



Child Protection Policy

This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

- DP05 Social Media;
- EY05 Acceptable use of iPad;
- EY08 Partnership with parents;
- HS12 Mobile phone and wearable technology;
- HS18 Prevent Duty;
- HS20 Photos and images;
- HS21 Safeguarding;

Purpose

We have a duty of care to protect each individual child and ensure their welfare and safety is of paramount importance. The purpose of the policy is to provide a clear framework and procedures to keep children safe, secure and prevent them from harm. **“Nothing is more important than children’s welfare. Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support as soon as a need is identified”** – Working together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Definition

Child protection is an aspect of Safeguarding but is focused on how we respond to children who need Early Help to avoid escalation into more serious problems or have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm. As a provider of childcare, we have an obligation to notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. If they are any concerns regarding a child’s safety or welfare.

Legislation and guidance

We work alongside all statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures set down in “Working together to Safeguard children 2018”, “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’ (DFE 2015) and “Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019”, “The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” alongside Ofsted requirements. Copies of all documents are kept on site and referred to as needed.

Early Help

- Following the ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019’ statutory guidelines, we understand that any child may benefit from Early Help from time to time. This may be to support families facing a crisis or to prevent a child or children escalating into the Social Care system under section 17 or section 47 of the Children’s Act 2004.
- With support from the Group Safeguarding Lead (GSL), staff are advised to follow guidelines on how to initiate or take part in an Early Help Assessment from the HSCP (Hampshire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership) website or and to liaise with the local Family Hub and/or Hampshire MASH (Multi agency Safeguarding Hub) for guidance and support.
- If at our Nurseries that are based under Southampton City Council, alongside the DSL, the staff member will make contact with the Early Help Hub by emailing Families.matter@gov.uk. Who will then send across a referral form with more information or we can phone them directly on 0238 083 2300.
- The Family Hubs offer support for families and professionals with Early Help and Prevention for families with children aged 0-19 that are in tier 2 or 3 of the Safeguarding Threshold (Early Help and Targeted Early Help).
- Staff are advised to use the HSCP thresholds document when making any decision or referral to Children’s Services to gain an accurate assessment of what level of help the child and family may need, and to provide a good quality referral to Children’s Services.

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A safe environment

We promote a culture of safety which is an environment where all children are protected from abuse and harm. Our nursery is designed to ensure staff can effectively care for children in a safe and secure environment in a layout that allows supervision and transparency. Every Room on every Hopscotch Nursery has a copy to hand of ‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused-Advice for Practitioners March 2015 statutory guidance document. All staff attend a Hopscotch Safeguarding briefing approved by HSCP/SCC.

Children’s Rights and Entitlements

- Hopscotch take every opportunity to promote the children’s rights to be strong, resilient, and listened to.
- We do this by facilitating a robust Key Person System, so every child has at least one person they know well and trust to talk to.
- Creating an environment in which we encourage children to develop positive self-image.
- We train all staff internally on Safeguarding based on the ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ statutory guidance and HSCP / SSCP roles and responsibilities. We regularly check their ongoing knowledge and understanding through regular supervision.
- We train staff to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, and to understand that their professional judgement is crucial in protecting children from harm as many of our children are too young to verbally disclose or may not realise they are being abused.
- Where possible and in an age appropriate way, we teach children about keeping themselves safe. We use the ‘Pantosaurus’ resources from NSPCC to help children understand that their bodies belong to them and how to keep themselves safe.

Group Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead

(hereinafter referred to as GSL and DSL)

- We have a designated member of the management team in each setting who coordinates and monitors all child protection matters (DSL).
- Due to COVID, although settings must continue to have a practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding. It is acceptable for the safeguarding lead not to be based on-site if this is not practical, for example they may be working from home or be based at another setting, as long as they are still available to provide support, advice and guidance to staff.
- All DSL’s to ensure that there is clear communication within their teams and contact numbers available for all practitioners & nursery staff to use. If staff are unable to make contact with the DSL or Deputy DSL they are to call the Group Safeguarding Lead on 07435 949 782.
- The DSL is trained in advanced child protection and/ or lead safeguarding training.
- Staff have a duty of care to immediately report any concerns of abuse to the most senior Safeguarding practitioner on site as named below.
- The GSL supports the seven DSL’s across the Hopscotch group in decision making, case handling and any other further support and advice required.
- Staff are aware they can contact the GSL with any concerns prior to making any further decisions following a reported concern.

Types of abuse

There are four categories of abuse: Physical, Emotional, Neglect, Sexual.

- We understand that adult issues such as domestic violence, substance misuse and mental health issues have a significant impact on a child.
- Children can be abused within their own family, by a person in a trusted position, by another child or by a stranger.
- Any child can be groomed and abused; however, we recognise that non-mobile babies, disabled children and Looked After children are particularly vulnerable.

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- When children are suffering from any type of abuse this can be demonstrated through play, things they say, physical marks or changes in their appearance or behaviour.
- We have an awareness of abuse linked to certain cultural beliefs.
- As a mandatory requirement, our staff must complete training specific training for female genital mutilation (FGM) and Prevent.
- From October 2015 it has been illegal to smoke in a car with children present. We will raise a concern if we feel a child’s health is at risk from passive smoking. We would initially discuss any concerns regarding passive smoking to a parent.
- When a child discloses abuse, the staff member will listen, offer reassurance and be clear that they will pass on the information in order to help them. At no point is the child questioned or influenced in anyway.
- Our team are trained to adopt the attitude of ‘It could happen here’ in line with the Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidelines. Staff must not allow personal feelings opinions or relationships to interfere with reporting concerns.

Non-mobile babies bruising protocol and Blood Shot Eyes

- Injuries to babies who are not yet mobile are to be taken seriously.
- We have a duty to report all non-mobile baby injuries to children’s services.
- This is the same for children who are non-mobile due to a disability.
- The term not independently mobile applies to infants who are not yet rolling or crawling.

Please refer to the document entitled ‘Protocol for the management of actual or suspected bruising in Infants who are not independently mobile (HIPS Local Safeguarding Children’s Partnership).

Prevent Duty

We have a legal responsibility to follow the Prevent Duty (2015) and to act upon any concerns that relate to children or families displaying extremist views. We deal with concerns of radicalization and extremism the same way we would report any other child protection concerns. In an emergency staff are instructed to call 999/ or the antiterrorist hotline.

Allegations against Staff

If a member of staff who is in a position of trust has believed to have:

- 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 or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

Then allegations procedures as detailed below must be followed.

1. A concern must be raised to the nursery DSL (person in charge that day, usually the manager or deputy)
2. The DSL then contacts the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the GSL as soon as practically possible but by close of day at the latest.
3. The advice of the LADO will be followed. The concern will first be reported verbally, confirmed in writing and if out of hours the electronic submission form is to be used.
4. The Registered Provider, Freya Derrick will be informed of the reporting of such an allegation to the LADO.
5. Ofsted would be informed that we have referred an incident to the LADO.
6. The advice of the LADO will be taken, and all actions followed in regards to taking action against the staff member. (If we are unable to contact the LADO we would call the police if we regarded it an emergency) or suspend the staff member pending investigation and advice.
7. Where a member of staff is subsequently dismissed because of misconduct relating to a child (or would have been dismissed had they not left first) we notify the DBS so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.
8. Ofsted would be appraised of the full investigation and concluding action. As soon as reasonably practicable at least within 14 days

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Reporting and recording of Concerns

- Staff have a duty of care to report and record the details of any concerns to the DSL as soon as the concern becomes apparent. It is important that we act quickly to mitigate the risk of any further escalation.
- They will be asked to record information on a concern log.
- This information is confidentially stored in the child protection file which is in lockable storage.
- The DSL will assess the concerns and take the appropriate action and refer to the GSL any concerns that require action.
- Concerns will be discussed with the parents if this does not put the child at risk of further harm
- The action may be a referral to the children’s services department of the local authority or other agency with statutory responsibilities.
- We view making a referral as a necessary step in a line of enquiry, it is not an accusation.
- Staff are trained to be confident in calling the local authority’s children’s services department if they feel their concerns have not been dealt with effectively within Hopscotch.
- Staff are trained to challenge professionals if they are not satisfied with proceedings.

A list of child protection contacts is displayed for staff around the setting. Referred to as the ‘Minute Guide to Safeguarding’.

- We have a duty to contact the designated social worker with any relevant updates or concerns regarding children who are already receiving support from children’s services.
- DSL/GSL will contact police if a crime has or is about to be committed.
- Every setting has a ‘Flow Chart of Action Following a Referral to Children’s Services’ to support staff understanding of what happens next and what to expect when a concern is passed on.

Please be advised that following endorsement by the Hampshire Safeguarding Children’s Board, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Children’s Services no longer accept telephone referrals that are not Section 47 (child protection).

All other referrals/information requests/information sharing, and case updates need to be made on the Interagency Referral Form (IARF) which can be easily accessed through the following link:

https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7e6115a7-b0ba-484d-991f-084c1248ac72/AF-Stage-52cf8e73-0daf-47d4-bb55-0fdad856d3e6/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en

Inter-agency referral form

Please note your request/referral will not be processed until IARF submitted.

Training and Support

We understand that to safeguard the children effectively our team require ongoing training and updates.

- We provide both internal and external training so that staff have a strong awareness of child protection procedures, the types and signs/ symptoms of abuse, staff allegation and who to report to.
- Lead practitioners are required to update their training and knowledge every 2 years with refreshers in between.
- Our team receive regular in-house training as well as staff meetings to discuss updates.
- Staff must complete Prevent duty training online and FGM training as part of their child protection knowledge.
- Lead practitioners attend regular meetings as a group to discuss current practice and updates to procedures, policies and legislation. These are both in house and with the local authority.
- DSL/GSL attend termly HCC safeguarding provider meetings.

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Supervisions

- Staff are also given the opportunity to speak with management on a one to one basis to discuss any concerns they have about any of the children or other members of the team and these are carried out every term. This is called a supervision.
- The purpose of the supervision is for the staff member to have a private conversation to discuss any concerns they may have regarding the safety, well-being, and development of the children in the setting.
- It is also an opportunity to discuss their own personal training/ development and wellbeing to ensure that the children in the setting are well looked after, developed, and safeguarded.
- However, staff are trained to raise child protection concerns immediately rather than wait for a supervision to share information.
- The supervisions are carried out for each staff member on a regular basis and the document is used as part of our records for protecting and developing the children and staff. It can also be used or contribute towards making a referral to children’s services.
- Staff are expected to attend supervisions as part of the child protection procedures.
- The GSL has quarterly clinical supervision to specifically focusing on Safeguarding to support their role.
- DSL have clinical supervision every 4 weeks with GSL .

Existing injuries

- When a child attends the setting with an existing injury, we ask the parent to fill in and sign an “existing injury form” on arrival at the start of their session.
- This form will be used to evidence that the injury was not caused whilst the child was in the care of Hopscotch.
- These forms can also be used as a way of monitoring concerns, patterns of possible harm or significant injuries.
- Staff must report existing injury forms and overviews to the DSL immediately.
- Accidents which happen in the setting are reported on an accident form for the parents to view and sign.
- Parents are familiarised with Existing Injury forms and their use at settling in sessions before the child/ren start nursery with us.

If a staff member causes an injury to a child, for example, accidentally stepping on their hand, then they will be required to fill out a staff incident form and a child accident form.

Hopscotch Safeguarding Pledge

- A thorough, clear and regularly reviewed Safeguarding Policy that is understood by all staff members across the group.
- Safer recruitment procedures followed in line with ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ Sept 2019 statutory guidance.
- Every member of staff including office, housekeeping, maintenance and kitchen staff must have a basic understanding of safeguarding.
- Every member of staff must know where to refer to if they have a safeguarding concern.
- All Nurseries and the Head Office must have the ‘Safeguarding Minute Guide’ displayed in office spaces, kitchens, toilets and staff rooms.
- Every room in every nursery must have a copy to hand of ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused - March 2015’ document.
- Robust induction and ongoing supervisions that reviews and highlights safeguarding arrangements specifically.
- All staff to attend in house Basic Safeguarding Briefing every 2 years minimum.
- Information for parents on what to do if they are worried about a child being abused, alongside information for support with domestic abuse.

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Sharing information

- We follow the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (HIPS) Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual on Information Sharing available on the HSCP / SSCP website. This is in line with national guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and covers, The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Myth-busting guide to information sharing, The seven golden rules to sharing information, Caldicott Guardian Principles, Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme and further information
- We recognise the crucial importance of sharing relevant information to the right people at the right time in protecting children from harm.
- We will share information with other professionals without parental permission if we feel a child/ren may be at risk.
- Sharing information with the team regarding current child protection concerns regarding specific individual children will be on a need to know basis depending on the circumstances and in the best interest of the child and family.
- The team are not permitted to discuss child protection cases or concerns outside of the setting.

Partnership with parents

We pride ourselves on our honest and transparent relationships with parents and in cases where concerns have been raised, we will discuss these openly with an aim to support the family and maintain good relationships in the best interest of the child.

Key to strong partnership with parents is working together and offering support and honesty without judgement regarding all concerns and child protection cases.

- Our policies, including child protection and safeguarding are available to view in our reception area. We clearly state who has the role of the DSL within the setting. Parents are given a copy of the child protection policy upon registration.
- If a concern of abuse is recorded and subsequently referred to the appropriate agency then parents are informed of the report, except where guidance and advice is given not to.

We continue to welcome and support the child and family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse where appropriate.

- We advise staff members not to become friends with parents on social networking sites or within their personal lives. A babysitting agreement must be signed by the parent and the staff member. If this arrangement is made, this clearly states that a staff member would have a duty to report any concerns seen within the home.
- If a parent or family member is currently being investigated for serious allegations of abuse or we are aware that they are a barred person, then we can refuse them entry to the premises if we feel we are putting the children in our care at risk.
- If a parent or carer collects the child from the setting under the influence of alcohol or drugs, we will phone an emergency contact to collect the child. If we feel a child is at risk or the parent/ carer becomes aggressive we will call the police. Ongoing substance and alcohol misuse will be dealt with as a child protection concern and we will support the family in getting the help they require.
- If a parent requests access to their child's records, then a request in writing would need to be made by the parent to the settings DSL.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family after any investigation or ongoing case.
- We also attend any Child Protection meetings as scheduled by the children's services team. If for any reason we are unable to attend, then we will send the relevant reports to be read on our behalf to children's services.

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- Our reports will give an honest overview of the child's development and wellbeing and we share this report with parents 48 hours before any meeting is due to take place.
- Staff are aware that they have a duty of care to the children and they should not allow their own relationship with a parent or staff member to stop them reporting a concern.
- We fully cooperate with any investigation that takes place.
- Posters are displayed in settings with information for parents on what to do if they're worried about a child being abused, alongside information for support with domestic abuse.

In addition;

- We follow the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019' statutory guidance Safer Recruitment guidelines along with a supporting inhouse policy for employing new staff. This is to prevent unsuitable people being able to look after children.
- The team are trained in the procedure to follow when reporting a staff allegation and the warning signs that a colleague may be unsuitable.
- We encourage staff members to comfort children by cuddling and showing affection, however staff are aware of what is acceptable contact and what is not as outlined in the Positive Handling Policy.
- Staff are checked regularly for suitability through termly supervisions and PDP's.
- Staff are contractually obliged to subscribe to the DBS update service within 30 days of applying for their DBS
- Staff know how to raise a concern about the inappropriate behaviour or actions of individuals within the setting which may include an allegation of abuse
- Parents should report any concerns regarding staff members to the manager of the setting or the Managing Director.
- Any accidents that occur which involve a staff member harming a child (for example; a staff member accidentally scratching a child when changing their nappy) are recorded on a staff incident form, these are discussed with the parent on the same day.
- Any physical restraint used by a member of staff on a child will also be recorded on a physical handling form (REF. Positive Handling Policy).
- Staff who use their mobile phones in the rooms where children are cared for must be reported to management immediately and will be subject to disciplinary procedures in line with company policy. (REF. Mobile Phone Policy).

Guidance updates due to COVID-19

- Designated lead safeguarding officer for each nursery to make sure that they are making regular contact with any child that they feel is classed as vulnerable during the pandemic, if they are not attending the nursery due to lockdown, times of isolation or still not returning after closure. These conversations are to be recorded and put alongside the child's safeguarding log.
- For any children that are being monitored by our SENDCo or that currently have individual education plans with outside agencies, all practitioners and SENDCo need to make sure that we continue to work alongside other professionals. Organising zoom meetings when needed and communicating any concerns or changes with the relevant agencies.
- Any children that are currently under Social care, it is paramount that we keep communications open with the Social worker and any core group meetings are attended. If DSL/Deputy are unable to attend the GSL is to be there in their absence.

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https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7e6115a7-b0ba-484d-991f-084c1248ac72/AF-Stage-52cf8e73-0daf-47d4-bb55-0fdad856d3e6/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en

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Group Safeguarding Lead (GSL) is Sally Rutledge

In the absence any of the DSL member listed below, the staff member must escalate to the Group Safeguarding Lead. Staff must make contact with Sally Rutledge the GSL if they feel a concern raised to their lead DSL or similar has not been suitably dealt with.

The named Group Safeguarding Lead is:

Name: **Sally Rutledge**
 Email: sally@hopscotchdaynurseries.co.uk
 Telephone: **07435 949 782**

The setting's named child protection team for **Botley** is:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Emma Smith
 Supporting Safeguarding Practitioner: Katie Streets

The setting's named child protection team for **Eastleigh** is:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Lorraine Dalipe
 Supporting Safeguarding Practitioner: Zoe Turner

The setting's named child protection team for **Fareham** is:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Fiona Ellery
 Supporting Safeguarding Practitioner: Gemma Glenton
 Third in Charge: Dani Manning

The setting's named child protection team for **Gosport** is:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Lucy Boswell
 Supporting Safeguarding Practitioner: Laura Smith
 Third in Charge: Aimee Grey

The setting's named child protection team for **Lee on the Solent** is:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Emma Saunders
 Supporting Safeguarding Practitioner: Amy Smith

The setting's named child protection team for **Regents Park** is:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Hayley James
 Supporting Safeguarding Practitioner: Sophie Fall

The setting's named child protection team for **Titchfield** is:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Anna Dempsey
 Supporting Safeguarding Practitioner: Catherine Dolton

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