

**Safeguarding Policy**

This policy represents the agreed principles for Safeguarding Children throughout the Pre-School. All Pre-School staff, representing Apsley Lock Pre-School have agreed this policy.

**Introduction**

The health, safety and welfare of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our Pre-School. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, background or disability. They have a right to be safe in our Pre-School. This policy is in line with LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Boards) local guidance and procedures.

**Aims and objectives**

Our aims are:

* to provide a safe environment for children to learn in;
* to establish what actions the Pre-School can take to ensure that children remain safe, at home as well as at school;
* to raise the awareness of all staff to these issues, and to define their roles and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse;
* to identify children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm;
* to ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection issues;
* to set down the correct procedures for those who encounter any issue of safeguarding.

**Statutory Framework**

This policy is formulated using the DfES documents: ‘Circular 10/95 – Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service’, ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2006), ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’ (2006) and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection procedures (2007).

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 introduced a new duty requiring governing bodies and LAs to have appropriate child-protection procedures in place. This policy takes account of the requests set out in the Children Act 2004 ('Every Child Matters').

Pre-School Schools are expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse – these procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse.

DfEE Circular 10/95 (Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service) places the following responsibilities on all schools:-

* Should be aware of and follow the procedures established by the Safeguarding Committee
* Should have procedures (of which all staff are aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff should be alerted to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions
* The Designated Senior Person should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the Pre-School and liaise with other agencies
* Staff with designated responsibility for Safeguarding should receive appropriate training

Circular 10/95 also states that “parents should be made aware of the Pre-School’s Safeguarding Policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigative agencies in the interests of the child”. This including the police.

**The Designated Senior Persons (DSP) Lucy Peters (Manager) and Jacquie Green (Deputy Manager)**

The Designated Senior Persons (DSP) for Safeguarding are the managers of the Pre-School. The DSPs’ role is to:-

* ensure that the Hertfordshire Area safeguarding Committee’s Safeguarding Procedures are followed in the Pre-School
* ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures
* ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff
* develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
* decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g. refer to Children Schools and Families Referral and Assessment Team)
* liaise with Social Work Teams over suspected cases of child abuse
* ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked ‘Strictly Confidential’
* submit reports to, and attend, Safeguarding Conferences
* ensure that the Pre-School effectively monitors children who have been identified as ‘at risk’
* provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.
* Keep up to date with all relevant procedures and legislations
* Attend TAC (Team Around the Child) and CAF (Common Assessment Framework) meetings

**Pre-School Procedures**

If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform the DSPs’

Information regarding the concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day on a ‘cause for concern’ sheet (which has an outline of a body on it – staff must accurately record their concerns). The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations and must be dated. These sheets are kept in the DSP’s ‘Children Causing Concern’ file, which is kept securely in the managers locked cupboard.

The DSP will decide whether the concerns should be referred to LADO (**Local Authority Designated Office)**. This may be done without prior discussion with parents

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who the Pre-School believes to be ‘at risk’ or who has been placed on the Safeguarding Children Register

Records relating to Safeguarding children will be kept in a secure locked place, separate from the child’s general file

If a pupil who is known to be on the Safeguarding Children Register changes Pre-School, the DSP will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving School/Pre-School, in a secure manner, to a named person, and separate from the child’s general file.

**Prevent Abuse by means of good practice**

Adults will never be left alone for long periods of time, with individual children or with small groups.

Adults that have no CRB or DBS certificate or relevant childcare qualifications will never be left alone with a child.

Children will have regular circle time and discussions on appropriate behaviour.

All staff are aware of where to access the ‘LADO’ Recognise, Refer, Respond phone number. It is clearly displayed on notice boards within the Pre-School both in the entrance and in the staff office.

**Staff training**

A clear vetting and barring training is in place for all new staff and clear policies are in staff handbook. All adults in the Pre-School receive regular training to raise their awareness of abuse, and to improve their knowledge of Safeguarding procedures that have been agreed locally. The maximum period of time before refresher training must take place is three years. All staff have termly staff supervisions and yearly performance management appraisals which are informed by peer on peer and management observations.

* We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and parents and visitors are made aware of them too.
* All staff have an up-to-date knowledge and training of safeguarding issues.
* We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.

**The Prevent Duty**

* Lucy Peters has completed WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) training regarding the Prevent Duty and Radicalisation and is the Prevent lead at Apsley Lock Pre-School.
* All other staff have completed a Channel Awareness module and have read through and understood The Prevent Duty document, a copy of which is kept in the Policies and Procedures file in the staff office.
* Staff are aware of the ‘Notice, Check, Share’ procedure with regards to the Prevent Duty document.
* In the case of a suspected incident Lucy Peters will make a decision whether to refer the matter to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) or the police.

**When to be concerned**

Staff should be concerned about a child if he or she:-

* has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children’s injuries
* regularly has unexplained injuries
* frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given)
* gives confused or conflicting explanations on how injuries were sustained
* exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude
* indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age
* discloses an experience in which he or she may have been harmed
* gives other cause to believe that he or she may be suffering significant harm

**Dealing with a disclosure**

If a pupil discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:-

* listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
* accept what is being said
* allow the child to talk freely
* reassure the child but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
* not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to LADO
* reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
* stress that it was the right thing to tell
* listen, rather than ask direct questions
* if necessary, ask open questions, not leading questions
* not criticise the alleged perpetrator
* explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

**Record keeping and monitoring**

When a pupil has made a disclosure, the member of staff should:-

* make brief notes during and as soon as possible after the conversation
* not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
* record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
* complete the diagram with an outline of a body shape, to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury.
* record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions on the incident report form.
* the DSP is required to undertake an annual Safeguarding Checklist.

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a Safeguarding case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DSP.

**Whistleblowing**

It is important to Apsley Lock Pre-School that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or people at Apsley Lock Pre-School is reported and properly dealt with. At Apsley Lock Pre-School we encourage all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the setting or the way in which the setting is run. At Apsley Lock Pre-School, we recognise that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with.

Whistleblowing relates to all staff and volunteers who work within the setting, who may from time to time think that they need to raise with someone in confidence certain issues relating to Apsley Lock Pre-School. Whistleblowing is separate from the grievance procedures. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances, you need to follow the grievance procedures highlighted in the ‘staff hand book’. If you are concerned about malpractice within Apsley Lock Pre-School the following procedures need to be followed:

Report any concerns to Lucy Peters or Jacquie Green.

All staff are aware of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing within Apsley Lock Pre-School and are watchful for illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature to the managers.

Staff understand that any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to you.

No one will be victimised for raising the matter under this procedure and continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because of a legitimate concern.

Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.

If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure Apsley Lock Pre-School disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.

If a malicious, vexatious or false allegation is made then this will be considered to be a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken.

Any instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If you are told not to raise or pursue any concerns, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. In this event you should report the mater to either Lucy Peters or Jacquie Green.

**Allegations against staff**

* We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the provision, 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.
* We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the provision, has abused a child.
* 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 the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate. 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.
* 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 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) 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.

**Physical restraint**

There may be times when adults, in the course of their duties, have to intervene physically in order to restrain children and prevent them from coming to harm. Such intervention will always be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation. We follow the guidance given in the DfES circular 10/98 on The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils. The managers will require the adult(s) involved in any such incident to report the matter to him or her immediately.

**Confidentiality**

DfEE 10/95 acknowledges that Safeguarding Children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff in schools. The Circular advises that all staff in the Pre-School have:

“a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children Schools and Families and the Police). If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child’s sake. Within that context, the child should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts. Child Protection records should be kept securely locked”.

**Employment and recruitment**

Apsley Lock Pre-School ensures that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles. We have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children are suitable.

Practitioners must tell managers if they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). Apsley Lock Pre-School does not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, including through a criminal records check, to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for. Managers record information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed (including the criminal records disclosure, reference number, the date a disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it).

Apsley Lock Pre-School meets their responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

We will do all we can to ensure that all those working with children in our Pre-School are suitable people. This involves scrutinising applicants, verifying their identity and obtaining references, as well as the mandatory checks and enhanced DBS. We follow the DfES guidance set out in Safeguarding Children: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service, DfES.

We ensure that all staff have sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care.

**Family Support**

The Pre-School School will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families, staff and volunteers in the group.

Where abuse at home is suspected, the Pre-School School will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.

 **Liaising with other bodies**

The Pre-School School and children’s schools and families will work together:

 0300 1234043 Safeguarding Children Referrals

 0845 3300222 Police

LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk

01438 737511 MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

**Legal framework**

*Primary legislation*

* Children Act (1989 s47)
* Protection of Children Act (1999)
* Data Protection Act (1998)
* The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

*Secondary legislation*

* Sexual Offences Act (2003)
* Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
* Equalities Act (2010)
* Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
* Counter-Terrorism & Security Act (Prevent Duty) July 2015

**Further Guidance**

* Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE July 2015)
* What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (DfE July 2015)
* Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2014)
* Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Procedures (Electronic)
* Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
* The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
* Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
* Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008)
* Independent Safeguarding Authority: www.isa-gov.org.uk

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| This policy was adopted by the manager, committee and staff of | Apsley Lock Pre-school |  |
| Held on | January 2021 |  |
| Date to be reviewed | Annually |  |
| Signed on behalf of the management committee |  |
| Name of signatory | Andrew Jones |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | Chair |

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| Date reviewed/updated | Signature Pre-school Leader/Manager |
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