

6. Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures



Statement of intent

Yaddlethorpe Pre-school is committed to ensuring all children are safeguarded, and take all complaints, allegations or suspicions seriously, including allegations made against staff members. We work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Our aims

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- promoting children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in the pre-school that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their language spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home backgrounds;
- promoting children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- promoting children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;
- helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

Definitions of abuse

Physical: involves hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child's ill health also constitutes physical abuse.

Sexual: involves forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse: is present in virtually all child protection incidents, but can also constitute abuse in its own right. It involves persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or torture causing, or anything that caused severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Emotional abuse also deeply affects children who witness or hear domestic abuse.

Neglect: is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical needs, i.e. lack of food or clothing, emotional or psychological needs, so to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability.

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (2015) for parents and staff, and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.

- We contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01724 298340 or 298293 for advice on child protection issues. We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.
- If a referral is made to the local authority social services department, we act within the Area Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Key Commitment 1

Yaddlethorpe Pre-school is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery

Methods

Staffing and volunteering

- Our designated officer who coordinates child protection issues is **Louise Heath-Drury** who;
 - liaises with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSCB,
 - provides support, advice and guidance to any other staff, and
 - attends relevant child protection training

In the absence of the designated Safeguarding Officer an appropriately trained deputy will be on site and staff, parents and visitors will be informed of who it is.

- Staffing arrangements meet the needs of all of the children and ensure their safety:-
 - staff under age 17 will be supervised at all times
 - required adult to child ratios will be met at all times
- Applicants for posts within the Pre-school are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out Enhanced Disclosure checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed.
- Criminal records disclosure reference number and date disclosure was obtained are recorded and kept on the personal file.
- Where applicants are rejected because of information that has been disclosed they have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the pre-school or has access to children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements 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 concerns.
- Our 'Visitor Book' records the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the pre-school so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Personal mobile phones are kept and used in the office/kitchen area only and never used where children are present. Use of personal mobile phones is kept to a minimum. In certain circumstances, i.e. Pre-school trips, It may be necessary for staff members to have a mobile phone with them in case of emergency. In these cases phones will be kept in bags and only used if necessary and staff will not be alone with children. The use of cameras on mobile phones is not allowed at any time.
- Disciplinary procedure will be taken against any member of staff failing to comply with this policy.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We recognise that children with SEN and disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse. Staff who work with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems will be sensitive to signs of abuse and will receive specialist training where appropriate. The pre-schools Special Educational Needs Policy will be observed at all times.

Photographs

- Yaddlethorpe Pre-school is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
- We take photographs of children to record their progress. These photographs are shared with parents. Relevant permissions are obtained from parents that specify what photographs can be used for. All photographs are used for purpose and deleted from the camera.
- In line with the Data Protection Act (1998) images will only be used for agreed purposes and no image will be stored for any longer than necessary.
- Photographs are only taken in public areas and regard is given to children's modesty.
- Cameras are stored securely on the premises and other electronic devices such as tablets and computers where images may be kept are password protected.
- No images will be taken on or transferred to any staff members mobile phone or personal electronic device.
- Visitors to the pre-school are not permitted to take photographs of children unless permission is agreed with parents.
- Parents and carers are not permitted to take photographs with their personal mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices on the premises unless permissions are received in advance.

Online safety

We will ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place on all digital appliances, e.g. tablets, to protect children from harmful online material.

Key Commitment 2

Yaddlethorpe Pre-school is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (DoH 2004)

Method

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this might be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play.
- 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 manager and the designated Safeguarding Officer. The information is stored in the child's personal file.
- Staff in pre-school take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.

- **Child Sexual Exploitation** – all staff will be aware of how children can be exploited and will act on any concerns immediately. This also includes recognising where older children may be at risk. If a staff member has concerns they will follow their normal safeguarding referral route or in an emergency call the police directly. A staff member will receive specific awareness raising training on CSE and disseminate to all other staff.
- **Prevent Agenda** – All staff will be aware of the prevent agenda and how to identify and assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including extremist ideas that are part of the terrorist ideology. Staff will be alert to changes in children’s behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff will use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act accordingly. We will promote fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs, which are already implicitly embedded in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage. A staff member will receive specific awareness raising training on the Prevent agenda and disseminate to all other staff.
- **Female Genital Mutilation** – All staff should be aware of female genital mutilation and the risk factors for young girls. Staff will respond to any concerns immediately either through following the normal safeguarding referral route or directly to the NSPCC FGM helpline, 0800 028 3550.
- **Domestic Abuse** - Seeing, hearing or knowing of a parent being abused is traumatic for children and can have long-term damaging emotional and psychological effects. All staff should be aware of the impact of domestic abuse on children and where it is suspected that a child is at risk of harm by witnessing or hearing domestic abuse staff follow their normal safeguarding referral route or in an emergency call the police directly.
- **Peer on peer abuse** – Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers and such abuse is taken as seriously as abuse by adults. We will not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young children but a child’s age and stage will always be considered. Please refer to our behaviour policy for strategies with children who engage in inconsiderate / hurtful behaviour.

Allegations against staff (*Ofsted must be notified in all cases within 14 days*)

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01724 298340 or 298293 for advice when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incidents.
- We refer any such complaint to the local authority’s social service department to investigate.
- We cooperate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the incident has taken place, but it is to protect the staff as well as the children and families through the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we take advice from the Local Area designated officer (LADO) so that the name may be added on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Key Commitment 3

Yaddlethorpe Pre-school is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Method

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- The designated Safeguarding Officer and deputy will undertake safeguarding training every two years and knowledge and skill will be refreshed at regular intervals, but at least annually. All staff, committee, students and volunteers will be given appropriate training on safeguarding at induction and this will be up-dated on a regular basis and at least annually (i.e. via in house training, emails, e-bulletins and newsletters).
- We ensure that all staff are aware of the procedure for reporting and recording their concerns in the pre-school.
- Induction training includes; emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, health and safety issues and a copy of all of the pre-school policies.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they grow to be 'strong, resilient and listened to' and so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting 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, culture and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Dealing with concerns regarding children

All staff members are responsible for the safety and well-being of the children, including protecting them from harm. If a member of staff is worried that a child may be being harmed, or if a child discloses abuse, or if a third party expresses concerns to a member of staff, they must adhere to the following procedures.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child;
- makes no observable judgement;
- reassures the child that it is not their fault;
- does not make promises that they can not keep, such as promising not to tell anyone; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- the child's name;
- the child's address;
- the age of the child;
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- the names of any other persons present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept on the child's personal file.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

Making a referral to Children's Services

If a referral is to be made our Safeguarding Officer will ring a Children's Services duty officer on 01724 296500 or if it is out of office hours 01724 296555. The referral will be followed up in writing within 48 hours of making the referral.

Ofsted will be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse and of the actions taken in respect of the allegation. These notifications will be made as soon as practically possible, but at least within 14 days of the allegation being made

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 Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officer will inform parents.

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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- Yaddlethorpe Pre-school believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.

- Yaddlethorpe Pre-school makes clear to parents its 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 social services department.
- Yaddlethorpe Pre-school continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.

Responding to disclosures or concerns for a student on placement

Where a student on placement makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will listen without question or judgement and will offer reassurance that he /she will take action by contacting the Child Protection Officer at the relevant college or school, or by contacting the Local Safeguarding Children Board. A record of events and conversations will be kept as stated above in **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**.

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 procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

