

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN / CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

We intend to create in our pre-school an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

In our setting we plan to provide an environment which ensures children are safe from potential abuse including bullying and will respond to any suspicion of potential abuse in a way that respects the child's rights and reinforces the adult's responsibilities to the children. All details of concerns, progress, case conferences etc, are confidential and will not be discussed with anyone not authorised to have this information.

In order to achieve this, we follow the following procedures:

Employment of staff

Before accepting potential workers at the Cottage Pre-school, whether paid or voluntary, they need to attend an interview, have proof of eligibility to work in the UK if necessary and identification i.e. birth certificate, marriage licence, or driving licence and 2 references will be obtained. They will also be asked to complete the requirements to obtain a DBS certificate and to work for a probationary period and until the DBS has been received staff members will not be left unsupervised with any child.

For Manager or Trustee roles, OFSTED are notified and EY2 form completed.

All adults working (voluntary or paid) in the pre-school must be aware of the fact that such work is exempt from the provision laid down in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Staff will be given an induction programme that includes child protection responsibilities and they will be offered ongoing training on the care and education of children. This in turn should help them, along with their experience they have, to recognise and respond to suspected abuse of children, whether physical, emotional, and sexual or as a result of neglect. We are committed to careful planning and where possible we will provide

activities that will enable children to develop an understanding of personal safety, express their fears and anxieties and name parts of the body in simple terms.

All staff should report any safeguarding concerns and information to the DSL below. Unregistered adults working at the Cottage Pre School will not be permitted to be alone with a child or children. We have an Accident / Incident Records, where records can be completed.

The Safeguarding Leads are Jo Poole and Michelle Evans

At all times refer to the Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures

<https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/page/contents>

This policy should be read alongside the guidance above.

Contact telephone numbers

Single Point of Advice (SPoA) 01323 464222

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

Ofsted 0300 123 1231

Emergency police 999

Non-emergency police 101

LADO

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/professionals/resources/lado/referrals/>

ADULTS

Where concerns/allegations relate to a staff member or volunteer, the following procedure will take place.

- **You must pass any concern to the safeguarding lead as soon as possible. Never leave until the next day. In their absence the Deputy Manager will become the lead person.**
- The safeguarding lead will make a decision about whether the allegation indicates that someone has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child or behaved in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children.

- If an allegation is made relating to the safeguarding lead then the trustees should be contacted, who will consult with another member of staff who has the training.
- In a serious allegation the adult involved will be suspended on full pay from the setting whilst an investigation into the allegation takes place and Ofsted informed.
- All concerns must be recorded on an incident form in the Child Protection Folder.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) oversees allegations about adults who work or volunteer with children. We offer advice to employers and agencies when an allegation has been made about a person, whether at work or in their private life.

Refer directly to the Single Point of Advice (SPoA) when a child is at risk of, or has suffered, significant harm and an adult who is working or volunteering with children has:

- harmed or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved in a way that suggests they may pose a risk to children

For other concerns about conduct, you can make a referral to the LADO.

- The safeguarding lead and trustees will collect and record all evidence and following the advice of the SPoA will carry out a full investigation.
- The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation to the conclusion.

CHILDREN

The DSL should be informed immediately if you suspect a child may have been subject to abuse. You should:

- Take notes if possible, during the disclosure on exact wording used by the child (however, **do not leave the child to go and get writing materials**)
- Record the disclosure or what you have observed on incident and welfare concern forms as soon as possible. Keep any original notes in the file.

- Do not ask leading questions.
- DSL will make a judgement on what, if any further action is deemed necessary.
- Any actions taken will be thoroughly documented on incident records and children's Chronology's.
- If at any time staff do not believe the DSL has performed their duty effectively, the staff member has the authority to seek advise themselves from SPOA.
 - All records will be confidential and kept safe.
- Any injury to a child on arrival must also be recorded as an existing injury and filed in the child's safeguarding folder.

**Reporting Procedures and making a referral
See Record Keeping below.**

- The police will be informed immediately if it is suspected a criminal offence has been committed.
- Safeguarding lead assesses the evidence to decide next stage.
- When a referral is to be made, the safeguarding lead will contact the SPoA and followed up by a written report within 24 hours.
 - a) Monitor situation through ongoing observations and staff discussions if general concern without concrete evidence. Where possible discuss concerns with parent.
 - b) Check with parents/carers to see if they have noticed any change in behaviour and seek explanations for any unexplained bruises or marks.
 - c) Inform parents/carers of any action taken.
 - d) If there is specific evidence to report. Where possible discuss actions with parent unless sexual abuse.

If the pre-school has concern for a child, the first person to share this with would normally be his/her parents/carers unless it would place the child in immediate harm. However, if believed or suspected a child has been abused then the following should be considered.

Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse.

1. The first concern is the child.
2. Children whose condition or behaviour has given cause for concern will be listened to reassured and helped to understand that they themselves are valued and respected and have not been at fault. Changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated.
3. Parents will normally be the first point of reference, but if they are not in a position to allay any legitimate anxieties, the matter will also be taken up with SPoA or attached Social Worker.
4. In exceptional circumstances, the SPoA may be the first point of reference.
5. All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know.

Types, signs and symptoms of abuse.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Physical abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back and wrists. Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries. These should also be logged and discussed with the Manager and DSL.

Female genital mutilation

This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups and there is now more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in England. FGM is illegal in the UK.

Fabricated illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The

signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness.

Child sexual abuse or sexual exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. These activities may involve physical contact or the production of sexual images or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Emotional abuse

The behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

Neglect

If a staff member has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold, starvation or failure to seek medical treatment, when required, on behalf of the child. Signs may include a child persistently arriving at Pre-school unwashed or unkempt.

Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief

Staff members should have awareness of signs of abuse that can be linked to faith and belief. There are many different faiths and beliefs that can present abusive behaviour towards children, some examples are outlined below:

- 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 muti 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.

Some signs that a child is being exposed to such faiths and beliefs can be similar to signs of different kinds of abuse, some to look out for are:

- A child's body showing signs or marks, such as bruises or burns, from physical abuse;
- A child becoming noticeably confused, withdrawn, disorientated or isolated and appearing alone amongst other children;
- A child's personal care deteriorating, for example through a loss of weight, being hungry, turning up to school without food or food money or being unkempt with dirty clothes and even faeces smeared on to them;
- It may also be directly evident that the child's parent does not show concern for or a close bond with them;
- A child's attendance at Pre-school becoming irregular.
- A child reporting that they are or have been accused of being evil, and / or that they are having the devil beaten out of them.
- A child made to wear some form of paraphernalia that could be of a religious nature.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Ofsted 'Registered Person' has overall legal responsibility for Safeguarding. If concerns relate to the 'Registered person'. Ofsted should be contacted following our whistle blowing policy.

- The Lead person for safeguarding is the Manager/Deputy Manager. All safeguarding concerns relating to allegations against staff and volunteers should be reported to this individual and recorded. If the concerns relate to the lead person then the Registered Person should be contacted.

Prevent abuse by means of good practice

1. Adults will not be left alone with individual children unless necessary for short periods.
2. Adults who have not received a relevant and up to date DBS check will not be left unsupervised or take children unaccompanied to the toilet.
3. Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them.
4. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
5. The layout of the playroom will permit supervision of all children.

Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers

This code of behaviour is for all volunteers and workers. The code makes it clear what is appropriate behaviour and what is not. A full explanation of this practice is detailed in our [Staff Protection Policy](#).

Record Keeping and Records Management

- All staff will make records in line with the guidance.
- The Children's Portal is an online system that enables professionals to submit forms securely online to ESCC's Children's Services recording system.
- The Lead Person will telephone the Single Point of Advice SPoA to notify them of a safeguarding concern and follow instructions on completion of the paperwork.
- Where concerns relate to an allegation against a member of staff, or volunteer the referral should include the child's name, address, gender and date of birth together with the full details of the complaint or allegation, including witness statements.
- All records will be held confidentially but will be shared with other agencies e.g. the police, children's social care, Ofsted, where this assists an ongoing investigation. Records will be held in line with the retention of records guidance and passed on to the receiving setting or school when the child moves on.

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.

1. Parents/carers are asked to report their child's absence and reason why as soon as possible, via phone call, email or tapestry. If the parent does not report it then a member of staff will contact the parent/carer after an hour since the session began.
2. All children's attendance will be monitored by all staff. Any child absence will be written down onto the absence sheet and then transferred to each child's individual file within the safeguarding files by the DSL. The date, child's name and reason for absence is recorded here.
3. Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's attendance, behaviour or physical condition on arrival, a new record will be set up, quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development.
4. Without comment or interpretation, where possible the exact words spoken by the child.
5. The dated name and signature of the recorder, counter signed by other adults involved.
6. Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people other than the named DSL's.

Liaise with other Bodies Information Sharing and Working with other Agencies

1. The pre-school operates in accordance with guidelines laid down by the registering authority.
2. Confidential records kept on children about whom the pre-school is anxious will be shared with SPoA with parental permission, unless it would cause further harm to the child and if the pre-school feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided.
3. The group will maintain ongoing contact with SPoA
4. The setting respects confidentiality at all times and complies with GDPR

5. However the setting will share information as part of its day to day work in order to safeguard and protect children from harm, but also has to work together to support families to improve outcomes for all. This may involve liaison with Police, Children's Social Care, participation in multi-agency meetings and serious case reviews, if required to do so.

Support families

1. The pre-school will do everything possible to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff in the group.
2. Where abuse at home is suspected, the pre-school will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.
3. Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with parents. With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount.

Commissioning and Procurement

Any external agencies visiting the premises must respect this setting's policies and procedures at all times. They are asked to read a summary of policies which is available in the entrance hall. They must also not discuss overheard conversations or information regarding children and families outside the setting. Any concerns regarding safeguarding must immediately be advised to the lead person or if it concerns relate to that member of staff the complainant must contact the LADO.

Breaches of this Safeguarding Policy by external contractors or visitors will be taken very seriously and appropriate action will be taken.

A separate Complaints Procedure and Whistle Blowing Policy exists and describes the actions which must be taken in these circumstances.

Training and Development

We are committed to ensuring all staff are qualified, have opportunities for professional development and have relevant up to date training in safeguarding children.

All new staff, volunteers and students will participate in an induction programme before taking up their duties and will be allocated an experienced member of staff to mentor them for the duration of the induction.

- All staff will be required to complete Safeguarding training consolidated by East Sussex County Council.
- The lead person will be required to complete the 'Designated Safeguard lead in a childcare setting' training
- All training must reflect the government requirements in conjunction with the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership training strategy and plans.
- The DSL is required to update their training every 2 years. All staff to refresh their knowledge annually.
- Staff supervision meetings will record discussions regarding continuing professional development and subsequent identification and planning of training to meet those needs.

Safeguarding PREVENT DUTY

As part of Cottage Pre-school's ongoing Safeguarding and Child Protection duties, we are fully behind the governments Prevent Duty

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

All childcare providers have a duty under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

At Cottage we build resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British Values. Ongoing training of staff will raise awareness of the Prevent Duty and how to deal with any issues they may see inside or outside the pre-school.

The Pre-school will make sure any discussions are suitable for the age and maturity of the children involved. See also the Equal Opportunity Policy.