



Leapfrog Neighbourhood Nursery

SAFEGUARDING

POLICY

ACTIVE LEARNING THROUGH PURPOSEFUL PLAY

Introduction

Leapfrog Neighbourhood Nursery Ltd is committed to developing and sustaining a strong safeguarding culture, supporting us all in safeguarding children, creating a positive and respectful environment in which everyone can flourish.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to. Maintaining an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned, we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children.

We support the children in our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children’s health and development. In our setting we strive to protect children from radicalisation , promoting acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures.

This child protection and safeguarding policy is for all employees, volunteers, parents and visitors to and of Leapfrog Neighbourhood Nursery Ltd. It forms part of our safeguarding arrangements and should be read alongside other relevant policies. The policy is available in the nursery and is available on the [website](#) for access at any time.

We work closely with parents and ask that parents to advise of any other agencies working with the child so that we can contact them as required.

Parents are supported to ensure they feel that they can openly discuss any concerns they may have about any child or parent at Leapfrog Neighbourhood Nursery Ltd. We are equally open to any feedback on our team member’s conduct.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Legal Framework

Our policy and procedures are guided by the following legislation and relevant documentation:

- Childrens Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018)
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable groups Act 2006
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory guidance
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR)
- What to do if your worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Prevent Duty Departmental Advice for schools and childcare providers 2015 Guidance
- Sexual offences Act 2003
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2017
- Child sexual exploitation 2017
- Preventing and tackling bullying 2017
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Female Genital information Act 2003
- Information Sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018
- Local Guidance -Hampshire , Isle of Wight and Portsmouth Safeguarding Partnership (HIPS) guidance and procedure

Safeguarding definitions within this document

Child protection is an aspect of safeguarding, but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

The term **staff** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the Freedom School Holidays , full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18 birthday. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of schools, however the policy will extend to trainees or volunteers under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents, guardians and foster carers.

Abuse could mean neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any combination of these. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts and/or failure to provide proper care. Explanations of these are given within the procedure document.

Principles and values

- Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children have a right to be protected from harm.
- All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, either in the setting or in the community.
- We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.
- Whilst Leapfrog Nursery School Ltd will work openly with parents as far as possible, it reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the police, without notifying parents if this is believed to be in the child's best interests.

Roles and responsibilities

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility, all professionals should make sure their approach is child – centred. This means they should consider at all times, what is in the best interests of the child”.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE 2021)

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them from harm and provide a safe environment that enabled them to learn and achieve their full potential. However there are identified key adults in the setting and in the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.

Designated safeguarding leads

Each site must have a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is available at all times. The lead will build a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers, children, young people and their families treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Jayne Baines is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the setting and takes lead responsibility for managing child protection referrals, safeguarding training and raising awareness of all child protection policies and procedures.

Angela Fripp (DSL at the Yarborough site) is the deputy DSL, if for any reason the DSL is not on site the deputy DSL will act in their absence.

It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that:

- All policies, practice and professional development and training in the setting are effective and reflect statutory and local guidance.
- All staff receive safeguarding training on induction relevant to their role and continue to have refresher training every three years. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually.
- As a setting they contribute to inter agency working in line with statutory and local guidance. All staff and volunteers are aware of these procedures and they are followed at all times.
- Advice and support is provided to staff on child protection matters and will make timely referrals to MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) via the Children Reception Team (CRT).
- They are alert to the additional vulnerabilities of children with a social worker, ensuring staff know who these children are and understand how to support them with any challenges they may face.
- Information stored and shared is in accordance with GDPR regulations.
- The DSL and Deputy DSL will attend child protection training to enable them to identify and act on any indications that a child may be suffering harm.
- All staff will be provided with support and guidance in relation to child protection matters so they are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and are able to respond appropriately.
- Updates in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in meetings.

- The DSL will work in partnership with parents and carers and other agencies to work together to safeguard children and provide the support around contextual safeguarding.

Practitioners responsibilities

Everyone at Leapfrog Neighbourhood Nursery Ltd has a responsibility to provide a learning environment where children feel safe. Each individual must be able to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in a timely and appropriate way, taking into consideration the context of the child's development and situation.

Follow the procedures set out by the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education.

Staff will undertake Safeguarding training relevant to their role and attend regular training to ensure they regularly update their knowledge of safeguarding best practise.

As a result, staff (and in particular practitioners) will be aware of the factors that make some children more vulnerable than others, understand what is going on at home and elsewhere and understand the likelihood of increased risk and harm to children in their care when they live with a family member or carer with one of the following vulnerability factors:

Domestic abuse/ Parental/familial mental ill-health/learning disabilities/substance misuse/sexual exploitation/homelessness

Have an awareness that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

Identify children who may be vulnerable to include children at risk of FGM , child exploitation, disabled children, young carers, children who may be subject to bullying or cyber bullying and radicalisation of children, countylines.

Practitioners and staff must listen carefully and respond appropriately to children at all times.

Practitioners should teach children to understand when they may be at risk and how to avoid risky behaviours.

Respond to inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children, for example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

Understand confidentiality and information sharing procedures including who to report concerns to and treat information with confidentiality but never promising to “keep a secret”.

Have an understanding of early help, and be prepared to identify and support children who may benefit from early help.

Have read and understood Child Protection Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Staff code of conduct Policy as outlined in the staff handbook.

Parents

Where there are concerns regarding safeguarding, we will always aim to be a source of support and guidance to our parents. Parents will be contacted before we make any referrals, unless doing so could increase the risk of harm to the child.

Any concerns regarding the safety and welfare of our children will not be shared with anyone in the Leapfrog Neighbourhood Nursery Ltd team who is not directly involved with that child. Information may need to be shared with other agencies, we will usually advise parents prior to sharing information.

Parents will be provided with updated information regarding the child protection procedure at regular intervals. We aim to help parents understand what and who may be harmful to their children and their rights to protection. As a team we will always adopt safe working practices at all times.

Making a Referral

Where an individual has concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child these should be recorded to include factual information; date, time, marks or comments, disclosures (word for word) on a “Welfare” form. This person must then discuss their concerns with the designated lead.

The designated lead will use assessment tools provided by the Portsmouth Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership and professional opinion to decide upon next steps which will be recorded on an individual chronology sheet. And will identify tier of need using the threshold document.

If there is uncertainty about the action that should be taken, the designated person can contact MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) for advice.

If it is the case that a referral is not made, an assessment will be made as to whether no further action is required, whether to continue to monitor, whether the family and child can benefit from

early help, whether the child is at risk from significant harm and referral to be made to MASH (Multi agency safeguarding Hub).

Early help referral

Children of any age can experience problems at times, and parents or carers can't always meet their needs by themselves. When children do require some extra support it's always best to put help in place before things worse.

The designated lead will discuss with parents the benefits of Early Help where local agencies with the Health Visitor as lead. Together they will meet with the family to address the assessed needs of the child and their family with the aim of improving outcomes for the child. The meeting can take place wherever the parent feels most comfortable and Leapfrog Neighbourhood Nursery Ltd can host the meeting if the parent wishes.

MASH referral

New referrals on open cases should be made directly to the allocated social worker for the child/family (or in their absence their manager or the duty social worker). For new referrals on closed or unknown children where the child/children have NOT suffered significant harm or are NOT in immediate danger, the referral should be submitted to the Children's Reception Team (CRT) online using the Inter Agency Referral Form (IARF). Should it become apparent that a case is already open to the department, this information will be transferred directly to the responsible worker.

If the designated lead believes a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, they should contact Child Reception Team (CRT) directly on **023 92688793** or **0845 6710271** or out of hours: **0300 555 1373**.

Any telephone contact with CRT will need to be supplemented with a further Inter Agency Referral Form (IARF) sent via email to MASH@secure.portsmouthcc.gov.uk. Professionals can refer child protection concerns directly using the IARF.

It is neither the role nor responsibility of those working with children to assess, diagnose or investigate whether a child is at risk of or is suffering harm or abuse. This is the role of the MASH team. However, it is the responsibility of early years services to report concerns appropriately.

According to *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, key principles should be:

- Never delay emergency action to protect a child from harm
- Always record in writing concerns about a child's welfare, including whether or not further action is taken

- At the close of a discussion, always reach a clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken.

In most cases concerns should be discussed with the family prior to referral. Where possible agreement should be sought. However, this should only be where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm.

The consent of a parent or carer is not required to make a child protection referral.

Reacting to a Disclosure

A disclosure is where a child confides in somebody about potential abuse.

If a child tries to make a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff should:

- Be accessible and receptive.
- Make sure that the child is all right.
- Listen carefully and uncritically.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Reassure the child that they are right to tell.
- Tell the child that they must pass information on.
- Make a careful record of what was said.

Staff should never:

- Make promises about confidentiality or agree to keep secrets.
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc.
- Speculate or accuse anybody.
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information.
- Offer opinions about what is being said.

Recording

A member of staff should make a record as soon as possible after the disclosure, and in doing so:

- Be factual and state exactly what was said.

- Use the child's words wherever possible.
- Sign the record.
- Pass the record to the designated safeguarding lead immediately.
- Details (where appropriate) of the category of abuse or neglect.
- The name of the keyworker.
- The name of the lead professional.

Allegations of Abuse Against Staff

Local Safeguarding Children's Partnerships have responsibility for ensuring there are effective inter-agency procedures in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children, and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of those procedures. The procedures must aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded accusations.

Children who report that they have been abused by a member of staff must be listened to and heard, whatever form their attempts to communicate take. When an allegation is made against a member of staff there should be an urgent initial consideration by the provider of whether or not there is sufficient substance in the allegation to warrant an investigation.

Initial sharing of information with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) may lead to:

- A decision not to take any further action.
- A strategy discussion
- The involvement of the police or social care services.

The procedures will apply where a person who works with children is alleged to have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed an offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she is unsuitable to work with children unsuitable to work with children.

They will also apply where:

- Concerns arise about the person's behaviour with regard to her or his own children
- Concerns arise about the behaviour in private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

If an allegation is made the welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989) and must inform the way the allegation is handled. Early years providers must:

- Inform Ofsted of any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff as soon as is practicably possible and in any event within 14 days of the allegation being made
- Evaluate the possible risk of harm to the child and manage this appropriately
- Maintain confidentiality whilst an allegation is being investigated or considered in order to protect the child and the staff member concerned
- Give support to both the child, in liaison with other appropriate professionals to ensure the child's needs are met, and the accused member of staff
- Treat any allegation seriously and objectively, with those concerned keeping an open mind. The provider can seek to understand but not to investigate the alleged abuse.

All aspects of employment law should be followed. In general accused staff members should not be automatically suspended but guidance from local safeguarding boards should be followed. Staff should be encouraged to seek support, representation and advice from their union or professional association.

The nature of any investigation and actions to be taken will usually be determined by the LADO in consultation with Ofsted, the employer and, where appropriate, the police. There may be three strands to an investigation.

- Police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
- A child protection investigation by Specialist Children's Services (which could include the children of the member of staff in certain circumstances).
- Disciplinary action by the employer.

Any disciplinary process should be separated clearly from child protection investigations. The child protection process has different objectives from the disciplinary procedure and the two should not be confused. Any investigation by the police or child protection agencies will take priority over an internal investigation which should be held in abeyance pending the outcome of the external investigation.

Once the investigations have been completed, Ofsted will carry out a review of the early years provider's policies, procedures and systems.

At the end of any investigation, regardless of the outcome, the provider should check its policies and procedures and review them as necessary in the light of the allegations and the outcome of any investigation.

LADO contact details

Tel: 023 9288 2500

E-mail: Lado@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Protecting staff from unfair allegations

Staff work closely with children and their families, forming warm and caring relationships. However, because of the nature of their work members of staff are also vulnerable to unfair allegations of child abuse.

All practitioners should understand and follow their organisation's safeguarding procedures and avoid putting themselves in situations which may lead to allegations against themselves.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Confidentiality should be restricted to those people who "need to know". Generally this will be the child, the child's parents, and any member of staff who has responsibility for the child's welfare, eg the key worker, and keeping the child safe, eg the manager, and/or the named person with responsibility for safeguarding. Where there is an allegation against a member of staff, the staff member should be kept informed of the progress of any investigation except where this would put the child at risk of significant harm.

Four Types of abuse

The four main types of abuse referred to in Keeping Children Safe in Education are:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

Our nursery school Ltd is aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. Within those four main types of abuse there are a number of specific types of abuse to which we are aware and especially alert.

Prevent duty

As an early years provider we are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

Prevent is the name given to a national strategy which aims to stop people from becoming violent extremists or supporting terrorism. Channel is the process that supports people at risk of being drawn towards terrorism or violent extremism. Prevent aims to deal with all forms of extremism including Far Right racist extremism, animal rights extremism and religious extremism.

Signs of possible radicalisation

- Notable changes in behaviour/mood.
- May begin to express extreme political or radical views.
- Appear increasingly sympathetic to terrorist acts.
- Appearance may change.
- Friends may change and may spend excess time on their own or on the internet.

The 'designated safeguarding lead officer' will have undertaken Prevent awareness training (WRAP training) and will provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. It is their responsibility to ensure that an appropriate risk assessment has been undertaken for their setting. All staff will be alert to what is happening in the child's life at home or elsewhere and any changes in the child's behaviour that gives cause for concern.

Settings will work in partnership with other organisations and parents to prevent children from being drawn into extremism. Parents and children will be supported to understand how to stay safe online. We will use both local resources Portsmouth safeguarding Childrens Partnership [Home - Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board \(portsmouthscp.org.uk\)](http://portsmouthscp.org.uk) and national resources www.saferinternet.org.uk.

Settings will build children's resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment and by promoting British values through the curriculum offered; Personal Social Emotional Development and Understanding The World.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK and

constitutes a serious form of abuse. On 31 October 2015 a new duty requires that health and social care professionals and teachers report 'known cases of FGM' in girls under 18 to the police.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Leapfrog Nursery school Ltd understands that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Our nursery recognises that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group and that this demands greater awareness of their vulnerability, individuality and particular needs.

Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse for a number of reasons. Some disabled children may:

- Have fewer outside contacts than other children;
- Receive intimate care from a considerable number of carers, which may increase the risk of exposure to abusive behaviour and make it more difficult to set and maintain physical boundaries;
- Have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse;
- Have communication difficulties that may make it difficult to tell others what is happening;
- Be inhibited about complaining for fear of losing services;
- Be especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation (see **Bullying**);
- Be more vulnerable than other children to abuse by their peers.

Safer Recruitment

Early years providers must have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other people who are likely to have regular contact with children, are suitable. They must tell staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment).

Providers must not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, in to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for.

It is an offence under s.76 of the Childcare Act 2006 for providers to employ in connection with early years provision someone who is disqualified from working with children. A person could be disqualified by association, should they be living with or someone is employed on the premises where they live who have been disqualified from working with children. In these instances the person could apply to Ofsted for a waiver.

Leapfrog Nursery School carry out robust safer recruitment and selection processes which must include, DBS, barred list checks, medical and employment history and references.

A person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults is breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with those groups.

Providers have a duty:

- To refer workers found to be unsuitable for working with children for consideration about placing on the barred list
- To check all new recruits against the list and ensure that they undergo a criminal records check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Not to knowingly engage a barred person in a regulated activity.

Inspection and Audit

The inspection of safeguarding systems and arrangements is a key focus of Ofsted teams, who will want to check safeguarding records and establish whether there is a culture of safeguarding in place.

Local Authorities are required by the Department for Education to audit safeguarding arrangements in early years provisions and schools.

Audits should be completed by the senior leadership team, which should include the designated member of staff.

The results of the audit should be used by a service to identify areas of weakness and improve practice.

In 2015 under the new common inspection framework safeguarding will be judged either effective or ineffective. The guidance document used to determine the effectiveness of safeguarding is: 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills from August 2016'

- Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, eg in the child's home
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children.

Such training can be provided "in-house" or in collaboration with local child protection professionals.

Training for staff designated as responsible for safeguarding should be more in-depth and should also include:

- How to make a referral
- Report writing
- Working with other agencies to ensure the welfare of the child.

The framework confirms that the lead practitioner must attend a child protection training course.

Local authorities and their partners are responsible for ensuring that workforce strategies are developed in the local area, including making sure that the training opportunities to meet the needs of the workforce are identified and met. As part of this function most Local Safeguarding Children's Boards run extensive multi-agency training programmes.