



Kemerton Early Years and Forest School C.I.C.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

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Policy statement and principals

This policy is one of a series in the setting's integrated safeguarding portfolio which includes recruitment and selection, complaints, staff code of conduct.

This policy is available on the setting's website and is included in the staff handbook.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the setting's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

Child protection statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and are consistent with those of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Board (WCSB).

Policy principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection;
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm;
- Children and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

Policy aims

- To provide all staff including governors and volunteers with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities;
- To ensure consistent good practice;
- To demonstrate the setting's commitment with regard to child protection to children, parents and other partners.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the setting, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DSL refers to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the setting

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Safeguarding legislation and guidance

This policy is consistent with our legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as described in section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the following statutory guidance:

- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- has the status and authority within the setting to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff;
- is appropriately trained, with update training every 2 years together with regular updates;
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the setting;
- has a working knowledge of WSCB procedures;
- makes staff aware of WSCB training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding;
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the child's general file;
- refers cases of suspected abuse to police as appropriate;
- ensures that when a child leaves the setting, their child protection file is passed to the new setting (separately from the main child file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained;
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences;
- coordinates the setting's contribution to child protection plans;
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the WSCB;
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually liaises with the nominated governor and Managing Director;
- ensures that the child protection policy is available publicly, on the setting's website or by

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other means.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s):

Is trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children attended the setting. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

Good practice includes:

- treating all children with respect;
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately;
- involving children in decisions that affect them;
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among children;
- being a good listener;
- being alert to changes in a child's behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse;
- reading and understanding the setting's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues;
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of abuse;
- referring all concerns about a child's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police.

Abuse of position of trust

All staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable and that their conduct towards children must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the staff and a child under 18 may be a criminal offence.

The setting's Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs;
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs;
- asylum seekers;

- living away from home;
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- living in temporary accommodation;
- live transient lifestyles;
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations;
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality;
- at risk of sexual exploitation;
- do not have English as a first language;
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM);
- at risk of forced marriage;
- at risk of being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The setting's whistleblowing code enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Managing Director. Complaints about the Managing Director should be reported to the Chair of Directors.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to Children's Social Care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2018)* and in the setting's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy and procedures.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the setting, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

Staff training

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the setting's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL. The DSL will undertake update training at least every 2 years. All other staff, Managing Director and governors will receive regular update training. All staff will also

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receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

Safer recruitment

Our setting complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2018) and the WSCB, by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history. The setting's Staff Recruitment policy and procedures set out the process in full and can be found on the setting's website.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

The setting maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the setting, their contact with children and the supervision provided to them together with OFSTED requirements. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

Contractors

The setting checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the setting's day.

Site security

Visitors to the setting are asked to sign in. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the setting's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The Managing Director will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended setting and off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended setting activities are provided by and managed by the setting, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our setting, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our children attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Child protection procedures

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2018) refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying will be managed appropriately by our staff.

Taking action

Any child, in any family in any setting could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary, call 999;
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, and definitely by the end of the day;
- do not start your own investigation;
- share information on a need-to-know basis only - do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family;
- complete a record of concern;
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you are concerned about a child's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a child may be at risk. The child's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the **Logging a Concern form (Appendix 3)** to record these early concerns. If the child does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the child, if the member of staff still has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

If a child discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a child talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the child know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL.** The point at which they tell the child this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the child, staff will:

- allow them to speak freely;
- remain calm and not overreact;
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort - 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me';
- not be afraid of silences;
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions - such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the child's mother think about it;
- at an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why;
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort;
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong;
- tell the child what will happen next;
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves;
- complete the Logging a Concern form and hand it to the DSL as soon as possible;
- seek support from the Managing Director if they feel distressed.

Notifying parents

The setting will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the child. Therefore, if the setting believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and/or the police before parents are contacted.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Managing Director or Chair (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following several cases where senior leaders in settings had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact Children's Social Care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the GDPR 2018 (General Data Protection Regulation).

Information sharing is guided by the following principles of data handling:

- Lawful, fair and transparent;

- Purpose limitation;
- Data minimisation;
- Accurate;
- Storage limitation;
- Integrity and confidentiality;
- Accountability.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the child's setting file and the setting file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the child and/or parents to share sensitive information within the setting or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Managing Director.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent setting staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The setting's confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents on request.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, the Managing Director and the Chair are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety;
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the setting's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a child's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become

concerned about a child's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

Sexual exploitation of children

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

Honour-Based Violence

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so setting staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female child about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales, the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. Setting staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a child about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

Radicalisation and Extremism

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and settings should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

Setting staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable children to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the setting follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Settings (2014).

Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a child may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the setting should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

Related safeguarding portfolio policies

This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding policies, which are set out in Appendix Two.

Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The setting ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

Useful Contacts

Family Front Door

• 01905 822666 Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm; 01905 768020 (evenings and weekends)

Police - Call 999 in an emergency. For less urgent issues call local police on 101.

LADO

01905 843311 / 07809 586225

Early Help Hub

01905 822666

Ofsted - 0300 123 1231

Babcock Prime Early Years Team - 01905 678134

Community Social Workers Team Manager: Rob Kyle Mobile: 07703 097988
Telephone: 01905 845991; rkyle@worcestershire.gov.uk

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

Appendix One

Four categories of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss setting, arrive late or leave the setting for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour - from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their setting work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSP to decide how to proceed.

Appendix Two

Related Safeguarding policies

- Staff behaviour/code of conduct
- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- Personal and intimate care
- Complaints procedure
- Safe working practice
- Whistleblowing
- SEN
- Missing children
- Recruitment and selection
- Managing allegations
- Grievance and disciplinary
- Confidentiality and information sharing

Appendix 3

Logging a Concern about a Child's Safety and Welfare - all staff and visitors

Child's name:		Date of birth:	
Date:		Time:	
Name:	
Print		Signature	
Position:			
Note the reason(s) for recording the incident.			
Details of concern/incident - record the who/what/where/when factually (continue on reverse of sheet if necessary):			
Any other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken)			
Action taken			
Reporting staff signature Date			
DSL - Response/Outcome			
DSL signature Date			

Check to make sure your report is clear now - and will also be clear to a stranger reading it next year.

PLEASE PASS THIS FORM TO YOUR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Continuation Sheet

Incident /Concern; other relevant information; Action Taken; Outcome PUPIL NAME:

DATE DETAILS

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