



# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Current Version 10.0

## Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

### 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.

The Children Act 2004 provides a legal framework for a range of services to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. The legislation underpins the five outcomes from the Government's vision of '**Every Child Matters**'. These were:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Wellbeing

Our aim is to follow the **ECM** outcomes to protect the welfare of all our children. We have created an environment in which children are safe from abuse. Any suspicions of abuse will be promptly and appropriately responded to.

We display the current version of 'Children's Single Point of access' for staff, parents and carers. All staff are aware of the procedure if they have concerns.

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### PROCEDURES

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Pre-school Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

#### 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.



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**Our designated persons who co-ordinate child protection issues are:  
Hilary Coome (Manager) and Emma Dawes (Deputy)**

**Our designated officer (a member of the management team) who oversees this work is:  
Hilary Coome**

- 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 and are aware of how to contact the Reading LADO (0118 9372684), or **Single Point of Access (0118 9373641)**
- 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 criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers (excluding any Parent Helpers on site in accordance with our Parental Help Policy), 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 criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
- 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.



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- 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).
- 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.

## Key Commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents 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;
  - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.



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- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, 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; 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.
- 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.
- We refer concerns to 'Single Point of access'. There are 3 ways to contact the team:  
Using a web form, which is the most secure and effective way of requesting help for a child. The form can be found at:  
[www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org/concerned-about-a-child](http://www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org/concerned-about-a-child)  
Calling the team on 0118 937 3641  
Emailing the team on [cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org](mailto:cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org)
- The main contact details and referral form for the LADO are on the website  
<https://www.berkshirerwestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp/reading/concerned-about-an-adult-working-with-children-2>

The Reading LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) contact number is: 0118 937 2684

Email - [LADO@reading.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@reading.gov.uk)



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- 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.

## 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 ask a leading question to 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.
- 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 and Single Point of access.



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

- The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication "Safeguarding Children" contains procedures for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as 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.

## **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. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.

## **Liaison with other agencies**

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have procedures for contacting 'Single Point of Access'.
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' is available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.



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- 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.

## **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.
- 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 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate.
- 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.



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- 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.
- We closely follow the guidance set out in our 'Whistle Blowing' Policy.

## **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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

## **Planning**

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



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## **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 and Single Point of Access.

## **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.



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

### Further guidance:

- Essential Policies and Procedures for the EYFS – Pre-school Learning Alliance publication
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings - Ofsted, 2016
- Working together to safeguard children - DfE, 2018
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers - DfE, 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners - DfE, 2015
- Safeguarding children and young people and young vulnerable adults policy - Ofsted, 2018



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## Student placements

We recognise that qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of the care and education we provide. As part of our commitment to quality, we offer placements to students undertaking early years qualifications and training. We also offer placements for school pupils on work experience.

We aim to provide for students on placement with us, experiences that contribute to the successful completion of their studies and that provide examples of quality practice in early years care and education.

## Procedures

- We require students on qualification courses to meet the Suitable Person requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and have a satisfactory enhanced DBS check with barred list check(s).
- We require students in our setting to have a sufficient understanding and use of English to contribute to the well-being of children in our care.
- We require schools, colleges or universities placing students under the age of 17 years with us to vouch for their good character.
- We supervise students under the age of 17 years at all times and do not allow them to have unsupervised access to children.
- Students undertaking qualification courses who are placed in our setting on a short term basis are not counted in our staffing ratios.
- Students and apprentices, over the age of 17, who are undertaking a level 3 qualification, may be considered to be counted in the ratios if our Manager deems them to be suitably qualified and experienced.
- We take out employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance, which covers both students and voluntary helpers.
- We require students to keep to our Confidentiality, Social Media and Safeguarding Policies.



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- We co-operate with students' tutors in order to help students to fulfil the requirements of their course of study.
- We provide students, at the first session of their placement, with a short induction on how our setting is managed, how our sessions are organised and details of our policies and procedures.
- We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- We make the needs of the children paramount by not admitting students in numbers that hinder the essential work of the setting.
- We ensure that trainees and students placed with us are engaged in bona fide early years training, which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.

## APPENDIX 1

Within Berkshire, the LSCB is able to act as an independent body where staff and volunteers can direct whistleblowing concerns around children's safeguarding, if they have exhausted all the identified options within our setting. It is important to state that this is not another route to raise Safeguarding concerns about a child that you are working with.

## APPENDIX 2

### The Prevent Duty & Promoting British Values

From 1st July 2015, all schools, registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as The Prevent Duty.

St Andrew's Pre-school staff take Safeguarding very seriously. Therefore to ensure that we adhere to and achieve the Prevent duty we will;



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- Ensure that our staff team undertake Prevent Awareness training. Part of this training will enable staff to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation.
- Build the children's resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views (for early years providers the statutory framework for the EYFS sets standards for learning, development and care for children from 0-5, thereby assisting their Personal, Social and Emotional development, as well as Understanding the World).
- Assess the risk, by means of a formal risk assessment, of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.
- Ensure that our staff understand the risks so that they can respond in an appropriate way.
- Become aware of the online risk of radicalisation through the use of social media and the internet.
- As with managing other safeguarding risks, our staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help, or protection (children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views). The Key Person approach means we already know our key children well and so we will notice any changes in behaviour, demeanour, or personality quickly.
- We will not carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but we will take action if we observe behaviour of concern. The Key Person approach means that we already have a rapport with our families so we will notice any changes in behaviour, demeanour, or personality quickly.
- We will work in partnership with the Reading LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children's Board) for guidance and support.
- We will build up an effective engagement with parents/carers and families. This is important as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation.
- We will assist and advise families who raise concerns with us. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms.



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- We will ensure that any resources used in Pre-school are age appropriate for the children in our care and that our staff have the knowledge and confidence to use the resources effectively.
- In Prevent priority areas, the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support. You can also contact your local police force, or dial 101 (the non-emergency number). They can talk to you in confidence about your concerns and help you gain access to support and advice.
- The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly. There is a contact form available on the following page:  
[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education)  
Concerns can also be raised by email to:  
[counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk)

## APPENDIX 3

### COVID-19

#### **Introduction**

COVID-19 (commonly known as Coronavirus) has presented a huge challenge nationally to the normal running of education and child care provision. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 all schools in the United Kingdom were closed on the advice of the UK Government to help delay the spread of the Coronavirus, and that they were only to remain open for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Education and child care settings were also expected to remain open to those children who are identified as vulnerable<sup>1</sup> and their needs cannot be catered for at home, or they need to attend the education/child care setting as it is a safe place.

This appendix has been prepared to explain key changes and interim measures being taken within our setting to continue to meet our safeguarding requirements during these extraordinary times.



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## Status of this document

This is an appendix to the main body of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and was effective from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 until the setting returns to business as usual, following the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been formally agreed and signed off by St Andrew's Pre-school Committee and the Manager (lead DSO) Hilary Coome.

Any questions about the contents of this document should be directed to:

Name: **Hilary Coome**

Job Title: **Pre-school Manager**

Email: [hilary@standrewspreschoolcaversham.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:hilary@standrewspreschoolcaversham.onmicrosoft.com)

Telephone: 07981 195435

## Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) arrangements

- It is vital that while our setting remains open, a suitably trained DSL is available for consultation and advice.
- A trained DSL from the setting will be available to be contacted via phone or email at all times. Our DSL and deputy DSL are identified in the main body of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. In the event of any changes being implemented and the DSL changes, this will be communicated to staff by **email**.
- **Brighter Futures for Children, Children's Single Point of Access:**  
Use the web form (the most secure and effective way of requesting help for a child):  
<https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/cspoa-notifications-form1/>  
Call on 0118 937 3641 - this number includes out of hours contact details.



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- **For urgent enquiries out of hours, call the Emergency Duty Team on 01344 786543:**  
Email the team on [cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org](mailto:cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org) Out of Hours Emergency Duty Service. Any referrals or contacts between 5pm and 9am, Monday to Friday, or 24 hours on Saturday and Sunday, should be directed to our Emergency Duty Service. A record of all referrals to the emergency duty service will be made and referred onto the relevant local office. Call on 01344 786 543.

## Contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- In the instance a referral to the LADO is necessary this will be actioned by the **Manager/DSL** within 1 working day of the allegation coming to light. Should they not be available then the **Deputy Manager/DSO** will make the referral.
- Contact methods for the LADO will remain the same with all LADO referrals being made via the online referral form. Consultation by phone may be necessary in which case this will be done via **Jeremy Curtis**.

The main contact details and referral form for the LADO are on the website <https://www.berkshirerwestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp/reading/concerned-about-an-adult-working-with-children-2>

The Reading LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) contact number is: 0118 937 2684

Email - [LADO@reading.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@reading.gov.uk)

If there is an immediate concern about the safety of a child you should contact CSPOA

## Allegations against adults working with Children

- Any staff member who works in the setting will be aware of the process for sharing concerns about colleagues or other adults who works with children in regulated activity. In our setting



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they will report these concerns directly to the **Manager/DSL** as soon as practically possible, ideally face to face, however during challenging times that may not always be possible, and a telephone call is also acceptable.

- It is made clear to staff in training, induction and in our Whistleblowing Policy that they should not consult or speak of the concern/allegation with other parties, without the expressed permission of the **Manager/DSL** so as not to damage the integrity of any potential investigation, nor tarnish the reputation of colleagues prior to any due process.