



# Child Protection Policy

**Reviewed: July 2025**

**To be reviewed: July 2026**

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989 and 2004; and in line with the following:

- “Working Together to Safeguard Children” **2023**
- “Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families” **2000**
- “What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused” **2015**
- “Keeping Children Safe in Education” **2025**
- “London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures” 5th Edition **2017**
- “Ofsted: Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings” (**May 2019**)
- “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education” **2012**

1.2 We recognise that all staff and Directors have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.

1.3 All staff believe that our nurseries should provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

1.4 The aims of this policy are:

1.4.1 To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and resilience.

1.4.2 To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach all staff members if they are in difficulties.

1.4.3 To raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting

possible cases of abuse or neglect.

- 1.4.4 To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the nursery, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children.
- 1.4.5 To acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding children.
- 1.4.6 To develop a structured procedure within the nursery that will be followed by all members of the nursery community in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.
- 1.4.7 To develop effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children.
- 1.4.8 To ensure that all adults within our nursery who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

## **2.0 Procedures**

2.1 Our nursery procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with The London Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, and "Working Together to Safeguard Children". We will ensure that:

2.1.1 The Board of Directors receive safeguarding updates at least termly, including training compliance, incidents, policy updates, and lessons learned. They undertake annual safeguarding training and review safeguarding data and strategy regularly.

2.1.2 The Executive Leader will take overall responsibility for Child Protection in our Nursery. He/she has undertaken single agency Designated Safeguarding Lead training as delivered by the designated trainer. This training should be attended every two years.

2.1.3 A Senior Staff Member will act in the Designated Safeguarding Lead's absence who has also received Designated Safeguarding Lead Training, and who will have been briefed in the role.

2.1.4 Each member of staff is provided with opportunities to receive recognised training by the local authority's Child Protection Officer or Designated Safeguarding Lead trainer every three years in order to develop their understanding of the signs of abuse or neglect

2.1.5 Each member of staff, volunteers, and Directors know how to respond to a child who discloses abuse or neglect and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern or disclosure of possible abuse or neglect.

2.1.6 Each parent/carer is made aware of the nursery's responsibilities in regard to child protection procedures through publication of the nursery's Child Protection Policy.

2.1.7 Our selection and recruitment policy includes all checks on staff suitability including DBS checks as recommended by the DfE and in accordance with current legislation.

2.1.8 The name of any member of staff considered to be not suitable to work with children will be notified to the DfE and Ofsted with the advice and support of Human Resources and in accordance with the NEOST guidance and related regulations<sup>4</sup>

2.1.9 Our Nursery's Child Protection procedures will be reviewed and up-dated annually.

2.1.10 The name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be displayed clearly in the Nursery, with a statement explaining the nursery's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

2.1.11 All adults (including supply agency and volunteers) new to our nursery will be made aware of the nursery's policy and procedures, the name and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

2.1.12 If any member of staff feels that a safeguarding concern has not been responded to appropriately or promptly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they must escalate the concern directly to the Board of Directors, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), or use the Whistleblowing Policy as appropriate.

2.1.13 Our recruitment procedures ensure that all staff and volunteers are vetted in line with safer recruitment practices. This includes enhanced DBS checks, identity checks, reference verification, and checking disqualification by association where applicable.

### 3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 We understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all share appropriately any concerns that we may have about children. We have Designated Safeguarding Lead who are responsible for:

3.1.1 Referring a child if there are concerns about a child's welfare, possible abuse or neglect to the First Response Team MASH. A written referral using the Inter Agency Referral Form will be emailed to The First Response Team MASH immediately following the telephone referral (on advice of the First Response Team).

3.1.2 Ensuring that detailed and accurate written records of concerns about a child are kept even if it is decided that there is no need to make an immediate referral. This decision should be taken in consultation with the local authority's Child Protection Officer.

- Retention periods (e.g., "Records will be kept until the child is 25 years old.")
- Who has access
- Secure storage method (e.g., locked filing cabinet and/or password-protected digital system)

3.1.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.

3.1.4 Ensuring that an indication that there is a confidential Child Protection file, (kept in a separate and secure place), is marked on the pupil's records and CPOMS.

3.1.5 Acting as a focal point for staff concerns and liaising with other agencies and professionals and parents as appropriate.

3.1.6 Ensuring that either they or another appropriately informed member of staff attends case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to the Framework for Assessments process, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents.

3.1.7 Ensuring that any absence of one/two days, without satisfactory explanation, of a child subject to a Child Protection Plan is referred to the nursery's Education

Welfare Officer and/or the Child's Social Worker without delay.

3.1.8 Ensuring that all nursery staff are aware of the nursery's CP policy and procedures, and know how to recognise and refer any concerns.

3.1.9 The Executive Leader provides, an annual report for the Board of Directors, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and by all staff and Directors; relevant curricular issues, number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children referred to social services and who are subject to a Child Protection Plan.

3.1.10 Keeping themselves up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role, including attending relevant training, at least every two years, provided by the local authority's Child Protection Officer or an external organisation.

#### **4.0 Supporting Children**

4.1 We recognise that a child who is abused or neglected, who has witnessed violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth.

4.2 We recognise that the nursery may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or neglected or who are at risk of harm.

4.3 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

#### **4.4 Our nursery will support all pupils by:**

4.4.1 Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of nursery life.

4.4.2 Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the nursery.

4.4.3 Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.

4.4.4 Notifying the First Response Team MASH as soon as there is a significant

concern.

4.4.5 Ensuring that the Head of Early Years, who is responsible for Looked After Children (LAC), ensures that an up to date list of children are regularly reviewed and updated.

4.4.6 Providing continuing support to a child (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the nursery, by ensuring that every effort is made to discover where they have moved to and such concerns and medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the Manager at the child's new setting as a matter of urgency. A photocopy of these records should be kept in a confidential file.

## **5.0 Confidentiality**

5.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

5.3 However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

5.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child that they will keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.

5.5 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to social services with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the First Response Team MASH on this point.

In line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Children Act 1989, we will share information without consent where there is reasonable cause to believe that doing so is necessary to safeguard a child.

## **6.0 Supporting Staff**

6.1 We recognise that staff working in the nursery who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

6.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and to seek further support. This could be provided for all staff by, for example, Head of Early Years, by Occupational Health, and/or a trade union representative as appropriate.

6.3 We understand that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. The document "Guidance on Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings" provides advice on this and the circumstances which should be avoided in order to limit complaints against staff of abuse of trust and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook.

6.4 We recognise that a designated safeguarding lead should have access to support (as in 6.2 above) and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings as organised by children's services or the local safeguarding children board.

## **7.0 Allegations against staff**

7.1 All nursery staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. (See also 6.3 above)

7.2 All staff should be aware of the nursery's behaviour policy. This can be found in the Nursery Policy folder, or the electronic policy file.

7.3 We understand that a child may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Designated safeguarding lead or the deputy safeguarding lead.

7.3.1 The Designated safeguarding lead on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the local authority's Child Protection Officer.

7.3.2 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Designated safeguarding lead the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Board of Directors who will consult as in

7.3.1 above, without notifying the Designated safeguarding lead first.

7.3.3 The Nursery will follow the Local Authority and Ofsted procedures for



managing allegations against staff as outlined in Part 4 "Keeping Children Safe in Education" **2025** and 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' **2024**

7.3.4 Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult with the Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO) and the nursery's Human Resources advisor.

## **8.0 Whistleblowing**

8.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

8.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to the delegated 'whistleblowing' Director or the Local Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection LADO.

## **9. Positive Handling**

9.1 Our policy on positive handling or use of reasonable force by staff is set out separately. It complies with Dfes guidance on positive handling strategies (2001) and circular 10/98, 'The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils'. This guidance states that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, eg. when a child is endangering him/herself or others and that, at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person, reasonable and proportionate.

9.2 Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.

9.3 Staff who are likely to need to use specialist positive handling techniques should be appropriately trained.

9.4 We understand that positive handling of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

## **10.0 Anti-Bullying**

10.1 We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **11.0 Racist Incidents**

11.1 Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **12.0 Prevention**

12.1 We recognise that the nursery plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection within its duty of care.

12.2 The nursery community will therefore:

12.2.1 Establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to.

12.2.2 Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the nursery whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

12.2.3 Provide opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

12.2.4 Deliver age-appropriate, evidence-informed safeguarding education as part of the nursery's curriculum and daily interactions, ensuring children understand personal boundaries, how to stay safe online and offline, and how to seek help when needed.

12.2.5 Train staff to recognise early indicators of vulnerability, including contextual risks such as domestic abuse, online exploitation, radicalisation, and child-on-child abuse, and respond with timely, appropriate support and referrals.

12.2.6 Encourage a culture of early help by promoting open communication, supporting families, and intervening early where emerging problems are identified in a child's life.

12.2.7 Regularly evaluate and update the nursery's safeguarding approach based on local and national safeguarding trends, inspection feedback, and evolving risks to children.

12.2.8 All staff are trained in line with the Prevent Duty to identify children vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist ideologies and know how to refer these concerns.

## **13.0 Online Safety**

13.1 We recognise that safeguarding children includes protection from online abuse, exploitation, and exposure to inappropriate content.

13.2 Staff receive training on how to recognise and respond to online safety concerns.

13.3 Children are taught basic online safety awareness in an age-appropriate manner.

13.4 The nursery ensures that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place on devices used by children or staff.

13.5 Any online safety incident is reported in line with safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures.

## **14.0 Health & Safety**

14.1 Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the nursery environment and, for example, in relation to internet use, and when away from the nursery when undertaking nursery trips and visits.

## **15.0 Working With Children with Disabilities**

15.1 For a number of reasons, children with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse than others. For example children with disabilities may be more dependent on others for intimate care and may be less able to tell people about any abuse they experience. For these reasons, it is essential that rigorous safe recruitment procedures are in place, especially with regard to recruitment checks on volunteers and paid workers, whistle blowing policies, and having clear guidelines setting out acceptable behaviour by those working with children with disabilities. Training which covers the interface of disability and safeguarding, will also be required.

15.2 We are aware that children with EAL or refugee/asylum-seeking backgrounds may face communication and cultural barriers that could impede disclosure of abuse. Staff are trained to support these children with sensitivity and awareness, including using interpreters or culturally appropriate resources when necessary.

## **16.0 Child-on-child abuse**

Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or financial abuse, or coercive control exercised between children, and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider associations.

We are aware that safeguarding concerns can arise from external influences and peer contexts. As part of our safeguarding approach, we assess and respond to any risks that children may face outside of the nursery, including in their peer groups, online, or in the wider community.

Signs that a child may be suffering from child-on-child abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse and can include, but are not limited to:

- disengagement from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to their usual standard
- physical injuries,
- experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing,
  - becoming withdrawn and/or shy; experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and/or panic attacks; suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much
- broader changes in behaviour, such as alcohol or substance misuse
- changes in appearance and/or acting in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age
- abusive behaviour towards others.

This list is not exhaustive, and if a child displays these signs, it does not necessarily indicate abuse. Staff must be alert to behaviour that might cause concern and think about what the behaviour might signify. Children should be encouraged to share with them any underlying reasons for their behaviour and, where appropriate, staff might need to engage parents/carers to understand the context more fully. Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for his/her age or stage of development, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour and, if so, what the concern is and how the child can be supported going forwards.

Staff must inform the DSL of any such behaviour.

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation etc. This is a matter of professional judgement. If one child causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a child's behaviour as abusive if:

- there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the children concerned; or
- the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or

There are concerns about the intention of the alleged child. If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim or to exploit them, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused. Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. It is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate

support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. It is also important that other children, and school staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

Further detailed information is provided in DFE's advice: Part Five of KCSiE **2025**

## **17.0 Safer Recruitment**

17.1 All appointments follow safer recruitment practices as outlined in KCSiE 2025.

17.2 Interview panels include at least one person who has completed Safer Recruitment training.

17.3 Employment is conditional on satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

17.4 A Single Central Record (SCR) is maintained and regularly reviewed.

## Appendix 1: Child Protection Disclosures – What to do

1. **Listen** – be receptive, stay calm and reassuring, repeat the child's words.
2. **Don't** – ask leading questions or press for information.
3. **Questions** - use questions like who, where, what and when.
4. **Tell** – the child he/she is not to blame.
5. **Believe** – tell the child you believe them.
6. **Affirm** – tell them they were right to tell you and you are glad they have. They have been strong and brave to tell you.
7. **Never** – tell a child you will keep what they have told you secret.
8. **Refer** – tell the child you must tell other people to help. Tell the named person for child protection in your nursery and follow procedures.
9. **Follow up** – make arrangements to speak to the child at a later date if they wish.
10. **Record** – write down what the child has told you as soon as possible. Add to CPOMS.