

1.10 Safeguarding children and Child protection

Policy statement

At Patchwork Day Nursery and Pre-school, we work with children, parents, external agencies, and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. In our setting we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation, and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the nursery's other policies and procedures. Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. At Patchwork Day Nursery and Pre-School, all staff, students, volunteers and agency staff are made aware of this.

Our Lead Practitioner for Safeguarding is:

Michelle Osman (Nursery Manager)

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- Our Deputy Lead Practitioners for Safeguarding is:

Amy Craig (Line Manager/Assistant Head Teacher)

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- Our School designated officer is:

Alexei Western (Deputy Head Teacher)

This policy works alongside other specific policies to cover all aspects of child protection:

- Social networking and mobile phone policy
- Promoting positive behaviour
- Employment (safer recruitment)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

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

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2018)

Policy intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- Ensure all staff can identify the signs and indicators of abuse, including the softer signs and know what action to take
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures, and communities
- Help children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion, and role-modelling
- Always listen to children
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.

Staff are aware that abuse does occur in our society, and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Staff working on the frontline with children and families are often the first people to identify a concern, observe changes in a child's behaviour or receive information relating to indicators of abuse. They will be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such, we believe we have a duty to the children, parents/carers, and the members of staff in the setting to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with the relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care, family support, health professionals such as health visitors and GP's or the police. All members of staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, this includes working as part of a multi-agency team where needed.

We aim to:

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do, providing sensitive interactions that develops children's well-being, confidence, and resilience. We will support children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe, healthy and have positive relationships.
- Ensure staff are trained right from induction to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children (peer-on-peer) through bullying or discriminatory behaviour.
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), isolated families and vulnerabilities in families, including the impact of toxic trio on children and adverse childhood experiences: maintaining professional curiosity around the welfare of children.

- Ensure that all members of staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child and to share information and seek help that the child may need at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that all members of staff are familiar and are updated with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures, including through annual safeguarding updates.
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the Hampshire safeguarding children's partnership.
- Ensure that information is only shared with people who need to know to protect the child and act in the child's best interest.
- Keep the setting safe online, we refer to 'safeguarding children and protection professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations, using appropriate filters, checks and monitor access at all times and maintaining safeguards around the use of technology by staff, parents and visitors in the setting.
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the care of nursery staff.
- Identify changes in staff behaviour and to act on these (as per the staff behaviour policy)
- Take any appropriate actions relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any member of staff working with children, including reporting allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities, including Local Authority.
- Ensure that parents/carers are fully aware of our safeguarding children and child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Ensure that this policy is regularly reviewed and make sure it complies with legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Hampshire safeguarding children's partnership.
- Ensure that staff identify, minimise, and manage risks while caring for children

We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort, and sensitive interactions. We will devise activities according to individual circumstances to enable the children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group.

Contact telephone numbers

Local authority children's social care team – 01329 225379

Local authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Shona Mc Minn or Barbara Piddington 01962 876364

Local authority referral team – 0300 5551384 (out of hours number- 0300 555 1373) or email

childrens.services@hants.gov.uk

Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership – 01962 876355 or email hscp@hants.gov.uk

Ofsted – 0300 1231231

Non-emergency police – 101

Police - 999

Government helpline for extremism concerns – 020 73407264

Early help services – 01962 876355 at Merry-go-round Children's centre, Wickham C of E School, Buddens Road, Wickham PO17 5HU

Child exploitation and online protection command (CEOP) – <https://ceop.police.uk/safetycentre>

Types of abuse and particular procedures followed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them or failing to act to prevent harm. Children can suffer abused within their family, institution or community setting by those known to them or more rarely a stranger. This could be an adult/adults or child/children.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (advice for practitioners 2018)

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child is suffering from abuse but will support members of staff to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

Indicators of child abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents/carers or members of staff
- Repeated illness
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

Emotional states:

- Low self-esteem
- Fearful
- Withdrawn

Behaviour:

- Aggressive
- Oppositional habitual body rocking

Interpersonal behaviours:

- Coercive controlling behaviour towards parents/carers
- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness towards strangers, including health care professionals
- Excessive clinginess, persistently resorting to gaining attention
- Lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions
- Very young children showing comforting behaviours when witnessing parent/carer distress
- Demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent parent/carer disapproval
- Failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed.

Peer on peer abuse

We are aware that peer on peer abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we are talking about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way as we report adults for abusing children and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area: to support for both the victim and the perpetrator, as they

could also be a victim of abuse. We know that children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve:

- Hitting
- Shaking
- Throwing
- Poisoning
- Burning or scalding
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Or otherwise cause physical harm to a child.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms, or deliberately induces illness in a child. (This is fabricated or induced illness)

These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, for example fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, trunk, ankles, and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from exploring and developing. When children enter Nursery or Pre-School with an existing injury, Parents/Carers will be asked to record the details of the injury. Injuries that are a cause for concern will be followed up with the parents and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If a child's injuries are regular occurrence, or there is a pattern to the injuries, then we will report our concerns.

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been physical abuse to a child.

Female genital mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reasons for this. Some ethnic groups practice this form of physical abuse as a cultural ritual. When the procedure happens is dependent on the community and it may occur shortly after birth, during childhood, during adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediately/and or long term health consequences, including mental health problems, urinary infection, septicaemia, difficulties in childbirth causing danger to the mother and child or death.

If you have any concerns about a child or family, you should contact Children's Social Care Team in the same way as other types of physical abuse. We have a mandatory duty to report to the police any case where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 years.

Breast Ironing/flattening

This is also known as “breast flattening” and 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 to delay the development of breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. Although this is unlikely to happen in a nursery due to the children’s age, we will remain vigilant for any signs and symptoms in any children and families using our services and follow up concerns following our regular safeguarding referral process.

Any concerns about a child or family will reported to the children social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse.

Fabricated illness and injury

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. The parent or carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation; they may exaggerate a real illness and symptoms or deliberately induce an illness through poisoning with medication or other substances or they may interfere with medical treatments. Fabricated illness is a form of physical abuse and any concerns will be reported, in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, or enticing, a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities 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 of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Action must be taken if a staff member witnesses an occasion(s) where a child indicates sexual activity through words, play, drawing, has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters; or has an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or language, for their developmental age. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role-play area with their peers; drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words.

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child’s behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child is being sexually abused staff may observe both emotional and physical symptoms.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Keeping Children safe in Education (2021) defines CSE as “...a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or a young person under the age of 18 years into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can occur using technology.”

We will be aware of the possibility of CSE and the signs and symptoms this may manifest as. If we have any concerns, we will follow the same procedures as for other concerns and we will record and refer as appropriate.

Non-mobile Baby

The aim of the non-mobile Baby protocol is to safeguard non-moving babies and older children who are unable to move for a variety of reasons, for example a disability. By putting this procedure in place to protect them if they are observed to have unexplained bruising or other injuries such as fractures, burns or head injuries, which might suggest they have been subject to abuse.

Mobile – a baby who can crawl, pull to stand, “cruise” around furniture, is toddling/beginning to walk.

Non-mobile – babies who are not able to do any of the above. Babies who can roll are classed as non-mobile for the purpose of this policy.

Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) previously described as “shaken baby syndrome” is a relatively common cause of childhood neuro-trauma with an estimated incidence of 14-40 cases per 100,000 children under the age of 1 years: 15-23% of these babies die within hours or days after the incident. Of those who survive AHT, one third are severely disabled: one third are moderately disabled: one third have mild or no lasting symptoms.

As soon as you are aware of the bruising, we will take immediate action. Children must be seen within 4 hours. If bruising is observed on a non-mobile child, we will contact:

- The parent/carer
- Ofsted - 0300 123 1231
- Children’s services – 0300 555 1384

Emotional abuse

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) defines emotional abuse as 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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It

may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a 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 (including cyber 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, though it may occur alone.

Signs that children are being emotionally abused may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them; becoming withdrawn, aggressive, or clingy to receive their love and attention; not having a close bond with their parent/carer; seem unconfident or anxious or being aggressive towards others.

Action will be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. Children may also experience emotional abuse through witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them. In England, the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) recognises in law, for the first time, that children are victims if they see, hear, or otherwise experience the effects of domestic abuse .

Neglect

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) defines Neglect as 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 abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- a. Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- b. Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- c. Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- d. Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at nursery. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Action will be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) can be described as when an individual, or group, takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs from big cities into smaller towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line.' Customers will live in a different area to where the dealers and networks are based, so drug runners are needed to transport the drugs and collect payment.

They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Signs that a child may be involved in county lines could be a change in behaviour, suddenly having more money or possessions; change in friendship group, withdrawing from family life, sudden change in appearance; unexplained physical injuries, staying out late or a lack of interest in school and previous positive activities.

Cuckooing

Cuckooing is a form of county lines crime in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to criminally exploit them as a base for drug dealing, often in multi-occupancy or social housing properties. Signs that this is happening in a family property may be an increase in people entering or leaving the property, an increase in cars or bikes outside the home; windows covered, or curtains closed for long periods, family not being seen for extended periods; signs of drug use or an increase in anti-social behaviour at the home.

If we recognise any of these signs, we will report our concerns as per our reporting process.

Contextual safeguarding-

As young people grow and develop, they may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their family. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online.

As part of our safeguarding procedures, we will work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to work together to safeguard children and provide the support around contextual safeguarding concerns.

Extremism – the Prevent Duty

Under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police (In Prevent priority areas the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support).

Reasons for referral may include a cause for concern relating to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team (or other persons in the setting) or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child in their care. We have a Prevent Duty and Radicalisation policy in place. Please refer to this for specific details.

Online Safety

We take the safety of our children very seriously and this includes their online safety. Patchwork is aware of the growth of internet use and the advantages this can bring. However, we are also aware of the dangers and strive to support children, staff, and families in using the internet safely. The DSL is ultimately responsible for online safety concerns. All concerns need to be raised ASAP to the DSL (Michelle Osman). We are aware of the need to manage our digital reputation, including the appropriateness of information and content that we post online, both professionally and personally.

All electronic communication between staff and parents/carers should be professional and take place via the official Patchwork communication channels, for example via our Perins email account.

We aim to keep children, staff, and parents/carers safe online. Our safety measures include:

- Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware on all devices which is maintained by the IT department
- Ensuring all devices are password protected
- Ensure content blockers and filters are on all our devices which are maintained by our IT department
- Locking away all devices at the end of the day
- Ensuring no social media apps are installed on patchwork devices.

Modern Slavery and Child Trafficking

The Modern Slavery Act received Royal assent on 26th March 2015. The act consolidates slavery and trafficking offences and introduces tougher penalties and sentencing rules.

Child trafficking and modern slavery is becoming a more frequent form of child abuse. Children are recruited, moved, transported, and then exploited, forced to work or sold on. Victims of modern slavery are also likely to be subject to other types of abuse such as, physical, sexual, and emotional. Staff members and parents/carers under the age of 18 years are children and so this may apply to them, as well as the children in our care. For an adult or child to have been a victim of trafficking, there must have been:

- Action – recruitment, transportation, and transfer
- Means – threat or use of force, coercion, and abduction. There does not need to be ‘means’ for children as they are not able to give informed consent
- Purpose – sexual exploitation or forced labour

Action should be taken if they appear to have some of these possible signs including:

- Being under the control of someone else and reluctant to interact with others
- The victim has few personal belongings and wears the same clothes everyday or wears unsuitable clothes to work
- The victim is not able to move around freely and is reluctant to talk to strangers or the authorities
- Appearing frightened and withdrawn
- Showing signs of physical or psychological abuse.

You can contact:

- Modern Slavery helpline on 08000 121 700
- Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

Adult sexual exploitation

As part of our safeguarding procedures, we will also ensure that staff and students are safeguarded from sexual exploitation.

Up skirting

Up skirting involves taking a picture of someone's genitals or buttocks under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or to humiliate, or distress, the individual. This is a criminal offence, and any such action would be reported following our reporting procedures.

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.

Domestic abuse/Honour based violence/forced marriages

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as:

“Behaviour of a person (A) towards another person (B) is domestic abuse if:

- They, A and B are each aged 16 years or over and are personally connected to each other

- The behaviour is abusive

Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following:

- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct. 'Economic abuse' means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to acquire, use, or maintain money or other property, or obtain good and services.

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, sex, age, social background, religion, or ethnicity. Domestic abuse can happen at any stage in a relationship.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse can have serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In England, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises in law, for the first time, that children are victims if they see, hear, or otherwise experience the effects of domestic abuse.

We aim to develop staff knowledge of recognising the signs and symptoms of domestic abuse. These signs may include:

- Changes in behaviour, for example becoming very quiet, anxious, frightened, tearful, aggressive, distracted, or depressed
- Visible bruising or single or repeated injury with unlikely explanations
- Change in the manner of dress, for example, clothes that do suit the climate which may be used to hide injuries
- Partner or ex-partner stalking employee/parent in or around the workplace. This may include excessive phone calls or messages
- Partner or ex-partner exerting an unusual amount of control or demands over work schedule
- Frequent lateness or absence from work
- Regressive behaviour
- Constant or regular sickness
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Withdrawn and low self-esteem

We will raise awareness of domestic abuse within or setting by:

- Sharing information with external organisations that can offer support with incidents of domestic abuse. The information will be displayed in visible spaces within the setting

- Providing all staff with the telephone number for the free 24-hour domestic violence helpline 0808 2000247
- Sharing our safeguarding policy with all trustees.

The domestic violence crime and victims act 2004 extended provisions to help stop domestic abuse. It created new offences “causing or allowing death of a child or vulnerable adult”. This act was amended in 2012 (domestic violence amendment act 2012) to include ‘causing or allowing serious physical harm (equivalent to grievous bodily harm) to a child or vulnerable adult’.

If we are concerned that domestic abuse is happening within a home and, a child is at risk, we will follow our safeguarding reporting procedure.

Where incidents of domestic violence are shared by an employee or parent/carer, we will always respect confidentiality and not share information without permission. However, we will share this information without permission, in cases of child protection or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved,

Honour based violence (HBV) can be described as ‘a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour’; such as being held against their will, sexual or psychological abuse, threats of violence, assault or forced marriage.

Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual violence. There is no honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

We aim to develop staff knowledge of recognising the signs and symptoms of HBV. These signs may include:

- Changes in how they dress or act, they may stop wearing ‘western’ clothing or make-up
- Visible injuries, or repeated injury, with unlikely explanations.
- Signs of depression, anxiety or self-harm
- Frequent absences
- Restrictions on friends or attending events.

We will raise awareness of domestic abuse within our setting by:

- Sharing information with external organisations that can offer support with incidents of HBV. The information will be displayed in visible spaces within the setting
- Sharing our HBV, child protection and safeguarding policies with all stakeholders.

Where incidents of HBV are shared by an employee or parent/carer, we will always respect confidentiality and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information without permission in

cases of child protection, or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is defined as 'a marriage in which one, or both spouses, do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. In the cases of some vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced'.

If we suspect or receive information about a forced marriage being planned, then we will follow our safeguarding reporting procedures. If the person concerned is under the age of 18 years, then we will report the incident to the children's social care team.

If we believe a person is in imminent danger of being forced into a marriage, we may contact the Police and the Government's Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) on 020 7008 0151.

Reporting Procedures

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding and child protection concerns and suspicions of abuse. These concerns will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible.

- Staff will report their concerns to the DSL Michelle Osman and in the absence of the DSL they will be reported to the Deputy DSL Amy Craig or Mr Western (DSL for Perins)
- Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded and stored securely
- If appropriate, any concerns/ or incidents will be discussed with the parent/carer, and discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to these records on request in line with GDPR and data protection guidelines
- For children who arrive at nursery with an existing injury, a form will be completed along with the parent's/ carer's explanation as to how the injury happened. Staff will have professional curiosity around any explanations given, any concerns around existing injury's will be reported.
- If there are queries/concerns regarding the injury/information given, then the following procedures will take place:

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- Contact the Local Authority children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice immediately, or as soon as it is practical to do so. If it is believed a child is in immediate danger, we will contact the police. If the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children, then the DSL will follow the reporting allegations procedure (see below).
- Record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised
- Speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by LA children's social care team)

- The designated safeguarding lead will follow up with the Local Authority children's social care team if they have not contacted the setting within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018). We will never assume that action has been taken.

Keeping children safe is our highest priority and if, for whatever reason, staff do not feel able to report concerns to the DSL or deputy DSL they should call the Local Authority children's social care team, the Police or the NSPCC and report their concerns anonymously.

These contact numbers are displayed **on notice in the settings**.

Responding to a spontaneous disclosure from a child

If a child starts to talk openly to a member of staff about abuse, they may be experiencing then staff will:

- Give full attention to the child or young person
- Keep body language open and encouraging
- Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown such courage today'
- Take time and slow down: we will respect pauses and will not interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace
- Recognise and respond to their body language
- Show understanding and reflect back
- Make it clear you are interested in what the child is telling you
- Reflect what they have said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault
- Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the child's disclosure. This could make things a lot worse for the child.

(Information taken from NSPCC)

Any disclosure will be reported to the nursery manager or DSL and will be referred to the local authority children's social care team immediately, following our reporting procedures.

Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the nursery manager or designated safeguarding lead (DSL). This record should include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure, location
- Exact words spoken by the child (word for word) and non-verbal communication

- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of any incident including any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the DSL, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse, it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly, and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately. It is not the nursery's role to investigate, it is the role of statutory services to complete this.

Staff involved in a safeguarding case may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have about a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with the local authority children's social care, police, and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent, child, or member of staff.

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the local authority children's social care team/police does not allow this to happen. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the local authority. All staff, students and volunteers are bound by confidentiality and any information will not be discussed out of work, or this will become a disciplinary matter.

The Nursery has due regard to the data protection principles as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)¹. These do not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal information, even without consent if this would put the child at further risk. We will follow the principles around data collection and information sharing, and ensure any information is recorded and shared in an appropriate way.

Support to families

The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, students, and volunteers within the nursery.

The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child.

Record Keeping

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate and in line with guidance of the local authority with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

The Nursery keeps appropriate records to support the early identification of children and families that would benefit from support. Factual records are maintained in a chronological order with parental discussions. Records are reviewed regularly by the DSL to look holistically at identifying children's needs.

Allegations against adults working or volunteering with children

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who lives or works on the nursery premises regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below.

The allegation should be reported to the senior manager on duty. If this person is the subject of the allegation, then this should be reported to the Deputy Manager and Line Manager

At Patchwork we will follow our own local safeguarding partnership website information about how to report an allegation and we would also inform Ofsted immediately for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly. This includes:

- If as an individual you feel this will not be taken seriously or are worried about the allegation getting back to the person in question then it is your duty to inform the local authority children's social care team yourself directly
- The local authority children's social care team will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (local authority children's social care team, Ofsted) to determine how this will be handled
- The nursery will follow all instructions from the local authority children's social care team and Ofsted and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with local authority children's social care team support and advice
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation, Legal advice will be sought to ensure compliance with the law.
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities

- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police will also be informed.
- Founded allegations will be dealt with as gross misconduct in accordance with our disciplinary procedures and may result in the termination of employment, Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision along with notifying the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated.
- All safeguarding records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
- The nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated
- A return-to-work plan will be put in place for any member of staff returning to work after an allegation has been deemed unfounded. Individual support will be offered to meet the needs of the individual staff member and the nature of the incident; this may include more frequent supervisions, coaching and mentoring and external support.

Monitoring children's attendance

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern.

Parents must inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all incidents of sickness absence should be reported to the nursery the same day so the nursery management are able to account for a child's absence.

This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children, by keeping us informed parents can help us to meet our statutory requirements and let us know that children are safe.

If a child has not arrived at nursery by 10 am or within one hour of their normal start time the parents will be called to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the emergency contacts numbers listed will be used to ensure all parties are safe. Staff will work their way down the emergency contact list until contact is established and we are made aware that all is well with the child and family. It is a parent's responsibility to keep their emergency contact details updated. If contact cannot be established, then we will assess if a home visit is required to establish all parties are safe.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safe and well.

Looked after children

As part of our safeguarding practice, we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this, we ask that we are informed of:

- The legal status of the child (e.g. whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order)
- Contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those with parental responsibility)
- The child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her
- The details of the child's social worker and any other support agencies involved
- Any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question.

Please refer to the Looked After Children policy for further details.

Staffing and volunteering

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We follow safer recruitment practices including obtaining references and all staff employed to work with children will have enhanced criminal record checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before being able to carry out intimate care routines or be left unsupervised with children.

We will obtain enhanced criminal records checks (DBS) for volunteers in the setting. Volunteers and visitors will never have unsupervised access to children.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery. During induction staff will be given contact details for the local authority children's social care team's, the local safeguarding children partnership and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

Ongoing suitability of staff is monitored through:

- regular supervisions
- peer observations
- regular review of DBS using the online update service

Designated Safeguarding Lead

We have named persons within the nursery who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinate child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), there is always at least one designated person on duty during the opening hours of the setting. The designated persons will receive comprehensive training at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year.

The nursery DSL's liaise with the local authority children's social care team, undertakes specific training, including a child protection training course, and receives regular updates to developments within this field. They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge of the staff team with regular safeguarding updates.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the nursery is: **Michelle Osman**

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- Ensure that the settings safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed and developed in line with current guidance; and develop staff understanding of the settings safeguarding policies
- Take the lead on responding to information from the staff team relating to child protection concerns
- Provide advice, support, and guidance on an on-going basis to staff, students, and volunteers.
- To identify children who may need early help or who are at risk of abuse
- To help staff to ensure the right support is provided to families
- To liaise with the local authority and other agencies about child protection concerns
- Ensure the setting is meeting the requirements of the EYFS Safeguarding and welfare requirements
- To ensure policies are in line with the local safeguarding procedures and details
- Disseminate updates to legislation to ensure all staff are kept up to date with safeguarding practices
- To manage and monitor accidents, incidents and existing injuries; ensuring accurate and appropriate records are kept
- Attend meetings with the child's key person
- Attend case conferences and external safeguarding meetings, as requested, by external agencies.

The Nursery safeguards children and staff by;

- Providing adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all children
- Informing applicants for posts within the nursery that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information
- Giving staff members, volunteers and students regular opportunities during supervisions and having an open-door policy and regular opportunities to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life which may affect their suitability to work with children
- Abiding by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and suitability checks for staff, students, and volunteers, to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers working in the setting are suitable to do so
- Ensuring we receive at least two written references BEFORE a new member of staff commences employment with us
- Ensuring all students will have enhanced DBS checks completed before their placement starts
- Volunteers, including students, do not carry out any intimate care routines and are never left to work unsupervised with children
- Abiding by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018) in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS)

- Having procedures for recording the details of visitors to the nursery and take security steps to ensure that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- Ensuring all visitors/contractors are supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
- Staying vigilant to safeguard the whole nursery environment and be aware of potential dangers on the nursery boundaries such as drones or strangers lingering. We will ensure the children always remain safe
- Having a Staff Behaviour Policy sits alongside this policy to enable us to monitor changes in behaviours that may cause concern. All staff sign up to this policy too to ensure any changes are reported to management, so we are able to support the individual staff member and ensure the safety and care of the children is not compromised
- Ensuring that staff are aware not to contact parents/carers and children through social media on their own personal social media accounts and they will report any such incidents to the management team to deal with
- Ensuring that all staff have access to, and comply with, the whistleblowing policy which provides information on how they can share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner. We encourage a culture of openness and transparency, and all concerns are taken seriously
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the signs to look for of inappropriate staff behaviour, this may include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images. This is not an exhaustive list, any changes in behaviour must be reported and acted upon immediately
- Ensuring all staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training, safeguarding concerns and any needs for further support or training
- Having peer on peer and manager observations in the setting to ensure that the care we provide for children is at the highest level and any areas for staff development are quickly identified. Peer observations allow us to share constructive feedback, develop practice and build trust so that staff are able to share any concerns they may have. Concerns are raised with the designated lead and dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner
- Ensuring the deployment of staff within the nursery allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

We also operate a Phones and Other Electronic Devices and Social Media policy which states how we will keep children safe from these devices whilst at nursery. This also links to our Online Safety policy.

Our nursery has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the DSL.

Early help services

When a child and/or family would benefit from support but do not meet the threshold for Local Authority Social Care Team, a discussion will take place with the family around early help services.

Early help provides support as soon as a concern/area of need emerges, helping to improve outcomes and prevent escalation onto local authority services. Sometimes concerns about a child may not be of a safeguarding nature and relate more to their individual family circumstances. The nursery will work in partnership with parents/carers to identify any early help services that would benefit your child or your individual circumstances, with your consent, this may include family support, foodbank support, counselling or parenting services.

Conflict resolution and Escalation

Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard children. Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationship between agencies.

Professional disputes are reduced by clarity about roles and responsibilities and airing and sharing problems. Effective working together depends on resolving disagreements to the satisfaction of workers and agencies, and a belief in a genuine partnership. Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion. Disagreements could arise in a number of areas but are most likely to arise around thresholds and roles and responsibilities. Some examples may include:

- Where one professional disagrees with the action of another around a particular course of action.
- Where one agency considers that the plan is inappropriate and that a child's need is not being met by the current plan.
- Where a member of staff or an agency considers that the child's safeguarding needs are better met by a Child Protection Plan and have requested that a Child Protection Conference be called and feel that this has been refused.

It is important to:

- Avoid professional disputes that put children at risk, obscure the focus on the child or delay decision making
- Resolve difficulties (within and) between agencies quickly and openly
- Identify problem areas in working together where there is a lack of clarity and to promote resolution via amendment to protocols and procedures.

Escalation Policy

The process of resolution should be as simple as possible. The aim should be to resolve difficulties at practitioner level between agencies. Attempts at problem resolution may leave one worker/agency believing that the child/ren remain(s) at risk of significant harm. This worker/agency has the responsibility for communicating such concerns through agreed channels.

The following stages are likely to be involved:

- Recognition that there is a disagreement over a significant issue, which impact on the safety and welfare of the child
- Identification of the problem and clarity about the disagreement and what the aim is.

These two stages could involve consulting a colleague to clarify thinking.

Initial attempts should be made to resolve the problem. This should normally be between the people who disagree unless the child is at immediate risk. It should be recognised that differences in status and /or experience might affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this unsupported.

All parties should keep a clear record at all stages. This must include written confirmation between the parties about an agreed outcome of the disagreement and how any outstanding issues will be pursued. All records should be retained on the child's case file.

At each stage, it is important that the person who originally raised the concern is given feedback on what action had been taken in response. It is the responsibility of the person to whom the issue is referred to ensure that clear and timely feedback is provided.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 and 2004 amended 2018)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Protection of Children Act (2018)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Protocol for the management of actual or suspected bruising in infants who are not independently mobile (2016)
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021
- Working together to safeguard children (2018)
- Keeping children safe in education (2021)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)
- Counter – Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years education, and skills setting 2021

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
 - Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
 - Equalities Act (2010)
 - Data Protection Act (1998) Non-Statutory Guidance
 - Neglect Strategy 2016/2018
 - FGM Strategy 2016
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This policy was adopted by

Patchwork Day Nursery and Pre-school

On

2nd November 2022

Date to be reviewed

2nd May 2023

Signed on behalf of the provider

Michelle Osman

Name of signatory

Michelle Osman

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Nursery Manager