



Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

Leechpool Nursery and After School Club is committed to supporting, development and learning through high quality care for our children, their families and the community to ensure we provide them with the very best start in life. We are dedicated to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

All staff, students and volunteers have the responsibility for safeguarding the children within our setting. Being aware of and identifying safeguarding concerns and ensuring these are reported in line with the policy.

We ensure all staff, student and volunteers have sufficient knowledge to support their roles and responsibilities and have an understanding of how this policy and the procedure support them in promoting safeguarding the welfare of the children. This is done through ongoing training to keep knowledge up to date and supporting staff within their specific roles.

This policy is updated regularly in line with statutory guidance and its effectiveness is monitored within staff's knowledge and feedback.

It is the responsibility of every staff member, student or volunteer to report any breaches of the policy to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Cat Hall – Nursery and After School Manager). In the absence of the Lead DSL it is to be reported to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Jakki Maybank – Deputy Manager, Mariana Maderia – After School Lead).

Policy intention

This policy is to make it clear to staff, students and volunteers that they have the responsibility to safeguard the children and young people and to protect them from harm. It is to build on awareness of how to safeguard and what to do if a child protection issue was to arise.

This policy applies to all children and young people under the age of 18 years, this being if they are living with families, in state care, or living independently (Working together to Safeguard Children, 2018).

Safeguarding and promoting welfare is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health and development



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- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

(Working together to safeguard children, 2018)

Within this policy child protection will mean:

The activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm.

Within Leechpool Caterpillars Nursery and After School club we will safeguard children and promote their welfare by:

- Developing a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct.
- Ensure all staff are able to identify the signs and indicators of abuse, including the softer signs of abuse and know what action needs to be taken.
- Share information with outside agencies where appropriate.

We promote this by:

- Always listening to children
- Children developing independence and self-sufficiency as appropriate for their age and stage of development.
- Safe and secure environments for children
- Tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- British values
- Providing help and intervention for families in need

It is our duty to ensure we act quickly in any instance that may come to our attention. If staff have any doubt of what constitutes to a safeguarding concern, they are required to refer this concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.

At Leechpool Caterpillar Nursery and After School Club we aim to:

- Provide sensitive interactions to help develop the children's wellbeing, confidence and resilience. Aim to build on the children's ability to develop awareness of how to keep themselves safe, healthy and to develop positive relationships with others.
- Be aware of vulnerability increasing with regards to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), isolated families, vulnerabilities in families such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).



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- Ensure all staff feel supported and confident to act with the best interest of the child in mind. Sharing information and seeking help if they feel the child may need it and this happening within the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure all staff's child protection training is kept up to date and they are kept informed of any local/and or national procedures including through annual safeguarding updates.
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, ensuring we share all relevant information when needed in line with procedures outlined by the Integrated Front Door for Families (West Sussex).
- Ensure all information is only shared with who it is necessary to be shared with to protect the child and act in their best interests.
- Ensure staff are able to identify, minimise and manage risks while caring for the children.
- Taking appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against anyone working with children including reporting any allegations to Ofsted and any other relevant professional agencies.
- Ensure parents/carers are aware of our child protection policies and procedures when they join the nursery and are informed of any updates.
- Regularly review the policy and update this with staff and parents when needed and ensure it complies with legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the overall responsibility for Safeguarding children and child protection policy and procedures. It is their role to ensure that the policy and procedure is implemented by all staff, volunteers and students. They are also responsible to ensure all staff have relevant training and this is kept up to date.

There is always at least 1 Designated Safeguarding Person on site at both Nursery and After School Club. The Designated Safeguarding People receive thorough training in line with West Sussex Designated Safeguarding Lead training programme at least every 3 years and update their knowledge as needed, ensuring the ongoing development of all staff knowledge with regular safeguarding updates.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead at Nursery and After School Club is: **Cat Hall (Manager)**



Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads at Nursery are: **Jakki Maybank (Deputy Manager), Mariana Maderia (Assistant Early Years Practitioner)**

Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads at After School Club are: **Jakki Maybank (Deputy Manager) and Mariana Maderia (After School Lead)**

The role of the DSL

It is the role of the DSL to:

- Monitor and update the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures in line with any updates and new legislations to ensure it is effective and all staff have sound knowledge of the correct procedures during their reviews.
- Ensure new legislations are added to our practice as soon they are known.
- Act as a support for all staff, students, volunteers, parents and children who have child protection concerns.
- Ensure referrals are detailed, accurate and secure written records.
- Review all written safeguarding reports.
- Access information provided promptly, carefully and refer as appropriate to external agencies.
- Provide signposting to other agencies.
- Consult with statutory child protection agencies and regulatory bodies where required.
- Make formal referrals to statutory child protection agencies or the police as required.

Also:

- Keep up to date with good practice and national requirements for safeguarding and child protection.
- Provide information for safeguarding and child protection for the setting.
- Ensure they have awareness of all safeguarding and child protection training that is needed and implement this where needed.
- Retain up to date knowledge of the role of the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) arrangements and local child protection procedures.

The DSL does not investigate whether or not a child has been abused or investigate an allegation or disclosure. Investigations are for the relevant agencies, usually the police or social services.



Sharing low-level concerns

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 'lowlevel' concern, although this does not mean that it is insignificant. We define a low-level concern as:

- Any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working with children may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our Staff behaviour policy, including inappropriate behaviour outside of work.
- A concern that may be a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' and does not meet the harm threshold or is serious enough to refer to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

We encourage a culture of openness, trust and transparency, with clear values and expected behaviour, monitored and reinforced by all staff. All concerns or allegations, however small, will be shared and responded to. All concerns will be shared with the DSL, or other nominated person, as in our reporting procedures. We encourage concerns to be shared as soon as reasonably practicable and preferably within 24 hours of becoming aware of it. However, it is never too late to share a low-level concern.

It is not expected that staff will be able to determine whether the behaviour in question is a concern, complaint or allegation before sharing the information. If the DSL is in any doubt as to whether the information meets the harm threshold, they will consult the LADO.

Occasionally a member of staff may find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted or appear compromising to others. If this occurs, staff are encouraged to self-report to the DSL. Equally, a member of staff may have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, falls below the standards we set for staff behaviour. If this occurs, staff are encouraged to self-report to the DSL. We encourage staff to be confident to self-refer and believe it reflects awareness of our standards of conduct and behaviour.

When the DSL receives the information, they will need to determine whether the behaviour:

- Meets, or may meet, the harm threshold (and so contact the LADO)
- Meets the harm threshold when combined with previous low-level concerns (and so contact the LADO)
- Constitutes a 'low-level' concern



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- Is appropriate and consistent with the law and our Staff behaviour policy.

The DSL will make appropriate records of all information shared, including:

- With the reporting person
- The subject matter of the concern
- Any relevant witnesses (where possible)
- Any external discussions such as with the LSP or LADO
 - Their decision about the nature of the concern
 - Their rationale for that decision
 - Any action taken.

These records are kept confidential and held securely accessed by only by those who have appropriate authority. Records of Low-level concern are retained at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Monitoring children's attendance

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern. We ask parents to inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all incidents of sickness absence should be reported to the nursery the same day, so the management are able to account for a child's absence.

If a child has not arrived at nursery by 9.30am, the parents will be contacted to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the emergency contacts numbers listed will be used to ensure all parties are safe. Staff will work their way down the emergency contact list until contact is established and we are made aware that all is well with the child and family. If contact is still not established, we would assess if it would be appropriate to contact relevant authorities, including the police, in order for them to investigate further.

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

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones for staff must be kept in the Office and not stored in staff bags. When children from After School bring mobile phones into the club these must be stored in the Office until the child leaves to go home.



After School Club Absence

Absent children are to be checked against the school clubs registers, if the child is not attending a club and have not arrived at After School club by 3.15pm a member of staff is to go to the school office or phone the school office to see if the child is waiting there or has been absent from school. If child has been at school and not arrived at After School club families must be contacted to check where they are.

Informing Parents

Parents are usually the first point of contact. If the suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made expect where guidance from the Local Authority children's team, police or LADO does not allow this.

This is usually because if the parent or family member is likely the abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In this case the investigating authorities will be the ones to inform parents.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality must not override the right of the children to be protected from harm. However, every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality is maintained for all concerned if an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

Part 2: Definitions of Abuse

Definition of significant harm

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as 'the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children'. It gives LAs a duty to make enquires to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Whilst there are no absolute criteria to rely on when judging what constitutes significant harm, consideration should be given to:

- The severity of the ill-treatment, including the degree of harm
- The extent and frequency of abuse and/or neglect
- The impact this is likely to have, or is having, on the child involved.

This may be a single traumatic event, such as a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning, or it can be a combination of events (both acute and long-standing) that



impairs the physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development of the child.

Definitions of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, a stranger. Perpetrators of abuse can be an adult, or adults, another child or children. (What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners, 2015 and Working together to safeguard children, 2018)

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

Indicators of child abuse

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

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

Emotional states: Fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem.

Behaviour: Aggressive, habitual body rocking.

Interpersonal behaviours:

- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness to strangers including healthcare professionals
- Excessive clinginess, persistently resorting to gaining attention
- Demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent parent disapproval
- Failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed



- Coercive controlling behaviour towards parents
- Lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions
 - Very young children showing excessive comforting behaviours when witnessing parental or carer distress.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is also known as peer-on-peer abuse; children are included as potential abusers in our policies. Child-on-child abuse may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse or sexual abuse. Reporting procedures in these instances remain the same although additional support from relevant agencies may be required to support both the victim and the perpetrator. Children who develop harmful behaviours are also likely to be victims of abuse or neglect.

If Child-on-child abuse is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with the safeguarding procedures.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

If Physical abuse is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with the safeguarding procedures.

Fabricated or induced illness (FII)

Fabricated or induced illness (FII) This abuse is when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. The parent may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. They may exaggerate a real illness and symptoms, or deliberately induce an illness through poisoning with medication or other substances, or they may interfere with medical treatments. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

FII is a form of physical abuse and any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed with no medical reason. The procedure may be carried out shortly after birth, during



childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy, according to the community. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother, and/or death (definition taken from the multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation). Other consequences include shock, bleeding, infections (tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C) and organ damage.

FGM is a form of physical abuse, and any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures. In addition, there is a mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

Breast ironing or breast flattening

Breast ironing, also known as breast flattening, is a process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or to delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. These actions can cause serious health issues such as abscesses, cysts, itching, tissue damage, infection, discharge of milk, dissymmetry of the breasts, severe fever.

Breast ironing/flattening is a form of physical abuse, and any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Emotional abuse

Working together to safeguard children (2018) defines emotional abuse as 'the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.' Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur separately. Examples of emotional abuse include:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, such as interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as



overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction

- Serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children
- A child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. A child may also experience emotional abuse through witnessing domestic abuse or alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them. In England, The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) recognises in law that children are victims of emotional abuse if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of domestic abuse.

Signs and indicators may include delay in physical, mental and/or emotional development, sudden speech disorders, overreaction to mistakes, extreme fear of any new situation, neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation), extremes of passivity or aggression, appearing to lack confidence or self-assurance.

If emotional abuse is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, or enticing, a child to take part in sexual activities. Sexual abuse does not necessarily involve a high level of violence and includes whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Adult males are not the sole perpetrators of sexual abuse; women also commit acts of sexual abuse, as do other children. This policy applies to all children up to the age of 18 years. Action must be taken if staff witness symptoms of sexual abuse including a child indicating sexual activity through words, play or drawing, having an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or having an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or language, for their developmental age. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls or toys or in the role-play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words.



Additional signs of emotional and physical symptoms are shown below.

Emotional signs	Physical signs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age or stage of development.• Personality changes, such as becoming insecure or clingy• Regressing to younger behaviour patterns, such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys• Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating• Being isolated or withdrawn• Inability to concentrate• Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a carer• Becoming worried about clothing being removed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bruises• Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexually transmitted infections• Pregnancy.

If sexual abuse is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Neglect

Working together to safeguard children (2018) defines neglect as 'the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.'

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve adults involved in the care of the child failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect them from physical harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Respond to their basic emotional needs.



An NSPCC briefing (July 2021) found neglect to be the most common form of abuse, with one in ten children in the UK having been neglected. Concerns around neglect have been identified for half of children who are the subject of a child protection plan or on a child protection register in the UK. Younger children are more likely than older children to be the subject of a child protection plan in England because of neglect, although research suggests that the neglect of older children is more likely to go overlooked.

Signs of neglect include a child persistently arriving at nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in, or a child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed. A child may be persistently hungry if a caregiver is withholding, or not providing enough, food. A child who is not receiving the attention they need at home may crave it from other adults, such as at nursery or school.

If neglect is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Domestic abuse

The definition of domestic abuse from the Domestic Abuse Act, 2021 is: Behaviour of a person (A) towards another person (B) is 'domestic abuse' if:

- A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other
- The behaviour is abusive. Behaviour is 'abusive' if it consists of any of the following:
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour •

Economic abuse (any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property and/or obtain goods or services)

- Psychological, emotional or other abuse.

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone regardless of gender, age, social background, religion, sexuality or ethnicity and domestic abuse can happen at any stage in a relationship.

Signs and symptoms of domestic abuse include:



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- Changes in behaviour (for example, becoming very quiet, anxious, frightened, tearful, aggressive, distracted, depressed etc.)
- Visible bruising or single, or repeated, injury with unlikely explanations
- Change in the manner of dress (for example, clothes to hide injuries that do not suit the weather)
- Stalking, including excessive phone calls or messages
- Partner or ex-partner exerting an unusual amount of control or demands over work schedule
- Frequent lateness or absence from work. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. Where incidents of domestic abuse are shared by our own staff, students or volunteers we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information, without permission, in cases of child protection or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

If domestic abuse is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Contextual safeguarding

As young people grow and develop, they may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their family. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. As part of our safeguarding procedures, we will work in partnership with parents and other agencies to work together to safeguard children and provide the support around contextual safeguarding concerns. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child criminal exploitation (CCE) Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation (Keeping children safe in education, 2022).

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)



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CSE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology and may be without the child's immediate knowledge such as through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Physical injuries such as bruising or bleeding
- Having money or gifts they are unable to explain
- Sudden changes in their appearance
 - Becoming involved in drugs or alcohol, particularly if it is suspected they are being supplied by older men or women
- Becoming emotionally volatile (mood swings are common in all young people, but more severe changes could indicate that something is wrong)
- Using sexual language beyond that expected for their age or stage of development
- Engaging less with their usual friends
 - Appearing controlled by their phone
- Switching to a new screen when you come near the computer
- Nightmares or sleeping problems
- Running away, staying out overnight, missing school
- Changes in eating habits
- Talk of a new, older friend, boyfriend or girlfriend
- Losing contact with family and friends or becoming secretive
- Contracting sexually transmitted diseases.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Other examples include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being



coerced into moving drugs or money across the country forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Signs and symptoms of CCE are similar to those for CSE. If CSE or CCE is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

County Lines

The National Crime Agency (NCA) defines county lines as gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs from big cities into smaller towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line.' Customers live in a different area to the dealers, so drug runners are needed to transport the drugs and collect payment. Perpetrators often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. A child is targeted and recruited into county lines through schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Changes in dress style
- Unexplained, unaffordable new things (for example, clothes, jewellery, cars etc.)
- Missing from home or school and/or significant decline in performance
 - New friends with those who don't share any mutual friendships with the victim, gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Increase in anti-social behaviour in the community including weapons
- Receiving more texts or calls than usual
- Unexplained injuries
- Significant changes in emotional well-being
- Being seen in different cars or taxis driven by unknown adults
- A child being unfamiliar with where they are.

If involvement in county lines is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Cuckooing

Cuckooing is a form of county lines crime. In this instance, the drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to criminally exploit them by using their



home as a base for drug dealing, often in multi-occupancy or social housing properties.

Signs and symptoms include:

- An increase in people, particularly unknown people, entering or leaving a home or taking up residence
- An increase in cars or bikes outside a home
- A neighbour who hasn't been seen for an extended period
- Windows covered or curtains closed for a long period
- Change in resident's mood and/or demeanour (for example, secretive, withdrawn, aggressive or emotional)
- Substance misuse and/or drug paraphernalia
- Increased anti-social behaviour. If cuckooing is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Child trafficking and modern slavery

Child trafficking and modern slavery is when children are recruited, moved, transported and then exploited, forced to work or are sold. For a child to have been a victim of trafficking there must have been:

- Action: recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation
- Purpose: sexual exploitation, forced labour or domestic servitude, slavery, financial exploitation, illegal adoption, removal of organs.

Modern slavery includes slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour and child trafficking. Victims of modern slavery are also likely to be subjected to other types of abuse such as physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

Signs and symptoms for children include:

- Being under control and reluctant to interact with others
- Having few personal belongings, wearing the same clothes every day or wearing unsuitable clothes
- Being unable to move around freely
- Appearing frightened, withdrawn, or showing signs of physical or emotional abuse.



If child trafficking or modern slavery are suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is defined as 'a marriage in which one, or both spouses, do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.' Where incidents of forced marriage are shared by our own staff, students or volunteers, we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information without permission in cases of child protection, or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

If it is suspected that a forced marriage is being planned, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Honour based abuse (HBA)

HBA is described as 'incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.' (Keeping children safe in education, 2022).

Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their 'honour' code. It is a violation of human rights and may be domestic, emotional and/or sexual abuse such as being held against their will, threats of violence or actual assault. It often involves wider family networks or community pressure and so can include multiple perpetrators.

Signs and symptoms of HBA include:

- Changes in how the child dresses or acts, such as not 'western' clothing or make-up
- Visible injuries, or repeated injury, with unlikely explanations
- Signs of depression, anxiety or self-harm
- Frequent absences
- Restrictions on friends or attending events.

Where incidents of HBA are shared by our own staff, students or volunteers, we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information without permission in cases of child



protection, or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

If honour-based abuse is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB)

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

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

If CALFB is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Extremism and radicalisation

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, there is a duty to safeguard vulnerable and at risk children by preventing them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent Duty.

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources and some of these views may be considered radical or extreme.

Radicalisation is the way a person comes to support or be involved in extremism and terrorism; usually it's a gradual process so those who are affected may not realise what's happening. Radicalisation is a form of harm.

The process may involve:

- Being groomed online or in person
- Exploitation, including sexual exploitation



- Psychological manipulation
- Exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- The risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts. For further information visit The Prevent Duty website.

If radicalisation or extremism is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures. This includes reporting concerns to the police.

Online safety

While the growth of internet and mobile device use brings many advantages, the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues such as child sexual exploitation and radicalisation.

There are four main areas of risk associated with online safety:

- Content - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material such as pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views
- Contact - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users such as commercial advertising or adults posing as children or young adults
- Conduct - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images and online bullying.
- Commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Report online safety concerns to the DSL and to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP): <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

Inappropriate content received via email must be reported to the DSL and to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>

Up skirting/down blousing

Up skirting and down blousing are criminal offences. They involve taking pictures of someone's genitals, buttocks or other intimate images under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or in order to humiliate, or distress, the individual.

If up skirting or down blousing is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

PART 3: Reporting procedures

Public interest disclosure (whistleblowing)

Reviewed – February 2025

Next review – September 2025



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Whistleblowing is the term used when a worker passes on information concerning wrongdoing. All safeguarding allegations, internal or external, current or historical, must be passed on the DSL. We will cooperate fully with the authorities involved and follow any guidance given.

We believe keeping children safe is the highest priority and if, for whatever reason, concerns cannot be reported to the DSL or deputy DSL, concerns can be reported anonymously to the NSPCC, the police or the LA social services safeguarding children team.

Allegation against our staff

An allegation against our staff may relate to a person who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

We will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of all parties while an allegation or concern is being investigated. Dealing with an allegation can be a stressful experience and, to support the staff member, a named person (usually the DSL or Deputy DSL) to liaise with will be offered. The timeframes for an investigation will follow the guidelines of other involved authorities.

We reserve the right to suspend a staff member until the investigation is concluded. Further action will be determined by the outcome of the investigation.

Reporting procedure

We will always act on behalf of the child and will do everything possible to ensure the safety and welfare of any child and so will take all allegations of potential abuse seriously. All concerns reported to staff will be pursued, regardless of the nature of the concern and to whom the allegation relates.

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding and child protection concerns and suspicions of abuse. These concerns will be discussed with the DSL as soon as possible, as follows:



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	Staff member Role on receiving information that causes a safeguarding concern	DSL Role on receiving information that causes a safeguarding concern
Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the DSL immediately. This must be a verbal conversation to ensure the concern is clearly understood and action is taken. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the DSL is unavailable, contact the Deputy DSL • For children who arrive at nursery with an existing injury, an accident form will be completed. If there are queries or concerns regarding the injury or information given, follow these procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it is believed a child is in immediate danger, contact the police
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write an objective report including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Child's name and address – Age and date of birth – Date, time and location of the observation or disclosure – Exact words spoken by the child (as close to word-for-word as possible) and nonverbal communication – Outline of the concern – Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen – Exact observation of any incident or concern reported and the names of any other person present at the time – Any known confidentiality issues – Signature and date of person making the report and the DSL or other nominated individual receiving the report – A body map indicating the size and location of any injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign and date report received from staff member • Securely store the information according to the nursery procedures • If the safeguarding concern relates to a child, contact the Local Authority children's social care team, report concerns and seek advice immediately, or as soon as it is practical to do so. • If the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children, contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and request a confirmation email of the report, then report the concern to Ofsted • A full investigation into any allegation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals to determine how this will be handled • Note any actions requested by LADO /



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		Ofsted and follow any instructions received
Step 3	If you feel the report is not being taken seriously or are worried about an allegation getting back to the person in question, then it is your duty to inform Senior Management within Leechpool Primary School. (Safeguarding Flow Chart and at the bottom of this document)	If appropriate, discuss the concerns or incidents with parent(s), unless it is believed that this would place the child at greater risk of harm. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Record all discussions (remember parents will have access to these records on request in line with GDPR and data protection guidelines)• Follow all instructions from the Local Authority children's social care team and/or Ofsted, cooperating where required• Record information and actions taken
Step 4	If you feel that the Senior DSL Team from Leechpool Primary School are not taking the matter seriously, then contact Integrated Front Door for Families (West Sussex) contact details below. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow all instructions from the Local Authority children's social care team and/or Ofsted, cooperating where required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the Local Authority children's social care team have not been in contact within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018), it must be followed up.• Never assume that action has been taken
Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safeguarding procedures will be reviewed to ensure the process has been applied in line with the policy	

If a concern is raised anonymously and we have no contact details, we will treat the concern as valid and follow the procedures as above. If a malicious call is suspected, the procedures will still be followed: a child may be in danger. The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) will be contacted to ensure permitted data sharing.

PART 4: Recruitment, selection and training

Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed on the job advert and application form that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Candidates are informed of the need to carry out "enhanced disclosure" checks with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and they will be supervised until a satisfactory DBS certificate has been received. (More information can be found at www.gov.uk search Disclosure and Barring Service)

Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants



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have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

We abide by OFSTED requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.

Volunteers do not work unsupervised.

We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:

- the criminal records disclosure/DBS reference number.
- the date the disclosure was obtained; and
- details of who obtained it.

We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).

Learners on placements or in employment

We hold responsibility for ensuring that learners on placement or in employment are familiar with and sign up to this policy and agree to work within this framework. Learners will receive basic child protection training prior to starting their placement.

Learners and students under the age of 18 will be protected as children. Risk assessments will be completed to ensure their safety and well-being are protected and supported during their employment or training period. If situations arise during employment or placement which identifies those aged 18 or under are at risk from abuse or neglect, we will contact the appropriate bodies to ensure the individual is safeguarded.

Responding to and recording disclosures

Staff, volunteers or students may receive a safeguarding disclosure. See the guidance below for responding to and reporting disclosures of abuse.

Responding to a child's disclosure of abuse - what to do and say

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Try not to look shocked and reassure them that this is not their fault
 - Find an appropriate opportunity to say that the information will need to be shared and do not promise to keep the information shared a secret
- Allow the child to continue at their own pace
- Only ask questions for clarification and avoid asking any questions that may suggest a particular answer



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- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing, let them know what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Record the disclosure in writing using the child's own words as soon as possible, but not while the child is talking
- Includes the date and time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given.
- Sign and date the record, store it securely and refer the disclosure to the setting DSL.

Legal framework

We adhere to all current legislation, as below:

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015)

Freedom of Information Act 2012

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Childcare Act 2006 The Children Act 2004

The Children Act (England and Wales) 1989

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

The Data Protection Acts 1984, 1998 and 2018

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Police Act 1997

The Sexual Offences Act 2003

Working together to safeguard children 2018

Relevant non-statutory guidance:

Child sexual exploitation, DfE 2017

Information sharing, DfE 2015

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, DfE 2015

Useful contacts

Cat Hall (Nursery Manager and After School Club) Lead DSL



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Jakki Maybank (Deputy Manager) Deputy DSL

Mariana Maderia (Assistant Early Years Practitioner and After School Lead)

Integrated Front Door for West Sussex 01403 229900 (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm) Out of hours Emergency Team 033022 26664.

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0330 222 6450 or 01403 229900
lado@west sussex.gov.uk**