contacting-the-lado	0161 474 5657
NSPCC		0808 800 5000
Local Early Help Services	https://stockport.fsd.org.uk/kb5/stockport/fsd/service.page?id=m48l32F4aKU	0161 217 6160
Ofsted		0300 123 1231
Emergency Police		999
Non-emergency Police		101
Government Helpline for extremism concerns	https://report-extremism.education.gov.uk/	020 7340 7264
Child exploitation and Online protection command (CEOP)	https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/	N/A

Useful resources

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Online</u>
Stockport Safeguarding Website	http://www.safeguardingchildreninstockport.org.uk/
Stockport Local Authority Safeguarding Policies and Procedures	http://www.safeguardingchildreninstockport.org.uk/practitioners/policies-and-procedures/
GM Safeguarding Procedures Manual	https://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/
Stockport Early Years Safeguarding Cards	http://www.safeguardingchildreninstockport.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Safeguarding-cards-final-updated-August-2017.pdf
Early Years Foundation Stage	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2
What to do if you're worried a child is being abused	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf
The Prevent Duty	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales