



9. Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy

This policy links to the following Legislation & Key Guidance

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021
 - Children Act 1989 & 2004 and the Childcare Act 2006
 - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2022
 - Prevent Duty 2015
 - Children & Families Act 2014
 - E-Safety Checklist
 - Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners July 2018
 - GDPR May 2018
 - Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - The Human Rights Act 2000
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - FGM Act 2003
 - Serious Crime Act 2015
 - Inspecting Safeguarding in the Early Years (May 2019)
 - Early Help Practice Guidance (March 2020)
- Working Together (Gloucestershire’s multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children) April 2019

Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning & Development
Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.	Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships	Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.	Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years’ provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

9: CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING

9.1: Children's Rights and Entitlements

Policy Statement

Primrose Hill Nursery believes that all children attending the nursery have a right to be:

- Listened to and be heard
- Strong, resilient and develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background
- Treated as individuals
- Respected for their individuality and identity
- Encouraged and praised
- Involved in decisions whenever it is appropriate
- Helped to establish and sustain satisfying relationships with their families, peers and other adults
- Helped to develop an understanding of why and how to keep themselves safe through activities, stories and visitors

All of the above statements are promoted daily in nursery through play-based activities which promote children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development. This is a prime area of development in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

9.2: The Protection of the Child

Policy Statement

All staff (including students and volunteers) have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we provide, our practitioners will often be the first people who sense that there is a problem and they may well be the first people in whom children confide about abuse. Nursery practitioners are aware that abuse does occur in our society. This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

9.3 Management of Staff & Child Protection

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection in the nursery is: **Katherine Brown**

The Deputy Safeguarding Officer is: **Laura Hopson**

The Committee Safeguarding Lead is: **Amanda Mason**

It is the duty of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that: -

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Safeguarding Lead will always be in the nursery. There may be rare occasions when this may not be possible and, in this instance, staff will be able to contact the DSL or Deputy via telephone.
- All practitioners attend the appropriate training and that it is kept up to date. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and his/her deputy must attend the GSCP Multi Agency Training every two years as a minimum. For new DSL's the training is one day (Multi Agency Child Protection Training) and the refresher course is ½ day (Revision & Update Training). This training is provided through GSCP. The DSL and Deputy also attend GSCP Local Forums and are signed up to receive safeguarding alerts from GSCP throughout the year. All other staff are required to attend Single Agency Training, and this is renewed every three years minimum, and they are also required to sign up for safeguarding alerts from GSCP throughout the year. This ensures that: -
 - a. All nursery practitioners are familiar with their own responsibilities, and they can act swiftly upon any suspicions or concerns they may have about any child/parent or member of staff at the nursery. The nursery has regard to and works in accordance with *Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)*, *Keeping Children Safe In Education (2022)*, *the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)* and *the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership* and as such will seek advice on all steps taken subsequently. *The procedures to be followed in accordance with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership are contained in the booklet Safeguarding Children Handbook, to which the **online** version found at [dsl-handbook-version-jan-17.pdf \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/dsl-handbook-version-jan-17.pdf) should **ALWAYS** be referred to for the most up to date information.*
 - b. All nursery practitioners understand the different forms of abuse and are alert to the signs.
- All staff have read and understood this policy plus the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People and the E-Safety Guidance. (These are read and signed annually and as and when new staff are appointed).
- The Annual Safeguarding Audit from the GSCP is completed, an action plan is completed when necessary and the policy is updated accordingly.
- All practitioners (including regular helpers) have enhanced CRB/DBS clearance. *Children will never be left in the care of any person who has not had an enhanced CRB/DBS check*
- An officer of the committee is elected to be the Designated Person who will work with the DSL to ensure that all safeguarding issues are addressed in the correct manner and that all processes and procedures are kept up to date

Primrose Hill Nursery also ensures that:

- Correct ratios are always maintained
- No child is left alone with a staff member or volunteer in a 1:1 situation without being within sight and/or hearing of others. The open layout of the room allows for this.

9.4 Signs and Symptoms of Abuse and Procedures

Policy Statement

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Staff in nursery recognise that child abuse can and does happen in all types of families. The different social and cultural backgrounds of the children do not constitute barriers to child abuse and in most cases, children are abused by individuals known to them, rather than strangers. Child abuse can take many formats, but all instances can be broadly categorised under one of four headings; neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

The following identifies some possible manifestations of child abuse; however, these lists are not exhaustive.

NEGLECT:

This is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and psychological needs, which may result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Examples are: poor hygiene, untreated medical problems, emaciation or under nourishment. Staff may notice behavioural signs such as a child who always seems to be hungry, is constantly tired or talks of being left alone.

Procedure:

1. The concern should be discussed with the parent/carer.
2. Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent/carer will have access to such records.
3. If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances, then Gloucestershire MASH on 01452 426565 (option 3) will be contacted for further advice.

PHYSICAL ABUSE:

This may involve unexplained bruising in unlikely areas, facial bruising, hand/finger marks, bite marks, burns, lacerations or abrasions. Staff may notice certain behavioural signs that also indicate physical abuse such as a child that shy's away from physical contact, is withdrawn or aggressive towards others or their behaviour suddenly changes.

Procedure:

1. All signs of mark/injuries to a child when they come into nursery will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member
2. The incident will be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest opportunity
3. Such discussions will be recorded, and a signature obtained from the parent/carer who will have access to such records
4. If there appears to be any queries regarding the injury, then Gloucestershire MASH on 01452 426565 (option 3) will be contacted immediately.

SEXUAL ABUSE:

Physical signs may include bruising consistent with being held firmly, discomfort in walking/sitting, pain or itching in the genital area, discharge or blood on the under clothes, or loss of appetite. Behavioural signs may include drawings or play showing indicators of sexual activity, sexually explicit language, and knowledge of adult sexual behavior, seductive behaviour towards others, poor self-esteem and a child who is withdrawn.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

You suspect that a child may become subject to female genital mutilation (FGM) i.e. talking about a journey/becoming a woman plus a planned extended holiday abroad. Staff must report this BEFORE the child leaves the UK.

Procedure:

1. The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report.
2. The observed instances will be reported to the DSL/Nursery Manager.
3. The matter will be referred to Gloucestershire MASH (01452 426565) immediately.
4. The Nursery has a mandatory duty to report any instance of FGM on an individual under 18 years old, whether informed by a child or having observed signs it has been carried out, to the Police immediately.

Breast Ironing

Breast Ironing also known as "Breast Flattening" is the process whereby young pubescent 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 and therefore be kept in education. Much like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Breast Ironing is a harmful cultural practice and is child abuse, therefore safeguarding procedures should be followed as for FGM above.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Physical signs of emotional abuse may include a general failure to thrive, not meeting expected developmental milestones and behaviourally a child may be attention seeking, tell lies, have an inability to have fun, low self-esteem, speech disorders, and be inappropriately affectionate towards others.

Procedure

1. The concerns should be discussed with the parent/carer by the DSL/Nursery Manager
2. Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent/carer will have access to such records
3. If there appears to be any queries regarding the circumstances, then Gloucestershire MASH (01452 426565) will be contacted.

Notes:

When identifying any potential instances of abuse, staff must at all times be aware that children may demonstrate individual, or combinations of the indicators detailed but may not be the subject of abuse. Individual or isolated incidents do not necessarily indicate abuse. However, staff should always remain vigilant and must not ignore warning signs and contact Gloucestershire MASH (01452 426565) at any stage for support.

Staff must raise any concerns initially with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will discuss these concerns with the Manager/Registered Person on a 'need to know' basis and the appropriate action will be taken. Staff responsibilities do not include investigating the suspected abuse and all related information must be kept in a locked cabinet. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst investigations by the appropriate authorities are being carried out in the best interest of the child.

If neglect or abuse are suspected, then the procedures will be followed, and outside help sought as required in accordance with the local Safeguarding Children Partnership. Wherever possible all parties should be kept informed of what is happening and told of actions to be taken, this includes keeping parents informed of all actions except in the case of suspected sexual abuse or where doing so would put the child at risk.

Staff understand that they must not make comment either publicly or in private about a parent's supposed or actual behaviour and strict confidentiality will be observed at all times.

Other possible incidences that need to be reported to the DSL include when:

- ❖ A child is accidentally hurt
- ❖ You are worried that a child is becoming too attached to you
- ❖ You think a child may have misunderstood or misinterpreted something you have done
- ❖ You have been required to physically restrain a child to prevent them from harming themselves or another or from causing significant damage to property (record on an incident form and staff member and parent to sign)
- ❖ You see any suspicious marks on a child
- ❖ You hear of any allegations made by a child/parent/service user of events outside Primrose Hill Nursery
- ❖ You have suspicions that a child or members of their family may be at risk of being drawn into radicalization and/or terrorism (*See 9.6 Prevent Duty*).

Bullying/Peer on Peer Abuse

This could involve children on children or adults on adults.

See 4. Equal Opportunities Policy - 4.3 Bullying/Peer on Peer Abuse.

9.5 Recording Suspicions of Abuse, Disclosures and Reporting

If a child says something or acts in a way that abuse is suspected (disclosure) the person receiving the information is required to: -

- React in a calm and considered way but show concern
- Tell the child that it is right for them to share this information and that they are not responsible for what has happened
- Take what the child says seriously
- Only ask questions to determine whether there is a concern but not to interrogate the child
- Listen to the child and do not interrupt if the child is recounting significant events
- Offer reassurance that the problem will be dealt with
- Do not promise to keep the information confidential (secret), explain that you will have to tell those people that need to know this information
- Make a detailed record of what is said and done as soon as possible and before leaving work. This record should include: -
 - ❖ The child's name, address, age, and date of birth
 - ❖ Date and time of the observation or disclosure

- ❖ A verbatim record of what the child said/injuries or marks seen (*Please note that you are not allowed to remove a child's clothing to inspect injuries*)/what has been observed. *You should be aware that this may be used later in a criminal trial and therefore needs to be accurate.*
- ❖ The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time and the names of any other person present at the time. This is usually the DSL however, if the concerns relate to the DSL then the concern must be referred to the Deputy DSL or the nursery safeguarding champion.
- ❖ Any discussion held with the parent/carer.
- ❖ When making a referral the referrer should confirm the details of the concern in writing, within 48 hours, following the procedure set out in the GSCP Handbook on the GSCP website [Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership \(GSCP\) - Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#).
- ❖ These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file and are only shared with those who need to know. The file is kept in a locked cabinet which is only accessible to the DSL and Deputy DSL.

IT IS THE REMIT OF THE GSCP (AND/OR THE POLICE) AND NOT ANYONE CONNECTED WITH PRIMROSE HILL NURSERY TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE AS DETAILED IN SECTION 47 OF THE CHILDRENS ACT 1989.

The nursery will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being carried out in relation to an alleged abuse.

All records for children with a Child Protection Plan/Safeguarding concerns will be kept separately from their general records in date order with a chronology form on the front. The nursery will follow the advice and guidance set by a case conference or strategy discussion for the child. The files will be cross referenced to the child's general records.

The records kept on the child will be shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the confidentiality policy and under the guidance of the GSCP.

The nursery ensures that all records of any child with a Child Protection Plan/safeguarding concerns are passed on to the child's next setting/school.

Resolution of Professional Differences (Escalation Policy – July 2018)

If an occasion should arise whereby workers within one agency feel that the decision made by a worker from another agency on a child protection or child in need case is not a safe decision, then the process laid out in the GSCP policy for Resolution of Professional Disagreements in work relating to the Safety of Children (Escalation Policy) should be followed (see *Operational Plan and Safeguarding File in setting*).

9.6 Prevent Duty (2015)

Staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs that indicate the risk that a child or their family may be susceptible to being drawn into radicalization and terrorism and understand the need to report any suspicions promptly to the DSL, who will contact the appropriate authorities (GSCP, police, etc.). Staff will undergo training as part of their Child Protection training and more specific courses as appropriate and available.

Nursery will, through its ethos and activities, promote the fundamental **British Values**, defined by the Government as:

- Democracy – making decisions together, sharing, taking turns and working together.
- Rule of Law – understanding the importance of rules and learning right from wrong.
- Individual liberty and mutual respect – developing confidence and self-esteem, taking risks, talking about opinions and feelings.
- Tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs – treating others as you would want to be treated, value all, challenge stereotypes and provide an awareness of other cultures and beliefs in a positive way.

9.7 Low level concerns and allegations of serious harm or abuse made against staff or volunteers.

Primrose Hill Nursery ensures that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or action of staff/volunteers within the nursery through our policies and information posted on the noticeboard. Concerns may come from a parent, child, colleague or member of the public. Allegations or concerns must be referred to the DSL without delay - even if the person making the allegation later withdraws it.

What is a low-level concern?

The NSPCC defines a low-level concern as *'any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:*

- *is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work*
- *doesn't meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough...to refer to the local authority.*

Low-level concerns are part of a spectrum of behaviour. This includes:

- *inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour*
- *behaviour that might be considered inappropriate depending on the circumstances*
- *behaviour which is intended to enable abuse*

Examples of such behaviour could include:

- *being over friendly with children*
- *having favourites*
- *adults taking photographs of children on their mobile phone*
- *engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door*
- *using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language'*

(NSPCC [Responding to low-level concerns about adults working in education](#))

Responding to low-level concerns

Any low-level concerns about the conduct of staff, students or volunteers must be shared with the DSL and recorded. The DSL should be informed of all low-level concerns and make the final decision on how to respond. Where appropriate this can be done in consultation with the Appointed Safeguarding Lead for the Committee.

Reporting low-level concerns about the conduct of a colleague, student or volunteer contributes towards a safeguarding culture of openness and trust. It helps ensure that adults consistently model the setting's values and helps keep children safe. It protects adults working in the setting from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

If it is not clear that a low-level concern meets the local authority threshold, the DSL should contact the LADO for clarification.

In most instances, low-level concerns about staff conduct can be addressed through supervision, training, or disciplinary processes where an internal investigation may take place.

Identifying

An allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or agency staff constitutes serious harm or abuse if they:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they 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

Informing

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff the DSL will immediately inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). It is important to take the name of the person spoken to and they will advise on the next steps to be taken. The DSL will also ensure that the Appointed Safeguarding Lead for the Committee is informed and told of the action to be taken following advice from the GSCP. The local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be responsible for convening a strategy meeting and to offer advice and support. Ofsted and the Disclosure and Barring Service will also need to be informed and the case will be investigated. It is not the responsibility of the DSL to oversee the Allegations Management Process – this is the remit of the GSCP.

- Staff will cooperate with the investigating authority
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff on full pay during an investigation
- All investigation/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file. Records on the alleged perpetrator will be kept until they reach normal retirement age or for 10 years if that period is longer. This includes records of people no longer associated with the nursery.
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated
- All allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisation (GSCP) and, if substantiated, will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of the allegation. The nursery will also be required to notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated.
- Counselling will be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by the allegation, their colleagues in the nursery and the parents
- If an allegation of abuse is made about the nursery Manager/Registered Person, the person making the complaint is likely to contact Ofsted, GSCP or the police directly.
- All allegations are investigated even if the person involved resigns or ceases to be a volunteer.

If the incident witnessed is deemed not to be abuse but is serious poor practice. The manager must be

informed. If the matter is not resolved immediately or the incident is more serious the Chairperson of the Committee and the Early Years Locality Lead must be informed. At this stage the complaints and disciplinary procedure will be put into practice and all action and information must be recorded.

All documents relating to the allegation will be returned to the DSL and will be kept with the employee's personal file when the case has been concluded. If the allegation was found to be malicious or without foundation no record will be kept in the employee's file unless the employee requests it.

Escalating concerns

- If a member of staff believes at any time that children may be in danger due to the actions or otherwise of a member of staff or volunteer, they must discuss their concerns immediately with the DSL.
- If after discussions with the DSL, they still believe that appropriate action to protect children has not been taken they must speak to the Appointed Safeguarding Lead for the Committee.
- If there are still concerns then the whistle blowing procedure must be followed, as set out in *10. Confidentiality – 10.4 Whistle Blowing*

9.8 Children in Care (CiC)

Policy Statement

All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable 'children in care' in their setting to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of 'Children in Care' (CiC) – "A **child** who is being **looked after** by the local authority is known as a **child** in care. They might be living with foster parents, at home with their parents under the supervision of social services, in residential **children's** homes." (NSPCC).

The Nursery recognises that children who are "in care" may have experienced traumatic situations, abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that there are a range of reasons that children may be taken into the care of the local authority and not all will have experienced abuse. We recognise that whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family disrupts their lives and has an impact on their emotional well-being.

For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with a new environment and new expectations.

Procedures

- The designated person for children in care is the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The designated person with the manager will ensure that a Key Person is assigned to the child
- The designated person and the Key Person will liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and the family to ensure appropriate information is gained and shared
- The Nursery recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate

parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes with regard to the birth parents' or foster carer's role in relation to the Nursery without prior discussion and agreement with the child's support worker

- If a care plan is in place, then this will be discussed prior to the child starting and reviewed regularly during the child's time at the Nursery
- The sharing of information will be discussed by all the professionals involved with the child and the parents, foster carer so that confidentiality can be followed

9.9 Early Help

We recognise that every family is unique with its own combination of strengths and weaknesses. Any family can get overwhelmed by what seems like endless challenge when it comes to juggling money, school and each other's needs. And sometimes families are disrupted by an upheaval such as a mental or physical illness, a job loss, or an addiction. Even "joyful" events such as a wedding or a new job can bring unexpected problems. Every family is different; each needs options from which to choose to find an early solution to challenges as they arise.

This solution could be as simple, for example, as talking with a worker in; a Children's Centre; School; with a voluntary worker; a faith worker; a GP; a health visitor or using a self-help checklist. The Early Help Offer (the Offer) is an approach not a service. It respects every family's right to access information to help manage their own lives successfully, whilst guiding them to seek support from appropriate sources. Help can then be agreed as soon as concerns start to emerge. The 'Offer' is for all children, as issues may arise at any point in a child or young person's life. It includes both universal and targeted /specialist services, to reduce or prevent concerns from growing or becoming entrenched, possibly leading to an escalation of safeguarding issues. See Useful telephone numbers below.

The "Gloucestershire Family Information Service" provides easy to access information to help families meet their needs and it is also used by professionals when supporting families.

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

Paul McLain, Cabinet lead for Children & Young People and Strategic Commissioning said:

'the Early Help Offer is about working with partners to help children, young people and families deal with their issues as early as possible; providing information, advice and services at the right time; supporting them to resolve their concerns as needs emerge.'

9.10 Operation Encompass

As part of Primrose Hill Nursery's commitment to keeping children safe we have signed up to implement the principles and aims of the **Gloucestershire Encompass Model**.

In signing up to Gloucestershire Encompass the Management Committee and Senior Leadership Team:

- Endorse the Gloucestershire Encompass Model and support the Key Adults in our school to fulfil the requirements of the Gloucestershire Encompass Protocol.
- Promote and implement Gloucestershire Encompass processes and use these in accordance with internal safeguarding children processes.

- Recognise the sensitive nature of the information provided and ensure that this is retained in accordance with the principles of data protection.

If you wish to know more about this commitment, please click on the link below.

[what-is-op-encompass-ey.pdf \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](#)

Useful telephone Numbers

Ofsted Complaints, Investigation and Enforcement Team – 0300 1231231

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Team (MASH) (8am – 5pm) – 01452 426565 (formerly known as GSCP Front Door)

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 01452 426994

Emergency Duty Team (5pm – 8am) – 01452 614758

Early Help – Families First Plus – Forest Locality – 01452 328048

Email: forestofdeanearlyhelp@gloucestershire.gov.uk