# Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

### Policy statement

***The preschool is committed to building a ‘culture of safety’ in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our preschool setting.***

Our setting is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and secure environment for children, parents, and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life, and to feel confident about sharing concerns. We adhere to the South Gloucestershire Children’s Partnership ‘SGCP’ 2019-2020 (www.southglos.gov.uk)

We believe that our preschool provides a safe, positive, and caring environment in which children can grow in their social, physical and moral development.

Our policy draws on all relevant legislation and guidance including:

* Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (2023)
* Working together to Safeguard Children (2023)
* Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in education (2021)
* Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (2018)
* What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015)
* The Prevent Duty (2023)
* Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2019)
* FGM (2024)

#### Designated Safeguarding Lead

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is:
**Angela Maddocks**

In their absence, these matters will be dealt with by the Deputy Safeguarding Lead:
**Debra Dudbridge**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place, regularly reviewed and are followed regarding safeguarding and child protection issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers, and committee members to draw upon.

#### Designated Officer (a committee member)

The Designated Officer for Safeguarding at the preschool is:
 **Megan Spocinski**

The responsibilities of the management committee are outlined in part two of ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023’.

#### Preventing harm

We recognise that developing the necessary qualities (e.g. emotional resilience, self-confidence) within both the children themselves and the preschool can help to prevent harm.

We will therefore:

* + Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to:
	+ Ensure children know that there are adults who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
	+ Include opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and they know who to turn to for help.

#### Early Help

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) states that “All school and college staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help”. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. In the first instance, staff will discuss early help requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. We follow the South Gloucestershire early help process.

### Procedures

***The preschool is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents of 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 2015”.***

The procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with the ‘South West Child Protection Procedures’ [www.proceduresonline.com](http://www.proceduresonline.com) and those accessed on the South Gloucestershire Children’s Partnership website – http://sites.southglos.gov.uk

#### As a preschool we will ensure that:

* We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead who has attended Advanced Inter-agency training and is maintained by attending Child Protection Update training every 2 years thereafter.
* We have at least one deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who will meet the same training requirements as the Designated Safeguarding Lead outlined above.
* Every member of staff knows and understands:
	+ The name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Officer on Committee and their roles around safeguarding and child protection.
	+ That they have an individual statutory responsibility for referring child protection concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as can reasonably be considered possible; and
* Their responsibilities as outlined in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019’.
All members of staff receive refresher training monthly and official training every 3 years, a member of staff may repeat the training sooner, if required. Official training covers:
	+ Their personal responsibilities in relation to child protection.
	+ Child protection procedures.
	+ Identifying signs of abuse/suspected abuse.
	+ How to support a child who discloses abuse.
	+ Current national and local issues in safeguarding and child protection.
	+ Whistleblowing and the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); and
* Relevant legislation related to child protection.
* All matters relating to child protection are confidential. Information about a child will only be disclosed to members of staff on a need-to-know basis, in line with ‘Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services 2018’.
* All staff are aware of their professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.
* All staff are aware that they need to obtain support and help for the children should it be necessary.
* All members of staff recognise that statistically children and young people with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse.
* Parents/carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff with regard to child protection and understand the role staff play in child protection and that good communication between parents/carers and the preschool is vital to this.
* All new members of staff are given a copy of our child protection procedures during their induction to the preschool.
* All visitors need to log in and out of the premises when visiting the preschool.
* Should there be any concerns raised about the conduct of staff, parents/carers or visitors they will be asked to leave and further action taken to ensure the safety of children. (see: promoting positive adult behaviour policy & Confidential policy).

#### Reporting Concerns

Is your concern about a child?

 **YES NO**

 Is your concern about an adult or member of staff?

 **YES**

Has the child disclosed anything?

Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if it relates to the Safeguarding Lead, inform the Designated officer for safeguarding on committee. Inform LADO

 **NO** **YES**

Refer to and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible on the same day.

1. Listen carefully.
2. Use TED questions (tell me, explain to me, describe to me)
3. Record carefully and accurately.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will decide the appropriate course of action.**

**It is important that all communication is given in writing to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible as an official signed and dated record. A log of events relating to the incident will be kept.**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

* Working closely with the Deputy Safeguarding Lead so that they can act effectively in the absence of the Lead.
* Adhering to SGCP procedures by referring children to the Access and Response Team (ART) on 01454 866000 if there are concerns about their safety or well-being.
* Ensuring that in the case of a referral to ART, the parents/carers are informed prior to the referral being made, unless doing so would put the child at risk of further harm.
* Ensuring that written records are kept about any child about whom there are concerns of possible abuse or neglect. Abuse will be defined in terms of: Physical, Sexual, Emotional (including witnessing or hearing domestic abuse) and Neglect (see appendix B)
* Storing such records confidentially in a secure locked cabinet, in the locked preschool cupboard.
* Checking the attendance of children subject to a child protection plan notifying the local social care team if there is an unexplained absence of a child subject to a child protection plan of more than a day from preschool (or one day following a weekend) without contact and good reason.
* Attendance at Initial Case Conferences and Child Protection Review Conferences.
* Submitting written reports to Social Care on request within the agreed time limits.
* Liaising with other agencies to safeguard children and young people.
* Notifying parents/carers as soon as possible if a child sustains an injury or are affected by an incident whilst they are the responsibility of the preschool.
* Ensuring that a photocopy of all child protection records is forwarded, under confidential cover, to a child’s new preschool following a transfer, and
* Retain copies of all child protection files, including those for children no longer on roll until the child reaches 25.

#### Support

We recognise that when children are the victims of abuse or are witnessing domestic abuse their self-esteem and sense of self-worth will be adversely affected. Our preschool may be the only stable, secure, and predictable element in the lives of children at risk.

Nevertheless, when at preschool their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. All staff are encouraged to consider the underlying causes for a child behaviour – all behaviour is communication.

We understand that our role is to help children combat the feelings of helplessness and self-blame they may experience in these situations. We can do this by maintaining a positive ethos where children feel valued, safe, and secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.

We recognise that staff who have been involved with a child who has been abused or appears at risk of harm, may find the situation very stressful and upsetting. Support will be given to staff by providing an opportunity to talk about their anxieties and reflect on possible outcomes with a designated member of staff and to seek further external support as appropriate.

#### Allegations against staff

If an allegation is made against, or there are concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff, volunteer or committee member, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately.

Where the allegation is against, or the concern is about the Leader, the Designated Officer from the Committee must be informed immediately.

If the Designated Officer from Committee cannot be contacted, the LADO must be informed immediately.

If the response, from either the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Designated Officer, to a report of an allegation or report is felt to be unsatisfactory e.g. minimising, then the LADO must be informed immediately.

#### Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. See our Whistleblowing policy.

#### Staff code of conduct

All staff paid or voluntary, and committee members are expected to adhere to the preschool’s Code of Conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and their families. Children and young people will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, restraint, sanctions, or rewards are allowed outside those detailed in the preschool’s Promoting Positive Adult Behaviour policy.

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with a child. Our staff are alert to the possible risks which might arise from contact with parents/carers outside the school, including the use of social media. Please refer to the Social Media policy, in addition to the Promoting Positive Adult Behaviour policy.

#### The Prevent Duty

For the preschool to fulfil the Prevent Duty, it is essential that our staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation as part of our safeguarding duties. The statutory guidance makes clear that preschools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

The general risks affecting children may vary from area to area, and according to their age.

It is important that we understand these risks so that we can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way. At the same time, we are aware of the increased risk of online radicalisation, as terrorist organisations may and do seek to radicalise children by social media and the internet.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to terrorism. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views.

Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside and display concerning behaviour. The Prevent Duty does not require teachers to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but, as with any other safeguarding risk, they must act when they observe behaviour of concern.

#### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child abuse which involves children and young people receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. Perpetrators of CSE are found in rural as well as urban areas and are not restricted to ethnic groups. It is important that staff are aware of the risk factors and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are concerns.

Key indicators of children and young people being sexually exploited can include:

* + Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
	+ Regularly missing education or not taking part in education.
	+ Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
	+ Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
	+ Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
	+ Suffering from sexually transmitted infections.
	+ Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing.
	+ Drug and alcohol misuse, and
	+ Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

Practitioners should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation may not recognise themselves as such, but they should still be regarded as victims.

#### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

As all staff should be vigilant to the indicators of child sexual exploitation – the same is relevant for FGM.

Section 5B of the 2003 FGM Act introduced a mandatory duty which requires practitioners and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:

* Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her, or
* Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

**Other Safeguarding**

We are also aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour-based violence or maybe 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 encounter.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must be kept notified of any disclosures, concerns and calls made to the police. Recordings of disclosures/concerns and any subsequent conversations must be logged and given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as with any other safeguarding/child protection issue.

Contact Information

* + Access and Response Team (ART)
	01454 866000
	accessandresponse@southglos.gov.uk
	+ South Gloucestershire Children’s Partnership http//sites.southglos.gov.uk
	+ Early Help 0-25 service 01454 868008 or 01454 615165 out of hours
	+ Tina Wilson
	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
	01454 868508
	Tina.Wilson@southglos.gov.uk

# Adoption of Policy

This policy was adopted as follows:

Meeting of Friends of Warmley Preschool

Date Held\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of review\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of the management committee:

Name of Signatory\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Role of Signatory\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_