

Little Cuckoos Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

We fully recognise our responsibilities for child protection.

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Implementation of ENCOMPASS

This policy should be read alongside the following other policies:

- New Staff induction policy
- Behaviour
- Special Educational Needs
- Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equal opportunities
- Student Placements
- Staffing ratios
- Photograph policy
- Use of mobile phones and cameras
- ICT
- Looked after children
- Missing child
- Risk assessments
- COVID19

This document also references the following documents from the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board:

Revised Multi-Agency Thresholds for Safeguarding Children (December 2014)

Little Cuckoos staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' as far as safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interest of the child.

Settings do not operate in isolation. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working or volunteering with children. The setting aims to help protect the children in its care by working consistently and appropriately with all agencies to reduce risk and promote the welfare of children. All professionals work within the same safeguarding procedures.

1. Purpose of the policy

- To raise the awareness of all staff of the importance of safeguarding children and of their responsibilities for identifying and reporting actual or suspected abuse
- To ensure children and parents are aware that the setting takes the safeguarding agenda seriously and will follow the appropriate procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and for dealing with allegations against staff
- To promote effective liaison with other agencies in order to work together for the protection of all children
- To support children's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence
- To integrate a safeguarding curriculum within the existing activities allowing for continuity and progress through all developmental stages
- To take account of and inform policy in related areas such as bullying and e-safety

There are three main elements to the safeguarding policy:

1. **PREVENTION** (positive and safe environment, careful and vigilant teaching, accessible support to pupils, good adult role models).
2. **PROTECTION** (agreed procedures are followed, staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns).
3. **SUPPORT** (to children, who may have been at risk of significant harm and the way staff respond to their concerns and any work that may be required).

2. Child Protection procedures and guidelines

What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm. Safeguarding, in addition to child protection, encompasses issues such as children's and learners health and safety and well-being including mental health, bullying/cyber-bullying, appropriate medical provision. These areas have specific policies and guidance which should be read in conjunction with this document.

What is significant harm?

The Children's Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and require discussion with the statutory agencies.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for child safeguarding falls on everybody who is employed at the setting. All adults who work at Little Cuckoos are expected to support the Child Protection Policy, with overall responsibility falling upon the Committee. All staff, including volunteers have a statutory obligation to report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Hayley McMahon if there is suspicion of abuse/neglect of a child or if a child discloses abuse or allegations of abuse.

We will follow the child protection procedures set out by the Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP) and will have regard to statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a senior member of staff designated to take lead responsibility for:

- Managing all child protection issues (Chair of Committee leads on allegations against staff)
- Keep secure child protection plans, write records and reports
- Child protection policy and procedures: lead in evaluation, review and revision, ensure available to staff and parents
- Induction of staff and volunteers/staff training/ensure staff are aware of safeguarding policy and procedure
- Providing advice, information and support to other staff/adults in the setting on safeguarding issues
- Understand (and participate in) early help assessments and process for early help
- Liaising with the local authority and local safeguarding children board
- Working in partnership with other agencies; referrals and support; information sharing
- Ensure a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Hayley McMahon

The deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Samantha Keller

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Committee is: Elaine Millard (Chair)

3. Safer Recruitment

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring that our staff have appropriate qualifications. We carry out enhanced DBS checks with barred list information. We verify candidates identity, Mental & physical fitness and rights to work in the UK. We seek references and invite potential candidates in for an observational trial session. We arrange safer recruitment training for our designated safeguarding/Child Protection member of staff (DSL) and our designated Committee Chairperson. The chairperson also attends Safeguarding training.

All volunteers and committee members are DBS checked and read the safeguarding/CP policy before appointment.

4. Staff training and induction

- The DSL & DDSL will attend safeguarding training and or refresher courses at least once every three years, attend safeguarding forums and keep up to date with recommendations from serious case reviews, changes to national and SVPP policy and guidance.
- The whole-setting staff group will receive safeguarding training at least every three years with annual up-dates and notifications of any necessary changes, reminders being made available as required.
- All new staff, volunteers and committee management will receive Safeguarding induction to ensure understanding of the safeguarding policy.
- The CP policy and Code of Conduct will be provided to all staff –including temporary staff and volunteers- on induction.

5. Safer working practice

All staff, committee and volunteers understand their duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at Little Cuckoos Pre- School.

We ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children in our Pre- School are competent, confident and safe to do so.

We ensure that children are safe and that all staff, volunteers and committee

- are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Work in an open and transparent way
- Work with other colleagues where possible in situations open to question
- Discuss and/or take advice from management over any incident which may give rise to concern
- Record any incident of decisions made
- Apply the same professional standards regardless of gender, race, disability or sexuality
- Be aware of confidentiality policy

- Are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.
- We will seek further information from WSCB Social Networking Policy, 2015.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and that they develop an 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, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

6. Staff behaviour

At Little Cuckoos all staff and volunteers

- Treat all children with respect
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- Involving children in decision-making which affects them
- Encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children, using reasonable force when necessary to maintain children's safety
- Being a good listener
- Being alert to changes in child's behaviour
- Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- Reading and understanding all of the setting's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information sharing
- Asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, or administering first aid
- Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- Maintaining professional standards and boundaries at all times on and off the site

- Being aware that the personal and family circumstance and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse

Refer also to Code of Conduct policy

7. Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

The Allegation Management SVPP flowchart has been included in Appendix 1.

Any report of concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer, or allegation of abuse against a member of staff must immediately be reported to the Manager/Owner who will refer to the appropriate designated officer(s) from the local authority:

Wiltshire Designated Officer: 01225 713945

Any concern or allegation against the Manager will be reported to the Chair of Committee without informing the Manager.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

In some circumstances the member of staff will, without prejudice, be asked to take a period of paid leave pending the results of the investigation.

Little Cuckoos will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Malicious allegations against staff will be investigated and dealt with by the Manager and, if appropriate, the committee chair.

If you have concerns about a colleague

If staff members have concerns about another staff member or volunteer than this should be referred to the Manager.

Where there are concerns about the Manager this should be referred to the Chair of Committee.

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of a child is paramount. The setting's whistle blowing code enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

Please refer to our separate

- Whistleblowing policy
- Case Resolution Protocol

8. What constitutes child abuse and neglect?

All adults who work or volunteer with children should be able to identify concerns about child abuse. The four types of abuse, described in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 are:

Physical abuse

Emotional abuse Sexual abuse

Neglect

Specific safeguarding issues:

Little Cuckoos recognises other safeguarding issues: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

What is FGM:

FGM is the mutilation of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is sometimes known as female circumcision or 'sunna'

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

What is CSE:

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home and education at some point.

Bullying (including cyber-bullying), domestic violence, drugs, fabricated or induced illnesses, faith abuse, forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, gender-based violence/violence against women and girls, mental health, radicalisation, sexting, teenage relationship abuse, trafficking.

The setting will endeavour to identify and act upon any forms of abuse according to our procedures.

For more information, including definitions, indicators and other safeguarding issues, please refer to Appendix 2.

Attendance

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

- **Learning:** - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's attendance and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and their ability to settle within the setting. Any child's absence disrupts the settings routines and may have a lasting impact on the child.
- **Safeguarding:** - Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this pre-school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: -
Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, access to the Early Years Foundation stage, Anti- bullying.

At Little Cuckoos we ask parents to inform us of the reason for the child's absence and this is then recorded in our absence diary. This is monitored by all staff and any safeguarding concerns and patterns of absence are raised with the designated safeguarding lead.

Bullying

Please refer to our 'Achieving Positive Behaviour' policy

Social Media

Please refer to our 'Code of Conduct policy' and 'E Safety Policy'.

Photography in the setting.

Please refer to our 'Use of mobile phones and cameras policy' and 'Code of conduct policy.'

Whistle blowing

Please refer to our Whistle blowing policy.

Private fostering

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, for 28 days or more. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity). Little Cuckoos have a responsibility to make Wiltshire Council's children and families team aware of private fostering arrangements so that we can work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of potentially vulnerable children.

9. Early Help

The Revised Multi-Agency Thresholds for Safeguarding Children (December 2014) document aims to inform settings and other agencies about the suitable action to take when a child has been identified as making inadequate progress or having an unmet need. At Little Cuckoos, whenever possible, we will ensure that early intervention is actioned via a referral to Early Help as soon as the criteria are met, to prevent situations to escalate into larger problems. The document can be found on the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP) website.

Early Help Single Point of Entry: 01225 718230

Therefore the setting will consider the following:

- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- Provide early help services e.g. Children's Centre, family outreach worker
- Refer to appropriate services e.g. CAMHS etc.

10. Responding to disclosures: guidance for staff

If a child wishes to confide in you the following guidelines should be adhered to:

Create a safe environment

- Take the child to a private and safe place if possible
- Stay calm
- Reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame
- Tell the child that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you
- Listen to the child and tell them that you believe them and are taking what is being said seriously
- Tell the child what you are going to do next after the disclosure

Be honest

- Do not make promises that you cannot keep
- Explain that you are likely to have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening

Record on the appropriate form exactly what the child has said to you as soon as possible and include the following into the form:

- Child's name, address, date of birth
- Date and time of any incident
- What the child said (Exact words, not using language you think the child means) and what you said
- Your observations e.g. child's behaviour and emotional state

The Child Welfare and Child Protection Concern Sheet is included in Appendix 3a. An overview sheet is also available for quick reference, refer to Appendix 3b for further details.

Be clear about what the child says and what you say

- Do not interview the child and keep questions to a minimum.
- Encourage the child to use his/her own words and do not try to lead them into giving particular answers

Maintain confidentiality

- Only tell those people that it is necessary to inform

Do not take sole responsibility

- Immediately consult your Designated Safeguarding Lead so that any appropriate action can be taken to protect the pupil if necessary
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the information and decide on the next steps.

11. Reporting concerns

The 'What to do' SVPP flowchart has been included in Appendix 4.

Where any adult in the setting has concerns about a child they should discuss these in the first instance with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence, the deputy. In exceptional circumstances, staff members can speak directly to Children's Social Care.

Children's Social Care referrals:

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): **0300 456 0108** Out of hours: **0845 6070 0100**

If you believe the child is at immediate risk of significant harm or injury, then you must call the police on 999.

Implementation of ENCOMPASS at Little Cuckoos Pre School

- ENCOMPASS is a partnership between Wiltshire Police and designated Early Years staff known as Key Adults. From Monday 4th September 2017 for Wiltshire & Swindon the Police will inform the Key Adults within Early Years settings about any domestic abuse incident where the child or young person has been affected by domestic abuse.

Sharing Concerns with Parents

Little Cuckoos is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015)

We share information with Parents unless to do so would place the child at an increased risk of significant harm.

This includes concerns of Domestic abuse

There is a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers and in most situations it may be appropriate to discuss initial concerns with them. However there will be some circumstances where the Designated Safeguarding Lead will not seek consent from the individual or their family, or inform them that the information will be shared. For example, if doing so would:

- place a child at increased risk of significant harm;
- place an adult at increased risk of serious harm;
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime;
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

In some circumstances, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from Children's Social Care by ringing the MASH to obtain advice about the recommended course of action.

Little Cuckoos shares a purpose with parents to educate, keep children safe from harm and have their welfare promoted.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information until we have permission or it is necessary to do so to protect a child.

Little Cuckoos will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm.

We encourage parents to disclose any concerns they may have with Little Cuckoos. We make parents aware of our Child Protection Policy which is also available on demand.

Recording concerns

When a concern about a child is raised by an adult in the setting, that person is responsible for making a written record of the disclosure as soon as possible after reporting it urgently to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their deputy.

Discussions should be recorded on a child welfare and CP record form (see template in Appendix 3), with details of the concern and any agreed action that is to be taken. The records must be signed and dated by the member of staff documenting the concern.

Record keeping of child protection concerns

Little Cuckoos will:

- Keep clear written records of all child welfare and child protection concerns using the standard recording form, with a body map where injuries need to be noted (see Template in Appendix 3a), including actions taken and outcomes as appropriate.
- Ensure all child welfare and child protection records are kept securely, and in a locked location. The record must be signed and dated and kept securely in a file under the child name, away from the other records (medical forms, academic records etc.) The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that concerns and discussions are written up properly and acted on appropriately.

Ensure that all child protection records relating to a child who moves to another setting or school are passed on to the new school securely, promptly and separate from the main pupil file, with a copy being kept in this setting. Confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Child welfare records below the child protection threshold but with continuing relevance to the child's wellbeing should also be transferred with parental consent.

Information sharing –internal process

Information concerning children at risk of harm will be shared with all members of staff on a “need to know” basis. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a judgement in each individual case about who needs and has a right to access particular information.

12. Monitoring of children subjected to a CP Plan

Children who are the subject of a Child Protection Conference will have either an agreed multi-disciplinary action plan or child protection plan. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will attend planning meetings and core group specified in the plan and contribute to assessments and plans.

The setting recognises that children who are the subjects of abuse or who live in situations of domestic violence may exhibit distressed or challenging behaviour and may not be reaching their full academic potential. The setting will ensure that appropriate support is in place at the setting.

13. Children with Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities

For a variety of reasons, children with additional needs face an increased risk of abuse and neglect; therefore adults are expected to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. Indications of abuse will be reported as for other pupils.

Wiltshire Council provides targeted support services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability who need additional support with:

- Communication
- Learning and processing information
- Experiencing the world around them, including sensory difficulties
- Physical or medical conditions that affect their life and learning
- Coping with social and emotional challenges

The SEND service can be contacted on 01225 757985.

14. Follow-up support of vulnerable children

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The setting may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When attending the setting their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The setting will endeavour to support the children through:

- Key person
- The content of the activities
- The setting's ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives children a sense of being valued
- Liaison with other agencies supporting the child such as Children's Social Care, Children's Centres, the SEND team, etc. and where appropriate initiate and/or contribute to a CAF and Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings.

In order to create a culture of safety in the setting, Little Cuckoos will ensure that safeguarding is a standing item on all meetings agendas.

15. Welcoming other professionals

Visitors with a professional role, such as social workers will have had the appropriate vetting checks undertaken by their own organisation. Any professionals visiting the setting should provide evidence

of their professional role and employment details (an identity badge for example). If felt necessary, the setting will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity.

Professionals will complete our signing in/out visitor's book and wear an I.D. badge if required to do so.

- **Rules for visitors during their visit are inside the visitors book**

16. Off-site visits

Appropriate risk assessments must be in place prior to any off-site visit taking place.

Safeguarding concerns or allegations will be responded to following the SVPP procedures (as above). The member of staff in charge of the visit will report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Manager, who will pass to Social Care if appropriate. In emergency the staff member in charge will contact the police and/or social care.

17. Photography and images

To protect children we will:

- Seek informed parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications) via our enrolment forms
- Only take photos and videos of children to celebrate achievement on Cuckoos devices (Kindle /Mobile)
- Apple watches not to be worn by staff members or volunteers
- Use only the child's first name with an image
- Ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- Encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

At events such as the Christmas nativity play and end of year Graduation all guests will be asked not to share any photographs or videos on social media.

Policy review

The Manager/Chair of Committee will undertake an annual review of the setting's Child Protection Policy and procedures and remedy any deficiencies and weakness found without delay.

Date of review: February 2024

Name of Committee Chair person: Elaine Millard