

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Policy statement

Harvey Bears Nursery and Preschool will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Procedures

We are committed to building 'a culture of safety' in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Ryan Bailey 07927903535 (DSL)**

Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Sue Scrivens 07927903535 (DDSL)**

Our designated officer (a member of the management committee) who oversees the work is

The designated people ensure that they have relevant training and attend relevant cluster meetings. All staff have Level 2 Safeguarding training, which is regularly updated.

We ensure that all staff accept the responsibility of safeguarding our families and children and any vulnerable adults we have contact with. We ensure that;

- All staff accept that safeguarding is their responsibility.
- All staff have updated safeguarding training and are alert to possible indicators and signs of abuse and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported, where relevant, to the local authority Family Front Door.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to take things at face value.
- All staff understand the principles of Early Help as defined in the document (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*) and are able not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully skeptical.
- All staff understand the thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including those families who are below the threshold for significant harm, according to arrangements published by the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- All staff understand the responsibilities, under the *General Data Protection Regulation* and the *Data Protection Act 2018*, and understand relevant

safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements and local safeguarding partners requirements and ensure that any information they may share about parents and children with outside agencies is shared appropriately and lawfully.

- We will support families to receive appropriate early help by sharing information with other agencies, in accordance with statutory requirements and lawfully.
- We will share information with Safeguarding partners and other agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.
- We will be transparent about how we lawfully process data.
- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns, in the event that they feel either the DSL, DDSL or the local authority has not acted adequately.
- All staff know how to act if there is a dispute between staff and outside organisations.
- All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour, and conduct and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including mobile phones and devices)whistleblowing and dignity at work.
- Children have a keyperson to build a relationship with, and are supported to express any worries or concerns or complaints in an age appropriate way.
- All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behavior and follow it in relation to children showing aggression to other children.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Enhanced criminal record and barred list checks, and other suitability checks are carried out for staff, volunteers and committee prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified, or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected based, on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and challenge incorrect information.
- Volunteers must be 17 or over.
- Receive a robust and induction and regular supervisory meetings.
- Be considered competent and capable.
- Be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures.
- Be fully supervised if they have access to children.

Information must be recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including;

- The Disclosure and Barring certificate reference number and date and who obtained it.

- Certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate
- Two character references.

All staff and volunteers are informed 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).

From 31 August 2018, staff and volunteers in childcare settings, not on domestic premises are not required to notify the setting if anyone in their household has any relevant convictions.

Staff require regular supervisions and appraisals which include discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs which are reviewed regularly.

In addition to induction, supervision and annual appraisals, staff are provided with clear expectations in relation to their behavior.

We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances, that would otherwise have led to dismissal, for reasons of a child protection concern.

Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.

Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the building in the form of a magnetic door lock.

Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or videoed for any other purpose than to record their development, or inform of their involvement in activities.

Parents sign a permission slip indicated where they give permission for children's photos to be included.

Permission is sought for children's photographs to be included on social media or any marketing material.

Personal mobile phones are not used where children are present, even when taken on an outing to enable staff to contact the setting.

The DSL has responsibility to ensure that the Online Safety Policy is adhered to.

We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns, including details of how they are responded to.

We ensure that robust visual risk assessments are completed on all activities. Where necessary, as in the case of a one off activity, these will be written. Individual risk assessments are completed in the case of a person's injury.

All staff will inform the DSL at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay referral to Family Front Door or the LADO, OFSTED or RIDDOR,

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations 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 worried a child is being abused' HMG 2015 and the Care Act 2014

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, plus differences of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture and that these receive full consideration in relation to children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect this may be demonstrated through;
 - 1) Significant changes of behavior.
 - 2) Deterioration in their general well-being.
 - 3) Their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say either direct or indirect disclosure.
 - 4) Changes in their appearance, their behavior, or their play.
 - 5) Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
 - 6) Any reason to suspect neglect or abuse observed outside the setting.
- We understand how to identify children who maybe in need of Early help and how to access services for them
- We understand that we should refer a child who meets section 17 of the Children's Act 1989, child in need definition, to local authority children's work services.
- We understand that we should refer any child who may be at risk of significant harm to the Family Front Door or the Police, if a child is considered to be in danger of immediate harm.

- We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, e.g. social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalization, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.
- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is privately fostered we inform the children's social care team.
- We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The DSL will take action to contact the child's parent for an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that this child is safe and well. If no contact can be made, and if the DSL has reason that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately and LSCP procedures are followed.
- If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of unexplained absence.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's and young people's vulnerability, such as Special Educational Needs and Disability, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children, including through an internet abuser, female genital mutilation and radicalization or extremism.
- In relation to radicalization and extremism we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCP guidance procedures on responding to radicalization.
- All staff must complete Channel training, online Prevent training and Operation Encompass training.
- We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to early years' staff to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police. We are also aware that early years' practitioners should follow local authority published safeguarding procedures to respond to FGM and other safeguarding issues, which involves contacting police if a crime of FGM has been, or is about to be, committed.
- We are also aware that children can be affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organized abuse. This can be through forced marriage, honour based violence or victims of child trafficking.
- If we become concerned that a child may be a victim of the above, we will refer to the National Referral Mechanism (0800 121700) as soon as possible or seek advice from the local authority Family Front Door, or the Police.
- We will be alert to threats from outside a child's family, e.g. organised crime groups such as County Lines and child sexual exploitation groups.
- When we believe that a child in our care may be affected by these factors we follow the procedures for reporting child protection and children in needs concern and follow LSCP procedures.

- Where such indicators are apparent, the child's keyworker makes a dated record of the details and informs the DSL as soon as possible.
- In the event that a staff member or a volunteer is unhappy with the decision made by the DSL they may follow the escalation process.
- We refer concerns about children's welfare to the Local Authority, children's social care team and cooperate fully in the subsequent investigation.
- We respond to any disclosures sensitively and appropriately. We take care not to influence the outcome, either through the way we speak to children or by asking leading questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people of 16 - 19 as defined by the Children Act 1989.
- This includes students, volunteers or school aged children on work experience. Where abuse or neglect is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the person concerned will be taken into account, in an developmentally appropriate way.
- All staff are aware that adults can be vulnerable, and know how to refer them.
- All staff know how to follow the Harvey Bears whistle blowing policy and procedure.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern, (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, the member of staff should:

- Listen to the child, offer reassurance and give assurance that she/he will take relevant action.
- Does not question the child, although it is OK to ask questions for the purpose of clarity.
- Makes a written record that portrays an objective record of the observation or disclosure. The exact words spoken by the child. as far as possible, the name of the person who is concerned, the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, usually the DSL. The date and time and if anyone else was present.
- These records must be signed and dated and kept in the safeguarding folder.
- The DSL is informed as soon as possible, within one working day.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we follow their procedures.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

The number for Family Front Door is always kept on the back of the cupboard door. Copies of referral forms are contained on the Worcestershire County Council website.

Important numbers; Family Front Door 01905 822666.

Emergency out of Hours; 01905 768020

Escalation process

- If you feel a referral made has not been dealt with properly, or that concerns are not being correctly addressed or responded to, you should follow Local Safeguarding Children's Board escalation process.
- We will ensure that all staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.
- We will follow local procedure published by the LSCP.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact, Concerns are normally discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child or others at risk. It is not shared if it is felt that informing the parents may hinder any police inquiry, or may unduly delay a referral, or unless it is otherwise unreasonable to seek consent. Advice will be sought from Family Front Door, or the police where necessary.
- Parents are informed of any record of concern, unless this may be harmful to the child. A record is made of any conversation held with a parent/carer.
- If a suspicion warrants referral to Family Front Door, parents are informed at the same time as the referral will be made, except where the procedure of the LSCP do not allow it, e.g. if the child is considered at risk.
- If there is a possibility that informing parents due to putting a child at greater risk, advice should be sought from Family Front Door.

Liaising with other agencies and multi-agency working

- We work within guidelines provided by the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' is available to staff and parents.
- We have procedures for contacting Family Front Door regarding child protection issues, and concerns about child welfare.
- We notify OFSTED of any incident, or accident or any changes in arrangements which may affect children's welfare. Or when an allegation has been made against a member of staff. Any notification to OFSTED of allegations of abuse, committed on the premises must be made to OFSTED within 14 days.

Allegations made against staff and people in a position of trust.

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff and volunteers. OFSTED's complaint number is displayed at all times.
- We ensure that anyone working in the setting knows how to deal with concerns that they may have about the conduct or behaviour of anyone within the setting.
- We differentiate between allegations, and concerns about the quality of care or practice and have separate procedure dealing with complaints.
- We respond quickly to reports of staff, volunteers or visitors making inappropriate sexual comments, any excessive one to one attention, beyond the requirements of usual practice, or inappropriate sharing of information or images.
- We will respond to allegations that a member of staff has, behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child., possibly committed a criminal offence against or in relation to a child or behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child.
- We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse within the setting has taken place, by first taking detailed records of the disclosure.
- We refer any such disclosure to the DSL and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), to investigate or offer advice.

(LADO name and number)

- We also report any alleged incident to OFSTED, including what measures have been taken.
- If advised to do so the person in question will be suspended for the duration of the investigation.

Disciplinary Action

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to a safeguarding matter we will notify The Disclosure and Barring Service and OFSTED of the accusation.

We are committed to providing awareness of child abuse issues throughout our staff training. We are also committed to empowering children through our early year's curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- Training opportunities are sought for every adult within the setting to ensure they are able to recognize the signs and signals of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Including child sexual exploitation and neglect. They are aware of Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership guidelines for making a referral.
- Training must include Operation Encompass and Prevent training. Staff should be aware of how to respond to families in need of early help.
- At Harvey Bears Nursery and Pre-school we ensure that all staff have up to date training, including the DSL and DDSL.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures of reporting and recording any concerns.
- All staff receive safeguarding updates via email, bulletins, and discussion of safeguarding procedures at staff meetings supervisions and appraisals.

Planning

The layout of our rooms needs staff to be aware of children in different areas e.g. the conservatory and toilets. When leaving a room staff should be aware of how many staff are left supervising the main room. They should let another member of staff know where they are going. The door to the children's toilet is kept open. The door of the John Redman room is kept open when nappies are being changed. The CCTV camera overlooking the children's toilet door is covered when the setting is open.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our day to day programme.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for every individual. We have positive regard for children's heritage, colour, ethnicity, the language spoken at home and social and cultural background.
- We ensure this is conveyed in a way that is developmentally appropriate for our children.

Confidentiality

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the LSCP and in keeping with our GDPR policy.

Support for Families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibility in child protection, such as reporting any concerns, information sharing, monitoring children and liaising when necessary with the LSCP.
- We will continue to welcome the child whilst any investigation is taking place.
- We will engage with any Child in Need plan or Early Help and Care Plans agreed.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with parents/carer's in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure, and only if appropriate under the guidance of the LSCP.

Legal Framework

Children's Act 1989

Protection of Children Act 1989

The Children Act section 11 2004

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Childcare Act 2006

Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency Regulations England 2018

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

What to Do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused 2015

The Early Years Foundation Stage 2025