**1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection**

**Policy statement**

We at Woolston Preschool fully recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We work with our children, parents and our community to ensure the rights and safety of children are protected to give them the best start in life.

At Woolston Preschool, all staff, committee members, volunteers and students are aware of their responsibilities to safeguard the children and to support and promote safety and wellbeing. We ensure that this is done in a way that is there to protect everyone. We ensure that our parents and carers understand the duty and our statutory obligation we have in relation to child protection and ensuring the safety of the children within our care by reporting any concerns, observing and monitoring children and their behaviours, liaising with other professionals and agencies, and providing key information.

**This policy is in place to:**

• Provide staff, committee members, volunteers, students and visitors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure within our preschool.

•The policy will inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

•Protect children who attend our Preschool.

•Ensure consistent good practice across our Preschool.

•Demonstrate our commitment to protecting children.

**If you believe a child is at risk of significant harm and in immediate danger call 999.**

**If you are concerned about a child at preschool or a member of staff’s conduct contact our**

**Designated Safeguarding Leads:-**

**Woolston Preschool Manager and DSL**

Gemma Woodward: - [woolstonps@gmail.com](mailto:woolstonps@gmail.com) or 07483391591

**Woolston Preschool Deputy manager and DSL**

Hannah Winbourne: - [woolstonps.deputy@gmail.com](mailto:woolstonps.deputy@gmail.com) or 07483391591

**Our Chair of the Committee overseeing child protection**

Clare A’court: - [woolstonpscommittee@gmail.com](mailto:woolstonpscommittee@gmail.com) or 07554017703

**Our Aims and commitments:**

**The environment:**

• To provide a safe environment where the children can learn and flourish safely.

• To provide an environment in which all staff, committee members, students, volunteers, visitors and young people recognise that safeguarding and ensuring children’s welfare is everyone’s responsibility.

• To ensure that all children will feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, and feel confident to approach adults, if they feel they are in difficulties and that adults will always consider what is in the best interests of the child and act in a timely manner.

• To consider that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they might not recognise their experiences as harmful.

• To recognise that children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers. None of this should stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead.

• To raise the awareness of staff, committee members, students, volunteers, and visitors of the need to safeguard children within and outside of the home, including online.

• To raise awareness of all staff, committee members, students, volunteers and visitors responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible signs of any forms of abuse.

**Safeguarding procedures:**

• To ensure that all concerns, however small, are recorded so as to establish the wider picture for a child and ensure that sufficient oversight by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) enables a context to be known and therefore support the identification of, for example, risks of exploitation.

• To monitor children known or at risk of harm and ensure to assess needs and support plans for those children and families in a timely manner. There are many ways to support children and their families through an Early Help referral, contacting and working with multi-agency partners, children’s social care team and other safeguarding partners.

• To ensure where possible a DSL or known adult to the family, attends or sends a detailed report with the most up-to-date information, to be included in any multi-agency meetings for all children and their families at preschool.

•To ensure that the DSL liaises with any future schools or preschool settings to ensure that any information that is required to plan an effective transition for the child and their family.

• To work proactively together with other professionals such as other education settings where there are siblings, GP surgeries, Health visitors and any other relevant agencies working with the family, to ensure that where there are concerns, they are shared and addressed swiftly, ensuring that the best interest of a child/the children are placed at the centre.

• To refer to other professionals and services, relevant to the family and the child, to ensure that the child/ children, and their family can be supported by professionals, intervening as early as possible before referral to children’s resource service is required.

•Ensure that all staff, committee members, volunteers, students and visitors within our preschool who have access to children have had a fully enhanced DBS check. Whilst they are waiting for the DBS to be returned they will not be left alone with the children at any time. If they are on the DBS update service their unique numbers are recorded on the central record and are checked.

**External factors:**

• Appropriate supervision is given to all staff, committee members, volunteers, students and visitors within our preschool who have access to children on-site.

• Ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for school students or college students on work placements.

• Transfer of child protection, welfare concerns and learning records that provide support for child’s development when the children move on from their current setting will be carried out in accordance with local procedures.

**Curriculum:**

• To provide an effective curriculum that encompasses age and developmentally appropriate content, enabling pupils to build skills and confidence to help them to manage the challenges of growing up in today’s society, including knowing how to keep themselves safe and where to get help from if they, or others need it.

• The protection of children is of the highest priority for our preschool. Children have the right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so. All children regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, religion, culture, language, and beliefs 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 in accordance with the guidance. We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will proactively engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.

Whilst the preschool will work openly with parents as far as possible, the preschool reserves the right to contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, Southampton Children’s Resource Service, in line with current safeguarding procedures, without notifying parents if this is in the child’s best interests. In all cases, consent must be sought unless it is not in the child’s best interests to do so. These decisions will be clearly recorded with their reason and will be held with the child’s record of concerns or child protection file with a level of protection determined by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Children’s resource service can be accessed through the link below.

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/early-help>

**Safer recruitment including students and volunteers**

We create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt robust recruitment processes and volunteer checking processes that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. This enables us to act reasonably in making decisions about prospective employees and volunteers using evidence and checks carried out.

The Preschool committee is responsible for ensuring we follow recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might harm children.

All relevant staff are made aware of the disqualification from childcare guidance and their obligations to disclose to us relevant information that could lead to disqualification.

The Preschool follows the safer recruitment process outlined in Part Three of KCSIE 2024. Safer recruitment practice includes, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history, checking any gaps in employment history, alongside effective induction processes. It also includes undertaking interviews and, in all cases, instigating Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where candidates are informed of the need to carry out an ‘enhanced disclosure’ and asked if they would like to disclose anything they may be aware of before the checks are carried out.

We ensure that our volunteers and students are appropriately checked and supervised when in preschool. We ensure the school office checks the identity of all contractors working on the school site and they will request DBS checks where required by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised on the school/preschool site during the preschool/ school day.

The Central Record (CR) includes a record of all checks undertaken, the date they were completed. It also includes the identification of the person’s role to ensure regulated or unregulated activity is accurately recorded. Where an individual’s details or role has changed the CR will be updated and files supporting the CR will include the updated information. The CR also holds information about Committee members and our long term volunteers and is regularly monitored by the Preschool manager and the Chair of the committee.

**Training and Induction**

All staff, committee members, volunteers, students and visitors in our preschool should be aware of the signs of abuse and be able to respond appropriately. All staff, committee members, volunteers and students will receive an induction programme which will include basic information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child and advice on safe working practice.

All staff, committee members, volunteers and students are expected to read at least Part One of KCSIE 2024. Only staff who do not regularly work with children can choose to read Annex A instead.

In line with KCSIE 2024 safeguarding training for staff is provided to the whole team every year with separate training to all new staff, volunteers, students and committee members as part of their induction (if this falls at a different point in the year).

All staff, committee members, volunteers and students are provided with the preschool’s Safeguarding children and child protection policy and are informed about safeguarding arrangements on induction to ensure they fully understand their role in identifying concerns and their responsibility to report concerns.

The DSL attends Level 3 Safeguarding training for their role and then refreshes this specific training for DSLs every two years through the local authority. It is the responsibility of the DSL to maintain an overview of new developments so, in addition to having an annual update, they will receive regular updates between training through Local Authority Network meetings, safeguarding updates and reading safeguarding related articles or research.

Records of training and updates will be kept which identifies that staff have attended, read and understood the information shared.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

We recognise that all staff, committee members, volunteers, students and visitors have a full and active part to play in ensuring there is a culture of safeguarding that is effective in protecting our children from harm. We recognise that staff, committee members, volunteers, students and visitors may have some anxiety around child protection, and this can compromise good practice. Therefore, we have established clear lines of accountability, training, and advice to support the processes and the DSL will support individual staff, committee members, volunteers and students throughout the process. Staff, committee members, volunteers and students understand that they **all** have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and to provide help for children where necessary through referral to Early Help services or Children’s Services at the Local Authority.

**Any individual can contact the DSL if they have concerns about a child. The DSL’s are at Woolston Preschool are: -**

**Woolston Preschool Manager and DSL** Gemma Woodward: - woolstonps@gmail.com or 07483391591

**Woolston Preschool Deputy manager and DDSL** Hannah Winbourne: - woolstonps.deputy@gmail.com or 07483391591

**Our Chair of the Committee overseeing child protection** Clare A’court: - [woolstonpscommittee@gmail.com](mailto:woolstonpscommittee@gmail.com) or or 07554017703

**Woolston Preschool ensures that**

•We follow procedures to ensure that the details of any visitors to the setting are recorded and stored appropriately.

•We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the provision so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children

•We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child via the Parent zone app.

•Personal mobile phones are stored in the office in a box.

•The manager and deputy are appointed to the DSL role and support all staff, committee members, volunteers, students and visitors with understanding their role and the importance of safeguarding the children in our care at all times.

•Staff, Students, Volunteers, committee members and visitors are aware that they will inform the DSL’s at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern including accidents; however, this should not delay any referrals being made to the Children’s resources service, or where appropriate, LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and Ofsted and RIDDOR.

**The expectations of our staff, committee members, students and volunteers**

* Support, advice and guidance will be given to the DSL’s to be able to undertake their role adequately.
* Staff, committee members, students and volunteers will report any concerns, disclosures or observations relevant to the disclosure to the DSL in a timely manner ensuring the child has been listened to first.
* We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, concerns and disclosures that may occur and to work with the statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures set out in “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused.”
* We communicate with parents and carers and help identify those, using our professional judgement and relationships, that may need extra support from the children and Families first team and support them with accessing this and other services.
* All staff, committee members, volunteers and students will make a dated record of any details of their concerns and the DSL will report, where necessary and will update the staff, where appropriate.
* All safeguarding concerns, allegations, disclosures will be filled in the safeguarding file securely filled away.
* In the event that a staff member, committee member, volunteer or student is not happy with the outcome or decision made by the DSL in relation to the safeguarding referral made they must follow the escalation procedures that are appropriate to that case or incident.
* We will refer any concerns where appropriate to the local authority safeguarding teams and cooperate fully in any subsequent investigation.
* All staff, volunteers and students respond to any disclosures sensitively and appropriately and take account not to influence the outcome by either the way we speak to the child or by the questions and the way we ask them.
* We take into account that we have a duty to care and protect children and young people even those aged 16-19 as defined by the Children’s Act 1989. This may include students or school pupils on a work placement, young employees or young parents. Where there is a suspicion of abuse we will follow the procedure for reporting any child protection concerns. The views of the child or young person will always be taken into account, where age appropriate, but the setting has the right to override the young person’s refusal to consent to share information, if they feel it is necessary to prevent a crime from happening or to prevent harm or further abuse happening to a child or adult.
* Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing could put someone at risk of significant harm, further danger or a crime taking place or being committed.
* All staff, committee members, students and volunteers are aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer to those that are in need of a community care services <http://southamptonlsab.org.uk/concerns-about-an-adult-at-risk/>
* Whistle blowing policy is in place for all staff, volunteers and students if they feel that the DSL have not taken the appropriate action to safeguard a child and they feel it has not been addressed satisfactorily through our procedures.
* Further information and procedures can be found at Southampton City Council Child and Protection Policy website. <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/child-protection/>

**Confidentiality**

* All staff understand that they can get advice from the DSL regarding any concerns confidentitally.
* We ensure that all matters relating to child protection are treated as confidential and shared as per the GDPR guidance and DfE’s Working together to Safeguard Children guidance.
* The best interest of the child will be at the heart of all decision making and all decisions will be recorded and stored in the child’s safeguarding file.
* All staff, committee members, volunteers and students are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep a disclosure confidential.
* All disclosures are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.
* All staff, committee members, volunteers and students are asked to read and sign our confidentiality policy during their induction.
* Information will only be shared with agencies who we have a statutory duty to share with or individuals within the setting who ‘need to know’.
* Disciplinary action and re training will be considered for any breach of confidentiality.

**Do you have a concern about a child?**

Where there is concern for a child’s welfare but not necessarily suspected abuse the first course of action will be to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

* Staff write an accurate account of the concerns including the child’s own words and the evidence that has led to the concerns, where necessary.
* The concern form is then given to the DSL who will assess the risk and refer onwards as necessary and appropriate, requesting advice from Children’s Services if necessary and informing the parents if appropriate.
* Each time a child’s concern is noted, the setting’s DSL has to make an assessment.The DSL will refer on to local services, where appropriate, and in line with the framework set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children.
* Children’s safeguarding records will be stored securely.
* Urgent referrals will be reported via a phone call to children’s resource service and then dealt with in a timely manner according to their guidance.
* Recurring low level concerns, that are deemed not referable to children’s resource service, must be noted in an individual child’s file and are chronology compiled. These notes must be reviewed regularly by the DSL, every half term, in order for ongoing assessments to be made and referrals to take place to the appropriate service when/if appropriate.
* At any point the setting’s DSL could choose to complete the children’s and families first referral form, formally Early Help Referral form, to support the family with any identified needs of the child or family. <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/early-help>
* The setting’s DSL will liaise with the parents, where appropriate, when making an enquiry, to gain their consent, except where a child is considered to be at risk of harm and you believe that seeking parental consent may increase this risk. If parental consent is not given you can still seek advice but inform children’s resource service that the parents have denied consent
* For further information you can look on the southampton information directory or follow the link below.

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/further-information-resources/>

**If you are concerned about any child, please contact Children’s resource service on the details below.**

**Southampton Children’s resource service**

**Telephone number for members of the public: 023 80833004 (Mon-Thurs 8.30-5 and Fri 8.30-4.30)**

**Telephone number for professionals: 023 8083 2300 (Mon-Thurs 8.30-5 and Fri 8.30-4.30)**

**Out of hours for both professionals and members of the public: 02380233344 (weekends, bank holidays and outside office hours above)**

**Email address:** [**childrensresourceservice@southampton.gov.uk**](mailto:childrensresourceservice@southampton.gov.uk)

**Providing a safe and supportive environment**

We are committed to creating an ethos in our preschool where children feel safe and are able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued. All children at our preschool are aware that they can talk to any adult and if they are worried about any problems. As a preschool we are committed to ensuring that the children are aware of behaviour towards themselves and others that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe that is age appropriate for their understanding. As part of our curriculum we teach the children age appropriately, whom they might talk to, both in and out of school, and that they have a right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm.

**Children or young adults in our setting who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning** is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff, committee members, volunteers and students endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns and views with adults. When supporting a gender questioning child, we as a preschool should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child’s parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child).

**Children with mental health needs** where children have suffered abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Our staff, committee members, volunteers and students are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance, and education. Special educational needs coordinators (SENCO’s) will liaise with the DSL on matters of mental health when it involves safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) so children’s needs are considered holistically. Our preschool may liaise with the mental health support team and health teams where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health. We understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children’s behaviour, mental health, and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.

**Children who need a social worker** some children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation and/or complex family circumstances. A child’s experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

**Children Looked After (CLA)** We value that every child who has been taken into care, even if they are now out of care and adopted remain vulnerable. They will have experienced levels of abuse, neglect or exploitation that were eventually deemed unacceptable in order for them to have been removed. These experiences are often likely to have a long-term impact on a child’s relationships, emotional wellbeing, and development. We ensure that these children are closely monitored to minimise any gaps in attainment and that emotional development and wellbeing is supported.

**Private fostering arrangements** A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative care for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child’s parents. It applies to children under the age of sixteen or aged under eighteen if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children’s services as soon as possible. When a member of staff becomes aware that a child may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will tell the DSL and the preschool will notify the local authority of the circumstances.

**If a child makes a disclosure**

If a child’s comment to a member of staff causes concern, the staff member will listen to the child, offer reassurance and give assurance that she or he will take action. The staff member can ask questions for the purposes of clarification.

We will always take great care not to influence the outcome by monitoring the way we speak to children

and/or ensuring we do not ask leading questions of children. Our staff understand the ‘four W’s’

recommended in line with safeguarding partners.

* What happened?
* When did it happen?
* Where did it happen?
* Who was there?

A written record is made on the recording sheets that includes: -

* The date and time of the disclosure or conversation had,
* The exact words spoken by the child ensuring that it is factual and as detailed as possible,
* The name of the person to whom the concern was reported,
* The names of any other person present at the time,
* Signature of the member of staff writing the disclosure and any other staff member present during the disclosure,
* Recording sheets must be given to the DSL or DDSL straight away.
* Our staff are aware and will ensure that there is no delay in sharing safeguarding concerns with the DSL,
* A body map is used, if appropriate.
* The DSL then looks at the observation or disclosure and carries out the appropriate action.
* The DSL signs the paperwork and files away in the safeguarding file when appropriate with any follow up information if necessary.
* These records are signed and dated and kept in a file which is kept securely and confidentially
* We will follow local procedures published by the SSCP or safeguarding partners to resolve professional disputes informing parents.

**Accidents and injuries outside of preschool**

* If a child arrives at preschool with an injury in the morning, the staff on the door greeting will ask parents and carers how it happened, where appropriate.
* If the injury was seen after the parent had left then a call or text would be sent home asking how the accident or injury happened.
* The staff member who saw the injury will also ask the child how it happened making sure not to use any leading questions,
* Once all the information is collected from the child and the parents and carers the member of staff dealing with the incident will complete a pre existing injury form. Using the boxes available on the form to clearly describe the incident, how it happened, when it happened, if there was any first aid needed or given, using the body map clearly to mark and describe the injury using as much description as possible including the size, comparing them to coins, if possible.
* All staff should maintain a non-judgemental attitude towards parents/carers when completing pre-existing injury forms.
* Pre-existing injury forms are checked and monitored by the setting manager/DSL and they record, monitor and evaluate any concerns and follow up by referring to other agencies if necessary.
* If a member of staff feels that the Pre-existing injury may indicate abuse, they should discuss this with the DSL at the earliest opportunity.

**Informing Parents**

* Parents or carers are normally the first point of contact. However if the child or another person is at risk of harm or significant harm or there is the possibility that it may interfere with a police investigation; or may unduly delay the referral or unless it is otherwise unreasonable to seek consent from the parent.
* We inform parents when we make a record of concerns in their child’s file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
* If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care the DSL will contact the Children’s Resource Service and follow their support and guidance.
* We work within the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partners guidelines.
* The current version of ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ is available to all staff, committee members, volunteers, students and parents via this link <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf> (DfE 2015)

**Managing allegations against staff**

At Woolston Preschool we have a clear procedure for dealing with allegations against staff. All staff, committee members, volunteers, students and visitors know that all allegations are reported straight away to one of the DSL’s, unless the allegation is about them. If the DSL is not on site you can speak with the DDSL. The DSL is always contactable by telephone or email. If you are unable to get hold of the DSL or the DDSL then you would contact our Chairperson on the Committee who oversees child protection, whois Clare A’court. All their contact information is above on pg 1

•All staff, committee members, Volunteers and Students are made aware of the Whistleblowing policy and are displayed in setting for reference if and when they feel they need it.

•The DSL or DDSL responds to any disclosures of abuse made by children or staff, that a member of staff, volunteer, student or visitor within the setting may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident. In line with the rest of our policy, if the DSL or the DDSL is the accused, you would report to Clare A’court on the chair of the committee or LADO.

**LADO**

**LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)**

**Currently Jemma Swann (Monday-Thursdays) or Jo Williams (Fridays)**

**on tel: 023 8091 5535, or mob: 07500 952037 or email:** [**LADO@southampton.gov.uk**](mailto:LADO@southampton.gov.uk)

* We at Woolston Preschool report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, (unless advised by LADO that this is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
* We at Woolston Preschool co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children’s social care or in conjunction with any police investigation.
* Where the setting manager, alongside the committee, children’s social care and the local authority agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff, committee member, volunteer or student will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. The staff member will be suspended on full pay whilst the investigation is ongoing. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but it is to protect the staff member, volunteer or student, as well as children and families throughout the process. Where it is appropriate,practical and agreed with LADO, we may seek to offer an alternative to suspension for the duration of the investigation. during which time the staff member will receive full pay.
* Where a member of staff, committee member, volunteer or student, has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) of the relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups, can be identified and barred from working with these groups.
* The DSL or DDSL will follow the guidance of LADO when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, committee member, volunteer or student within the provision, or anyone working on the premises within the setting, has abused a child.
* We at Woolston Preschool refer any such complaint to LADO within a 24 hour period of the allegation that's been reported to be investigated. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and include what measures we have taken. This is done as soon as possible but at the latest within 14 days. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this
* We ensure that parents/carers know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff, committee members, volunteers or students within the setting, parents/Carers can access all policies online on our website or they can ask to see the printed copies that are kept within the setting.
* We follow the guidance of the Southampton Safeguarding Children’s partnership when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, committee member, student or volunteer within the setting, has abused a child.
* No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being seen or heard by other staff or volunteers. This is to protect everyone involved.

**Whistleblowing**

All staff, committee members, students and volunteers should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school’s safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously. All staff, committee members, students and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of adults using preschool’s Whistleblowing Policy. If the concern is in relation to a member of staff, the matter must be brought to the attention of the manager immediately who will act in accordance with procedures in Part 4 of KCSIE 2024. Whistleblowing concerns about the Manager should be raised with the Chairperson. In the absence of a Chairperson DDSL should be contacted. Any concerns which staff feel unable to raise internally or feel they have not been addressed correctly can be taken straight to LADO.

**LADO**

**LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)**

**Currently Jemma Swann (Monday-Thursdays) or Jo Williams (Fridays)**

**on tel: 023 8091 5535, or mob: 07500 952037 or email:** [**LADO@southampton.gov.uk**](mailto:LADO@southampton.gov.uk)

.

**Liaison with other agencies**

**If you believe a child is at risk of significant harm and in immediate danger call 999.**

Our preschool will refer appropriately to local Children’s Resources services and encourage parents to self refer where appropriate to the Children and families first team, previously known as Early Help Hub.

**If you are a professional** you can contact the Children’s Resource Service on **02380 83 2300** (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm) or **02380 23 3344** (weekends, Bank Holidays and outside of office hours)

**If you are a young person, parent, carer or member of the public** you can contact the Children’s Resource Service on **02380 83 3004** (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm) or **02380 23 3344** (weekends, Bank Holidays and outside of office hours)

Referrals can be made online using the link below: - <https://scccrmportal.southampton.gov.uk/services/request-childrens-resource-service>

**Child Protection Conferences**

Staff working with a family known to or involved with Children’s Services may be invited to give their

professional input to a Child Protection Conference or Core Group Meeting. Parents/Carers will be informed

of all attendees to the meetings. Staff will provide a factual report within the appropriate timescales and the report will be shared with the family prior to the conference. Staff will work within Southampton City Council’s Strengthening Families Model to support families throughout this process and contribute

effectively. Retention and Transfer of Child Protection Records for Education it is recommended that all

child protection records are transferred with the child to any new setting/school. The DSL will contact the

child’s new setting to discuss any concerns or additional support which may need to be arranged for the

child prior to the transfer. It is noted that if the parent/carer refuses permission for the child’s information to

be shared with the new setting but we as a setting judge it to be in the best interest of the child, the files can

and will be transferred without parental permission.

**Abuse**

Abuse may take many forms, some signs are obvious others less so. Child abuse is not always

intentional. Below are some, but not an exclusive list, of types of abuse.

**Contextual Safeguarding**

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, children’s experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that children and young people form in their neighbourhoods, educational settings (such as preschool, schools, colleges) and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers can have little influence over these contexts, and children’s experiences of extra familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that children are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts. We will consider the various factors that have an interplay with the life of any child about whom we have concerns within the preschool and the level of influence that these factors have on their ability to be protected and remain free from harm particularly when it comes to child exploitation or criminal activity. We recognise that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the preschool environment and/or can occur between children outside of the preschool. This is contextual safeguarding.

**Radicalisation, Extremism and the Prevent Agenda**

Preschool is aware of its statutory duty to prevent radicalisation and extremism under the Prevent Duty which became law in 2015. The Prevent Duty requires that all staff, committee members, volunteers, students are aware of the signs that a child may be susceptible to radicalisation. The risks will need to be considered for any kinds of extremism. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British Values of liberty, mutual respect, tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, rule of law and democracy. Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to: negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or undermine, overturn or replace the UK’s system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in the above. All staff, committee members and long standing volunteers must undertake annual Home Office Prevent awareness training or equivalent and will be alert to signs of radicalisation. Students and volunteers will undertake prevent training during their induction, where appropriate. Preschool will discuss any concerns with the family unless this is likely to put the child at risk. As part of the preventative process, resilience to radicalisation will be built through the regular promotion of fundamental British values through the PSED and wider curriculum available at our preschool. Any child who is considered susceptible to radicalisation (and where there are evidence-based concerns which indicate they may be being groomed or radicalised), will be referred by the DSL, who will follow the agreed referral to local safeguarding partnerships, liaising and sharing information with the police and Channel, as required. If the police and colleagues consider the information to be indicating a level of risk, the Channel Panel will be convened, and preschool will be invited to attend and support this process. Consent will be sought where deemed appropriate.

**Exploitation**

Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive any child or young person under the age of eighteen. At our preschool we recognise that any child or young person is vulnerable to this activity and ensure through our annual safeguarding training for all staff, committee members, volunteers and students to ensure that awareness of raising concerns is vital. Our curriculum includes how children can keep themselves safe and Child Sexual Exploitation at an age-appropriate level.

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CCE “is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. (KCSIE 2024) The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Any person in our preschool who has concerns that a child is being criminally exploited should report their concern to the DSL without delay. The DSL will refer immediately to the local safeguarding partnerships for advice / to make a referral. It may be that the DSL decides to refer to the police. The Local Authority Children’s Services and the police will consider if a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) needs completing alongside child protection procedures. As a preschool we educate all staff in the signs and indicators of all forms of exploitation, including criminal exploitation.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. (KCSIE 2024 Part 1 para 38) Our Preschool recognises that this may even appear to be consensual, but still constitutes abuse.

Indicators a child may be at risk of CSE include:

• Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;

• Exclusion or unexplained absences from school;

• Associating with other young people being sexually exploited;

• Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;

• Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc., without plausible explanation;

• Drug and/or alcohol use – may return home or present at preschool under influence

• Increasing secretiveness around behaviours;

• Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being;

• Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;

• Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);

• Concerning use of internet or other social media;

• Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;

• Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;

• Frequenting areas known for sexual exploitation or adult sex work.

As a Preschool we educate all staff in the signs and indicators of sexual exploitation. Staff will also remain open to the fact that child sexual exploitation can occur without any of the above risk indicators being present. Our preschool will follow safeguarding procedures where there is a concern about a child being at risk of or experiencing CSE/CCE. We will use the Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (CERAF) available below and associated guidance to identify whom are at risk. <https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/qkyyoy/children-in-specific-circumstances/children-who-are-exploited/#s4982>

**County Lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of preschool including special educational preschools, school, special educational schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who: go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home, have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime), are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs, are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection, are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity, owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters and may have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

**Serious violence**

All staff, committee members, volunteers and students are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These include increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individual or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of mental health difficulties, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gang. All staff, committee members, volunteers and students are made aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

**Children Missing from Education (CME)**

Absence from preschool is a safeguarding issue. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect including sexual exploitation, FGM, child exploitation, child criminal exploitation or risk of radicalisation. We recognise our statutory duty to follow the guidance relating to any child we are aware of who for example does not begin preschool as expected or moves with no forwarding school known.

There are various reasons a child may be deemed as CME which include, but are not limited to:

• Failing to transition between preschool and schools, at phase transfer or if a family moves from one LA to another

• A delay in applying for a new school place

• Refusing an alternative offer of a preschool place or school, when the preferred preschool or school is full

• Leaving preschool, with no forwarding education provision or destination

We recognise that it is important that agencies work cooperatively, and information is shared in a timely manner. If anyone at our preschool becomes aware of a child missing education, a referral is made to the Local authority as soon as possible. If we are aware of a child who is moving and parents/carers have not provided any forwarding address or preschool, we will contact the local authority.

**Absence from preschool**

Woolston Preschool has a duty to keep children safe and protect them from harm and very poor attendance along with patterns of non-attendance can be an indication of neglect and seen as a safeguarding issue. Recognising patterns of non-attendance can be noticed in children where safeguarding issues occur. If we are concerned about the welfare of a child who is absent, we reserve the right to contact Children’s Services.

* We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of any child on a child protection plan who fails to arrive at preschool when expected.
* The DSL will take immediate action to contact the child’s parent/Carer to seek an explanation for the child’s absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
* If no contact is made with the child’s parents/carers and the DSL has reason to believe the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately.
* If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified of the unexplained absence
* In some instances the DSL may deem it fit to do an unannounced home visit to check in with the family especially if no contact has been made. This will be with either the DSL or the DDSL and another staff member ideally the child’s key worker.

**E-Safety and online safety risks**

Children may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the Internet and other technologies. Additionally, some children and young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate, or possibly illegal, through social networking sites etc., including cyber-bullying.

Some of the risks presented with online activity include:

• Unwanted contact

• Grooming

• Online bullying

• Sexting

• Leaving digital footprint

• Accessing inappropriate material deliberately or by accident

• Accessing inappropriate material beyond a child’s capacity to comprehend

In order to safeguard all our children, the preschool will, therefore, seek to provide information and awareness to both children and parents through age appropriate activities involving raising awareness around online dangers and strategies to keep themselves safe online.

•We ensure that we attend any relevant training and information sessions to ensure we have the most up to date information and guidance.

• We share relevant information to our families around online safety and support them if they need it,

• High profile events / campaigns e.g., Safer Internet Day

• Building awareness around information that is held on relevant websites, apps or publications.

• Ensuring the safeguards in place for the preschool electronic systems are effective and monitored for any threats to safety. The preschool has appropriate virus software and filters on all computers. If you would like any information about what filters and blocks to put on your own devices please contact the preschool manager for support.

• Careful management and handling of reports that include an online element. Including being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for preschools) and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child.

**Social Media**

In addition to the above online safety guidance, we recognise there are some specific risks with the use of social media platforms increasingly by younger children. Children of a young age are now aware of a wide range of social media platforms. They may access them via friends or family member’s phones. Many have an age restriction, mainly due to how the platform can be used. Trends may be seen with platforms, especially those aimed at young people where they think their message or photo disappears once read, or children do not understand privacy settings. Whilst they can seem harmless, we will ensure that our setting sets out the responsibilities and legalities of usage as well as the dangers and risks that usage can bring.

We have a closed facebook page that is monitored by the setting manager and deputy manager. This is where we share photos of the children and relevant information to parents. At registration we ask permission for photos to be taken and then used for our facebook page along with other permissions. If parents don't give permission all staff are aware of the children and a list is created for them to check as and when needed.

**Child on Child abuse including sexual violence and harassment**

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and it can take various forms – we robustly hold the view that it could happen here. Children can be victims, and perpetrators, in their own relationships. This will be dealt with in line with the statutory guidance set out in KCSIE 2024.

In KCSIE 2024, the definition of child-on-child abuse includes:

• Physical abuse

• Sexual violence and sexual harassment

• Sexting

• Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

• Bullying (including cyberbullying)

• Upskirting

All these behaviours are not acceptable, and it will be taken seriously. There is a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse. We uphold the importance of making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys” or “girls being girls”. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. We recognise, acknowledge, and understand the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. We will challenge physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

We will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by:

• Taking a whole preschool approach to safeguarding and child protection;

• Have good adult supervision and ratios to the further support the children

• Providing training to staff, committee members, volunteers and students;

• Making staff, committee members, volunteers and students aware that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, including direct disclosures of sexual violence and sexual harassment, they must not take the view it is not happening. All adults working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’.

• Engaging with specialist support and interventions. All persons who need to report any unwanted, inappropriate, or harmful behaviours whether they be on-line, in text type communications, on social media or in person to any adult can be reassured that they will be taken seriously and supported to take any appropriate actions which may be in preschool or with external agencies as needed.

**Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment**

All staff in our preschool are clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up. The preschool recognise that more vulnerable groups are girls, SEND and CLA. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment as well as their emotional wellbeing. It is important that all victims are reassured they are taken seriously, that they should not feel ashamed and offered appropriate support. The child’s wishes and feelings will be taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Staff recognise that allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are likely to be complex and will require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure.

The DSL must be notified without delay and decisions made on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL taking a leading role using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies. As with other disclosures the person disclosing must be able to disclose the information in a supportive environment with a clear record of factual information made as soon after the disclosure as possible.

The DSL will complete an immediate risk and needs assessment on a case-by-case basis. The risk assessment will consider:

• The victim, especially their protection and support;

• Whether there may have been other victims;

• The alleged perpetrator, their support needs and any sanctions;

• All other children at preschool;

• The victim and the alleged perpetrator sharing space at preschool.

Where there has been other professional intervention and/or specialist risk assessments, these professional assessments will be used to inform the preschool’s approach to supporting and protecting children.

The DSL will consider:

• The wishes of the victim;

• The nature of the incident including whether a crime has been committed and the harm caused;

• Ages of the children involved;

• Developmental stages of the children;

• Any power imbalance between the children;

• Any previous incidents;

• Ongoing risks;

• What support both the victim and perpetrator could need moving forward

• Other related issues or wider context.

The DSL will manage the report with the following options:

• Manage internally

• Refer to Early Help

• Refer to the Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

• Report to the police (generally in parallel with a referral to the Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. If the alleged abuse involves an online element staff including the DSL will be mindful of the Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools DfE guidance (2018) and the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)guidance (2022) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, the DSL will report to children’s social care through contact with children’s resource service, and this will be in conjunction with having contacted the police first (irrespective of the child’s age). Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to, such as immediate safety or risk to the child be they the victim or alleged perpetrator. The police will advise what information can or should be shared.

Ongoing response:

• The DSL will manage each report on a case-by-case basis, consider the proportionality of the response, and will keep the risk assessment under review.

• Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes they share with the victim.

• The DSL will consider how best to keep the victim and perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on preschool premises where possible.

• Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the school will take suitable action.

In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of rules and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same preschool would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other children).

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the preschool will, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in the light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of a permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the preschool, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate groups where possible. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

• Preschool recognises that taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions and will occur at the same time if necessary.

• The victim, alleged perpetrator and other witnesses (children and adults) will receive appropriate support and safeguards on a case-by-case basis. When it is clear that ongoing support will be required, Preschool will ask the victim, where appropriate, if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult to talk about their needs. The choice of any such adult will be the victims and the preschool will respect and support this choice.

**Bullying**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another

individual or group either physically or emotionally. All incidents of bullying (including those involving physical abuse), including cyber-bullying, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying, will be dealt with accordingly using our behaviour policy and we will ensure there is a wide range of learning, that is age appropriate, throughout our curriculum.

Woolston Preschool is committed to treating all bullying seriously. Racial and homophobic incidents are recorded separately to general behavioural issues and appropriate consequences, re education and support is put in place.

**Prejudice-based abuse / Hate crime**

This is a criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person’s real or perceived disability; race; religion; gender identity; sexual orientation; and/or age. Although this sort of crime is collectively known as ‘hate crime’ the offender does not have to go as far as being motivated by ‘hate’, they only have to exhibit ‘hostility’. As a preschool we will train staff, committee members, volunteers and students to ensure adults recognise what constitutes hate crime, or early indicative behaviour and take action to challenge it effectively. We will support victims of prejudice-based incidents and hate crimes. We recognise that anyone can be a perpetrator, and this can take place within groups who have a protected characteristic as well as those who do not.

**Harmful Practices**

Harmful Practice encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community or an individual, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, abuse linked to faith or cultural practices such as breast flattening (sometimes referred to as breast ironing). It often can include a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. Any concerns held must be reported to the DSL without delay. The DSL will contact social care for advice and follow up with a written referral and may contact the police. If it is clear that a crime has been committed or the child is at immediate risk the police will be contacted in the first place, followed by local safeguarding partnerships.

**Breast Ironing**

It is a practice whereby the breasts of girls (usually aged 8-16) are pounded by various tools to delay

the appearance of puberty. In some cases wraps are also being used to delay puberty and this has an impact on breast growth.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM is illegal in England and Wales and it is mandatory for education professionals to report known or disclosed cases of FGM directly to the police. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon educators such as early years educators, teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. In these situations, the DSL must be informed that the member of staff has called the police to report information that they believe indicates that FGM has happened. Advice can be sought from the DSL if required. If the information is gained by a non-regulated professional, they must report to the DSL without delay for advice on actions. At no time will staff examine children to confirm FGM concerns. For cases where it is believed that a girl (under 18) may be vulnerable to FGM or there is a concern that she may be about to be affected by this issue the staff will inform the DSL who will report it in line with other child protection concern.

**Forced Marriage**

Forcing a child, this is anyone under the age of 18, to enter into a marriage without their full and free consent or where it is seen that they cannot consent, is a crime in England and Wales and is a form of abuse. Forced marriage is one in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are physically, psychologically, socially or emotionally coerced into entering into it. Where evidence is found of forced marriage or forced marriage is suspected, the preschool will inform and work with the relevant agencies to support the victim.

**Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships. All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well being, development, and ability to learn. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. We acknowledge that all children who see, hear or experience its effects can be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. We know that experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. We are aware, in some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). Where there are concerns about safety or welfare, we will follow our child safeguarding procedures and both young victims and young perpetrators will be offered support. Prechool staff, committee members, volunteers and students are aware, as referenced in KCSIE, that advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available from:

• NSPCC

• Refuge (offers a 24-hour national domestic abuse helpline)

• Safe Lives (provide a toolkit for professionals to support an assessment)

• Operation Encompass

• Yellow Door

**Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children’s social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

**Glossary of types of abuse**

**Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is when someone intentionally hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose. Physical abuse symptoms include bruises; broken or fractured bones; burns or scalds; bite marks; injuries and health problems. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell. If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation does not match the injuries, then this should be reported.

**Sexual Abuse**

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is

aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-

penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse.

**Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse (sometimes called psychological abuse) is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate, or ignore a child. Varying degrees of emotional abuse are present in virtually all child protection incidents, but emotional abuse can also constitute abuse in its own right. Such behaviour may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, or making them feel unnecessarily frightened or vulnerable.

**Neglect**

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child’s basic needs. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger and have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing. Neglect can include physical neglect (not meeting a child’s basic physical needs); educational neglect (a child does not receive an education or relevant support from external agencies to support the needs of the child); emotional neglect (a child does not get the nurture and stimulation they need); and medical neglect (a child is not given proper health care).

**Neglect type Features associated with type of neglect**

| Educational  neglect | Where a parent/carer fails to provide a stimulating environment or show an interest in the child’s education at school. They may fail to respond to any special needs and fail to comply with state requirements about school attendance. |
| --- | --- |
| Emotional  neglect | Where a parent/carer is unresponsive to a child’s basic emotional needs. They may fail to interact or provide affection, undermining a child’s self-esteem and sense of identity. (Most experts distinguish between emotional neglect and emotional abuse by intention; emotional abuse is intentionally inflicted, emotional neglect is an omission of care.) |
| Medical  neglect | Where a parent/carer minimises or denies a child’s illness or health needs and/or fails to seek appropriate medical attention or administer medication and treatment. |
| Nutritional  neglect | Where a child does not receive adequate calories or nutritional intake for normal growth (also sometimes called ‘failure to thrive’). At its most extreme, nutritional neglect can take the form of malnutrition. |
| Physical  neglect | Where a parent/carer does not provide appropriate clothing, food, cleanliness and/or living conditions. |
| Supervisory  neglect | Where a parent/carer fails to provide an adequate level of supervision and guidance to ensure a child’s safety and protection from harm. For example, a child may be left alone or with inappropriate carers, or appropriate boundaries about behaviours (for example, under-age sex or alcohol use) may not be applied |

**Use the SSC neglect toolkit as a reference the link is found below: -**

[**Neglect toolkit**](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/children-families/childrens-social-care/southampton-safeguarding-children-partnership/professionals/themes-guidance-and-toolkits/neglect-toolkit/)

**Online abuse**

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet and can happen anywhere online. Children and young people might experience different types of online abuse, such as cyberbullying, emotional abuse, grooming, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

**Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse is defined as the behaviour of a person towards another person if they are aged sixteen or over and are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive. Behaviour is ‘abusive’ if it consists of any of the following: physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; psychological, emotional, or other abuse. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse.

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

Child Sexual Explotation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse and is when a child or young person is given things like gifts, drugs, money, status, and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they are in a loving and consensual relationship.

**Grooming**

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit, and abuse them. It can happen in person or online, or both and by a stranger or someone they know. Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited, or trafficked.

**Child trafficking**

Child trafficking is where children and young people are tricked, forced, or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.

**Honour based abuse**

Honor based abuse is an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion, or abuse which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual or family. This type of abuse can include female genital mutilation (FGM), breast ironing and forced marriage.

**Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is when a female’s genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It is also known as ‘female circumcision’ or ‘cutting’ but has many other names.

**Child criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.

**County Lines**

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into suburban areas and market and coastal towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or ‘deal lines’.

**Child-on-child abuse**

Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children’s relationships (both intimate and non intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations. It can take various forms. Online child-on-child abuse is any form of child-on-child abuse with a digital element.

**Bullying**

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening, or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online.

**Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online and can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming, and mobile phones.

**Useful contacts**

Any concerns will be referred to Southampton Children’s Resource service their contact details are:

Telephone number for members of the public: 023 8083 3004

Telephone number for professionals: 023 8083 2300

Email address: childrensresourceservices@southampton.gov.uk

[**The Children's Resource Service (southampton.gov.uk)**](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/childrens-resource-service/)

[**https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/childrens-resource-service/**](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/childrens-resource-service/)

**If at risk of immediate harm a call could be made to the police depending on the circumstances.**

**We will also notify OFSTED of any incidents or accidents and any changes in our arrangements, which may affect the wellbeing of a child.**

**OFSTED telephone number is: - 0300 123 1231**

**The OFSTED telephone number is in the Nursery noticeboard for all the parents and staff to use if necessary.**

**LADO, (Local Authority Designated Officer, currently Jemma Swann) on tel: 023 8091 5535, or mob: 07500 952037 or email:** [**LADO@southampton.gov.uk**](mailto:LADO@southampton.gov.uk)

**Children and Families first (previously known as Early Help)**

[**Children and Families First (previously Early Help) (southampton.gov.uk)**](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/early-help/)

**NSPCC whistleblowing advice line**

[**Whistleblowing Advice Line | NSPCC**](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/)

**Concerns about an adult**

[**Worried about an adult? – Southampton Local Safeguarding Adults Board (southamptonlsab.org.uk)**](https://southamptonlsab.org.uk/concerns-about-an-adult-at-risk/)

**Definitions used within this policy:**

**Safeguarding,** as defined in KCSIE 2024, is “providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge, protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online, preventing the 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.” (Part One paragraph 3).

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

**Child** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. On the whole, this will apply to the children in our preschool; however, the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments.

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

**Victim** refers to the person who is adversely affected by a stressful or distressing situation or harmful or humiliating act.

It is important that we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way.

**Alleged perpetrator(s) and perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what’s appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

**DSL** refers to Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**DDSL** refers to Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**Legal framework**

**This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education, however it is not an exclusive list:**

**• Keeping children safe in education 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk)**

**• Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)**

**• What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - Advice for Practitioners (March 2015) It is also based on the following child protection legislation:**

**• Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004**

**• Education Act 2002 which states that teachers, education professionals, social workers, health professionals, police officers and members of the public have a statutory duty to report any concerns or suspicions that a child has been abused.**

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Woolston Community Pre-School held in October 2015

**Last reviewed January 2025**

**Name of signatory:**

**Role of committee:** Chair

Date

Signature

**Woolston Preschool manager and DSL**

Name **Gemma Woodward**

Date

Signature