



Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Policy statement

Harlington village Pre-School & Wrap Around Care (HVPS/WAC) will work closely with children, parents/carers and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. This policy identifies how, when and what we do to ensure early interventions are made where necessary.

We pay full regard to *'Keeping Children Safe in education (DfE, 2021)*. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Procedures

We are committed to building a culture of safety in which children, *young people and vulnerable adults are protected from all kinds of abuse and harm in all areas of the setting.

Staff and Volunteers

Our designated safeguarding lead is **Mrs Sarah Wynn** and in her absence Mrs Danielle Stevens.

(if the designated person is working out their notice period, the new lead would shadow them during this phase. If this is not possible, however, the deputy safeguarding lead will step in to ensure a full hand over and transition into the role.)

- We ensure the designated safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding lead are suitably trained. They are aware of their responsibility to liaise with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding. They understand Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures and receive training at least every two years. They will refresh their knowledge annually through online courses.
- All staff receive training every two years. They understand HVPS/WAC safeguarding policies and procedures and parents are made aware of them.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They are confident to address concerns and ask questions in relation to safeguarding concerns.
- All staff are made aware of safeguarding concerns within the HVPS/WAC in order to record and monitor the evidence. The details of individual cases remain with the designated safeguarding lead and only shared on a need to know basis.
- Staff are aware of the potential signs of abuse and neglect and their professional duty to report and record concerns. Safeguarding is a permanent agenda for staff meetings.

- We understand the principles of Early Help (as defined in *Working together to safeguard children, 2018*) and staff are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early intervention. We practice 'integrated working', sharing information with other agencies, through an Early Help Assessment (EHA) if necessary, to enable access to services that support children and families.
- We provide exceptional staffing resources to meet the needs of our children.
- All staff recognise their responsibilities under the *General Data Protection Regulations* and *Data Protection Act, 2018*, and understand how this relates to safeguarding children so that we may share information appropriately and within the law. We signpost parents/carers to our Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the roles at HVPS/WAC are exempt from the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974*.
- Candidates are informed of the requirement to carry out enhanced disclosure checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed. Where a person volunteers on a regular basis, this will also be required
- Where applicants are rejected because of obtaining information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff, committee and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at HVPS/WAC or has access to the children.
- We record information about staff qualifications, identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - DBS reference number;
 - The date disclosure was obtained; and
 - Once a year, the DBS status is checked through the update service for every member of staff and committee. The dates and comments are recorded.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warning which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during employment with us).
- Every six weeks (as part of supervision), all staff are asked if there have been any changes to their circumstances that may cause concern in regard to safeguarding.
- We abide by the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006*, in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to their dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern. We follow procedures as set out by the LSCB and by first contacting the LADO.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into HVPS/WAC and have procedures for recording the details of visitors. This includes adults who volunteer or who are on the premises for any other reason. They will not have unsupervised access to the children.

- We ensure high levels of security in and around our premises to ensure no unauthorised persons can enter the building and no children can leave unattended. If a drone is seen flying over our setting, we will contact the local police immediately as most drones are equipped with video and still cameras.
- We have a Missing Child Policy which outlines the steps we take to reduce the risk of harm to children on the premises and the procedures to follow in the event of a missing or lost child.
- When starting HVPS/WAC, parents/carers provide names of adults who are authorised to collect their child. A password is also given by the parent to ensure that the authorised people (if not recognised by a member of staff) and any other named person can collect their child on their behalf in an emergency. Children will only be allowed to go home with an un-authorised adult if the staff have had written or verbal confirmation from the parent, even if they are aware of the collection password.
- We take steps to ensure that children are not photographed or filmed in the setting for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents give consent for this purpose and have access to records holding images of their child, upon request.
- Parents must notify us of any injuries the children have received outside of HVPS/WAC, upon arrival. This will be recorded and signed by the parent on report and record form.
- All mobile phones are kept visible in a clear box inside the office. Children do not have access to this area. Staff/Volunteers are only permitted to use mobile phones in an emergency during sessions, unless they are on designated breaks out of the room. The safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that there is an adequate Online safety policy.
- Staff are advised that they represent the setting when out of work. Any use of social media should not be detrimental to the reputation of HVPS/WAC or themselves.
- We have a safeguarding leaflet for visitors and volunteers to ensure that they conform to our procedures and to inform them of the procedure for reporting any concerns. Staff are provided with a reminders booklet to ensure that safeguarding is always a priority.
- We keep written records of any compliant or concern including details of how they were responded to.
- Risk assessments are robust. We carry out daily risk assessments in line with our health and safety policy, as well as completing written risk assessments. All staff read and sign to confirm they are aware of any changes. The assessments are updated regularly.
- The safeguarding lead is responsible for safeguarding at HVPS/WAC and is usually the person who refers safeguarding concerns to children's social care, the local authority designated office (LADO), Ofsted or RIDDOR. However, in her absence, this should not prevent a referral being made at the first opportunity- the most senior member of the team present at the time, will take the responsibility. Other Staff/Volunteers also have responsibility to escalate a concern and particularly in the event they consider the designated lead has not dealt with matters appropriately.
- The committee member who is responsible for overseeing Child Protection, Safeguarding and Looked After Children is **Esther Roche**, they are responsible for ensuring that an annual report is given to the committee, by the designated Child Protection co-ordinator, that staff are suitably trained and that this policy remains up to date. They may also provision supervision for staff who are dealing with difficult safeguarding issues.

- Committee members are expected to complete online safeguarding training every year.
- Staff speak to children (where age appropriate) about their rights and what to do if they have any concerns.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

We respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and we work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set out in *'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'*, 2015.

- We acknowledge that abuse can take different forms- physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, radicalism and extremism, and we are vigilant for signs of peer-on-peer abuse (inclusive of all kinds of abuse stated).
- All staff are aware of additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, inequalities of race, gender and sexual orientation, language, religion or culture. We consider these factors in relation to children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- When children are suffering from any kind of abuse (as stated above), this may be demonstrated through:
 - Significant changes to behaviour;
 - Deterioration in their general well-being;
 - Their comments which may give cause for concern (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - Changes in appearance, behaviour or play;
 - Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible neglect or abuse; and
 - Any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- Staff understand how to identify who may be in need of early help and how to access services.
- We consider factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's use of drugs and alcohol, mental or physical abuse or parents with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability, or may have affected children using HVPS/WAC. For example: abuse of disabled children; fabricated or induced illness; Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); contextual safeguarding, peer-on-peer abuse and any signs of radicalisation and extremism.
- We follow the *Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales* and the LSCB procedures when dealing with concerns of radicalisation and extremism.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour- based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting young people and adults, that we encounter. We refer to the National Referral Mechanism when responding to concerns of modern slavery or human trafficking. We seek advice from first responders e.g. children's social care or the police.
- Where we believe that a child in our care, or that is known to us (e.g. sibling or other family member), may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns:

- A form is completed and referred by the individual who observed the concern and it is referred to the designated safeguarding lead/deputy on the same day. A dated record of the details of any relevant information regarding a child is chronologically recorded to identify patterns. The concerns are always discussed with the designated person who analyses the evidence and decides when to refer. A referral is completed by contacting the Central Bedfordshire Access and Referral Hub **0300 300 8585** or in the case of a child from Luton Borough Council, we contact Luton MASH on 01582 547653
Out of hours: 0300 3008123
- We work collaboratively with children's social care and other agencies, including the police in any subsequent investigation.
- We take care not to influence the outcome whether through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We take into account the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined in the *Children Act, 1989*. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected, we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be considered, but HVPS/WAC may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if we feel that it is necessary to prevent a crime being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be a worse outcome than having shared it.
- From March 2017, we became part of the RELAY initiative. Any incidence of domestic abuse reported to the police, where a child is on our register or linked with HVPS/WAC at the time the incident occurred, will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead within HVPS/WAC by a member of the RELAY locality team.
- In the event that a member of staff or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made by the designated safeguarding lead in relation to whether to make a referral, they must follow escalation procedures and report their concern to the Access and Referral Hub/ MASH themselves.
- HVPS/WAC has a whistleblowing policy in place and all staff are made aware of this.
- Staff and volunteers can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing dilemmas.
- Staff and volunteers can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline on **0800 028 0285**, if they feel HVPS/WAC have not taken appropriate action to safeguard a child and procedures have not been followed.
- They can also contact the LADO for advice on **0300 300 8142**.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes a comment to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs and signals that give cause for concern (refer to signs on page 3), that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she/he will take action;
 - does not question the child;

- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person by whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time. See appendices.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- Any incidents/occurrences are recorded on a chronology form which is used to give an overview of all relevant information and clearly identifies areas of concern and potential patterns. A child's record and chronology is forwarded to their next setting upon leaving either by secure delivery or in person.
- The member of staff acting as the designated safeguarding lead is informed at the earliest opportunity.
- Any safeguarding information that has been recorded is discussed with the parent/carer to obtain their views and this is recorded. The information is only shared if the child would not be put at risk of harm.
- Where the LSCB stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside our own and follow the steps set down by the LSCB.
- If a member of staff has suspicions of extremism, we can contact the Central Bedfordshire Prevent Lead on **101** or the Department of Education dedicated Helpline **0207 340 7264** to speak about our concerns and gain support. Alternatively, we would email counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk to raise the concern. After following these contacts and a member of staff still has concerns, we can contact the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

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

- When making a referral, we follow Central Bedfordshire LSCB guidelines. We seek advice about a child or young person or make a referral by calling:

Central Bedfordshire Access and Referral Hub on 0300 300 8585

- A list of up-to-date telephone numbers is available and on display for staff and parents.
- A copy of *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, 2015*, can be located on the legislation notice board in the foyer for parents, staff/volunteers and visitors.
- Parents/Carers are usually the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child or young person in greater danger or may interfere with a police investigation. Advice will be sought from social care or the police, where necessary.
- We inform parents when we make a record of concern in their child's file and that we also make notes of any discussion we have regarding concerns. In cases where it is deemed dangerous to inform parents i.e. where the parent is the likely abuser, the designated lead will seek advice from the Access and referral hub- this discussion will be recorded.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the LSCB guidelines.
- We have a copy of What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, 2015, available for parents, staff and visitors to ensure that all parties are familiar with the process for reporting concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the Local Authority regarding child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that communication is accurate and timely in an emergency.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is practically possible, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegation being made.
- Contact details for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), are also kept. **0800 800 5000**
- When a child transfers from another setting, we request that any information, including safeguarding paperwork, be sent via special/recorded delivery, to HVPS/WAC. This would be the preferred method for sending information from HVPS/WAC to other settings.

Allegations against staff, volunteers and persons in position of trust

- We ensure that all parents/carers know how to complain about the behaviour of staff and volunteers within HVPS/WAC, or anyone on the premises, which may include allegations of abuse.
- All Staff and volunteers are made aware of the procedure for raising concerns that they may have about the conduct and behaviour of other people in the HVPS/WAC, including colleagues.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or any other person working with children, which includes:
 - Inappropriate sexual comments;
 - Excessive 1:1 attention beyond the requirements of the role;
 - Inappropriate sharing of images.
- We differentiate between an allegation of abuse and a concern or complaint about the quality and care of children in the provision and follow separate procedures to address them.
- We follow the LSCB guidance when responding to any allegation that a member of staff, volunteer or anyone working within HVPS/WAC, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by another member of staff, volunteer or anyone working within HVPS/WAC, may have taken place, By:
 1. Recording the details of the alleged incident;
 2. Referring the complaint to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **0300 300 8142;**
 3. We report the alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as the measures we have taken. We are aware it is an offence not to do so.

4. Cooperating entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police;
5. Suspending the member of staff on full pay, for the duration of the investigation, where management and social care agree it is appropriate to do so. This is not an admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but it is to protect the staff, children and families during the process.

The committee will provide two named people who would represent and support a member of staff, volunteer or any other person, during the investigation. The named person is Amanda Horlick-Coutts.

Disciplinary Action

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults, we make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups) can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Training

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues through training and regular updates. We are also committed to empowering young children, through early childhood curriculum. We promote the right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in HVPS/WAC to ensure that they can recognise the signs of all kinds of possible abuse (as stated on page 2). All staff receive annual updates either at meetings or online courses and they are required to attend an LSCB (through Central Beds CPD) course every two years.
- Committee members and regular volunteers are expected to complete online training every year.
- We ensure the designated lead/deputy receives training in accordance with the recommendations from the LSCB.
- All staff know the procedures for reporting and recording concerns.
- All staff are Prevent Duty trained and this is renewed every three years.

Planning

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone in a closed area with a member of the team in a one-to-one situation. When staff change nappies or clothing in the accessible toilet area, the door is always kept partially open.

Curriculum and Supporting Children to manage their own behaviour

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social, emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We build into the curriculum about keeping safe online by using stories such as 'Digi duck'.
- We create within HVPS/WAC, a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background. This is incorporated in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.
- We teach children how to manage their own behaviour by talking about feelings and supporting them in challenging situations. In doing so, we are giving children the tools they need to navigate situations independently.
- Staff take time to listen when a child is struggling, giving them time to put into their own words how they are feeling and if something is wrong;
- The Keyworker scheme gives children a point of contact at Pre-school and we work hard to ensure they know who they can come to if they are sad, worried or need help. We extend this attitude to the children that attend WAC.
- We ensure children understand the expectations of the setting and the boundaries set i.e. Adults open doors, gates remain closed.

Confidentiality

All allegations and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those that need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the LSCB and in line with GDPR, Data Protection and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Support to Families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, integrated working and information sharing, monitoring the well-being of the child and liaising with other agencies.
- We will continue to welcome the child and family involved in any investigations being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Early Help Action Plan, Child in need and Child Protection Plan as set out by a child's social worker or Lead practitioner in relation to pre-school's designated role and tasks in supporting the needs of the child and family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on the child are shared with the child's parent/carer or those with parental responsibility in accordance with the Data Protection procedure and only if appropriate under guidance of the LSCB.

Looked after Children

Please refer to our 'Looked After Children (LAC)' policy for further details on how we support Looked after children and previously looked after children.

Legal Framework

HVPS/WAC will fulfil their local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following documents:

Primary

Children Act (1989, s47)
The Children and Social Work Act (2017)
Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)
Protection of Children Act (1999)
The Education Act (2002, s175/s157)
The Children Act (2004)
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Secondary

Data Protection Act (1998); GDPR (2018)
Sexual Offences Act (2003)
Equality Act (2010)
Counter-terrorism and Security Act (2015)
Serious Crime Act (2015)
Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
Children and Families Act (2014)

Further Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2018)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG, 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2008)
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2018)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings, (Ofsted, 2016)
- Safeguarding Children (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2013)
- Safeguarding through Effective Supervision (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2013)

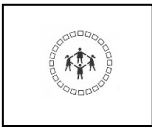
- The New Early Years Employee Handbook (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)
- People Management in the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)
- Threshold Document, Central Bedfordshire (LCSB)

*Young person/people are defined in this policy as 16-19 year olds i.e. student, volunteer, parent.

This policy was updated by Sarah Wynn (Manager)

And adopted at a meeting of HVPS/WAC Committee

Held on	28 th February 2023
Date to be reviewed	January 2024
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name of signatory	Keely Armitt
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Committee Treasurer



Appendix

Emergency Contingency planning

Introduction

COVID-19 (a type of Coronavirus) has presented a huge challenge nationally to the normal running of education and childcare provision since 2020. In light of this, we recognise the need for contingency planning and include this in our Emergency Contingency policy, including how vulnerable children will be supported and what to do when there are staff shortages.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) arrangements

It is vital that while our setting remains open a suitably trained DSL is available for consultation and advice.

The optimal scenario for our setting and one we will strive to achieve is to have a trained DSL or deputy available on site. Due to staff self-isolating, social-distancing or being physically unavailable for other reasons, it is recognised this may not always be possible, and where this is the case there are two options we will implement, the first being the preferred and second a backup option:

1. A trained DSL or deputy from the setting will be available to be contacted via phone or online video i.e. zoom, if they are working off site.
2. Sharing trained DSLs or deputies with **Harlington Lower School** until our own trained DSL can return to work or be available.