



Safeguarding Children policy



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection
Providers must have and implement a policy and procedure to safeguard children.

Introduction:

As an Ofsted registered early years setting, we recognise our paramount responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding encompasses protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health or development, ensuring they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable them to have the best outcome.

Child protection is an essential part of safeguarding and refers specifically to the activity undertaken to protect individual children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

We aim to create a "culture of vigilance" and an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. All staff are aware that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Legal Framework:

This policy is based on the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working together to safeguard children (2025)
- Keeping children safe in education (2024)
- The prevent duty (2015)
- Female genital mutilation Act (2003) and serious crime act (2015)
- The prevent duty (2015)
- Data protection act (2018) & UK GDPR
- Safeguarding vulnerable groups act (2006)
- Education act 2002
- Counter terrorism and security act (2015)
- Voyeurism (offences act 2019)
- Children and social work act 2017
- Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM
- Local safeguarding partnership procedures

Definitions of abuse:

Abuse is a form of maltreatment. It can be inflicted by an adult or another child. Abuse may be:

- Physical – Causing physical harm
- Emotional – Persistent emotional maltreatment
- Sexual – Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities
- Neglect – Persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs

All staff are trained to recognise indicators of abuse and understand that children may not always disclose abuse directly.



Safeguarding Principles and aims:

We are committed to:

- Creating an open, listening culture
- Ensuring all staff are vigilant and responsive
- Supporting children's development in ways that foster security, confidence and independence.
- Providing a safe environment free from discrimination or bullying
- Ensuring safer recruitment procedures
- Ensuring all concerns are acted upon swiftly and appropriately
- Working in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies

Designated Safeguard Leads (DSLs)

Our safeguarding leadership team includes:

Lead DSL – Stephanie Pinkett

Deputy DSL – Samantha Larcombe

Safeguarding Officer – Carley Pearson

All DSLs are trained to level 3 and receive refresher training every 2 years. They also undertake additional annual safeguarding updates.

Safer recruitment:

We follow safer recruitment in education principles to ensure all staff and volunteers:

- Have enhanced DBS checks
- Provide two verified references
- Undergo robust interview procedures

Training and Induction:

- All staff receive safeguarding training on induction
- Safeguarding refreshers are mandatory
- Training covers: FGM, Prevent duty, CSE, peer-on-peer abuse, online safety and the signs of abuse

Managing concerns and disclosures:

All safeguarding concerns must be:

- Reported immediately to a DSL
- Recorded factually using our safeguarding concern forms
- Kept confidential and stored securely
- Acted on in line with local safeguarding procedures

Recording must include:

- Date, time and location



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- Exact words spoken by the child
- Observations of behaviour/injuries
- Actions taken and by whom
- Conversations with parents/carers (unless this places the child at further risk)

Early help and multi-agency working:

Where appropriate, we will work with families under the early help framework, seeking to support before issues escalate. Where significant concerns exist, referrals will be made to children's social care of the family support and advice line

We understand our responsibility to contribute to child protection conferences, child in need plans and early help assessments.

Specific safeguarding issues

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Staff are aware it is a legal duty to report FGM in under 18s where it is known or suspected. This includes:

- Families planning travel to FGM-practising countries
- Girls disclosing, they will undergo a "procedure"
- Signs such as difficulty sitting, urinary issues or emotional distress.

Immediate referrals are made to the family support and advice line and police.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of abuse involving manipulation and/or coercion for sexual purposes, often in exchange for goods, status, or affection. Key indicators include:

- Inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Withdrawn or secretive behaviour
- Gifts from unknown adults
- Sudden changes in friendships or mood

Child criminal exploitation and county lines:

We recognise signs of grooming into drug-related gangs (county lines) including:

- Sudden unexplained absences
- Possession of expensive items
- Aggressive or fearful behaviour
- Multiple mobile phones

Prevent duty and radicalisation:

We are alert to signs of radicalisation and extremism. Indicators include:

- Isolation from peers
- Expression of extremist views
- Fixation on ideology or hatred



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Referrals to the channel panel may be made as part of prevent duties.

Domestic abuse and operation encompass:

We participate in operation encompass, which notifies the DSL of police-attended domestic abuse incidents. This enables us to provide immediate support and monitor the child's well-being.

Honour-based abuse, forced marriage and HBV:

We recognise that HBV, including forced marriage, is a safeguarding issue and not a cultural norm. Staff are trained to identify risk indicators such as:

- Sudden family travel plans
- Expressions of fear about marriage or cultural punishment

All concerns are treated as child abuse and referred accordingly.

Fabricated or induced illness:

FIL involves a parent or carer deliberately exaggerating or inducing illness in a child. Staff are trained to:

- Recognise patterns of frequent medical visits
- Monitor unexplained symptoms not observed by professionals
- Record inconsistencies between reported and observed behaviour

Children missing education (CME)

Children missing education from preschool without a valid reason are flagged for possible safeguarding concerns, especially where patterns of absence develop. DSL's will:

- Contact parents promptly
- Notify the local authority where appropriate (e.g. Where EY funding is involved)
- Record absences in line with our child absence policy.

Peer-on-peer abuse, upskirting and sexual violence

We are alert to all forms of peer-on-peer abuse, including:

- Bullying (Including online)
- Sexual harassment or violence
- Upskirting (A criminal offence under the voyeurism act 2019)

All disclosures are taken seriously and recorded appropriately. Support for both victims and perpetrators is offered in line with government guidance.

Looked after child (LAC):

We ensure LAC receive targeted support and praise interactions to promote emotional stability and resilience. The DSL liaises with the virtual school head and social workers, as needed and persona; education plans (PEPs) are maintained



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Online safety:

Children are increasingly vulnerable to online risks. We implement robust policies on:

- Use of mobile phones
- Supervised use of technology
- Filtering and monitoring
- Educating staff and children about online safety.

Confidentiality and information sharing:

We are bound by the Data protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. However, where a child's welfare is at risk, safeguarding concerns override data protection regulations. Information is shared securely, on a need to know basis with relevant agencies.

Policy Review:

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, guidance or circumstances. Staff are consulted and trained on any updates.

Contacts:

- The family support and advice line – 01305 228558
- LADO – 01305 221122
- The family front door consultation line (Somerset) – 0300 123 3078
- Children's social care (Somerset) – 0300 123 2224

Call 999 in emergencies!

Date: September 2025

To be reviewed: September 2026