

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

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

1.2 Child Protection Policy: safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people* and vulnerable adults. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the three key commitments of the Early Years Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, for the sake of this policy is defined as:

Safeguarding Lead: - Hazel Hilton, Deputy Lead: Alana Tudor, Committee Lead: Helen Brumby

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, for the sake of this policy is defined as:

Protecting children from maltreatment

Preventing the impairment of children's health or development

Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with

the provision of safe and effective care.

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to Safeguard Children 2025')

www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

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. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single child protection policy, therefore this. Document should be used in conjunction with the other preschool policies and procedures.

Our preschool will 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 equally with respect and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

Policy Intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image.
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children.

- Always listen to children.
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.

Sandbach Heath (St. John's) Playgroup 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 preschool manager/chairperson at the earliest opportunity.

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Legislation.gov.uk. 2021. Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. [online] Available at: <<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>> [Accessed 4 February 2021].

Working together to safeguard children.

Assets.publishing.service.gov.uk. 2021. [online] Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942455/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_Statutory_framework_legislation_relevant_to_safeguarding_and_promoting_the_welfare_of_children.pdf> [Accessed 4 February 2021].

Educators have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the hours of care, we are providing, staff will often be the first people to sense that there is a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide in about abuse.

The Preschool has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society.

This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and wellbeing of all children 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. All staff will work as part of a multiagency team where needed in the best interests of the child.

The preschool aims to:

Ensure that children are never placed at risk.

Sandbach Heath (St. John's) Preschool staff will:

- Ensure that confidentiality is always maintained.
- Ensure that all staff are alert to the signs of abuse.
- Understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed including by other children i.e., bullying, discriminatory behaviour.
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection issues and procedures.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the preschool and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Keep the child at the centre of all we do.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate.
- Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort, and sensitive interactions.

- Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

Contact telephone numbers.

I HAVE IMMEDIATE CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES:

Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) 0300 123 5012 (Option 3).
Monday to Thursday 8.30 am to 4.00 pm. Email: CESCP@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team 0300 123 5012
Monday to Thursday 8.30 am to 4.00 pm. Outside of these hours please contact the Emergency Duty Team above.

Professionals should always seek to discuss any concerns with the family and gain their consent to consult with ChECS. There will be rare situations where you should not speak to parents first; this would be in cases where it is felt, that by doing so, this would place a child at increased risk of significant harm e.g. suspected sexual abuse or FGM

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT/HAVE RECEIVED AN ALLEGATION ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF.

Make brief factual notes about your concerns. Speak to the Manager, unless the allegation is against the Manager, in which case speak to the Owner/ Chairperson. The Manager/Owner should call the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who will advise on the appropriate course of action. Do not start investigating until directed to do so.

Cheshire East LADO Tel: 01270 685904 / 01606 288931

Ofsted must be informed of all allegations against any adult living or working on the premises.

Ofsted Compliance and Concerns: Tel: 0330 123 4666

Chairperson: Martin Douglas martin.douglas73@yahoo.co.uk Tel no: 07399 593710

Safeguarding Committee Lead: helenbrumby@hotmail.com Tel no: 07890724142 (person responsible to OFSTED)

Types of abuse

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused but will help us to know that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree. Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the Preschool manager and chairperson. All signs of marks/injuries to a child when they come into preschool or occur during time at the preschool, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member. The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity. Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records. If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) in the local authority will be able to advise.

Fabricated illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g., through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet.

This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support. This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary

medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g., through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

Female Genital mutilation

This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups and there is now more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in England. If there is concern about a child in this area, social services should be contacted, in the same way as other types of physical abuse. This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups and there is now more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in England. If there is concern about a child in this area, social services should be contacted, in the same way as other types of physical abuse. FGM helpline [Tel: 0800 028 3550](tel:08000283550)

GOV.UK. 2021. Female genital mutilation: help and advice. [online] Available at: <<https://www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation-help-advice>> [Accessed 4 February 2021].

Sexual abuse

The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk.

The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report.

The observed instances will be reported to the preschool manager.

The matter will be referred to LSCB in the local authority.

This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them.

Emotional abuse

May also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them. The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive, or clingy to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Procedure:

The concern should be discussed with the manager/chairperson.

The concern will be discussed with the parent. Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records.

An Early Help Assessment, (EHA) may need to be completed.
Early Help Brokerage (EHB) ehb@cheshireeast.gov.uk 0300 123 5012 (option 3)

If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the LSCB in the local authority.

Indicators of child abuse

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

- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries.
- Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures
- Staff should make an objective record (supported by the preschool manager or Designated Safeguarding Coordinator (DSCO) of any observation or disclosure, these should include.
- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child.
- Exact position and type of injuries or marks seen.
- Exact observation of an incident including any other witnesses.
- Name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

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

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the LSCB and Ofsted and/or an EHA needs to be initiated. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have regarding a child. The preschool expects all members of staff to co-operate with the LSCB and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children. Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about a parent's or staffs supposed or actual behaviour.

Staffing and volunteering

It is the policy of the preschool to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. The preschool will therefore not allow an adult to be left alone with a child who has not received their enhanced DBS disclosure clearance. It is the policy of the preschool to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. All staff will attend child protection training within their first six months of employment and receive initial basic training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the preschool. All staff have safeguarding training.

Hazel Hilton the preschool Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes specific training and accesses regular updates to developments within this field. We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.

Applicants for posts within the preschool are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Legislation.gov.uk. 2021. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. [online] Available at: <<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/53>> [Accessed 4 February 2021].

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.

All enhanced Disclosure and Disbarring Service (DBS), disclosure checks will be updated on a regular basis to ensure the suitability of all staff to join the update service of the adults caring for the children.

We abide by Ofsted and Cheshire East requirements in respect of references and suitability checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the preschool or has access to the children.

We ensure we receive at least two written references BEFORE a new member of staff commences employment with us. All students will have enhanced DBS disclosures conducted on them before their placement starts. Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised.

We abide by the requirements 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.

We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the preschool and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the preschool, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

All contractors/external workers will be enhanced DBS checked and the manager will request this before allowing them access to the preschool when the children are present.

All visitors/contractors will still be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use.

All staff have access to a whistleblowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner.

All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss child protection training and any needs for further support.

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 placed into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

Informing parents

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

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the LSCB.

Support to families

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

The preschool continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.

Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child.

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

Employees or volunteers

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, we will follow the HM Government guidance in *'Working together to safeguard children, 2015'*.

The allegation should be reported to the manager. If this person is the subject of the allegation, then this should be reported to the Chairperson.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Ofsted and the LSCB will then be informed immediately for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly. LADO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance.

A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LADO, Ofsted, LSCB) to determine how this will be handled.

The preschool will follow all instructions from the LADO, Ofsted, LSCB and asks all staff members to do the same and cooperate where required.

Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice.

The preschool reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation

All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file.

Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated.

Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisation (police) and will result in the termination of employment.

Ofsted/CSSIW will be notified immediately of this decision. The preschool is also required to notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to ensure their records are updated.

All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS. checks and avoid any unnecessary reinvestigation.

The preschool retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry.

Counselling will be available for any member of the preschool who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the preschool and the parents.

Designated Safeguarding officer – Hazel Hilton

Continued Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy, which incorporates responding to child protection concerns.

Key commitment 1

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

- Our designated person who co-ordinates child, young person and vulnerable adult protection issues is:
Hazel J. Hilton
 - When the setting is open but the designated person is not on site, a suitably trained deputy, **Alana Tudor** will be available at all times for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.
 - Our designated officer (a member of the management team) who oversees this work is:
Martin Douglas (Chairperson) and **Helen Brumby** (Treasurer & person responsible to Ofsted).
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- The designated person, the suitably trained deputy and the designated officer ensure they have relevant links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.
 - The designated person (and the person who deputises for them) understands LSCB safeguarding procedures, attends relevant LSCB training at least every three years and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding at least annually.
 - 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 potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children's social care team or the NSPCC. The team at St John's update safeguarding training in house half termly, and with the local authority
 - 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.
 - All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2015) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
 - All staff understand LSCB thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm.
 - All staff understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations and the circumstances under which they may share information about you and your child with other agencies.
 - All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard.
 - All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of mobile phones), whistleblowing and dignity at work.
 - Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age appropriate way.
 - All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
 - 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 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 must:
 - be aged 17 or over;
 - be considered competent and responsible;
 - receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings;
 - be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
 - be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate;
 - 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, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision 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 online safety policy in place.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.

- 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 children's social care, the LADO, 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) and the Care Act 2014.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff understand the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- We are aware that children with special educational needs (SEN) mood, behaviour and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability. Practitioners are aware of indicators and remain alert to such factors. Practitioners are aware that there may be a risk of peer isolation and a greater impact of bullying. Practitioners recognise that there may be difficulties in communicating for children with SEN and our practitioners use different ways to help children communicate their thoughts and needs through a variety of methods. We consider additional pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.
- 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 are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.

- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
- We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The designated person will take immediate action to contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately and LSCB procedures are followed. If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision, such as abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, including through internet abuse; Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation or extremism.
- In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCB procedures on responding to radicalisation.
- The designated person completes online Channel training, online Prevent training and attends local WRAP training where available to ensure they are familiar with the local protocol and procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation.
- We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers, including early years practitioners, and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police.
- 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 team and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB: In some cases, this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 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.

- All staff are also aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.
- We have a whistleblowing policy in place.
- Staff/volunteers know they can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing; if they feel that the organisation has not acted adequately in relation to safeguarding they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline.

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, although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification;
 - 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 one 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

- 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.

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 at risk or interfere with the course of a police investigation. Advice will be sought from social care if necessary.
- 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 at risk.
- 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 (or interfere with a police response) the designated person should seek advice from children's social care, 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' is 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.
- We ensure that all staff and volunteers 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 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 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate and/or offer advice:

Cheshire East LADO Tel: 01270 685904 / 01606 288931

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- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by LADO that this is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), 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 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 (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.

- Designated persons receive appropriate training, as recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, every two years and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.
- We ensure that all staff receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters, online training and/or discussion at staff meetings at least once a year.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. [For group provision: No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being within sight and/or hearing of other staff or volunteers.]

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 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)

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2025
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- The Children Act (2004 s11)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act (2006)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)**
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2009)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Care Act (2014)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Further guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2015)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG, 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 2008)
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2015)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings, (Ofsted, 2016)

This policy was adopted by	Sandbach Heath (St. Johns) Playgroup	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	_____	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	_____	<i>(date)</i>
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)
- The New Early Years Employee Handbook (2016)
- People Management in the Early Years (2016)

*A 'young person' is defined as 16 to 19 years old – in our setting they may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent.

