

6. Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

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

- All procedures are in line with North Lincolnshire Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding Board (CMARS)
- 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 Single Point of Contact (SPOC) on 01724 296500 (out of office hours 01724 296555) 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.

Yaddleshorpe 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 North Lincolnshire Children's MARS arrangements,
 - provides support, training and advice and guidance to any other staff, and
 - attends relevant child protection training

In the absence of the designated Safeguarding Officer the trained deputy will be Tracey Wood or Jane Walls

- 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 Disclosure and Barring Service before posts can be confirmed.

- Disclosure and Barring Service 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 Disclosure and Barring Service 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.
- 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 at the end of the current term.
- In line with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) 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.
- 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.

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 2015)

Child Sexual Exploitation

All staff members 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. Staff members will receive CSE, CCE, County Lines and ROTH awareness training either from the DSL or an outside agency.

Prevent Agenda

All staff will receive awareness training on 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 should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they need help and protection. Staff will use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act accordingly.

We promote fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

Female Genital Mutilation

All staff will receive awareness training on female genital mutilation and the risk factors for young girls. Staff will respond to any concerns immediately through following the normal safeguarding referral route or directly to the NSPCC FGM helpline, 0800 028 3550. Information regarding FGM is shared with staff.

Brest Flattening

Breast ironing, also known as breast flattening, is the pounding and massaging of pubescent girl's breasts using hard or heated objects to try to stop them developing or to make them disappear entirely. All staff will receive awareness training on breast flattening 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 police or NSPCC. Information regarding breast flattening is shared with staff.

Infant Oral Mutilation (Ebinyo)

Infant oral mutilation is a primitive traditional practice involving the gouging out of a young infants healthy teeth/buds. This can lead to transition of blood-borne diseases such as HIV/AIDS, septicaemia and death. All staff will receive awareness training on infant oral mutilation. Staff will respond to any concerns immediately either through following the normal safeguarding referral route or directly to the police or NSPCC. Information regarding infant oral mutilation is shared with staff.

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 will receive awareness training on the impact of domestic abuse on children. Staff will respond to any concerns immediately either through following the normal safeguarding referral route or in an emergency directly to the police. Information regarding domestic abuse and coercive control is shared with staff.

Operation Encompass

Children are negatively impacted by experiencing domestic abuse and the impact of this can last throughout a child's lifetime. Where an operation Encompass notification is received, staff will be mindful of any adverse effects this may have on a child and ensure appropriate support and care is offered where required.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers and such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults. We never dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between children (however a child's age and stage of development will be considered). We will be aware of any instances of peer on peer abuse and respond to these within normal safeguarding procedures. Information regarding peer on peer abuse is shared with staff.

Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage

Honour based abuse 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. Forced marriage is when someone does not consent and faces physical and/or psychological pressure to marry. Information regarding honour based abuse and forced marriage is shared with staff.

Injuries to babies and non-mobile infants

Bruising to babies and non-mobile infants may be caused by medical issues e.g. birth trauma or birthmarks, however this is rare. Other unusual marks on the skin or unusual sites of bleeding, e.g. bleeding from the mouth in young children, without a clear explanation may also be a sign of non-accidental injury and should also give cause for concern.

There may also be occasion where an explanation is given that another child has caused injury. This should still be explored further.

In all cases, unless the specific mark that has been identified has been confirmed as arising from birth trauma, birthmark or a medical condition, any practitioner who identifies a bruise/injury to an infant or child who is non-mobile or suspect that an injury to a child is non-accidental as a result of abuse or neglect should make a referral to Children's Services Single Point of Contact.

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.

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 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 LADO on 01724 298293 to investigate.
- We cooperate entirely with any investigation carried out by Children's 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.

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.

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.

Staff

Social Networking

Staff will not have parents as friends on any social network site e.g. Facebook, Twitter. They must not mention the Yaddlethorpe Pre-school name, colleagues, clients or visitors names or any aspect of the pre-school business on any social networking site. Should an employee be found to be in breach of this they will face disciplinary action in accordance with the pre-school Disciplinary Procedure which could result in dismissal.

Mobile Phones and Devices

Personal mobile phones and devices must be kept in personal bags in the office/kitchen area only and are used only in emergency or on staff designated breaks and away from children. The use of cameras on mobile phones is not allowed at any time. Should an employee be found to be in breach of this they will face disciplinary action in accordance with the pre-school Disciplinary Procedure which could result in dismissal.

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;
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action and
- informs the designated lead/children's services.

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 the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) 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 Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding Board (CMARS).

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 CMARS 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 CMARS Board.

Safeguarding Children Procedure

Dealing with concerns regarding children in our care

All staff are responsible for the safety and well-being of the children, including protecting them from harm. If any 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.

1. Ask to speak with the Safeguarding Coordinator, this is Louise Heath-Drury, in private if possible. Always be mindful of ratios.
2. The Safeguarding Coordinator and the staff member discuss the concern and decide what action needs to be taken. A decision will need to be made in relation to whether it is appropriate to make a referral to the Children's Services Single Point of Contact (SPOC). During this discussion full written details including dates and times, parties involved, any supporting information from staff or explanations from parents/carers, will be recorded.
3. If no referral is to be made then a written record is to be completed and stored on the child's file. This written record should then be shared with parents/carers on collection.
4. If a referral is to be made then the Safeguarding Coordinator must ring North Lincolnshire Council Children's Services Single Point of Contact on 01724 296500 or if it is out of hours 01724 296555. The Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for providing as much information as possible to Children's Services (SPOC) to aid their investigation. The referral must then be followed up in writing within 48 hours of making the referral.
5. Direction as far as what to do next will be taken from Children's Services (SPOC).
6. All records will be kept secure and confidential and must be signed and dated.

Wherever possible parents need to be made aware that a referral is being made to Children's Services, however in some circumstances this may not be appropriate.

Consent should be gained from parents to contact Children's Services unless that by doing so it may place the child at risk of further harm. Where consent is not given providers can still contact Children's Services if they have concerns that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

In the event of disclosure from a child

- Listen to the child carefully.
- Make observable judgement.

- Do not question the child.
- Remain calm.
- Do not make promises that cannot be kept, such as promising not to tell anyone.
- Reassure the child that it is not their fault.

All concerns need to be kept as a clear written record, observations of the facts, not opinions. If a child confides in you, record what they said, try to use the exact words. Do not begin to question the child. This is important for any investigation that may follow. Do not put pressure on the child to respond but allow the child to talk and always take the child seriously.

Referrals

Yaddlethorpe Pre-school must notify North Lincolnshire Council Children's Services Single Point of Contact of any concerns in relation to a child as identified by the Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board of allegations of abuse. Yaddlethorpe Pre-school can seek advice from Children's Services Single Point of Contact prior to making a referral.

Yaddlethorpe Pre-school must inform OfSTED of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any living person, working or looking after children at the premises and of any action taken in respect of these allegations. These notifications must be made as soon as is reasonably practical, but at least within 14 days of the allegation being made.

Dealing with concerns and allegations against staff members or any other person working with the children

This section links to section 3.4 – 3.8 of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2017

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Louise Heath-Drury, has responsibility in respect of allegations against staff, volunteers and students. The Designated Safeguarding Officer must, where required

- Refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Gather information.
- Take part in strategy meetings.
- Progress and liaise jointly with the LADO.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility in respect of allegations against staff, volunteers and students is not available or is the subject of such allegations then contact Jane Walls.

Parents are made aware of the procedure to follow if they have any concerns regarding a member of staff.

The concerns may be about the behaviour/language of a

- member of staff, student or volunteer at Yaddlethorpe Pre-school.
- member of staff, student or volunteer from another service/setting received or attended by the child.

The behaviour/language could take a number of forms, for example;

- seeing an adult hit a child.
- observing an adult using inappropriate restraint or language.
- witnessing the neglect of basic care needs of a child.
- inappropriate sexual comments to children OR adults in the setting.
- Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities.
- Inappropriate sharing of images.
- Any other inappropriate behaviour or language.

If you have any concerns, the procedure is as follows:

First, do all you can to challenge the perpetrator's behaviour/language immediately without putting any child or yourself at risk.

- Inform the perpetrator of your concerns.
- Ask him/her to move to an area where there is no contact with children.
- Advise him/her that you will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of what you have witnessed.

If the perpetrator continues; take any appropriate action you can to separate any children and the perpetrator, call for assistance.

It is essential that you stay with the child/ren until you can transfer them to the care of another responsible adult (ideally their keyperson).

In all cases where a concern has been raised, inform the Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead or most senior person immediately. They will deal with the staff member in line with Children's MARS/OfSTED policies and procedures and/or disciplinary and grievance procedures. Ensure that ratios are met at all times.

Take notes of what you have heard or seen and what has been said – if it is not possible to take notes at the time, do so immediately afterwards. Keep the notes taken at the time, without amendment, omission or addition, whatever subsequent reports may be written. The notes should be dated and signed. The notes should cover what you saw, who said what, what action you took, and the details of date, time, location and name of child and perpetrator.

Allegations of Harm or Concern around quality of care and practice

The manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should determine whether the incident is an allegation of potential or actual harm or alternatively a concern about quality and care/practice or complaint. Guidance around this can be found in Children's MARS Managing Allegations Against People Who Work With Children Policy and Procedure.

Allegations of harm – if the information relates to a concern, allegation or suspicion that a member of staff, manager, owner, committee member, student, volunteer or carer who works with children has:

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

or where

- concerns arise about the persons behaviour with regard to his/her own children.
- concerns arise about the behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

You should

Report the matter immediately to the manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead or named deputy.

If you are the person to whom the allegation of a staff member, student, volunteer or carer who works with children harming a child is reported you must not investigate the matter by interviewing the accused person, the child or potential witnesses, but should;

- avoid asking leading questions.
- record the incident in writing, just recording the facts and include;
 - when the alleged incident took place (time and date).

- who was present.
- what was said to have happened.
- sign and date the written record.
- contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice about what to do next. Contact the LADO on 01724 298293. The LADO will then liaise with other agencies and advise the setting of next steps to be taken.
- OfSTED must be informed of any allegations on 0300 123 4666 within 14 days. A registered provider who without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement commits an offence.
- If the allegation or suspicion involves a child or young person suffering, or at risk of significant harm, the Safeguarding Lead must also make a telephone referral to the Children's Services.
- Following the telephone referral, the Safeguarding Lead must follow up the concerns in writing to Children's Services within 24 hours.

Please also see the Children's MARS Managing Allegations against people who work with children policy and procedure.

Concerns around quality of care and practice – if the concern does not relate to harm and is deemed to be a care and practice issue, this should be documented and signed by the manager/Safeguarding Lead and the person concerned. A copy of the concern and any subsequent actions should be kept in the pre-school and a copy given to the person concerned.

Whistleblowing

Staff have the right and individual responsibility to raise any matter of concern regarding colleagues associated with the pre-school. Managers have a responsibility to respond to any whistleblowing allegations accordingly. Additional information on whistleblowing responsibilities and procedures can be found in our separate Whistleblowing Policy.

We will make the following documents available to staff

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Department for Education 2015

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings - Ofsted 2022

Working Together the Safeguard Children - Department for Education 2023

Information sharing - advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - Department for Education 2021

The Prevent duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers- Department for Education 2015

One Family Approach - Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire Document – North Lincolnshire Children’s Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board

Managing Allegations against adults who work with children – North Lincolnshire Children’s Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board