



Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

Statement of intent

We work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children to give them the very best possible start in life. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting their welfare through building a safer organisational culture, all staff students and volunteers have a responsibility for safeguarding children by being vigilant and identifying and reporting any safeguarding concerns, in line with this and supporting policies.

In relation to children and young people, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined in 'Working together to safeguard children' (2023) as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

Child protection is an integral part of safeguarding children and promoting their overall welfare. In this policy, child protection shall mean:

- The activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains in line with statutory guidance. Its effectiveness is monitored through staff and stakeholder reviews, appraisals and feedback to ensure appropriate knowledge and awareness is in place.

We 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.

Aim of the policy

Our overall aim is to ensure children in our care are kept safe from harm through implementing this policy, ensuring all staff, students and volunteers have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their duties and are confident to implement this policy on an ongoing basis.

Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

We do this by:

- Creating an environment that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- Encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- Enabling children to have the self-confidence and the age-appropriate vocabulary and communication skills to keep themselves safe.
- Helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- Working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.
- Being alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), isolated families and vulnerabilities in families and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Liaison with other bodies/safeguarding documents

- We work within the North Somerset Children's Safeguarding Partnership guidelines.

- We have regard to the document '*What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners*' (2015) and this is accessible to parents and staff.
- We have regard to the Government's statutory guidance '*Working together to Safeguard Children*' (2023).
- We understand that the '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' guidance although not statutory for childcare providers other than schools, can be helpful in developing good safeguarding practice.
- We take into account the '*Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales*'.
- If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay (This means the North Somerset's Children's Services via the Front Door and, in emergencies, the Police).
- We notify Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person, living working or looking after children on our premises. This is done within 14 days of these allegations.
- If a referral is to be made to Children's Services, we will act under the guidance on the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership website in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time

Staffing and volunteering

- Our designated safeguarding lead takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the setting. Our designated safeguarding lead is: Elizabeth Braywood
- Our named designated safeguarding deputy is Sandie Simms. The addition of this role ensures that there is always someone appropriately trained during opening hours for staff to discuss concerns with.
- The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for liaising with North Somerset's Front Door and the Police.
- The designated safeguarding lead will provide support, advice and guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue within the setting as required.
- The designated safeguarding lead will keep up to date with good practice and national requirements for safeguarding and child protection.
- The designated safeguarding lead will undertake the appropriate level of child protection training (in line with the criteria set out in annex C of the EYFS) to equip them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect and take the lead in responding to safeguarding concerns. This will be kept up to date.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed.

- We abide by EYFS requirements in respect of references, criminal records checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service. Our Safer recruitment policy outlines this in more detail.
- Suitability checks for staff, volunteers, students and others (including those living or working on the premises) are carried out to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children. This includes recording information about staff qualifications, checks and vetting processes and the carrying out of staff identity checks and where relevant asking about those adults a staff member lives with (Childcare on domestic premises).
- We inform staff, volunteers, students and others of their requirement to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with babies and children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). A reminder of this requirement is within their regular 1:1 or Supervision cycle.
- If we become aware of relevant information which may lead to disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the children.
- We will not employ or continue to employ a person who has a disqualification.
- We will meet our disqualification requirements within the Early Years Foundation Stage, Statutory Framework, Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements.
- We do not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, including a criminal record check through the Disclosure Barring Service to have unsupervised contact with the children being cared for.
- Students on a paid placement will follow the same safer recruitment process we use for all staff.
- For students on a placement from a school or college that are over the age of 16, we will obtain checks that have been undertaken by the training provider prior to the student starting their placement. The training provider has a responsibility to share appropriately any information it holds on the student before the student begins any placement.
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern and will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring team if the two main conditions of referral have been met.
- We will notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the premises where childcare is provided. The disqualification of an employee could be an instance of a significant event.
- We will give Ofsted the details relating to disqualification laid out in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements (2025).
- Ofsted will be informed within 14 days of the date that as a provider we are aware of the information.

- As part of our induction process, all new workers will receive basic training on this Safeguarding children and child protection policy so they have the necessary knowledge and skills to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Within the first week of induction, all staff will receive a copy of this policy. It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure that the new staff member understands it and is able to follow it.
- All staff will be required to read this policy, the document 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' and familiarise themselves with the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership website during their induction. They will be asked to confirm they have read and demonstrate their understanding of the contents. They will be required to read and confirm understanding of the contents of the above documents annually.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting plus checking their identification and recording this.
- We take all reasonable security steps to ensure we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the babies and children.
- All staff must demonstrate that they know how to make a complaint and understand policies on whistleblowing and allegations against other staff.
- On occasion, inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour by staff or other adults is observed but does not meet the threshold for significant harm. This may be classed as a 'low-level' concern, although this does not mean that it is insignificant. (See our Staff conduct and Low-level concerns policies for full details)

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of babies and children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When babies and 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.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the setting's designated safeguarding lead. The information is stored in the child's personal file. The practitioner will follow the guidance on the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership website in responding to concerns.
- Staff in the setting must take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- Absences are followed up in a timely manner and highlighted to Children's Services where there have been other concerns, or a family has Social Worker involvement. Our Absence policy details how we monitor and respond to absences.

- Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from:
 - Neglect
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
 - Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse or prejudice to the family
 - Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
 - Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
 - Child sexual exploitation and trafficking
 - Issues that may be specific to a local area or population
 - Domestic violence
 - Female genital mutilation
 - Fabricated or induced illness
 - Poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children
 - Other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children

Safeguarding is not just about protecting babies and children from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- Children's health and safety and well-being

- The use of reasonable force
- Meeting the needs of babies and children with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Educational visits
- Intimate care and emotional well-being
- Online safety and associated issues appropriate arrangements to ensure children's security, taking into account the local context.

Making a referral to Children's Services

We follow the guidance on the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership website when contacting the Front Door with any concerns.

- If it is believed a child is in immediate danger, we will contact the police.
- If we are unsure about a situation involving a child or family, we will contact the consultation line for advice from the on-duty social worker on 01275 888 690
- If we want to report a concern outside of the hours 9am to 5pm, we will call the Out of hours emergency duty team on 01454 615 165
- We will report a concern by contacting Care Connect on 01275 888 808. Care Connect is North Somerset's single point of access. Care Connect will pass on the concern to be reviewed by the Front Door who will respond within 48 hours.
- We will use a request for support form, available on the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership website to refer a situation to Children's Services. The request for support form will be received by the Front Door and the information will be reviewed.
- We use the effective support for children, young people and families' to support our decision making

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff offers reassurance to the child and:

- Listens to the child
- If appropriate, gives reassurance that she or he will take action
- If it's necessary to ask the child any questions the 'TED' (tell, explain, describe) model will be used
- Only ask questions for clarification and avoid asking any questions that may suggest a particular answer

Record Keeping

The setting keeps appropriate records to support the early identification of children and families which would benefit from early help. Factual records are maintained in a chronological order with parental discussions. Records are reviewed regularly by the DSL to look holistically at identifying children's needs

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate and in line with guidance of the Children's Services with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

Following a disclosure, staff make a written record as soon as possible of:

- The child's name
- The child's address
- The age of the child
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure
- The exact words spoken by the child as far as possible, but not whilst the child is talking
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported to, with date and time
- The names of any other person present at the time
- Action taken and by whom

These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file. They must be highlighted to the designated safeguarding lead so that next steps can be actioned in a timely manner.

All Written records are held securely.

Our Data protection and confidentiality policy will be applied with regards to any information received from an individual. Only persons involved in the investigation should handle this information although any investigating body will have access to all information stored in order to support an investigation

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance from Children's Services does not allow this.

This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

Sharing information is an intrinsic part of any practitioner's role.

We follow the document 'Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' (July 2018)

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 North Somerset Safeguarding Partnership.

Sexualised behaviour

Whilst every family has its own set of names for parts of the body, at our setting we will use the terminology 'private parts' when referring to the areas covered by underwear. We will support children's understanding about keeping themselves safe by introducing the NSPCC Pants campaign.

Any observations of sexual behaviour that isn't age-expected will be recorded and followed up in the same way as other suspicions of abuse.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents and staff know how to complain about staff or volunteers within the setting, including an allegation of abuse.
- All staff and volunteers are made aware of the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- We follow the guidance of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a baby/child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken place, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the North Somerset LADO and Early Years Team Safeguarding lead.

- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by the North Somerset LADO in conjunction with the police and Ofsted.
- Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay 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.
- We notify Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children on our premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). This will be done as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the very latest within 14 days of the allegation.
- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at least within 14 days of the incident.

Training

- The designated safeguarding lead and deputy will attend child protection training that meets the criteria outlined in annex C of the EYFS, this will include updating training every two years and at least one of these practitioners will attend North Somerset Early Years Team's Designated Lead Safeguarding Clusters.
- All staff are trained to understand and implement our safeguarding policy and procedures in line with the criteria in annex C of the EYFS
- The training will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. This will also include inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- All staff have completed the government Prevent duty online training.
- The designated safeguarding lead will attend the local authority 'workshop to raise awareness of prevent' and will cascade the information to all staff.
- All training will be kept up to date, in line with EYFS requirements.
- All staff will have safeguarding updates, at least annually if not more frequently. These may be done by newsletter, staff meeting, in-service training or by being given an opportunity to read updated safeguarding documentation.

Early Years Foundation Stage/ Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme at a developmentally appropriate level for our children.
- We actively promote children's safety through our activities to enable children to feel safe.

- We aim to promote positive adult: child relationships and positive attachments through the key person system.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted so that they feel emotionally safe in our setting and grow to be strong, resilient, and listened to and develop an understanding of why and how to keep themselves safe.
- Children are provided with opportunities and experiences which foster a culture of mutual value and respect through having positive regard for each other's heritage arising from their colour, gender, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- Positive behaviour is promoted consistently. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques and creative alternative strategies that are specific to the needs of individual children.
- Staff are experienced in managing risks and discussing these with the children involved.

Support to families

- The setting believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The setting makes clear to parents its 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 children's social care department.
- The setting continues 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 social care department in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation.
- We may be asked to participate further in assessment of the child through an early help assessment, a child in need assessment or a child protection enquiry. We will actively contribute to this process which will be led by a Social Worker
- 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 policy and only if appropriate under the guidance of the North Somerset Safeguarding Partnership.

Early Help and Early Help Assessment

Early Help is a way to find out about what is happening for a child and offer support for them and the family. It offers a 'joined up' approach to supporting the family.

Early help assessments normally happen when a child or young person would benefit from some additional help – either because their needs have become more complex or because the needs are more than can be met by one agency.

This will be where;

- Children have a multiple range of needs
- Children whose health, social development or educational attainment may be impaired without support
- Children are vulnerable and living with considerable adversity
- There is a clear need for co-ordinated multi-agency response.
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It could be that the parent requests this or that a professional working with the child suggests that extra help may be useful. The earlier an Early Help Assessment is completed the sooner extra support can be explored. The assessment can only be carried out with parental agreement.

More information can be found on the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership website

<https://n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/children-young-people-families/early-help>

Prevent Duty

We Rainbow Preschool see the prevent duty as an integral part of the safeguarding process and keeping children and babies safe. We are alert to any reason for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. This includes awareness of the expression of extremist view.

Protecting children from radicalisation is seen as part of our wider safeguarding duties.

All safeguarding concerns will be documented including any that may be relating to radicalisation and our full Safeguarding process will be followed.

Where there are concerns over a child's pattern of attendance (which may or may not relate to radicalisation concerns) this will be documented, and the parent will be informed and asked to sign the documentation.

We can build children's resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British Values and enabling children to challenge extremist views.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

We are aware of the signs that a girl has had or is at risk of having FGM. It is possible that this may be highlighted to us through nappy changing or intimate care procedures, behaviour of the child or family or highlighted verbally. We would never examine a child. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting harmful consequences. If we believe this has taken place, we will contact Children's Services.

Procedure for checking the identity of visitors

- If the visitor or prospective parent is unknown to the setting, we check their credentials and reason for visit before allowing them to enter the setting
- We ask for at least 1 form of identification to verify who they are and, if appropriate, which organisation they work for (e.g. official identity badge, driving licence, bankcard which shows signature)
- If we require further verification, we will contact the main landline telephone number of their organisation and ask to be put through to the visitor's manager
- We ensure that the visitor or prospective parent is supervised whilst we are carrying out these checks, and throughout their visit
- We record that ID has been checked, together with the visitor's name, reason for visit, time and date in our visitor's book/log. The visitor or prospective parent is required to sign the book/log and their signature is then checked against their identification
- If the visitor or prospective parent is known to the setting, we check that they have a valid reason to enter. They are then required to complete the visitor's book/log and will not be left unsupervised in the setting.

Mobile phones, electronic devices and cameras

We have a separate policy that covers the use of mobile phones, electronic devices and cameras in our setting. We take into consideration the UK Council for Internet safety guidance; *Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations*.

Date Policy adopted

Signature

Policy review date

This has been produced in partnership with the NSSCP.