

Safeguarding, Welfare Requirements & Child Abuse Policy

At Dinky Dales Nursery we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and give them the very best start in life. We intend to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped and to thrive and be safe from any abuse whatever form.

Our aims is to promote children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating a setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their language they speak at home, religious beliefs, cultural transitions and home background. We have a copy of '**What to do if you are worried a child is being abused**' in the policies and procedures file. We also have regard to the government's statutory guidance '**Working Together to Safeguard children 2018**' and '**Keeping children safe in Education 2023**'.

All staff are familiar of what to do if they have concerns, the duty manager and Designated Safeguard Lead or Deputy Safeguard Lead will be responsible for ensuring this policy is carried out throughout day to day running of the Nursery.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. In our setting, we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures. All staff have completed the 'Prevent Duty' qualification this is either in house or a separate qualification, so have excellent knowledge on how to handle any radicalisation situations. Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. **ALL** staff, students, any bank staff and visitors are made aware of and asked to adhere to, the policy.

The Legal Framework:

- The Children Act 1989, 2004 (Every Child Matters), 2006, 2014
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- Special Educational Needs, Code of practice 2001
- Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Working together to Safeguard children Act 2018
- Human rights act 1998
- Keeping children safe in Education 2019
- Children and Families act 2014
- The United convention on the rights of a child 1992
- The Children and social work act 2017
- The Education act 2002
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) 2021
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security act 2015
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early years, Education, and skills setting 2021
- Prevent Duty 2015

Exclude known abusers:

It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the Nursery that the position is exempt from the provisions of The Rehabilitation of Offenders act 1974. All applicants that work within the Nursery, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least one reference. All such references will be followed up. All applicants must hold a clear and in date DBS check. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought. If explanations are unsatisfactory details will be passed to the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub.

Staffing and Volunteering:

All appointments will be subjects to a probationary period (6 months) and will not be confirmed unless the Nursery manager is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children. A meeting will take place after these 6 months to determine whether the member of staff is suitable for the role at Dinky Dales Nursery Ltd. We will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognise symptoms of possible physical and sexual abuse, we do this through the Safeguarding training and reading the policy. All staff/students have undergone (or in the process) DBS disclosure (we use Capita), until we receive this no adult will be left unsupervised with the children, or their job confirmed.

Prevent abuse by means of good practice:

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups unless necessary in ratio. At Dinky Dales Nursery, all rooms are visible in case of any adult being left alone with children. An adult who need to take a child aside, for example nappy changing or to have a discussion about behaviour, will do so in the Nursery, another member of staff will cover their role to ensure that appropriate ratios are adhered to. The layout of the rooms will permit constant supervision of all children. Adults who have not been DBS checked will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet or to nappy change. Any updates regarding safeguarding for children in our care or government updates will be discussed at Staff meetings. Children will be encourage to develop a self of independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches. See code of practice which covers the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

Allegations implicating staff members:

If inappropriate behaviour is displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with children and an allegation against a staff member is made, the manager will ask the accused staff member to write what happened and also the person accusing the staff member to do the same. If the manager deems appropriate, the staff member accused will be suspended without pay while investigations are on-going. The manager will contact our Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Tel: 03003033892 or LADO@cumbria.gov.uk for allegations against those who work with children, within one working day. The procedures are available on the CSCP website: www.cumbriacscp.com . Ofsted will also be informed within 14 days. Cumbria Safeguarding hub, Tel: 03332401727 = referral.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in the circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children have the best outcome

Child abuse signs and symptoms:

Staff must be able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. All staff have completed appropriate and relevant Safeguarding training which are updated every 3 years (if applies to certificate).

Types of abuse and particular procedures followed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or more rarely, a stranger.

This could be an adult or adults, another child or children.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, advice for practitioners (2015), keeping children safe in education (2023) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) documents are accessible in the Nursery at all times.

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

Indicators of child abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

Emotional states:

- Fearful
- Withdrawn
- Low self-esteem.

Behaviour:

- Aggressive
- Oppositional habitual body rocking.

Interpersonal behaviours:

- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness to strangers including healthcare professionals
- Excessive clinginess, persistently resorting to gaining attention
- Demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent parental or carer disapproval
- Failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed
- Coercive controlling behaviour towards parents or carers
- Lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions
- Very young children showing excessive comforting behaviours when witnessing parental or carer distress.

Peer-on-peer abuse:

We are aware that peer-on-peer abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way we do for adults abusing children, and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area; to support for both the victim and the perpetrator, as they could also be a victim of abuse. We know that children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves.

Physical abuse:

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. All children can suffer injuries during their early years as they explore and develop. If an explanation of how a child received their injury doesn't match the injury itself or if a child's injuries are a regular occurrence or there is a pattern to their injuries, then we will report our concerns.

Fabricated illness

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. The parent or carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation; they may exaggerate a real illness and symptoms or deliberately induce an illness through poisoning with medication or other substances or they may interfere with medical treatments. Fabricated illness is a form of physical abuse and any concerns will be reported, in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM can also be known as Female Genital Cutting. FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother; and/or death (definition taken from the Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation).

The procedure may be carried out shortly after birth and during childhood as well as adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy and varies widely according to the community.

FGM is child abuse and is illegal in the UK. It can be extremely dangerous and can cause:

- Severe pain
- Shock
- Bleeding
- Infection such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- Organ damage
- Blood loss and infections
- Death in some cases

Any concerns about a child or family, will be reported to the children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse. We have a mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

All staff have completed in house or any other appropriate training, regarding FGM.

Breast ironing/flattening

Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear, or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage.

Breast Ironing/Flattening is a form of physical abuse and can cause serious health issues such as:

- Abscesses
- Cysts
- Itching
- Tissue damage
- Infection
- Discharge of milk
- Dissymmetry of the breasts
- Severe fever.

Any concerns about a child or family, will be reported to the children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse.

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. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be

used to facilitate offline abuse. Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Action must be taken if a staff member witnesses an occasion(s) where a child indicates sexual activity through words, play, drawing, has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters; or has an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or language, for their developmental age. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role-play area with their peers; drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words.

If a child is being sexually abused staff may observe both emotional and physical symptoms.

Emotional signs:

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clingy
- Regressing to younger behavior patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a carer
- Becoming worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures or acting out actions inappropriate for their age
- Using sexually explicit language.

Physical Signs:

- Bruises
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy

Any concerns about a child or family will be reported to the children's social care team.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) describes CSE as: where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

Signs and indicators may include:

- Physical injuries such as bruising or bleeding
- Having money or gifts they are unable to explain
- Sudden changes in their appearance
- Becoming involved in drugs or alcohol, particularly if you suspect they are being supplied by older men or women
- Becoming emotionally volatile (mood swings are common in all young people, but more severe changes could indicate that something is wrong)
- Using sexual language that you wouldn't expect them to know
- Engaging less with their usual friends

- Appearing controlled by their phone
- Switching to a new screen when you come near the computer
- Nightmares or sleeping problems
- Running away, staying out overnight, missing school
- Changes in eating habits
- Talk of a new, older friend, boyfriend or girlfriend
- Losing contact with family and friends or becoming secretive
- Contracting sexually transmitted diseases.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

If staff have any concerns regarding CSE or CCE, they will be reported in the usual way.

Emotional abuse

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) defines emotional abuse as '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, though it may occur alone.

Signs and indicators may include:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Neurotic behavior (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Appear unconfident or lack self-assurance.

Action will be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. Children may also experience emotional abuse through witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

Neglect:

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) defines Neglect as ‘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 caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child’s growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child’s needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at nursery. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Action will be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child.

County Lines:

The National Crime Agency (NCA) describe county lines as a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs from big cities into smaller towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of ‘deal line.’ Customers will live in a different area to where the dealers and networks are based, so drug runners are needed to transport the drugs and collect payment.

Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes and care homes.

Signs and indicators to be aware of include:

- Changes in the way young people you might know dress
- Unexplained, sometimes unaffordable new things (e.g. clothes, jewellery, cars etc.)
- Missing from home or schools and/or significant decline in performance
- New friends or relationships with those who don't share any mutual friendships with the victim or anyone else
- May be carrying a weapon
- Receiving more texts or calls than usual
- Sudden influx of cash, clothes or mobile phones
- Unexplained injuries
- Significant changes in emotional well-being
- Young people seen in different cars/taxis driven by unknown adults

- Young people seeming unfamiliar with your community or where they are
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement from school
- An increase in anti-social behaviour in the community
- Unexplained injuries
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks.

Keeley Morland (DSL) has completed training regarding County Lines included in online CSPC training.

Cuckooing:

Cuckooing is a form of county lines crime in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to criminally exploit them as a base for drug dealing, often in multi-occupancy or social housing properties. Signs that this is happening in a family property may be an increase in people entering or leaving the property, an increase in cars or bikes outside the home; windows covered or curtains closed for long periods, family not being seen for extended periods; signs of drug use or an increase in anti-social behaviour at the home. If we recognise any of these signs, we will report our concerns as per our reporting process.

If staff have any concerns regarding county lines/cuckooing they will be reported in the usual way.

Keeley Morland (DSL) has completed training regarding Cuckooing included in online CSPC training.

Contextual safeguarding:

As young people grow and develop they may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their family. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online.

As part of our safeguarding procedures we will work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to work together to safeguard children and provide the support around contextual safeguarding concerns.

Domestic Abuse / Honour Based Abuse / Forced Marriages:

We look at these areas as a child protection concern. Please refer to the separate policy for further details on this.

Extremism – the Prevent Duty:

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to safeguard at risk or vulnerable children under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and refer any concerns of extremism to the police (In Prevent priority areas the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support).

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. Radicalisation is the way a person comes to support or be involved in extremism and terrorism. It’s a gradual process so young people who are affected may not realise what’s happening.

Radicalisation is a form of harm. The process may involve:

- Being groomed online or in person
- Exploitation, including sexual exploitation
- Psychological manipulation
- Exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- The risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts

We have a Prevent Duty policy in place. Please refer to this for specific details.

All staff have completed in house or appropriate training regarding this.

Online Safety:

We take the safety of our children very seriously and this includes their online safety. Please refer to the Online Safety policy for further details.

Human Trafficking and Slavery:

Please refer to our Human Trafficking and Slavery policy for detail on how we keep children safe in this area.

Protecting adults throughout the setting from abuse, exploitation and mental health/wellbeing issues:

As part of our safeguarding procedures we will also ensure that staff and students are safeguarded from sexual exploitation. It is Dinky Dales Nursery's responsibility to not only protect children in our care from abuse or exploitation, however the staff, students, volunteers and parents also. To ensure that all adults are protected from this throughout the setting we should.

1. Provide a clear job description so everybody knows what is expected of them
2. Maintain focused goals for positive morale, so that staff get recognition for the goals they have achieved
3. Recognise their achievements and be positive
4. Provide the correct training and in depth policies so that all staff are aware of the day to day running of the setting and procedures that we follow
5. Give access to support. As a part of staff benefits at Dinky Dales Nursery- we have signed all staff up to sage employee benefits. These are benefits to allow staff to get a percentage of money off various stores and also allows 24/7 advice for mental health or health problems
6. Encourage communication. To support mental health throughout the setting, we have allocated a mental health and wellbeing officer- this is Jair Donaldson. We flourish as a team as we are very approachable, this helps staff talk to us about any problems to resolve them quickly and calmly

Up skirting:

Up skirting involves taking a picture of someone's genitals or buttocks under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or in order to humiliate, or distress, the individual. This is a criminal offence and any such action would be reported following our reporting procedures.

Child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB):

Child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB) can happen in families when there is a concept of belief in:

- Witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs)
- The evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context)
- Ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits, or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies
- Use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune.

Reporting Procedures:

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding/child protection concerns and suspicions of abuse. These concerns will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible.

- Staff will report their concerns to the DSL **Keeley Morland** (in the absence of the DSL they will be reported to the Deputy DSL) **Julie Procter, Jair Donaldson and Lauren Belford**.

- Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded and stored securely
- For children who arrive at nursery with an existing injury, a form will be completed along with the parent's/carers explanation as to how the injury happened. Staff will have professional curiosity around any explanations given, any concerns around existing injury's will be reported
- If appropriate, any concerns/or incidents will be discussed with the parent/carers and discussions will be recorded. This will be recorded on our minutes sheet (see attached) and signed by appropriate bodies. Parents will have access to these records on request in line with GDPR and data protection guidelines.
- If there are queries/concerns regarding the injury/information given, then the following procedures will take place:

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- Contact the Local Authority children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice immediately (Cumbria Safeguarding hub: 03332401727), or as soon as it is practical to do so. Everything regarding the allegations will be documented and secured in a locked filing cabinet, in the child's personal folder. If it is believed a child is in immediate danger, we will contact the police. If the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children then the DSL will follow the reporting allegations procedure (see below)
- Record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised
- Speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by LA children's social care team or Safeguarding hub)
- The designated safeguarding lead will follow up with the Local Authority children's social care team if they have not contacted the setting within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018). We will never assume that action has been taken.

Keeping children safe is our highest priority and if, for whatever reason, staff do not feel able to report concerns to the DSL or deputy DSL they should call the Local Authority children's social care team, the Police or the CSPC and report their concerns anonymously.

These contact numbers are displayed in the main office by the telephone for easy access to everyone in need. The numbers are as follows:

Cumbria Safeguarding hub- 03332401727

LADO- 03003033892

Early help officer- 03332401727

Rosamund Rowcroft- 07920296

Ofsted- 03001231231

Government helpline for extremism concerns- 02073407264

Police- 999

NSPCC Child protection helpline- 08088005000

Multi Agency, Safeguarding hub (Steven Kemp)- 07557210979

Abuse through observation and/or disclosure:

Abuse can be detected through regular observation in a variety of situations. The child should not be aware staff are observing them as it might change the way they react in situations. If abuse is suspected, staff must record the information as soon as possible on the Safeguarding record sheet and body map (attached) and inform the manager.

The report must include, and to be legally admissible, the report needs to be made within 48 hours of the disclosure:

- Name, age and address of child
- Parent/carers names
- Date, time and place of disclosure- must be objective
- Specify whether recording own concerns or someone else's
- Brief description of what caused the concerns, including incidents leading to your concern

- What the child was doing immediately prior to disclosure? What may have prompted the disclosure?
- Description of any physical signs. Use a body map to indicate where the signs are. Signs should be reported accurately without judgements being made as to their cause
- Description of any behavioural changes
- If the child has said anything, which has caused concern, EXACTLY, what the child said, using words the child has used- not what the staff thought they meant
- Has the parent given an explanation for any of the staff's concerns?
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, and the names of any other person present at the time
- Details of who you passed the information on to records, as with all records pertaining to the children, must be kept in a locked cabinet and accessible only to those concerned. Parents do have a right to see the records about their child, should they request to do so.

Along with recognising abuse through observation children could tell staff about the abuse, which could take the form of:

- A full disclosure: Child related all history of abuse including names
- A partial disclosure: Child only tells part of the story
- A direct disclosure: Child tells early years worker verbally or by using sign language what has happened
- An indirect disclosure: Child might disclose abuse indirectly through play

Staff must be aware of and able to recognise the different types of abuse disclosures. Should a child make a disclosure to a member of staff the staff should:

- Take allegations seriously
- Listen to the child
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling them
- Praise the child for surviving the abuse
- Don't question the child or ask for details
- Don't make value judgements about the abuser
- Don't promise confidentiality to the child
- Explain to the child what you are going to do next and that you will let the child know what happens

Policy intention:

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- Ensure all staff are able to identify the signs and indicators of abuse, including the softer signs of abuse, and know what action to take
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- Help children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion and role modelling
- Always listen to children
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.
- An approachable management for any staff to voice concerns

The nursery staff are aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Staff working on the frontline with children and families are often the first people to identify a

concern, observe changes in a child's behaviour or receive information relating to indicators of abuse. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for Children's Social Care, family support, health professionals including health visitors or the police. If someone rings the Nursery and claims to be a social care professional, asking for information regarding a child and we are not aware of who this person is; we will try and verify the individual by checking the child's individual file regarding all information about the child, if we are still not aware of who the person is we will take a contact number and then ring the Safeguarding hub. We will do this to double check verification and if so ring the number back and give all information necessary. Information SHOULD NOT be given out unless we have verification of who the person is. This could put the child or family in serious danger so all procedures necessary should take place. All staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed.

The nursery aims to:

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do, providing sensitive interactions that develops and builds children's well-being, confidence and resilience. We will support children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe, healthy and develop positive relationships
- Ensure staff are trained right from induction to understand the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children (peer on peer) through bullying or discriminatory behaviour.
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), isolated families and vulnerabilities in families; including the impact of toxic trio on children and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child; maintaining professional curiosity around welfare of children and share information, and seek the help that the child may need at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures, including thorough annual safeguarding newsletters and updates.
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the CSCP .
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest. Verification is always needed.
- Keep the setting safe online, we refer to 'Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations and use appropriate filters, checks and safeguards, monitoring access at all times and maintaining safeguards around the use of technology by staff, parents and visitors in the setting.
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the care of nursery staff.
- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children or living or working on the nursery premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities including the local authority.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of our safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by Cumbria Safeguarding.

We will follow our own local safeguarding partner's website or contacting the Safeguarding hub; and receive information about how to report an allegation and we would also inform Ofsted immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly. This includes:

- If as an individual you feel this will not be taken seriously or are worried about the allegation getting back to the person in question then it is your duty to inform the local authority children's social care team yourself directly
- The local authority children's social care team will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (local authority children's social care team, Ofsted) to determine how this will be handled
- The nursery will follow all instructions from the local authority children's social care team and Ofsted and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with local authority children's social care team support and advice
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation, Legal advice will be sought to ensure compliance with the law.
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police will also be informed.
- Founded allegations will be dealt with as gross misconduct in accordance with our disciplinary procedures and may result in the termination of employment, Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision along with notifying the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated.
- All safeguarding records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
- The nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated
- A return to work plan will be put in place for any member of staff returning to work after an allegation has been deemed unfounded. Individual support will be offered to meet the needs of the individual staff member and the nature of the incident; this may include more frequent supervisions, coaching and mentoring and external support.

Monitoring children's attendance:

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern.

We ask parents to inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all incidents of sickness absence should be reported to the nursery the same day so the nursery management are able to account for a child's absence.

This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children, by keeping us informed parents can help us to meet our statutory requirements and let us know that children are safe.

If a child has not arrived at nursery within **ONE HOUR** of their normal start time the parents will be contacted to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the emergency contacts numbers listed will be used to ensure all parties are safe. Staff will work their way down the emergency contact list until contact is established and we are made aware that all is well with the child and family. It is a parent's responsibility to keep their emergency contact details updated.

If contact cannot be established then we would assess if a home visit is required to establish all parties are safe. If contact is still not established, we would assess if it would be appropriate to contact relevant authorities in order to them to investigate further.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safe and well.

Looked after children:

As part of our safeguarding practice we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this we ask that we are informed of:

- The legal status of the child (e.g. whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order)
- Contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those with parental responsibility)
- The child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her
- The details of the child's social worker and any other support agencies involved
- Any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question.

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

We have named persons within the nursery who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinate child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), there is always at least one designated person on duty during the opening hours of the setting. The designated persons will receive comprehensive training at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year. Both Safeguarding leads have completed Level 1, 2 and 3 Safeguarding qualification on the CSPC website lead by Cumbrian Safeguarding professionals.

The nursery DSL's liaise with the local authority children's social care team, undertakes specific training, including a child protection training course, and receives regular updates to developments within this field.

They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge of the staff team with regular safeguarding updates.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) at the nursery is: Keeley Morland
Deputy DSL: Julie Procter, Jair Donaldson and Laurent Belford

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Ensure that the settings safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed and developed in line with current guidance; and develop staff understanding of the settings safeguarding policies

- Take the lead on responding to information from the staff team relating to child protection concerns
- Provide advice, support and guidance on an on-going basis to staff, students and volunteers.
- To identify children who may need early help or who are at risk of abuse
- To help staff to ensure the right support is provided to families
- To liaise with the local authority and other agencies with regard to child protection concerns
- Ensure the setting is meeting the requirements of the EYFS Safeguarding and welfare requirements
- To ensure policies are in line with the local safeguarding procedures and details
- Disseminate updates to legislation to ensure all staff are kept up to date with safeguarding practices

Early help services

- When a child and/or family would benefit from support but do not meet the threshold for Local Authority Social Care Team, a discussion will take place with the family around early help services.
- Early help provides support as soon as a concern/area of need emerges, helping to improve outcomes and prevent escalation onto local authority services. Sometimes concerns about a child may not be of a safeguarding nature and relate more to their individual family circumstances. The

nursery will work in partnership with parents/carers to identify any early help services that would benefit your child or your individual circumstances, with your consent, this may include family support, foodbank support, counselling or parenting services.

Mobile phones, cameras and social networking: See code and conduct for staff, students and volunteers policy.

Whistleblowing:

Qualifying disclosure of information where the worker reasonably believes (and it is the public interest) that one or more of the following matters is either happening has taken place or is likely to happen in the future.

- A criminal offence
- The breach of a legal obligation
- A danger to health and safety of an individual
- Risk or actual damage to the environment
- Deliberate attempt to conceal any of the above

If a worker is going to make a disclosure it should be made to the employer first, or if they feel unable to use the organisations procedure the disclosure should be made to a prescribed person so that employment rights are protected. Workers who 'blow the whistle' on wrongdoing in the workplace can claim unfair dismissal if they are dismissed or victimised for doing so. An employee's dismissal (or selection for redundancy) is automatically considered 'unfair' if it is wholly or mainly for making a protected disclosure. From 25th June 2013 if a case goes to tribunal and the tribunal thinks the disclosure was made in bad faith, it will have the power to reduce compensation up to 25%. Complaints that don't count as whistleblowing are personal grievances, unless your particular case is in public interest.

Your employer will listen to your concern and decide if any action is needed. You may be asked for further information. You must say straight away if you don't want anyone else to know it was you who raised the concern. You won't have a say in how your concern is dealt with.

If you're not satisfied with how your employer has dealt with your concern contact the Advisory, conciliation and arbitration service, the whistle blowing charity. You must raise any claim of unfair dismissal within 3 months of your employment ending.

A worker will have to show three things to claim PDA protection:

- That he or she made the disclosure
- That they follow the correct disclosure procedure
- That they were dismissed or suffered detriment because of making the disclosure.

Signed:

Role: Manager

Review date: September 2024