**Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

In this policy, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Preventing the impairment of children’s health or development, and
* Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

(Definition taken from the HM Government guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013*)

**Our values and principles**

Children and young people have the right be protected from neglect and abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). **Everyone** has a responsibility to protect children and young people and to report concerns.

Children’s needs are paramount and takeprecedence over the needs of adults in any conflict between the two. This setting’s policy and procedure are to safeguard all children, to ensure they are all equally valued and to give them the best start in life.

All allegations and concerns are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately in accordance with this policy and procedure.

This setting has a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that are available to parents or carers in the setting at all times.

**LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

**This policy is based on the following laws and statutory guidance:**

*Children Acts 1989 and 2004* define safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as

* protecting children from maltreatment
* preventing impairment of children’s health or development
* ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
* undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully

*Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)* sets out how organisations and individuals must work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with Children Acts 1989 and 2004

*East Sussex Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (ESSCP) Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures:*

* + ensure that there are prompt methods for alerting, reporting, investigating and managing a child's protection. The Procedures are available at <http://pansussexscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>

*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021*

* + the mandatory framework for all early years providers, maintained schools, non-maintained schools, independent schools and all providers on the Early Years Register. The safeguarding and welfare requirements are given legal force by regulations made under Section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

I recognise that the context for safeguarding has changed throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and I regularly review my policy to ensure it remains effective for children in attendance and any that may be at home, due to isolation, shielding, change in parent working arrangements.

It is my responsibility to ensure that all children in my care are safe and their welfare is in line with all the procedures that are in place by my local Safeguarding children’s board.

I am responsible for passing on concerns, or making referrals, to the Duty and Assessment Team. In their absence the next most senior member of staff on will assume responsibility

All visitors to my setting must record their reason for visit and exact date and time of arrival and departure in my visitors book.

**REPORTING PROCEDURES AND MAKING A REFERRAL**

* Refer to the Manual when making a referral (see sections 9 to 11).
* The police will be informed immediately if it is suspected a criminal offence has been committed
* I will contact the Single Point of Advice (SPOA) as my first point of contact to report the concerns or the incident. I will also inform Ofsted at the same time.
* The timing of referrals will reflect the level of perceived risk and will always be **within one working day** of recognition of risk.
* All referrals made verbally must be confirmed in writing by the referrer within 24 hours (the next section defines how records will be kept).
* Any allegation or concern about a member of staff or volunteer must be reported immediately to Ofsted and the Single Point of Advice (SPOA).

**RECORD KEEPING AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

* Any concerns will be recorded and reported in line with the Manual (see section 16) and *Keeping Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns: Guidance for Early Years Settings, Schools and Colleges (2014).*
* I will telephone the Duty and Assessment Team to notify them of a safeguarding concern and follow instructions on completion of paperwork.
* Where concerns relate to an allegation against a member of staff, or volunteer the referral should include the child’s name, address, gender and date of birth together with full details of the complaint or allegation, including witness statements
* All records will be held confidentially but will be shared with other agencies, e.g. the police, Children’s Social Care, Ofsted, where this assists an ongoing investigation. Records will be held for a reasonable period of time after children or staff members have left the provision in case they are needed for any future investigation.

**SAFER WORKFORCE AND MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

All management, staff, volunteers and contractors working at this childcare setting will undergo rigorous suitability checks in line with the Manual (see section 19).

Allegations against people working with children will be managed in line with section 20 of the Manual.

**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

We are committed to ensuring all staff are qualified, have opportunities for professional development and have relevant up-to-date training in safeguarding children (see section 18 of the Manual).

* All new staff, volunteers and students will participate in an induction programme before taking up their duties and will be allocated an experienced member of staff to mentor them for the duration of the induction.
* All staff will be required to complete online child protection training upon appointment. This will be consolidated by formal East Sussex County Council-approved training at Level 1 as soon as possible.
* All volunteers and students will be required to complete the online child protection training.
* I have attended and completed The East Sussex County Council-approved Level 1 and Level 2 safeguarding training.
* All training must reflect the requirements of *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013* and informed by the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board training strategy and plans.
* I will update my knowledge by attending East Sussex County Council-approved training every two years.

 **INFORMATION SHARING AND WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER AGENCIES**

The setting respects confidentiality at all times and complies with the Data Protection Act 1998.

However the setting will share information as part of its day to day work in order to safeguard and protect children from harm but also to work together to support families to improve outcomes for all. This may involve liaison with Police, Children’s Social Care, participation in multi-agency meetings, e.g. case conferences and participation in serious case reviews, if requested to do so (see section 17 of the Manual).

**QUALITY ASSURANCE**

This setting is registered with Ofsted **Early Years Register and Childcare Register** and is required to meet **the Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012; Childcare Register.** These registers clearly state the minimum standards that must be met by law.

As a consequence, the setting is subject to routine and regular inspection by Ofsted. The most recent Ofsted report is available to view in the setting or online at www.ofsted.co.uk.

**COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT**

Any external agencies visiting the premises must respect this setting’s policies and procedures at all times and not discuss overheard conversations or information regarding children and families outside the setting. Any concerns regarding safeguarding, the Local Authority Designated Officer must be contacted (see section 20 of the Manual).

Breaches of this Safeguarding Policy by external contractors or visitors will be taken very seriously and appropriate action will be taken.

**WHISTLE-BLOWING AND COMPLAINTS**

* A separate complaints procedure exists which should be followed by any individual who has concerns about staff or practice in the setting. .
* If the complaint relates to the Lead Person, the complaint must be directed to the Registered Person.
* If the complaint relates to the Registered Person, the complainant must contact the SPOA and Ofsted. See also section 20 of the Manual.

**BREACHES OF POLICY**

Breaches of this policy will be taken very seriously and disciplinary action will ensue for members of staff. A separate Code of Conduct describes this process in more detail.

**POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually and involve participation of staff in order to promote continuing awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures. Parents will be informed when the policy has been renewed.

**RELATED POLICIES**

The following policies are required by law and also support safeguarding at this setting:

* Complaints
* Missing child
* Failure to collect a child
* Photographs and digital images
* Mobile telephones
* Social networking and e-safety
* Confidentiality and privacy
* Equality of opportunities
* Behaviour management
* Communicating with parents
* Supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities
* Emergency evacuation
* Administering medicines
* Illness and Hygiene
* Health and safety including risk assessment
* Smoking
* Drugs, alcohol and medication (for adults)
* Sun safety
* Healthy eating