9 - Safeguarding

**9.1 Child Protection**

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at Broad Town Pre-School. We endeavour to provide a safe, happy and welcoming environment where children are cared for with respect and where they are valued.

We aim to create such an environment in our pre-school, where children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

**Principles**

Our core safeguarding principles are:

* It is Broad Town Pre-School’s responsibility to take all reasonable steps to safeguard and protect the rights, health and well-being of all children who are in our care.
* Policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.
* Broad Town Pre-School will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all activity
* All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
* All staff have equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm in accordance with this guidance.

**Aims**

Our safeguarding aims are:

* To provide all staff with the necessary information and training to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities in the EYFS to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children.
* To ensure consistent good practice across Broad Town Pre-School’s childcare provision.
* To demonstrate Broad Town Pre-School’s commitment with regard to safeguarding children

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Broad Town Pre-School is **Louise Coward, Pre-School Deputy Manager**

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead for Broad Town Pre-school is **Cherri Hewitt.**

**Recognising abuse - All staff are aware of all forms of abuse and have an understanding of what to look for**

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

We will ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to indicators of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection.

There are many different types of abuse, some of which staff may be initially less aware of: physical abuse and female genital mutilation, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation, neglect and potential radicalisation, County Lines and Witchcraft.

**Physical abuse**

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen’s Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

This is the term for procedures, which include the removal of part or all of the external female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. FGM has been illegal in this country since 1985, and under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 it is an offence for UK nationals, permanent or habitual UK residents to carry out FGM abroad, or to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad, even in countries where the practice is legal.

Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM while not making assumptions that families from practising communities will want their girls and women to undergo FGM.

**Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age – or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual Abuse & Child Sexual Exploitation**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. They may include noncontact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

(Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children)

**Prevention of Radicalisation**

Broad Town Pre School is aware of its statutory duties under the ‘Prevent’ agenda, to be vigilant and aware of children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism and extremist ideas.

**County Lines**

County lines' is a form of criminal exploitation of children and young people with a devastating effect on each individual’s life, their families and their community. Children as young as seven-years-old are groomed and coerced into trafficking drugs by criminal gangs around the country.

**Breast Flatenning/Ironing**

Breast Ironing/ Flattening Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear, or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage.

**Child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB)**

Child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB) can happen in families when there is a concept of belief in:

• Witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs)

• The evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context) • Ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits, or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies

• Use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune.

**Operation Encompass Safeguarding Statement**

Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse and which is in place in every police force I England and Wales.

Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

Operation Encompass means that the police will share information with our school about **all** police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children PRIOR to the start of the next school day.

**Indicators of abuse and what you might see**

It is vital that staff are aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

We are aware that it is our responsibility to report concerns.

It is not our responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused and/or neglected may:

* have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
* show signs of pain or discomfort
* look unkempt and uncared for
* change their eating habits
* have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
* appear fearful
* be reckless with regard to their own or other’s safety
* self-harm
* frequently be absent or arrive late
* show signs of not wanting to go home
* display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
* become disinterested in play activities
* be constantly tired or preoccupied
* be wary of physical contact
* display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They will be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the Designated Safeguarding Person to decide how to proceed.

It is very important that staff, parents or carers report their concerns – they do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

**Taking action**

The WSVPP (Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership) flowchart illustrates the process that should be followed if staff have a concern about potential abuse:

<https://www.wiltshirescb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/What-to-do-if-you-are-worried-a-child-is-being-abused-or-neglected-FINAL.pdf>

Key points to remember for taking action are:

* in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
* report your concern to the Designated Safeguarding Person immediately
* DSL to Contact MASH, take advise and action accordingly
* if the Designated Safeguarding Person is not available, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the setting that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children’s social care
* **do not** start your own investigation
* share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
* complete a Child Protection Concern Record about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately (dated and signed on each page)
* seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

**Children's social care referrals:**

Wiltshire Multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH): 0300 456

Out-of-hours: 0300 4560100

Please follow any advice given by the MASH team directly.

If you believe the child is at immediate risk of significant harm or injury, then you must call the police on 999.

The Understanding safeguarding thresholds guidance can be found here <https://www.wiltshirescb.org.uk/professionals/safeguarding-thresholds>. It aims to inform childcare providers, schools and other agencies about the suitable action to take when a child has been identified as making inadequate progress or having an unmet need. Early intervention must be actioned by making a referral to early help as soon as the criteria are met, to prevent situations escalating into larger problems:

**Parental partnership**

Where possible, concerns will be discussed with the parent/carer for an explanation, providing it does not put the child at immediate risk.

Parents’ must notify the Pre-School regarding any concerns they may have about their child and any accidents, incidents or injuries affecting the child, which will be recorded.

We will involve parents and carers wherever possible and ensure they have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the setting for safeguarding children by setting out its statutory duty in the Pre-School policy and procedures, prospectus, notice board and newsletter.

**Confidentiality and sharing information**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated person or manager. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need-to-know’ basis. Child protection and all other child records and information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles.

Information is:

* processed for limited purposes
* adequate, relevant and not excessive
* accurate
* kept no longer than necessary
* processed in accordance with the data subject’s rights
* secure

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals. If a data base is used to record sensitive information it will be stored on a memory stick (not the hard drive of a computer) and kept off premises or locked in a robust safe, in accordance with the terms of Data Protection legislation.

We will register with www.ico.gov.uk and follow the guidelines required.

We will develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with any enquires regarding child protection matters including attendance of case conferences.

**Physical Steps and Record Keeping**

When a child discloses, or a staff member/parent or carer shares a concern, the member of staff should;

* Make brief notes as soon as possible (no leading questions) using the Child Welfare and Child Protection Concern Record form to:
* Record date, time, place and any noticeable non verbal behaviour as well as actual words used by child
* indicate positions of bruising and other injuries
* Record statements and observations
* Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE CHILD BE TAKEN
* Immediately pass information to DSP

Follow the procedure based on the flowchart WHAT TO DO IF GUIDE which is to be found on the notice board in the hallway.

Such records will be kept in a separate file only accessible to the nominated person or other member of staff as appropriate. Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child’s parents.

At the Pre-School we hold complete legal records containing all the statutory information required including CRB numbers for all our staff, helpers, Committee members and any outside visitors coming into contact with the children.

**Allegations against a member of staff**

Please see the flow chart in setting for further details.

If you become aware that a member of staff/volunteer/supply/contractor or bank staff may have:

* Behaved in a way that harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
* Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Any allegations against staff, peripatetic staff or volunteers, must be taken directly and immediately to the manager/DSL. Any allegations against the manager must be taken to the management board/ committee Chair.

**Whistle blowing**

If staff are concerned that a professional might be involved in abuse it is important that they take action. In such circumstances staff should report concerns to the nominated designated safeguarding lead or deputy who is the Manager or deputy Manager, or in the case of concerns/allegation is about the Manager, to the next appropriate person who is **John Kent, Chairperson.** Complaints about the designated safeguarding lead/manager should be reported to MASH.

**Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support the children and their families and staff by:

* taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
* responding sympathetically to any request from a member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
* maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
* storing records securely
* offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
* following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
* cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

**Staff training**

All training follows Wiltshire Multi-agency Child Protection Procedures.

All staff must be trained on the safeguarding policy and the procedures. All staff training is kept up to date and carried out through Wiltshire SVPP. t

All staff will be made familiar with child protection issues and procedures.

**Safer Recruitment**

***(See Broad Town Pre-School Policy 12.1 – Recruitment)***

John Kent has completed Safer Recruitment training and ensures all details and information is up to date.

We practice robust recruitment procedures in checking the suitability of staff, volunteers, and assistants to work with children. All staff are DBS checked and vetted.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the setting’s safeguarding and child protection policy and identification of their own safeguarding and child protection training needs.

All staff sign to confirm they have read and understood the child protection policy.

**Use of Mobile Phones**

It is prohibited for any staff to use their mobile phones to take pictures of the children attending the setting. The Pre-School has a designated mobile phone which is used by staff instead. Mobile phones will be stored in the **blue basket out of reach of children in the classroom roll up cupboard** whilst staff are on duty. Any staff known or seen to be using a mobile phone without express permission will be disciplined.

**9.2 Procedure to be followed if a child is not collected**

If a child is not collected within 15 minutes of the agreed time, the staff will first attempt to contact the parent and then the emergency contacts given on the child’s registration form.

If the staff are unable to contact either the parent or emergency contacts after a given period of time, we will contact MASH and follow advice and guidance given.

The Pre-School staff obviously have an obligation to stay with any uncollected child at the end of a session, until that child is collected.

The staff must not release the child to an unauthorised person, even if the collection is late, unless an authorised person telephones to state that because of an emergency a different person will be collecting. The authorised person should give the name and address and a physical description of the unauthorised person and the Manager should check this description before permitting the child to leave. The person collecting must also provide the appropriate password.

The person collecting the child must be over the age of 16 years.

**9.3 Procedure to be followed if a child is lost**

If a child is lost from the Pre-School premises or whilst on a Pre-School outing, a full search of the area will be made.

In order to prevent such a loss, safety procedures must be followed at all times. A register must be taken each morning and regular headcounts must be made, particularly during outside play and when off the premises on outings. It is good practice for all staff to be aware of the importance of these regular headcounts.  
The correct ratio of adult:children shall be maintained during outside play.

During freeflow play the padlock will remain on the Pre-school playground gate, which otherwise provides access to the pathway down to the external Pre-School site entrance.

The adult: child ratio must be maintained at all times and on outings the ‘Educational Visits Policy’ must be adhered to.

Should a child become lost then this is “a serious incident” and should be treated as such. Therefore, the following action should be taken:

* Alert the member of staff in charge who will make enquiries of relevant members of staff as to when the child was last seen and where.
* Remember the safety of the other children, with regard to supervision and security.
* Ensuring that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure, one or preferably two members of staff should search the building, garden and immediate vicinity.
* Designated Safeguarding Lead in setting to inform Ofsted of serious incident occurring (lost child).
* Designated Safeguarding Lead in setting to inform Public Liability Insurer of serious incident occurring (lost child).
* Designated Safeguarding Lead in setting to inform Designated Officer for Allegations – DOFA (formerly known as LADO) of serious incident occurring (lost child).
* If the child cannot be found within fifteen minutes, then the parents and Police must be informed.
* Continue to search, opening up the area, keeping in touch with mobile phone if available
* Designated Safeguarding Lead in setting to investigate how serious incident occurred and take steps to minimize future occurrence.

In the event of such a loss the Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead in setting will investigate the circumstances under which the serious incident occurred, in order to establish whether a failure to follow the procedures had occurred and to establish what action needs to be taken to minimize future occurrence.

**9.4 Photography**

It is Pre-school practice to take photographs of the children engaged in Pre-school activities, with prior agreement of parents, for use in Pre-school communications (including website) and in the children’s individual Learning Journeys and on Tapestry.

At no point must these photographs be downloaded onto the personal computers of staff or committee members. They must only be downloaded onto the dedicated Pre-school staff laptop provided by Pre-school for this purpose and taken from this laptop via a usb drive for incorporation into websites and other publications without being saved onto any other computer. Photographs will not be distributed by email.

Where a specific need for the saving of an image onto any usb drive (e.g. for delivery to an external printer) no photograph of children will be saved in this manner without prior, written parental permission being obtained, and written confirmation that the image has not been retained will be required from any and all external bodies involved.

**9.5 E-Safety & Information Communication Technology**

At Broad Town Pre-School we take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment or exposure to inappropriate materials in the setting.

**Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment**

* Only ICT equipment belonging to the setting is used by staff and children.
* The designated person is responsible for ensuring all ICT equipment is safe and fit for purpose.
* All computers have virus protection installed.
* The designated person ensures that safety settings are set to ensure that inappropriate material cannot be accessed.

**RULES FOR RESPONSIBLE INTERNET USE**

* Children do not normally have access to the internet and never have unsupervised access.
* If staff access the internet with children for the purposes of promoting their learning, written permission is gained from parents who are shown these rules.
* The designated person has overall responsibility for ensuring that children and young people are safeguarded and risk assessments in relation to online safety are completed.
* Children are taught the following stay safe principles in an age appropriate way prior to using the internet;
* only go on line with a grown up
* be kind on line
* keep information about me safely
* only press buttons on the internet to things I understand
* tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet

Suspicions that an adult is attempting to make inappropriate contact with a child on-line is reported to the National Crime Agency’s Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

* The designated person ensures staff have access to age-appropriate resources to enable them to assist children to use the internet safely.
* If staff become aware that a child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they discuss this with their parents and refer them to sources of help, such as the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 or [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) or Childline on 0800 1111 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Social media**

* Staff are advised to manage their personal security settings to ensure that their information is only available to people they choose to share information with.
* In the event that staff name the organisation or workplace in any social media they do so in a way that is not detrimental to the organisation or its service users.
* Staff observe confidentiality and refrain from discussing any issues relating to work
* Staff should not share information they would not want children, parents or colleagues to view.
* Staff should report any concerns or breaches to the designated person in their setting.
* Staff should avoid personal communication, including on social networking sites, with the children and parents with whom they act in a professional capacity. If a practitioner and family are friendly prior to the child coming into the setting, this information is shared with the manager prior to a child attending and a risk assessment and agreement in relation to boundaries is agreed.

**Use and/or distribution of inappropriate images**

* Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images. In the event of a concern that a colleague or other person is behaving inappropriately, the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy, in relation to allegations against staff and/or responding to suspicions of abuse, is followed
* Staff are aware that grooming children and young people on line is an offence in its own right and concerns about a colleague’s or others’ behaviour are reported (as above).

**Email**

* Children are not permitted to use email in the setting. Parents and staff are not normally permitted to use setting equipment to access personal emails.
* Staff do not access personal or work email whilst supervising children. This includes all devices including „smart watches‟.
* Staff send personal information by encrypted email and share information securely at all times.

**Mobile phones – children**

* Children do not bring mobile phones or other ICT devices with them to the setting. If a child is found to have a mobile phone or ICT device with them, this is removed and stored in a locked drawer until the parent collects them at the end of the session.

**Mobile phones – staff and visitors (including parents)**

* Personal mobile phones are not used by our staff on the premises during working hours. They will be stored in the **blue basket out of reach of children on the classroom roll up cupboard**.
* In an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in an area where there are no children present, with permission from the manager. In the first instance the settings phone should be used.
* Our staff and volunteers ensure that the setting telephone number is known to family and other people who may need to contact them in an emergency.
* If a member of staff volunteers to take their mobile phone on outings, or into Forest School sessions for use in case of an emergency, they must not make or receive personal calls, or take photographs of children.
* Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones whilst on the premises. This includes dropping off and picking up times. We make an exception if a visitor’s company or organisation operates a lone working policy that requires contact with their office periodically throughout the day. Visitors will be advised of a quiet space where they can use their mobile phone, where no children are present.
* These rules also apply to the use of work-issued mobiles, and when visiting or supporting staff in other settings.

**Cameras and videos**

* Our staff and volunteers must not bring their personal cameras or video recording equipment into the setting.
* Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons i.e. to record their learning and development, or for displays within the setting, with written permission received by parents (see the Registration form). Such use is monitored by the Supervisor.
* Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events, general permission is gained from all parents for their children to be included. Parents are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else’s child or to upload photos of anyone else’s children.
* If photographs of children are used for publicity purposes, parental consent must be given and safeguarding risks minimised, for example, ensuring children cannot be identified by name or through being photographed in a sweatshirt with the name of their setting on it.