



22. Safeguarding Children Child Protection

Aims of Policy

We at Seer Green Pre-School strive to create an environment in which children are safe from all forms of abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'Working together to safeguard children' (DfE 2018, available at <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications>) and the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (BSCP). We also follow all guidance as stated in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023'.

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- Promoting children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting 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.
- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- Promoting children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- 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.
- Promoting children to be good citizens.

Seer Green Pre-School will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. We acknowledge that 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. Abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional and sexual neglect, as well as domestic violence, female genital mutilation, and child exploitation.

In order to achieve our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Aims, we adhere to the following procedures:

Roles, Awareness and Training

- Our designated child protection officer is **the Pre-School Manager**. In her absence the designated child protection officer is the **Deputy Manager** or **Assistant Deputy Manager**.
- Our designated volunteer Trustee responsible for child protection is the current **Chairperson of the Board of Trustees**.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures at their child's induction.
- We ensure all staff are made aware of our safeguarding procedures at their induction and staff are made aware of any updates to these procedures and updates to the BSCP guidance document at staff meetings, or through the BSCP newsletters, which are on the website <http://bucksscp.org.uk/>.

- The Trustee Chairperson is informed of any changes to our 'Safeguarding Children' policies (Policies 22 to 30) as they occur.

Employment and Volunteering

- All staff/people working directly with children undertake enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks prior to starting work.
- Induction procedures include Child Protection training for all staff members.
- Level 1 training will be undertaken by all staff, as a minimum, every three years. Designated Officer training is refreshed every 2 years. A refresher is taken half way between these courses.
- We set out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, breast ironing, and child exploitation, so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Exceptions Order 1975.
- Candidates are informed that roles are offered subject to completion of a clear DBS check.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for all staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers/Staff awaiting Enhanced Disclosure do not work unsupervised with the children.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act and the Protection of Children Act 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.

Security

- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We have security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Cameras

- All photographs of children are taken with prior parental consent, on a designated camera or tablet and are for the sole use of the Pre-School. Photos are only taken during Pre-School hours and in areas where other staff and children would readily frequent. The camera is not allowed to be taken into the toileting area. Any photos which are developed or printed externally will be processed either by a DBS checked Trustee or staff member who has read, understood and signed our 'Safeguarding Children Policy - Confidentiality and Parent Access to Records' policy (Policy 25) and is aware of the need for the careful safe-keeping of these images.
- External photographers comply with our policy in taking photos and deleting images.

Mobile Phones and other electronic devices

- Staff mobile phones are stored in the cupboard, the kitchen cupboard or in the Office during Pre-School sessions. Staff are permitted to use their mobiles in the kitchen during their break or in the Office, provided that no children are present.
- The Pre-School Manager or person in charge has the authority to use their mobile phone to take a photograph of the white board or related activity (excluding children) for the secure Facebook page. No children should be present at the time the photo is taken and the photo must be deleted on the same day it was taken.
- Smart watches with a camera facility should have the camera turned off when inside the Pre-School. Notifications should be set to silent or vibrate only, and not cause any distraction to staff whilst with the children.

Social Networking Sites

- Photographs taken to share with Parents for Facebook purposes are to be taken with no children present, and deleted on the same day from the staff mobile device. If the photo required captures an activity that cannot be transported then another staff member must be present to ensure the photograph is appropriately taken and no children are included in the shot.
- Staff are asked not to use social networking sites to refer in any way to the Pre-School, staff, parents, visitors or children that attend.
- Staff are encouraged to act with discretion regarding parents as their friends on social networking sites.

Awareness of Pre-Existing Injuries

- All pre-existing significant injuries, sustained outside Pre-School hours, are recorded on the child's arrival and the record is signed by both the person in charge and the child's parent/carer. This record is filed in a file dedicated for the purpose.

Responding and Recording Suspicions of Abuse, Radicalisation, Terrorism, and Disclosures

If any member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern about a child's welfare, such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, evidence of radicalization or terrorism, that member of staff immediately discusses their concerns with the Pre-School's designated child protection officer. The designated officer makes a referral to Bucks County Council First Response Team if appropriate, as is our responsibility as part of our Channel and Prevent Duty commitment.

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child;
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action;
- does not question the child;
- takes care not to influence what the child says;
- discusses the disclosure with the Pre-School's designated child protection officer on the same day, who immediately makes a referral to the First Response Team; and
- discusses with the parents if this does not put the child at risk.

Staff make a record of:

- the child's name;
- 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;
- the names of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- the names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in the Safeguarding Logs.

All suspicions or investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the First Response Team. Parents are informed of any action taken, unless it is considered that this would put a child at risk of further harm.

Any referral is confirmed in writing to the First Response Team within 24 hours using a referral form.

All members of staff know the above procedures for recording and reporting.

Allegations against staff, Trustees or volunteers,

- At children's inductions, we ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse. This is detailed in our 'Safeguarding Children Policy - Complaints Procedure' (Policy 24). In the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, volunteer or Trustee, the designated child protection officer (Pre-School Manager) would follow the procedures outlined in this policy. In her absence this would be the responsibility of the Deputy Manager. The Pre-School Manager and Chairperson of the Board of Trustees would be advised on the same day, and the Chairperson would consider whether the Secretary should also be informed. This should be the case if the allegation involves any relation to the Chairperson, and the Chairperson should remove themselves from further discussions where possible in this case. In the event of an allegation being made against the Pre-School Manager, the designated Trustee (the Chairperson) would be responsible for following the procedures.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, volunteer or Trustee has abused a child, or used a mobile phone or camera inappropriately.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff, volunteer or Trustee may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident, following the steps outlined in the section on 'Responding and Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures' in this document.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the LADO. We follow the guidance from LADO, which potentially will be an investigation. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this. The parents involved would also be informed on the same day about the allegation, the involvement of LADO and any further action to be taken. We would also inform Bucks Early Years and Childcare.
- We cooperate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- Our policy is to seek advice from the LADO about potential suspension of the member of staff. This would be 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.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Children's Development and Awareness

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our curriculum planning to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be 'strong, resilient and listened to' and so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home and cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child and liaising at all times with the local social services 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 First Response department in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the BSCP.

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the BSCP's guidelines.
- We have procedures in place for contacting the local authority on Child Protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of First Response, Bucks Early Years Childcare and LADO to ensure that it is easy, in an emergency, for our setting and First Response/LADO to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.

Legal Framework

Primary legislation

- The Children Act 1989,
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2016), the Data Protection Act (2018)
- The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)
- The Children (NI) Order
- The Children (Scotland) Order
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Guidance

- What to do if you are worried a Child is Being Abused (2015)
- The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- The Common Assessment Framework 2005
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG 2015)
- Prevent Duty: Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers (DFE 2015)
- Fundamental British Values in Early Years
- Child Exploitation RUWise2it?
- DCSF Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2010)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

Secondary Legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Human rights Act (1998)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Helplines and Referrals related to Child Protection Issues

Buckinghamshire County Council

First Response (single point of contact for Bucks Children's Social services)	01296 383962
For Social Work Emergencies Out of Hours	01494 675802
Social Services (careline)	0800 137915
NSPCC	0800 8005000
Ofsted	0300 123 4666
PACEY, formerly NCMA, Helpline	0300 003 0005
Bucks Family Information Service	01296 383 293
Thames Valley Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit	101

If the matter involves an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or Trustee contact

1. BSCP LADO (local authority designated officer) 01296 382070
2. Ofsted 0300 123 1231
3. Early Years via our key contacts, Jemma Vincent 07785591139

As with all the policies for Seer Green Pre-School, the Operational Plan should be referred to for the specific details of day to day operations of the Pre-School. In addition, any issues which arise in the course of a child's time with the Pre-School and that are related to a child's health and wellbeing, parent's or staff's concern, or the overall care and safety of our children, staff, parents and equipment will be dealt with in a professional and confidential manner in order to arrive at an appropriate outcome.

This policy was adopted on (date) _____

Signed on behalf of Seer Green Pre-School (Chairperson) _____

This policy was reviewed as indicated below:

2007 created

2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 reviewed and updated as required

July-Nov 2017 reviewed and updated

June-July 2018 reviewed and updated

May 2019 reviewed and updated

June 2020 reviewed and updated

June 2021 reviewed and updated

July 2022 reviewed

June 2023 reviewed

September 2024 reviewed and updated

UNCRC related article:

Number 19

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Number 36

Governments must protect children from all other forms of bad treatment.