



Safeguarding Policy - WS

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Owner: Nursery Operations Team

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Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

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.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined for the purpose of this guidance as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet three key commitments, 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.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who co-ordinates child, young person and vulnerable adult protection issues in our setting is:_____
- When the setting is open but the DSL is not on site, a suitably trained deputy DSL is available at all times for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- The DSL and the suitably trained deputy DSL (DDSL) and the ensure they have relevant links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.
- The DSL and DDSL understand West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP) safeguarding procedures. They complete relevant safeguarding training at least every two years and where possible this will be undertaken with the WSSCP.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.

- Staff are trained to recognise potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect as part of their induction.
- During inductions staff are informed of their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the DSL.
- They receive updates on safeguarding when needed through staff meetings or training courses (see commitment 3 for details).
- Staff are encouraged to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and not to just take things at face value but be respectfully sceptical.
- The DSL understands WSSCP thresholds of significant harm and understands how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm.
- During induction all staff complete training explaining their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the circumstances under which they may need to share information about families with other agencies.
- All staff are shown our safeguarding flow charts explaining how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel the DSL has not acted adequately to safeguard.
- It is explained to staff what Kiddie Capers 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 and whistleblowing.
- 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.
- 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 or as part of completion of an accident/incident form on Family. Parents sign a consent form on Family and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Parents, visitors and staff are made aware that they may not use mobile phones, smart watches or Meta glasses on nursery premises, where children are present.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with general data protection regulations and guidance from the ICO.
- The DSL in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that our online safety policy is in place and being followed by all staff.

- 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 company Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will support the DSL to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
- The DSL will inform the SLT at the first opportunity of every safeguarding concern. However, this should not delay any referrals being made to the Integrated Front Door or LADO (via the IFD)
- Ofsted or RIDDOR, will be contacted by a member of the SLT, if needed and within the 14 day timeframe.

Safer Recruitment

- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and other suitability checks e.g. references are carried out for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at our settings 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.
- Volunteers must:
 - be considered competent and responsible;
 - receive an induction and be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
 - be fully checked for suitability and have an enhanced DBS check
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the DBS reference number;
 - 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 own 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.
- Staff, visitors and students must not start work until we have received an enhanced DBS check and at least one written reference for them.

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, sexual and neglect. We train staff to understand the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of:
 - age
 - gender reassignment
 - being married or in a civil partnership
 - being pregnant or on maternity leave
 - race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual, 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 Integrated Front Door (IFD).
- 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 DSL will contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence to be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is able to be made with the child's parents or emergency contacts within 24 hours, the IFD will be contacted and WSSCP procedures are followed. If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified of the unexplained absence. (See Nursery Attendance Policy)
- We are aware of other factors surrounding a child'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 WSSCP procedures on responding to radicalisation.
- The DSL completes online Prevent training and attends local 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 WSSCP procedures.
- Where such evidence is apparent, staff make a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the DSL. This information is stored confidentially in our Safeguarding file.

- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made by the DSL, in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral, they must follow escalation procedures, as outlined on our Safeguarding Flowcharts.
- We refer concerns to the local authority IFD and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the WSSCP.
- 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 considered. However, 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 aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services. This is done by contacting West Sussex Adult Services.
- We have a whistleblowing policy in place.
- Staff can use our company whistleblowing email address to express their concerns, should they feel they have not been listened to or taken seriously by their setting DSL.
- Staff know they can contact the organisation Protect (formally Public Concern at Work) for advice relating to whistleblowing. If they feel that our organisation has not acted adequately in relation to safeguarding, they can contact the NSPCC or Ofsted whistleblowing helplines.

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 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.

- The DSL/DDSL is informed of the issue the same day.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal section of our Safeguarding File, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- We follow West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership processes for recording and sharing concerns, alongside our company procedures, outlined in this policy.

Making a referral to the West Sussex Integrated Front Door (IFD)

- The Integrated Front Door team have an online form, via their portal, that must be completed and emailed to them to make a referral.
- It is also possible to ring the IFD to seek advice on whether a referral is needed, before the online referral is made.

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 escalate concerns by emailing the WSSCP on wsscp@westsussex.gov.uk
- We will ensure that staff know they can escalate their concerns, as above, if needed.

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 the IFD, if necessary.
- We record any discussions we have with parents, regarding any concerns.
- If we feel our concerns need to be referred, parents are informed before the referral is made. This would not be the case if the guidance of the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership is to 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 DSL should seek advice from the IFD, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the WSSCP 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.
- 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

- Parents are issued with our Complaints Procedure when registering their child which outlines how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteers or any other person working on the premises, which includes, but is not limited to:
 - 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 WSSCP when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within 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, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint to the Integrated Front Door, who will pass to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate and/or offer advice:
- Where the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and LADO 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 co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.

- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by the Integrated Front Door/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 and must be done within 14 days.

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. These individuals can then 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 staff. 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 staff involved in the setting, to ensure that they are able to recognise the possible signs and signals of abuse and that they are aware of the West Sussex guidelines for making referrals.
- Designated Safeguarding Leads receive appropriate training, as recommended by the WSSCP, every two years.
- All other staff complete Level 2 Safeguarding Children training, every three years.
- 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.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, enabling them to grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of how and why to keep safe.
- We create 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 West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.

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 WSSCP.
- 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 West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Document history

Date	Version	Section	Details	Reviewed by
10/11/2025	1.0		Creation of new policy	LE
03/08/2026	1.1	Key Commitment 1	Addition of 'smart watches or Meta glasses'	LE
10/08/2026	1.2	safer recruitment	Added section and updated to new stat framework	LE