



## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The safeguarding of children and young people at Great Doddington Village Preschool is our first priority. We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse and harm. Everyone involved in the care of children has a role to play in their protection. If staff, committee members or volunteers have any reason to suspect that a child in their care is being abused or neglected, or is likely to be abused or neglected, they have a duty of care to take action swiftly on behalf of the child.

We will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur. Our safeguarding procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP).

For further information, please see our:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy.
- Accident and Injury Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Complaints Handling
- Intimate Care Policy
- Lost Children Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is based on the legal frameworks of the Education Act 2002, the Children's Act 1989/2004, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, The Protection of Children Act 1978, 1994, 2008, and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. This legislation provides the legal framework for how we manage safeguarding issues at preschool.

We are committed to ensuring our staff and Committee members have access to ongoing professional development and through online training and in person staff meetings. All those connected with the preschool must keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

The preschool's **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)** are the **Manager, Laura Goodwin and the Deputy Manager, Tamsin Breen**. The DSL coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (e.g., Early Help Support, MASH and/or the designated officer for the local authority via the NSCP, and Ofsted).

**IN AN EMERGENCY:** If a child is in immediate danger, left alone or missing - call **POLICE AND/OR AMBULANCE 999**. If a child is at immediate risk call **MASH** on **0300 126 7000** and make a telephone referral. This will subsequently be required to be put in writing.

**NON-EMERGENCIES:** If there is no immediate danger the level of need and risk needs to be established - refer to 'Thresholds Guidance'. If advice about levels of needs and whether to make a referral is required contact **MASH** on **0300 126 7000**.

In all other circumstances to make a referral to MASH, complete the online referral form: <https://www.nctrust.co.uk/help-and-protection-for-children/Pages/report-a-concern.aspx>

### Forms of child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect a child from harm. The following are some signs often associated with particular types of child abuse and neglect. These types of abuse are more often found in combination than alone.

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Physical abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, or non-contact activities such as showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Female Genital Mutilation and Child Sexual Exploitation also come under this.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. Neglect can involve a failure to:
  - provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
  - protect a child from physical and emotional harm
  - ensure adequate supervision
  - allow access to medical treatment

### When abuse is suspected outside the preschool

Staff need to be vigilant at all times and take note of any of the following:

- Significant change in children's behaviour
- Deterioration in children's general well-being
- Unusual injuries such as bruising. Parent/carer will be asked to give an explanation and staff will record on a Pre-existing Injury form. Any injuries not consistent with explanation will be reported to DSL.
- Children's comments which give cause for concern
- Acts of self-harm.
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by any adult on the premises

### Where safeguarding action may be required

Point 14 of Inspecting Safeguarding in the Early Years, details the range of issues for when safeguarding action may be required. Some wider safeguarding issues to note include:

- Female Genital Mutilation

FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genital organs or any other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is most often carried out on young girls aged between infancy and 15 years old.

- Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) 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. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

- Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

- Online Safety

Online safety refers to the act of staying safe online. It is also commonly known as internet safety, e-safety and cyber safety. It encompasses all technological devices which have access to the internet from PCs and laptops to smartphones and tablets. Being safe online means individuals are protecting themselves and others from online harms and risks which may jeopardise their personal information, lead to unsafe communications or even effect their mental health and wellbeing.

- Domestic Violence

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

The new definition states that any child who witnesses domestic violence against another person, is also a victim of domestic abuse.

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

Child on child abuse (previously known as peer-on-peer abuse) can be motivated by perceived differences e.g., on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences. It can result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim. Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g., Significant disruption in their own lives, exposure to domestic abuse, or witnessing or suffering abuse, educational under-achievement, being involved in crime. It should be recognised that child on child abuse is harmful to both the perpetrator and the victim. See our Anti-Bullying Policy for more information regarding child-on-child abuse.

### **Abuse in children with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND)**

Children with SEND can be more vulnerable to abuse. Staff are aware that there may be barriers for children with SEND when reporting abuse: e.g., Impairment related barriers such as dependency on carers for personal assistance, impaired capacity to resist/avoid abuse, communication impairments and an inability to understand what is happening or to seek help.

### **Private fostering**

If a child under the age of 16 (or under the age of 18 if disabled) is living in a private arrangement with someone who is not their parent, stepparent, grandparent, aunt/uncle or adult sibling, for 28 days or more, then the local authority must be notified, as this is likely to be a 'private fostering' arrangement. We are aware of their responsibilities regarding private fostering and routinely ask, record and maintain up to date records of who has parental responsibility for each child. If we become aware of a child living with someone other than a close family member, we will notify MASH on 0300 126 7000 or by making an online referral at the Northamptonshire Children's Trust Website

### **Promoting awareness among staff**

We will promote awareness of child abuse issues through our staff training. We will ensure that:

- The DSL has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
- All staff have a copy of the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect.
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse
- All staff are familiar with the 'What to Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused'
- All staff are familiar with the Safeguarding Policies and procedures - Thresholds Guidance (NSCP), and Working together to safeguard children (HM Gov).
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Prevent Duty and have accessed and completed the Pathways to Extremism online training.
- All staff have Safeguarding training at least once every two years and join in with monthly staff meetings where Safeguarding refresher training is regularly on the agenda.

### **Staff, committee and volunteers**

Safer recruitment practices are followed for the hiring of all staff and volunteers (in particular DBS & reference checks prior to any staff joining the team). Committee members also have DBS clearance and are known to Ofsted to ensure suitability checks can be made. Volunteers do not work unsupervised. All visitors are required to sign in and out of preschool. No unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. All staff and Committee members have completed the required Safeguarding update training.

### **Confidentiality**

We will comply with the Data protection act in how we use and store information on children and their families, however, we have the right to pass on information to third parties if we feel a child is at 'risk' (such as: the police, MASH via the NSCP or to transitioning providers as children move on).

We ensure the safe storage of all child protection information. All records are kept securely locked in the preschool office in a safe accessible by code. Records will contain personal and confidential information and will be destroyed securely after they have reached the end of their retention period. Electronic copies will be securely deleted, and hard copies disposed of as confidential waste.

The transfer of Child Protection Records to other providers is done face to face and information is made available to the DSL at the new provision the child will be attending. We make sure a record of the information passed on has been kept at preschool until the child reaches 25 years of age.

If a recording device is lost it must be reported to the DSL immediately.

### **Allegations against staff**

Staff members working at Great Doddington Village Preschool are privileged to be able to work closely with children and their families, forming warm and caring relationships. However, because of the nature of their work, staff are also vulnerable to allegations of child abuse. By having appropriate policies and procedures in place, and following the principles of good practice the preschool not only protects the children but also the adults. For their part, staff need to avoid putting themselves in situations that may lead to allegations being made against them. See Safeguarding Procedures and Whistleblowing Policy for how to report an allegation against a member of staff.

### **Legislation and useful documents/information:**

- EYFS 2021
- The Children Act 1989/2004
- Education Act 2002
- The Protection of Children Act 1978, 1994,2008
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (HM Gov)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Information Sharing 2018
- Thresholds Guidance 2018
- Serious case reviews (NSCP)
- What to do if you think a child is being abused. 2015
- [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- Prevent Duty 2016 (Revised)

### **Contact numbers**

**MASH:** 0300 126 7000 (8-6 Mon -Fri); Out of hours 01604 626938

**Early Help Support:** <https://www.nctrust.co.uk/help-and-protection-for-children/protecting-children-information-for-professionals/Pages/early-help.aspx>

**Designated Officer:** Email: [LADOConsultations@nctrust.co.uk](mailto:LADOConsultations@nctrust.co.uk) Telephone: 01604 362 993 or 07831 123193

<http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/health-professionals/taking-action/designated-officer/> - to download the DO referral form which should be emailed to MASH at [MASH@nctrust.co.uk](mailto:MASH@nctrust.co.uk)

**Ofsted:** 0300 123 1231. To notify Ofsted about a significant change or event follow this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-a-serious-childcare-incident>

**Disclosing and Barring Service:** 03000 200 190 Email: [customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk)

**NSPCC:** 0808 800 500

## Safeguarding procedures

All those who work with children at Great Doddington Village Preschool (staff, volunteers and Committee Members), will hereto be referred to as adults. The procedures set out the requirements for what to do if an adult suspects a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse or harm.

### **Concerns regarding a child's welfare**

#### **If a child makes a disclosure, you should:**

- Reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to talk to you.
- Listen to the child but not question them.
- Give reassurance that the staff member will take action.
- Record the incident as soon as possible, and report to DSL.

#### **If another adult raises concerns, you should:**

- Encourage them to contact MASH directly. If they do not do so, explain that we are obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.
- Record the incident as soon as possible, and report to DSL.

If an adult believes a child is being treated in a way that is detrimental to their welfare, or if their living arrangements are not suitable and may be causing harm, it is their responsibility to pass on all concerns to the DSL. The DSL will:

- Ensure a record of concern is written down and follow the emergency or non-emergency reporting procedure.
- Arrange to meet with the parents/carers to discuss any concerns and see what can be put in place to help, at a preschool level. Use the Signs of Safety Toolkit to find out what is working well and to pinpoint exactly where to target support.
- If applicable, speak to parents about Early Help and how the service can be used to support families and with parental permission and where necessary, start the Early Help Assessment process
- At all times, the DSL will refer to the Thresholds Guidance to establish the right course of action at the right time.
- Following the Continuum of Need, the DSL will ensure children and families receive the right levels of support for their circumstances. These are
  - Universal support
  - Early Help
  - Targeted support
  - Statutory intervention

At induction, it is explained to new parents, that there is help available to them if they need support, and that it is part of our responsibilities to ensure that they receive that help. Parents are made aware of the Early Help team, so that if they have any worries themselves, they can ask for help from the preschool.

### **Recording an incident**

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure will be recorded as soon as possible after the event. The incident should be recorded on a Reporting a Safeguarding Incident form, which can be found in the Safeguarding Concerns file.

The record should include:

- Date of the disclosure or of the incident causing concern.
- Date and time at which the record was made.
- Name and date of birth of the child involved.
- A factual report of what happened. If recording a disclosure, it is essential to use the child's own words.
- Name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

In addition:

- Accounts of any meetings with parents/carers.
- Any action taken, by whom and dated.
- Details of resulting changes made to procedures and policies.

The record must be given to the DSL who will decide whether they need to contact make a referral to MASH or contact other agencies. If other staff feel that the incident has not been adequately followed up, they may refer to MASH themselves.

### **Reporting and referrals**

In the event of a disclosure, it is only necessary to report information to those who need to know.

At preschool, the DSLs should always be aware of a reported incident. It may also be necessary to report incidents to:

- MASH
- Designated Officer
- Police
- Ofsted
- Public Liability Insurance

All child protection information is stored in the preschool office and is kept in a locked safe at all times. Referrals need to be made to the Local Authority where the child lives. It is the responsibility of the DSL to obtain details of the Local Authority (LA) (if it is not the LA of the setting.)

### **Allegations against a member of staff**

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against an adult working on the premises:

- The allegation will be recorded on an "Allegations against a member of staff" document.
- Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The allegation must be reported to the Designated Officer (DO) within 24 hrs and to Ofsted within 14 days. The DO will advise if other agencies (e.g., police) should be informed, and the DSL will act upon the advice.
- Following advice from the DO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.
- We will meet our responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been, had they not left the setting first) because they have harmed or put a child at risk of harm
- See the Whistleblowing Policy for more information

### **Attendance**

Attendance at preschool is not compulsory, however, we have a duty of care to ensure that children registered to attend our setting are safe and well. We ask parents to inform preschool of any absence that

will prevent the child from attending, either by phone call or email. If a child does not attend, and we have not had a reason for their absence, it is our responsibility to check-up on the child to ensure they are safe and well. A member of staff will call the family to find out the reason for the absence.

We record a daily register of children who attend preschool. If we notice a pattern of non-attendance, preschool staff will get in touch with the family to find out why this is occurring. A plan will be put into place to try to increase the child's attendance. A pattern of non-attendance will be recorded on a Reporting a Safeguarding Incident form, which can be found in the Safeguarding Concerns file. This is so that we can keep a record of patterns of behaviour. If there continues to be a pattern of non-attendance at preschool, despite plans being put in place, we will take advice from outside agencies, e.g., MASH, Early Help Advice.

## **Bullying**

There is no legal definition of bullying, however, it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- Repeated.
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

It takes many forms and can include:

- Physical assault.
- Teasing.
- Making threats.
- Name calling.
- Cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger).

Bullying will not be tolerated. This can be child-on-child, adult-on-child or adult-on-adult. Our Anti-Bullying policy sets out our procedures for dealing with any instances of bullying.

## **Acceptable use of mobile phones, cameras and recording devices**

We ensure that children are not put at risk through the recording or taking of unlawful photos and videos. We do this by ensuring that all personal mobile phones are kept in the office throughout the day. Adults can only access their phones in the office and may not remove them from here unless on a lunch break away from children or off premises. Adults are **never** allowed to use personal phones, cameras or recording devices to take photos or videos of children at preschool.

Only preschool iPads and iPhones may be used to take photos and videos of children at preschool. These devices **should not be removed from the preschool**. Preschool iPads and iPhones are kept locked in the office overnight and are never left outside alone.

Parents complete a permissions form when their child starts preschool, which outlines how digital media may be used. A list of children without permissions is kept, so that all staff are aware of how photos and videos can be used. This is kept in the Children's Records file.

## **Safe use of technology**

At preschool, children use technology for the sole purpose of extending their learning. The children have access to iPads with the support of an adult to allow them access to the world beyond preschool. By looking at videos and photos of the outside world, we are giving children opportunities to experience things that they would not get to see. The children also have access to the television, which we use to



watch educational programmes such as those from Cbeebies (Let's Celebrate, Starting School, Maddie's Do You Know?), and see stories come to life, such as The Gruffalo.

We believe that most children have plenty of access to screens and devices at home. That is why we have chosen to use technology in this way. An adult is always working with a child when they are using technology, so they are there to ensure that what they are seeing is appropriate. Any concerns regarding inappropriate use of technology, either at preschool or at home, is referred to the DSL and recorded and acted upon where appropriate.

### **Keeping children safe online**

As part of our commitment to keep children safe online, we offer information and website links to parents, signposting them to places where they can find out more. In the Documents section of Tapestry, we have an Information for Parents section, where we have put information regarding online safety. We have also signposted parents on our Facebook page and by email.

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/keeping-young-children-safe-online/>

### **Safer recruitment**

When recruiting members or staff, volunteers or Committee Members, it is vitally important that Safeguarding is at the forefront of our process. For this reason, the Manager and Chair of the Committee will undertake Safer Recruitment training and remain up to date with any changes.

The Chair of the Committee knows and understands their responsibilities with regard to the induction of new Committee Members. They are aware of their statutory requirements set out under the Early Years Foundation Stage and the requirements of Ofsted.

When recruiting, we will ensure that:

- An advert is produced, and the position is advertised as widely as possible
- A job description and person specification is created to explain the roles and responsibilities of the post
- All applicants complete our application form as we do not accept CV's alone
- All applicants provide 2 references which are followed up where necessary
- All applicants asked to interview complete a self-declaration form
- Applicants on the DBS update service provide their certificate number which can be checked
- Any discrepancies are challenged and followed up with the candidate and/or their references
- Any successful candidates will need a DBS check before they start in their role. Preferably on the update service.
- A thorough induction is given to all new employees where ID and suitability to work in the UK is checked
- The new employee will be required to undertake safeguarding and Prevent training and will be required to read and understand all relevant policies.

We ensure that we are an equal opportunities employer, and we make sure that we do not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or any other factor.

### **Complaints**

We hope to build positive and nurturing relationships with parents. We do, however, understand that there may be times when a parent/carer or other stakeholder, may have a concern that requires thorough investigation. Our Complaints Handling policy details our complaints procedure, in the hope that all complaints can be brought to a satisfactory resolution for all parties.