



Safeguarding Policy

This policy is to be constantly reviewed and updated. Copies of signed forms from all members of staff who have read and agreed this policy are kept by The Manager.

This policy has been written in accordance with and in light of the following -

- East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) – safeguarding procedures and guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, updated 2023, statutory guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023, statutory guidance
- The Prevent Duty: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales 2023
- The Prevent Duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation 2023
- Safeguarding Children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online considerations', 2019
- Education Inspection Framework July 2023
- Early Years Inspection Handbook January 2024

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has overall responsibility for safeguarding protection practice at Southover Nursery School is the Manager, Charlotte Hasan. The Deputy DSL is Clare Moore.

Safeguarding is the proactive engagement with children, parents and carers as well as colleagues to ensure children are safe and achieving their potential. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established in the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education and in line with locally agreed inter-agency procedures. We recognise that we have a duty to protect children from maltreatment and to prevent impairment. We will promote welfare by creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum chances in childhood, adolescence and adulthood.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the nursery school. The aims of the policy are:

- To ensure that we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. The manager is trained in 'Safer Recruitment' and we have a robust recruitment policy in place, requiring thorough vetting of all potential new employees (this includes verification of qualifications, obtaining at least two references, covering 5 years of work history and full enhanced DBS checks).
- To raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- To develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- To support pupils who have been abused in accordance with their child protection plan.
- To establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Information about possible abuse may come to a member of staff in several ways - direct allegation from a child that has been abused, through a friend, relative or other child, through a child's behaviour or through observation of an

injury to the child. We recognise that because of day to day contact with children, nursery school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. It is the responsibility of every member of staff to immediately pass on any concerns to the Manager. The nursery school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need, to recognise, and stay safe from abuse.

We will take account of any guidance issued by the Department of Children, Schools and Families to:

- Ensure that we have a Designated Person for child protection who has undertaken Child Protection Training and who undertakes an updated training every three years – Charlotte Hasan.
- Ensure that every member of staff know the name of the Designated Senior Person responsible for child protection and their role.
- **Ensure all staff have the required training in Child Protection, completing Safeguarding eLearning (within the first week of employment), attending practitioner safeguarding training (within 6 months of employment), and then completing Safeguarding and Prevent Duty eLearning refresher training annually. The designated safeguarding leads will attend refresher training every two years in addition to the eLearning refreshers.**
- Ensure that all part time and voluntary staff who work with children are made aware of the arrangements that are in place to safeguard pupils.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the Designated Person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that the Designated Person contacts Children's Social Care if there are concerns about a child.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the nursery school and staff for child protection by setting out its duties on the school website.
- Notify the Area Social Care Officer immediately if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is on a child protection register/subject to a child protection plan.
- Implement the statutory and Local Authority guidance when a child goes missing from education.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including the attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concern about children, even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely and ensure that a child's nursery school record indicates the existence of further records.
- Ensure that when a child moves school their Child Protection Record is transferred to the named Designated Person in that new setting.

We recognise that a child, parents or a colleague may make an allegation against a member of staff if that member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children, therefore we will:

- o Ensure that in a case of serious harm, the police will be informed from the outset.
- o Ensure that if the matter refers to the EYFS that OFSTED are informed within 14 days even if the matter occurred on the premises or elsewhere.
- o Ensure that the Manager takes responsibility for handling allegations against staff.
- o Ensure that the nursery school complies with child protection procedures regarding the handling of allegations against adults who work with children.
- o Ensure that we participate in any investigation that ensues
- o Ensure that safe recruitment procedures are always followed including DBS checks.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The nursery school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at nursery school behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The nursery school will endeavour to support the pupils through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
- The nursery school Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The nursery school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- The implementation and reviewing of statutory policies that are relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Liaison with other agencies that support the child.
- Ensuring that where a pupil on the child protections register leaves the nursery school their information is transferred to the new school and any agencies involved are informed.
- Recognising that children come from multi cultural backgrounds and as a result have developed policies to ensure that we embrace:
 - o Diversity in religion and faith
 - o Diversity of race
 - o Diversity of ethnicity
 - o Diversity of gender and sexual orientation
 - o The Disability Equality Duty

All members of staff will be made aware of the following:

- The signs of possible abuse (please ask to see Appendix 1).
- The policy regarding searching for and if necessary reporting any children missing from school. (please ask to see Appendix 5).
- That confidentiality cannot be promised to a pupil giving evidence
- That we offer immunity from 'whistle blowing' (please ask to Appendix 9).
- Of the need to avoid asking leading questions
- The procedures for dealing with abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil (please ask to see Appendix 3).
- The nursery school's recording arrangements
- Guidance for staff to ensure that the behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil (please ask to see Appendix 7).
- That assurance is obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by other organisations and working with the school's pupils on another site

The manager will undertake an annual review of the nursery school's child protection policies and procedures and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

We recognise that no policy is perfect and consequently any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay by the Manager or a member of staff designated by her.

Useful telephone numbers:

SPOA (single point of advice) t: 01323 464222 e:
0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk

As of September 2020, referrals are to be made via ESCC's Children's Portal

Duty & Assessment team Lewes 01323 747373
Emergency Duty Service (out of hours) 01273 335906 / 01273 335905

LADO (allegations against staff) 01323 466606
referrals to be made via ESCC 'Allegations about Adults who work with children'
<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/children-families/professional-resources/allegations/lado>

East Sussex Early Help 0 – 19 Health Visiting Service
01323 463204 9.30am-4.30pm
esht.hv-duty@nhs.net
<https://www.esht.nhs.uk/service/health-visiting/>

East Sussex Family Hubs <https://familyhubs.eastsussex.gov.uk/>

Samaritans Call free on 116 123 - Any time, day or night

Childline 0800 1111

Whistleblowing 0300 1233155 (Ofsted's whistleblowing helpline)

Or email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Appendix I

Child Abuse Signs and Symptoms

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused they may well indicate that something is wrong. If a number of these symptoms are present then the possibility of abuse must be investigated.

Sexual Abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regression to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well
- Starting to wet, day or night nightmares
- Becoming worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be ultra good or perfect, overreacting to criticism

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for games lessons
- Bald patches

- Chronic running away
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation (I'm stupid, ugly, worthless)
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain (I deserve this)
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

If a child tells you about abuse:

- Stay calm and be reassuring
- Find a quiet place to talk
- Believe in what you are being told
- Listen, but do not press for information
- Reassure the child that he or she was right to tell
- It will help the child to cope if you say the abuser has a problem
- Acknowledge that the child may have angry, sad or even guilty feelings about what has happened, but stress that the abuse was not the child's fault.
- Acknowledge that you may need help dealing with your own feelings.

Appendix 2

Procedure following a disclosure - Remember the 4 'R's

Receive

Listen to the child. If you are shocked by what they tell you, try not to show it. Take what they say seriously. Children rarely lie about abuse and to be disbelieved adds to the traumatic nature of disclosing. Children will retract what they have said if they meet with revulsion or disbelief.

Accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking “Why didn’t you tell me before?”

Reassure

Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. It’s essential to be honest with the child, so don’t make promises you may not be able to keep, like “I’ll stay with you” or “Everything will be alright now”.

Don’t promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer a child who is at risk.

Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the child displays. For example by saying “You’re not to blame” or “You’re not alone, you’re not the only one this sort of thing happens to”.

Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened.

Empathise with the child – don’t tell them what they should be feeling

React

React to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter; but do not ‘interrogate’ them for full details.

Do not ask leading questions. Such questions may invalidate evidence in any later prosecution in court.

Ask open questions such as “Anything else to tell me?” “Yes?” or “And...?”

Record

Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.

Do not destroy your original notes in case they are later required.

Record the date, time, place and who else was around; any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. If the child uses their family’s own private sexual words, record the actual words used rather than translating them into ‘proper’ words.

Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising.

Be objective in your recording: include statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

Ensure that you note down

- What you have seen
- What you have heard from others
- What was said to you directly

Appendix 3

The procedures for dealing with abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil

You come across suspected or actual bullying. What do you do?

- Remain calm, you are in charge.
- Do not make the situation worse, for example by humiliating the bully (as this may lead to reprisals).
- Take stock of the situation and diffuse it.
- Make it plain that you disapprove of what you have witnessed.
- Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view
- Re-assure the victim, offer support / advice.
- Indicate that you will be reporting the matter to the Manager.
- Records of all incidents are vital.
- Try to give a full, detailed picture in the form of a written report as well as dialogue with manager.
- Do this promptly.

A member of staff who is directly approached by a parent and made aware of alleged bullying should consult the manager at the earliest opportunity.

Appendix 4

Arrangements for dealing with allegations of abuse by children against members of staff

Children who have a problem may speak to someone whom they trust. It is important that the member of staff sets the boundaries firmly at the outset of such a conversation, making it clear that no one can offer absolute confidentiality. The adult should provide the manager with a written account of what has transpired as a matter of urgency.

If a child decides to speak to a member of staff about the fact that either he/she, or a child known to them, is being bullied, harassed and abused, the member of staff should:

- React professionally, and remember that they are not carrying out an investigation, (which is a task for specialists),
- Take what the child says seriously, and calmly, without becoming emotionally involved,
- Make it clear why unconditional confidentiality cannot be offered.
- Explain that any adult member of staff is obliged to inform the manager, if there are child protection or safeguarding issues involved, in order that specialist help can be arranged.
- Encourage the child to speak directly to the manager. Explain that only those who have a professional "need to know" will be told, and, if appropriate, measures will be set up to protect the child from retaliation and further abuse,
- Reassure the child that he or she was right to tell, and that he/she is not to blame for having being bullied or abused,
- Allow the child to tell his or her own story, without asking detailed or leading questions
- Record what has been said,

- Inform the manager as soon as possible - at least by the end of the morning/afternoon session of that day.
- Inform the manager immediately in cases where abuse from a member of staff is alleged, or if the incident happened inside the nursery school.
- As soon as the manager is informed about an allegation of abuse against a member of her staff, she will gather the evidence/facts/notes and contact SPOA as soon as possible, thereafter following their advice.
- At the same time as contacting SPOA, the manager will also contact the LADO to report the allegation of abuse against the member of staff.
- Timescale - the manager will contact SPOA and the LADO on the same day that she is informed, ideally before the end of the morning/afternoon session at nursery.

Where there are evident signs of physical injury, that may (or may not) be the result of abuse or bullying, medical help should be summoned, or the child should be taken to the surgery. In serious cases, the Police should be informed from the outset.

Appendix 5

Missing Child Policy

In the event of a child missing, two members of staff stay with the group while the other staff members search hall, garden, kitchen and toilets. Then if not found, up St James Street and the school playing field.

If a child is definitely missing we contact police. Child's parents immediately contacted (parent asked to bring in photo of missing child)

- roll counts are made throughout the session

Appendix 6

Procedures to be followed by staff when a child is not collected on time

If a child is not collected, we will instigate the following procedure:

- If a child is not collected on time, our legal liability relating to the staff/child ratio will be infringed as two members of staff must remain at the nursery until the last child has been collected.
- Every effort will be made to contact parents to establish why they have failed to arrive to collect their child and to plan a suitable alternative. A list of contact numbers is available.
- If the parents or carer cannot be contacted on any of the telephone numbers we have been given within fifteen minutes then the emergency contact person whose details we have will be contacted. Messages will be left on all the telephones that are rung if this is possible.
- When parents are eventually contacted they will be reminded of the necessity to notify the nursery school of any delays and need to make alternative arrangements
- A last resort, if no-one can be contacted within two hours of the end of the day, we will contact Social Care and advise them of the situation.
- We will make a full written report of any such incidents.

We undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care.

Appendix 7

Guidance for staff to ensure that the behaviour and actions do not place children or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a child.

In general, children should be encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardians issues that are troubling them.

Physical Restraint

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on either themselves or another, and then only as a last resort, when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the manager who will decide what to do next.

Appendix 8

EYFS reasonable force policy

Teaching staff are allowed to use such force as is reasonable in all circumstances to prevent a child from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the child were not under the age of criminal responsibility);
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property (including their own property);

This provision applies when a teacher is on school premises or when he or she has lawful control or charge of the child concerned elsewhere.

Section I.1 Types of incident

There is a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a child. They will fall into three broad categories:

- where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is imminent risk of injury;
- where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
- where a child is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of situations that fall into the first two categories are:

- a child attacks a member of staff, or another child;
- children are fighting;
- a child is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- a child is causing, or is at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- a child absconds from a class or tries to leave nursery school

Section I.2 Reasonable Force

The degree of force will always depend on all the circumstances of the case, and there are two relevant considerations:

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore, physical force could not be justified to prevent a child from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that could be resolved without force.

- The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.
- Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the child.

Section I.3 Practical Considerations

Before intervening physically a teacher should, wherever practicable, tell the child who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he or she does not. The teacher should continue attempting to communicate with the child throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and teachers should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the child.

Sometimes a teacher should not intervene in an incident without help if the teacher believes he or she may be at risk of injury. In those circumstances, the teacher should remove other children who might be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues. Until assistance arrives, the teacher should continue to attempt to diffuse the situation orally, and to prevent the incident from escalating. Assistance should be sought whenever possible.

(I.3.a)

(I.3.b) Application of force

Physical intervention can take several forms:

- Physically interposing between children;
- Blocking a child's path;
- Holding;
- Pushing;
- Pulling;
- Leading a child by the hand or arm;
- Shepherding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of the back

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force'; for example, to prevent a young child running off a pavement into a busy road, or to prevent a child hitting someone, or throwing something.

Staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- Holding a child around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the child's ability to breathe;
- Slapping, punching or kicking a child;
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- Tripping a child;
- Holding or pulling a child by the hair or ear;
- Holding a child face down on the ground.

Restraint should not lead to injury

A member of Staff must only use force when they are acting in a controlled manner and there must be no element of punishment. Corporal punishment is not to be used in any circumstances. The unwarranted use of physical restraint could lead to criminal prosecution. Staff should always avoid touching or holding a child in a way that might be considered indecent.

Where the risk is not so urgent, the teacher should consider carefully whether, and if so when, physical intervention is right. Teachers should always try to deal with the situation using other strategies before using force.

The age and level of understanding of the child is also very relevant. Physical intervention to enforce compliance with staff instructions is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older children.

(1.3.c)

(1.3.d) Recording of incidents

It is important that the management are informed if force has been used and that a detailed report is written as soon after the event as possible and that parents are notified. All incidents will be recorded, signed and witnessed in our Incident Book. All parents/carers will be shown the report and asked to sign it.

Appendix 9

Whistleblowing policy

Definition:

Whistleblowing is raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation.

Protection:

Southover Nursery School is an organisation committed to delivering a high quality pre-school care, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence.

This policy provides individuals in the workplace with protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the organisation. The policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. The Act covers behaviour, which amounts to:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to the group's formal Grievance Procedure, but is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the organisation, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise, in good faith, a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such a concern should normally report the matter to the manager who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed. Concerns should be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the manager, he or she should contact our Early Years Advisor or OFSTED on 03001231231 for advice on what steps to follow.

A disclosure in good faith to the manager will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the organisation.

Parents

In general, we believe at Southover Nursery School that parents should be informed about any concerns regarding their children. It is important that we are honest and open in our dealings with them. However, concerns must be referred to the Manager, who will decide on the appropriate response. In a very few cases, it may not be right to inform parents of our concerns immediately as that action could prejudice any investigation, or place the child at further risk. In such cases, advice will be sought from Children's Services – SPOA 01323 464222.

Safeguarding and child protection is always our top priority.

Updated: 11/01/25 by: Charlotte Hasan

To be reviewed: Summer 2025