

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

(including managing allegations and allegations of abuse against a staff member)

Policy Statement

Longwick Pre-school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We regard the protection of children as paramount and is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers working within our setting. We ensure through safe recruitment practice, policies, procedures and training that all children are as safe from abuse as possible and that all suspicions of abuse are responded to promptly and appropriately within the specified timescales.

Our safeguarding policy takes into account the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) guidance and other publications, such as "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018".

Our pre-school aims to build positive relationships with all of our families, gaining trust and respect in order that we can offer support whenever needed. Our ratios are strictly adhered to and we aim for high quality interactions between staff and children in order to promote children's autonomy and self-esteem. The layout of our setting allows for constant supervision and no child is left alone with staff in a one to one situation without being within sight or earshot to others whilst inside the pre-school setting.

During outdoor play children are taken to the toilet inside the hall by one member or staff when needed, the lead practitioner or deputy leader is always made aware of who has been taken to the toilet and by whom. Where possible we try to take more than one child at a time.

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the meet the above requirements. Longwick Pre-school is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Our designated members of staff who co-ordinates child protection issues are:-

Lisa Lowles (Manager) and Julia Lineham (Deputy)

Our designated member of the committee who co-ordinates child protection issues is:-

Sophie Marshall (Treasurer)

This person will be the designated person if an allegation of abuse is made of the Leader or Deputy Leader of the setting.

- Parents are made aware of the settings complaints procedure and are able to access our settings complaints record either in our policies folder or on the main notice board.
- A current OFSTED poster citing Ofsted's telephone number and address will be displayed at all times at the entrance to the setting on an A-frame.
- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children – such as Safeguarding Children training opportunities and sufficient ratios.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Staff are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children.
- We have termly supervision meetings where continued suitability is checked.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the **DBS** before posts can be confirmed.
- All staff/volunteers and students on placements do not carry a mobile phone on their person and have to go into a designated area to use their mobile phone if necessary. Mobile phones are kept in a locked secure box away from the main setting area in the kitchen. The pre-school mobile phone is the **ONLY** phone permitted in the hall area and is used to take pictures of the children and of their participation in events organised by us. These are shared on the pre-school's private, closed parent Facebook page.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
These are:-
 - We are the sole users of the village hall when the pre-school is running except for Tuesdays and Fridays each week (1pm-3pm) when pre-school uses the 'Platinum Room' situated in the same building. This smaller meeting room has no direct access to or from the main hall and the corridor door and kitchen doors are locked accordingly. A risk assessment has been written for when the toilets need to be accessed by staff and children when using the Platinum Room.
 - All doors into the setting are locked and can only be opened by staff members
 - Unknown people are not admitted into the setting unless by prior arrangement and under the supervision of the caretaker and the setting leader (e.g. service engineers on very rare occasions)
- We have a statutory obligation to inform OFSTED and LADO of any allegations made against anyone in our organisation whether the incident is alleged or committed.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable group's act 2006 requires that we refer the names of individuals considered unsuitable to work with children to the **DBS** (Disclosure and Barring Service).

Longwick Pre-school is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents 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).

Responding to Suspicions of Abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms:-
 - **Physical**
 - **Emotional**
 - **Sexual**
 - **Neglect**
 - **Child Sexual Exploitation**
 - **Female Genital Mutilation**
 - **Domestic Violence**

- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people/students/apprentices 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 a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent the staff member who has noticed or been informed of any suspected abuse will make a dated record of the details of the concern and discuss what to do with the designated person as named above in 'procedures'. Information will be recorded in our child protection incident book and kept in a secure place.
- We will refer concerns to the local authority First Response Team and will co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 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/apprentices or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives 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;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
 - the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the setting's safeguarding file (not child's developmental record) which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The manager acting as the Designated Person is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- All records will be signed, dated and kept in a 'safe' file in a locked filing cabinet in a locked cupboard.

Referrals

Making a referral to the local authority social care team:-

- We follow guidance given by Buckinghamshire Council. This is based on 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015' (HMG 2006).
- We keep a copy of this document alongside procedures set down by our Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- We have a telephone number of First Response on our noticeboard for the settings use and if parents need to use this number.

The Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership have published guidance called The Continuum of Need which helps us to identify when a child may be in need of additional support and this is described over 4 levels of need.

- **Level 1** – children whose needs are met within universal services
- **Level 2** – children with additional needs showing early signs of vulnerability requiring early help.
- **Level 3** – children in need who require statutory or comprehensive support.
- **Level 4** – children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and need statutory/specialist support.

A copy of this document and guidance is displayed on the staff notice board in the main hall and a copy is kept in the Policy folder and all staff are aware of this information.

A referral to the First Response must be completed immediately if:

We believe that a child may be in need; that a child is being harmed or is likely to be harmed, or

Level 3 or Level 4 threshold is met. Any member of staff can make a referral by:

01296 383962

0800 999 7677 (Out of hours)

Go to <https://www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/reporting-a-concern/report-a-concern-professional/>

Secure Email: secure-cypfirstresponse2@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Any referral made should be **confirmed in writing within 24hours** using the Multi Agency referral form (MARF).

PREVENT DUTY

In accordance with the Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance> and Keeping Children Safe in Education <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

we have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

As a provider we will:-

- Protect children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies.
- Attend Training which gives staff the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism
- Ensure Children are kept safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet.
- Ensure Safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Informing Parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact unless it is felt that informing the parents will put the child in danger.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made into any alleged abuse.
- 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 BSCB.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the social workers will inform parents.

Liaison with other Agencies

- We will work within the BSCB (Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board) guidelines.
- We have the current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have a copy of the document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children':- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> for parents and staff to refer to if needed. All staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have contact names and numbers of relevant agencies if the need arises. These can be found in the 'Useful Contacts' at the end of this policy and on the setting notice board.
- We notify Ofsted (0300 123 1231) 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 allegation being made.

Allegations against a Staff Member or Volunteer

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the provision, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, or any other person working with the children, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments;
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or
 - inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the provision, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the

setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's designated officer (LADO) to investigate ASAP (within 24hrs). We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted within 14 days and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the owner/committee and the LADO agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the owner/committee will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, or left before an investigation can take place, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Longwick Pre-school is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Staff complete recognised safeguarding training as required every 3yrs but refreshers annually to keep knowledge up to date. Designated Safeguarding Officers complete the designated officer course every 2yrs following the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance. All certificates are kept on site.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be *strong, resilient and listened to* and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.

- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, 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 Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the First Response Team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care 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 Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Useful contacts

Buckinghamshire Council:-

First Response is a single point of contact for Buckinghamshire's Children's Social Care.

01296 383962

0800 999 7677 (Out of hours)

Go to <https://www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/reporting-a-concern/report-a-concern-professional/>

Secure Email: secure-cypfirstresponse2@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

All allegations against staff must be reported to Ofsted and to the Local Area Designated Officer

01296 382070

Secure email: secure-lado@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

The Early Years Designated Manager can provide advice and support in the event of an allegation or query/concern.

The Early Years Designated Manager for allegations against the childcare workforce:

Vanessa Mills

Deputy Early Years Designated Managers for allegations against the childcare workforce:

Tanya Page

Natalie Wrench

For advice or to raise a concern please contact a member of the team:

Designated email account: eyesafeguarding@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01296 387111

Buckinghamshire Family Information Service (BFIS)

01296 383065

9:00 am - 5:00 pm Mon – Fri Text 07786202920

familyinfo@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP)

Go to www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk/childrenpartnership/

External Services:

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

0870 000 3344

Go to www.ceop.police.uk

Child Protection and Sexual Crime Unit (Police)

01628 816935

Department for Education

0370 000 2288

Go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

01325 953 795

Go to www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

0808 800 5000

Go to: www.nspcc.org.uk Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Ofsted

0300 123 1231

Go to: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non-Statutory Guidance

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008)
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Date Policy Implemented *October 2011*

Signed *Alex Barter*

Name and Role *Alex Barter, Committee Management Chair*

Date of Last Review *November 2023*

Date of Next Review *November 2024*