



Lechlade Little Learners
PRESCHOOL

Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Access to a copy of this policy is available to all parents/carers in our policy document folder held in the setting.

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures.

Staff and volunteers

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (members of staff) who co-ordinate child protection issues are: Hazel Adamson and Jo Hooper. One or the other is available during opening hours at our setting.
- Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is Rebecca Musson.
- The designated persons and the designated officer ensure they have relevant links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.
- The designated persons understand LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) safeguarding procedures, attends relevant LSCB training at least every two years and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding at least annually.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility.

- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues and receive updates at least once a year to ensure they remain alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children's social care team or the NSPCC.
- All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2018) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All staff understand Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm.
- All staff understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations and the circumstances under which they may share information about children and parents with other agencies.
- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority or our setting has not acted adequately to safeguard.
- All staff understand what we expect of them in terms of their required behaviour, following our policies on positive behaviour, online safety and whistleblowing.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries or concerns they may have in an age appropriate way.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Staff monitor children's attendance and report concerns to the DSL who will investigate further.
- Safer recruitment practice is followed. (*see staffing policy*)
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the disclosure and barring service reference number;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - Details of who obtained it.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us) and sign a form at Staff Development Interviews.
- From 31 August 2018, staff and volunteers in childcare settings that are not based on domestic premises are not required to notify their line manager if anyone in their household (including

family members, lodgers, partners etc.) has any relevant convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision or have had orders made in relation to care of their children via Childcare Disqualification and Childcare Regulations 2018, and Disqualification under the Childcare Act guidance effective from 31 August 2018.

- We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service 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.
- Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
- Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form allowing staff to photograph children on Little Learner's camera and permission is requested for special events.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO.
- The designated person in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate online safety policy in place.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
- The designated persons will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to children's social care, or where appropriate, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), Ofsted or RIDDOR.

Visitors

We welcome visitors to Lechlade little learners. Some will be prospective parents and children wishing to have a look round and others may be from outside agencies eg. Health visitor, speech therapist, inspectors. We also have other professionals, parents, committee members and

students who come to help on rota or carry out maintenance/practical tasks. Security and safety of the children and staff is paramount.

When a visitor arrives at the setting the following will take place:

- They will be welcomed and asked the purpose of their visit if they have not booked an appointment and the purpose is not known. Where appropriate the visitor may be asked for identification.
- They are signed into the visitor book where their name, date, time, company and reason for visit are recorded.
- Visitors are told that they are not to go into the children's washroom/toilet area (unless accompanying their own child).
- Visitors will be asked to not use mobile phones on site unless prior agreement is made and any recording equipment is disabled.
- Visitors will be escorted around the building by a staff member.
- Visitors will be given instructions on how to evacuate the building in an emergency and given a Visitor summary leaflet.
- When the visit is over they will be signed.
- It is the responsibility of all visitors to adhere by our health and safety guidelines as set out in our Health and Safety General policy when on the premises.

Types of abuse and neglect

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: 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 because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Domestic abuse: is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It is important to remember domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- Both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, radicalisation, sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, being subjected to radicalisation or extremist behaviour or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;
 - periods of absence from the setting;
 - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of disabled children; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; and Female Genital Mutilation; that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- We are also aware that some children may be subjected to radicalisation and extremist behaviour and we have a duty (Prevent Duty) to protect them from this.

- We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers, including early years educators, and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
- We refer concerns to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board.
- In cases of concern about radicalisation or extremist behaviour we contact the Prevent Duty Police Officer at the police control room -101, as well as the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child;

- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; 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.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated person', Jo Hooper or Hazel Adamson, is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity and within one working day.
- We refer concerns to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board Children's Helpdesk on 01452 426565 and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board.

Making a referral to the Gloucestershire local authority social care team

- The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board Children's and Families Helpdesk can be contacted on 01452 426565. To log a child welfare concern phone 01452 583636 Safeguarding Children Service.
- All members of staff are familiar with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board procedure and a copy is kept in the kitchen. Further information can be obtained from www.gscb.org.uk/handbook.

Escalation process

- If we feel a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCB escalation process.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger or that it might interfere with the course of a police investigation.
- We inform parents where we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding

Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.

- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the social worker will inform parents.
- If there is a possibility that advising the parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk (or interfere with a police response) the designated person should seek advice from children's social care, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record the follow the advice given.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for Lechlade Little Learners and children's social care to work well together.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- **Local contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are 01793 431501 (Swindon) and nationally contact details for the NSPCC are 0808 800500**

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by Lechlade Little Learners, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or any other person working with the children, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments;
 - Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
 - Showing signs of extremism and radicalisation practices.

- We follow the guidance of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting has abused a child. More information can be found via their website their website www.gscb.org.uk.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board social care department to investigate. And to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate: Nigel Hatten 01452 426994
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this within 14 days of the allegation being made.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chair will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Training

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. The Designated Child Protection Officer and all other staff are trained every 2/3 years.
- All staff received an annual update.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision with doors left open so staff can hear or see the children with at least one member of staff outside and one inside during free-flow play.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within Lechlade Little Learners a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We actively promote the British values of democracy and the rule of law, and also encourage an ethos of mutual respect for, and tolerance of each other's beliefs and ideas through our delivery of Personal, Social and Emotional development and Understanding of the World in the EYFS curriculum.
- We appreciate that children and young people will fall out from time to time, however we will act upon any evidence of malicious behaviour or bullying.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.

- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Further Guidance

- Working together to safeguard children 2018.
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused. (HMG, 2015)
- Gloucestershire safeguarding children board handbook.
- Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers – June 2015
- Working together – Gloucestershire's multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children 2019

This policy was reviewed November 2021.

Signed on behalf of the committee by

This policy is to be reviewed annually unless legislation requires before.