Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Booklet

This document forms part of the wider Sticky Fingers Pre-School policy framework. Policy booklets contain related policies and procedures grouped by subject area for ease of access and reference. Each policy and procedure is reviewed and updated as required, with reviews brought forward where changes to legislation, guidance, risk assessments, premises, equipment, staffing, children's needs or practice require this.

Sticky Fingers Pre-School
Newlands
% Newlands Primary School
Windermere Avenue
Millbrook
SO16-9QX
023 80764499
SF.Newlands@
stickyfingersps.co.uk

Sticky Fingers Pre-School
Redbridge
% Redbridge Primary school
Studland Road
Millbrook
SO16-9BB
02380 764717
07726772381
SF.Redbridge@
stickyfingersps.co.uk

Sticky Fingers Pre-school
Tanners Brook
% Regents Park
Community centre
Elmes Drive
Millbrook
SO15-4PF
02380 703571
07470015388
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Sticky Fingers Pre-school
Spring road
% 14th Itchen Scout hut
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07586560936
SF.Springroad@
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Sticky Fingers Pre-school
Portswood
Portswood Primary school
Somerset road,
Portswood,
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Sticky Fingers aspires to provide a safe, fun and welcoming environment for everyone.
We offer children experiences to support their development, empowering them to reach their full potential.

06 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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- Different types of abuse including
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    - Faltering growth (Failure to thrive),
    - Child on child abuse,
    - Child Abuse linked to faith or belief.

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06. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

(Alongside associated in policies and procedures 06.01-06.11)

Approved by: Senior Leadership Team
Date Implemented: September 2026
Last Edited: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are:

Kayleigh C (Newlands)
Rachel C (Redbridge)
Diane B-H (Tanners Brook)
Abbi B (Spring Road)
Sarah H/Chloe H (Portswood)

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is unavailable, the deputy DSL is

Stacey W (Newlands)
Abby L (Redbridge)
Lisa N (Tanners Brook)
Carly B (Spring Road)
Shannon C (Portswood)

The Designated Safeguarding Officers are:

Sarah H (Area Manager)
Louise S (Deputy Area Manager)
Tiffany C (Chairperson) - chair@stickyfingersps.co.uk

Our Safeguarding Commitment

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All practitioners must be alert to any issues of concern in a child's life at home or elsewhere.

We are committed to maintaining an open culture in which safeguarding is embedded in everything we do. We work in partnership with the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and other relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

We maintain a child-centred approach, recognising the particular vulnerabilities of babies and young children and ensuring that their needs and experiences are actively considered and represented.

Our Aim

Our aim is to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment where every child can learn, develop and thrive free from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm.

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We ensure that all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are confident in recognising, recording and responding to concerns. We listen to children, take their views, wishes and feelings seriously, and act promptly when concerns arise.

We work in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals, sharing information appropriately and making referrals when necessary to ensure that children receive the right help and protection at the right time. Our procedures are informed by the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and the safeguarding arrangements of the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).

What is abuse and neglect?

What is abuse and neglect?

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 explains that abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Children may experience harm through acts or through a failure to act to prevent harm. Harm can include physical and non-physical ill-treatment and the impact of witnessing the ill-treatment of others, including domestic abuse. Abuse may occur within a family, institutional or extra-familial context. It may be perpetrated by adults or by other children and may take place offline, online or through technology. Children may be abused by people known to them or, more rarely, by others.

Types of abuse and neglect

There are four main categories of abuse and neglect:

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also involve a parent or carer fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately inducing, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that has a severe and persistent adverse effect on their emotional development. It may include conveying that a child is worthless or unloved, preventing them from expressing their views, deliberately silencing them, making fun of what they say or how they communicate, imposing inappropriate expectations, or exposing them to the ill-treatment of another person. It can also include serious bullying, including cyberbullying, and the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It may involve physical contact or non-contact activities, including exposing children to sexual images or activities, encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely

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to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may include failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter; failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to provide adequate supervision; failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment; or failing to provide suitable education. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Additional safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding concerns are not limited to these four categories. Children may also be at risk through domestic abuse, child sexual abuse, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, trafficking, online harm, radicalisation, harmful practices, abuse by other children and other forms of exploitation or harm. Staff must remain alert to concerns about a child's safety or welfare and report these promptly in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.

Source: Department for Education, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, Appendix A: Glossary.

Key commitment 1

We are committed to creating a culture of safeguarding in which every child is protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm and where safeguarding is understood to be everyone's responsibility.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) reports to the Designated Safeguarding Officers, who provide oversight, support and challenge in relation to safeguarding and child protection matters across Sticky Fingers Pre-School.

The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the setting and is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding concerns are identified, recorded, responded to and referred appropriately. The DSL works closely with the Designated Safeguarding Officers, staff, parents and carers, and relevant external agencies to promote the safety and welfare of children.

Our Designated Safeguarding Officers who oversee all settings are:

Sarah H (Manager of Sticky Fingers) and Louise S (Deputy Manager) and Tiffany (Chairperson)

We have designated people within each setting who lead for safeguarding and are responsible for carrying out these procedures. Our Designated Safeguarding Leads and Children Looked After officers (CLA) are our setting Manager, we also have our setting deputies trained to support and cover this role in the manager's absence.

The Designated officers are responsible for:

- Dealing with any allegations made towards staff in an effective manner and recording and reporting this to the Southampton LADO and Ofsted.
- Informing Ofsted of changes to the person who manages the setting, changes to the settings details and registration.
- Reporting any serious accidents, injury, serious illness or death of a child in our care and any actions taken to Ofsted.
- Supporting the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.

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- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Officer ensure they have links with statutory and voluntary organisations regarding safeguarding children. They understand and follow the procedures of the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and HIPS Procedures.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Officer have full DSL training every 2 years and undertake regular updates to keep their knowledge and skills current. They are responsible for ensuring that all practitioners are adequately informed and/or trained to recognise possible child abuse in the categories of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect or any other specific safeguarding issues, as required.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Officer ensure all staff are aware of the additional vulnerabilities that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture and that these receive full consideration in child, young person or adult protection related matters. Therefore we aim to create an environment in the pre-school which encourages children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Officer ensure that staff are aware and receive training in social factors affecting children's vulnerability including;
    - social exclusion,
    - domestic violence and controlling or coercive behaviour,
    - mental Illness,
    - drug and alcohol abuse (substance misuse),
    - parental learning disability,
    - radicalisation,
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Officer ensure that staff are aware and receive training in other ways that children may suffer significant harm and stay up to date with relevant contextual safeguarding matters:
    - abuse of disabled children,
    - fabricated or induced illness,
    - child abuse linked to spirit possession,
    - sexually exploited children,
    - children who are trafficked and/or exploited,
    - female genital mutilation,
    - extra-familial abuse and threats,
    - children involved in violent offending, with gangs and county lines.
- All staff understand the principles of Early Help set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and know how to recognise when a child or family may benefit from additional support. Staff discuss concerns with the DSL and follow the setting's Early Help and safeguarding procedures.

Key commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to working with statutory agencies in accordance with current safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures, including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and the procedures of the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).

- There are procedures in place to prevent known abusers from coming into the organisation as employees or volunteers at any level.

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- We ensure that our recruitment process complies with statutory guidance, good practice and follows our *08.04 Recruitment policy* and procedures stated within to check suitability of new staff (including students and volunteers) before employment. This includes gathering appropriate references, statutory enhanced DBS checks, verification of identity and qualifications (if applicable.)
- Safeguarding is the responsibility of every person undertaking the work of the organisation in any capacity.
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' is available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against a member of staff, or any other person undertaking work whether paid or unpaid for the organisation, where there is an allegation of abuse or harm of a child. Procedures differentiate clearly between an allegation, a concern about quality of care or practice and complaints.
- There are procedures in place for reporting possible abuse of children or a young person in the setting.
- There are procedures in place for reporting safeguarding concerns where a child may meet the s17 definition of a child in need (Children Act 1989) and/or where a child may be at risk of significant harm, and to enable staff to make decisions about appropriate referrals using local published threshold documents.
- There are procedures in place to ensure staff recognise children and families who may benefit from early help and can respond appropriately using local early help processes and Designated persons should ensure all staff understand how to identify and respond to families who may need early help.
- There are procedures in place in relation to escalating concerns and professional challenge.
- There are procedures in place for working in partnership with relevant agencies involved with a child for whom a child protection plan or other safeguarding plan is in place. These procedures also take account of working with children and families who meet the 'child in need' criteria and with families who may benefit from early help, including where there are issues of vulnerability such as social exclusion, radicalisation, domestic abuse, mental ill-health, substance misuse or parental learning disability.
- These procedures take account of diversity and inclusion issues to promote equal treatment of children and their families and that take account of factors that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture.
- There are procedures in place for record keeping, confidentiality and information sharing, which are in line with data protection requirements.
- We follow government and SSCP/HIPS guidance in relation to extremism.
- The procedures of the SSCP and HIPS must be followed.

Key commitment 3

We are 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.'*

- All staff receive adequate training in child protection matters to ensure that they can recognise the signs and signals of possible abuse including physical, emotional, sexual (including child

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sexual exploitation) and neglect and have access to the setting's policy and procedures for reporting concerns of possible abuse and the safeguarding procedures of the SSCP and HIPS.

- All staff have adequate information on issues affecting vulnerability in families such as social exclusion, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse and parental learning disability, together with training that takes account of factors that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture.
- All staff are aware of the 'Trio of vulnerabilities/Trigger trio' (previously known as the toxic trio) concerning domestic abuse, mental ill-health and substance misuse, and consider other factors that may affect parental capacity and increase risk, such as social exclusion, radicalisation, physical illness and parental learning disability.
- The setting promotes children's personal, social and emotional development and teaches children, in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development, how to recognise unsafe situations, seek help, develop healthy relationships and keep themselves safe.
- All services seek to build the emotional and social skills of children and young people who are service users in an age-appropriate way, including increasing their understanding of how to stay safe.
- We comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026.

Different types of abuse

To support understanding of different types of abuse we have given some definitions and links for more information below.

Contextual Safeguarding.

Starting from birth, children and young people are exposed to the influences of people around them. Initially this is their primary carer along with a small circle of family and trusted friends. Over time this then includes other children's parents, temporary (e.g. nursery, baby sitters, etc.), followed by school teachers and friends. Around the time that most children are leaving primary school and starting their secondary education this sphere widens again as they have access to the internet through mobile technology (with varying degrees of oversight), this cutting across traditional barriers that used to be dictated by who you were and where you lived[1].
Contextual safeguarding is about considering the child and identifying who may be influencing them and the degree of influence.

Child exploitation

More information can be found on NSPCC.org.uk

Child sexual exploitation is defined as:
"Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".
(**Child Sexual Exploitation - Definition and a Guide for Practitioners, Local Leaders and Decision Makers (DfE, 2017)**)

[1] Contextual Safeguarding 2026

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Child criminal exploitation is defined as:
"where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology."
Serious Violence Strategy (HM Government, 2018)

County lines

County lines describes gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal line'. Children and vulnerable adults may be exploited to move or store drugs and money and may be subjected to coercion, intimidation, violence, including sexual violence, and the use of weapons. County lines activity can happen locally as well as across the UK; there is no specified distance of travel required.
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Appendix A: Glossary – 'County lines'.

Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)

Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child.
The DfE describes three main, and not mutually exclusive, ways in which a carer may fabricate or induce illness in a child:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms, including fabrication of past medical history;
- fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of documents or specimens, for example hospital charts, records, letters or specimens of bodily fluids;
- induction of illness by a variety of means.

Harm to the child may be caused through unnecessary or invasive medical treatment, which may be harmful or dangerous, based on symptoms that are falsely described or deliberately manufactured by the carer and lack independent corroboration.
The child may also experience emotional harm through limitations placed on their development and social interaction, for example overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning, or prevention from participating in normal social interaction.

Faltering growth (Failure to thrive)

Growth has been used to measure babies and young children's health and wellbeing. Most children with faltering growth will be detected by primary healthcare professionals in early childhood.
Signs that can suggest faltering growth are;

- The child has not attained significant developmental milestones.
- The child is dehydrated.
- The child may seem listless or un-demanding.
- The child does not show an interest in their surroundings and is unresponsive to stimulation.
- Normal growth which is interrupted by a period of failing to gain weight or even weight loss.

It is important to rule out any organic cause such as a medical condition.

Child-on-Child abuse

View 09.10 Promoting Positive behaviour policy and 06.01 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns Page 15.

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Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes
- upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Part One, paragraph 35.

Although some forms of child-on-child abuse are more commonly associated with older children, harmful behaviour can occur at any age. Staff must take all concerns seriously, including concerning behaviour between very young children, and must consider the needs and developmental stage of all children involved. Any concern must be reported to the DSL without delay.

Child Abuse linked to faith or belief

"Abuse linked to faith or belief is where concerns for a child's welfare have been identified, and could be caused by, a belief in witchcraft, spirit or demonic possession, ritual or satanic abuse features; or when practices linked to faith or belief are harmful to a child.
Any abuse that takes place against those who are branded (or labelled) either as a witch or as having been possessed by an evil spirit is unacceptable. Significant harm (including murder) can occur because of concerted efforts to 'excise' or 'deliver' evil from a child (or vulnerable adult)."
Metropolitan police (met.police.uk)

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06. Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures

06.01 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns

Approved by: Senior Leadership Team
Date Implemented: September 2026
Last Edited: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

Our Designated Safeguarding Person/Lead's (DSL), Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead's (DDSL) and Designated Safeguarding Officers are named in 06 Safeguarding and Child Protection - Page 4

Safeguarding roles

- All staff recognise and know how to respond to signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. They understand that they have a responsibility to act immediately by discussing their concerns with the Designated Person or a named back-up designated person.
- The manager and deputy are the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, responsible for coordinating the setting's response to safeguarding and child protection concerns and for ensuring that appropriate action is taken to safeguard children.
- All concerns about the welfare of children in the setting should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures that all staff are alert to the indicators of abuse and neglect and understand how to identify and respond to these.
- The setting should not operate without an identified Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer at any time.

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- The line managers of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are the Designated Officers.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead informs the Designated Safeguarding Officers about serious concerns as soon as they arise and agree the action to be taken, seeking further clarification if there are any doubts that the issue is safeguarding.
- If it is not possible to contact the Designated Officers, action to safeguard the child is taken first and the Designated Officers are informed later. If the Designated Officers are unavailable advice from children's services.
- We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The Designated Person will take immediate action to contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well, following our *09.02 Attendance and Absence* policy and procedures stated within. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- The views and wishes of the child or young person will always be taken into account when considering whether information should be shared. However, the setting may override a child or young person's refusal to consent to information being shared where it considers this necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or to intervene where a crime may have been committed, or where this is necessary to prevent harm to a child or adult.
- Where information shared by a child or young person gives rise to concerns that an adult may be at risk of abuse, neglect or harm, the concern will be reported to Children's Services, who will provide advice and guidance on any further action required.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns.
- The setting will notify Ofsted of any notifiable incident or change in circumstances within the required statutory timescale. The Designated Safeguarding Officers are responsible for ensuring that required notifications are made promptly and recorded.
- If there is an incident, which may require reporting to RIDDOR, the designated officers immediately seek guidance from the pre-school legal representatives. There continues to be a requirement that the designated officers follow legislative requirements in relation to reporting to RIDDOR. This is fully addressed in section *01 Health and Safety procedures*.
- All settings follow procedures of Southampton Children's Safeguarding Partnership (SSCP) and HIPS for safeguarding and any specific safeguarding procedures such as responding to radicalisation/extremism concerns. Procedures are followed for managing allegations against staff, as well as for responding to concerns and complaints raised about quality or practice issues, whistle-blowing and escalation.

Responding to marks or injuries observed

- Where a mark, bruise or injury is observed on a child, or a parent/carer informs the setting of an injury that occurred outside the setting, the parent/carer will be asked to provide a written

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account of what happened, using their own words. This provides an accurate record of the information given by the parent/carer.

- Practitioners will speak with the child using open prompts, including the 4 Ws — what, where, when and who — to establish what happened. This approach will be adapted to the child's age, stage of development and individual communication needs. Babies and non-verbal children will be given appropriate opportunities to communicate through sounds, gestures, facial expressions, body language or other forms of communication.

- Practitioners will use open, non-leading prompts and will not attempt to investigate the concern.

- Any concern will be shared with the DSL without delay and recorded in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.

- If there are concerns about the circumstances or explanation given, by the parent/carer and/or child, the designated safeguarding lead decides the course of action to be taken.

- If a mark or injury is noticed later in the day and the parent/carer is not present, the child will be given an opportunity to explain what happened using age- and developmentally appropriate open prompts, including the 4 Ws — what, where, when and who. An 'Outside the Setting' form will be completed and raised with the designated person. The form will be shared with the parent/carer at the end of the session, who will be asked to provide a written account of their explanation in their own words and sign the form.

- If there are concerns about the nature of the injury and it is unlikely to have occurred at the setting, the designated person will decide the appropriate course of action, taking into consideration the child's account and any information available at the time. If the mark or injury is to the head, the parent/carer will be contacted for further information in accordance with the setting's bumped head procedure. (see health, medical and first aid policy)

- If the parent/carer believes that the injury occurred at the setting, this will be recorded on an accident record, together with an accurate record of the discussion with the parent/carer. Following the discussion with the parent/carer, the circumstances will be discussed with the practitioners involved to establish what has happened. The parent/carer's account will be recorded as information provided and will not automatically be accepted as evidence of how the injury occurred.

- Where there are concerns about the circumstances of the injury, including concerns that responsibility may be being incorrectly attributed to the setting or that there may be a safeguarding concern, this will be referred to the DSL/designated person and managed confidentially in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.

Responding to the signs and symptoms of abuse (including child-on-child abuse)

- Concerns about the welfare of a child are discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.
- A written record is made of the concern as soon as possible.
- Concerns that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm are responded to immediately and if a referral is necessary this is made on the same working day.
- In an unlikely event that a child is brought to the setting with serious injuries, it would be appropriate to discuss this with the DSL or person in charge immediately who should telephone for an ambulance.

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- Any concerns where a child has experienced child-on-child abuse in the setting would be subject to an investigation and reported to Ofsted.

Responding to a disclosure by a child

When responding to a disclosure from a child, the aim is to get just enough information to take appropriate action.

The staff member:

- Listens carefully and calmly, allowing the child time to express what they want to say.
- Staff do not attempt to question the child but if they are not sure what the child said, or what they meant, they may prompt the child further by saying *'tell me more about that'* or *'show me again'.*
- They will use the 4 W's -
  - "what happened?,"
  - "when did it happen?"
  - "Where did it happen?"
  - "Who was there?"
- If a child shows visible signs of abuse such as bruising or injury to any part of the body and it is age appropriate to do so, the staff member will ask the child how it happened.
- After the initial disclosure, they do not further question or attempt to interview a child. An accurate written record is completed of the disclosure that includes:
  - Child's name,
  - The date and time of the observation or the disclosure,
  - The exact words spoken or noises made by the child,
  - The names of any other person present at the time,
  - If marks or injuries are observed, these are recorded on a body diagram.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed as soon as possible,
- These records are signed and dated and kept in our child protection file which is kept securely and confidentially, information will also be added to CPOMS.

Decision Making (all categories of abuse)

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead makes a professional judgement about referring to other agencies, including Children's Services, using the Southampton Pathways document and relevant Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) safeguarding procedures.
-
  - **Level 1: Universal** – Children and young people whose needs are being met through universal services.
  - **Level 2: Early Help** – Children and young people who require additional support to meet their needs and would benefit from an early help response.
  - **Level 3: Targeted / Specialist Support** – Children and young people with multiple or complex needs who require a coordinated response from additional or specialist services.
  - **Level 4: Statutory / Safeguarding Intervention** – Children and young people who are in acute need and may be suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and require statutory intervention.

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- Staff are alert to indicators that a family may benefit from early help services and should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, also recording information on CPOMS if they have not already done so.
- Parents and carers can gain additional support and advice from;
  - **Samaritans: www.samaritians.org, Call: 116 123**
  - **The national association for people abused in childhood: www.napac.org.uk, 0808 801 0331**
  - **NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 Email:help@nspcc.org.uk**

Seeking consent from parents/carers to share information

Parents are made aware of the setting's Privacy Notice, which explains the circumstances under which information about their child may be shared with other agencies.

The setting will seek consent from the child's parents/carers before sharing information with other agencies or making a referral, including referrals for Early Help at Level 2 and support at other levels where appropriate. If consent is withheld, information may be shared without consent where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of significant harm, or where seeking consent would place the child or another person at risk of harm or prejudice a safeguarding or police investigation.

Where consent is withheld and a referral is nevertheless made, this will be recorded. The parent/carer will normally be informed that the referral is being made, unless doing so may place the child or another person at risk of harm or prejudice a safeguarding or police investigation.

Informing parents when making a Child Protection referral

The setting will seek parental consent before making a child protection referral unless doing so may place the child or another person at risk of harm, or may prejudice a safeguarding or police investigation. Where a referral is made without parental consent, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from Children's Services and will consider whether and when it is safe and appropriate to inform the parent/carer.

Parents/carers will not be informed prior to making a referral where:

- there is a possibility that the child may be put at risk of harm by discussion with the parent/carer, or where a serious offence may have been committed and informing the parent/carer could jeopardise a potential police investigation;
- there are concerns relating to sexual abuse, fabricated or induced illness, female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage, where informing the parent/carer may place the child at further risk or prejudice enquiries;
- contacting the parent/carer may place another person at risk of harm, or where attempts to contact the parent/carer to seek consent would cause delay in making a necessary safeguarding referral.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a professional judgement about whether parental consent should be sought and whether and when the parent/carer should be informed. The decision, including the reasons for it, will be recorded. Advice will be sought from Children's Services where there is any doubt.

Referring

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy follows the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) procedures for making a referral.

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- If the DSL or deputy is not on site, the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) takes responsibility for making the referral to Children's Resource Services, following the appropriate SSCP procedures.
- If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, or an incident occurs at the end of the session and staff are concerned about the child going home that day, Children's Resource Services and/or the Police will be contacted immediately, as appropriate.
- If the child is safe because they remain in the setting, and there is time to do so, the DSL will contact the Children's Resource Service (CRS) for advice and follow the advice provided.
- Serious child protection incidents recorded on CPOMS will automatically be notified to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). The DSL will also speak with the DSO to ensure that the incident has been seen and discussed.

Further recording

- Information is recorded on CPOMS including information following discussions with parents and any further discussion with social care is recorded**.** If recording a conversation with parents that is significant, regarding the incident or a related issue, parents are asked to sign and date it a record of the conversation. It should be clearly recorded what action was taken, what the outcome was and any follow-up.
- If a referral was made, copies of all documents are kept and stored securely and confidentially and added to CPOMS.
- Each member of staff/volunteer who has witnessed an incident or disclosure should also make a written statement recording what they saw or heard.
- We will continue to welcome and support the child and family whilst safeguarding enquiries or investigations are being undertaken, unless advised otherwise by Children's Services or the Police.
- Follow up phone calls to or from social care are recorded with date, time, the name of the social care worker and the information discussed.
- Safeguarding records are kept up to date on CPOMS to allow continuity of safeguarding information and support during closures or holiday periods.

Professional Disagreement/Escalation Process

- If a staff member disagrees with a decision made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) not to make a referral to the Children's Resource Service (CRS), they must initially discuss their concerns with the DSL and try to resolve the disagreement.
- If the disagreement cannot be resolved with the DSL and the staff member continues to believe that a safeguarding referral is required, they should discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).
- If the issue cannot be resolved, the Whistleblowing Policy should be followed (see 06.03 Whistleblowing).
- Supervision meetings will also be used to discuss safeguarding concerns and professional disagreements, but this must not delay action or the making of a safeguarding referral where one is required.
- If we believe that a referral made to the Children's Resource Service (CRS) has not been dealt with appropriately, or that safeguarding concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) escalation process.

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Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs, for non-medical reasons.

Staff should be alert to signs that FGM may have occurred or that a child may be at risk of FGM. Any concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. Where there is information or a disclosure that FGM has been carried out, the DSL will contact the Police immediately and will also contact the Children's Resource Service (CRS) for advice and follow the appropriate Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) procedures. Where there is a concern that a child may be at risk of FGM, the DSL will contact the Children's Resource Service (CRS) for advice and take appropriate safeguarding action.

FGM is illegal in the UK under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. It is also an offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to carry out FGM overseas or to assist or arrange for FGM to be carried out. FGM is a harmful practice with serious physical and psychological consequences.

The setting will follow relevant SSCP safeguarding procedures and will ensure that staff are adequately informed and/or trained to recognise and respond appropriately to concerns relating to FGM.

Possible indicators that FGM may have occurred or that a child may be at risk include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing;
- painful urination or urinary tract infections;
- urinary retention;
- evidence of surgery or injury to the genital area;
- changes in nappy changing or toileting routines;
- spending longer than usual in the bathroom or toilet;
- changes in behaviour following an absence from the setting, including increased anxiety around adults or reluctance to talk about home experiences or family holidays;
- parents/carers being reluctant to allow the child to undergo normal medical examinations;
- a sibling or other family member having undergone FGM;
- discussion of plans for an extended family holiday where there are other indicators that a child may be at risk.

For further support and guidance:

NSPCC 24-hour FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
Government help and advice: www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation

Children and young people vulnerable to Extremism or Radicalisation

Early years settings, schools and local authorities have a duty to identify and respond appropriately to concerns that a child or adult may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Local safeguarding and Prevent procedures are in place to support professionals in responding to concerns that children or young people may be at risk of being influenced by or becoming vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation.

There may be safeguarding implications where children have close or extended family or friendship networks linked to involvement in extremism or terrorism.

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- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will familiarise themselves with the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) procedures for responding to concerns relating to extremism and radicalisation, including local Prevent and Channel referral arrangements, and current government Prevent guidance.
- The DSL will familiarise themselves with the following guidance:
  - Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism – https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-duty-guidance-protecting-people-vulnerable-to-being-drawn-into-terrorism
  - Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales – https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance
- The DSL will follow relevant SSCP, local Prevent and Channel procedures when responding to concerns regarding extremism or radicalisation and will seek advice from the Children's Resource Service (CRS) where appropriate.
- The DSL will ensure that staff know how to recognise and raise concerns about extremism and radicalisation.
- Where a concern indicates that a child may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism, the DSL will follow the appropriate local referral and Channel procedures.
- The DSL will ensure that staff receive appropriate information and/or training to recognise possible signs that a child may be vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation and understand how to report concerns.
- The DSL will complete appropriate Prevent and/or WRAP (or equivalent) training where this is available and appropriate, and will support staff to access relevant training offered through local arrangements.
- The DSL will maintain an awareness of the terrorism and extremism risks relevant to the area in which the setting operates and ensure that this informs the setting's safeguarding and Prevent arrangements.
- The setting will keep its Prevent training and awareness arrangements under review and ensure that training reflects current government and local guidance.

Parental consent for radicalisation referrals

The setting will follow relevant Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP), Prevent and Channel procedures when considering whether parental consent should be sought before making a referral concerning a child or adult who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Consent will normally be sought from the individual or, for very young children, from their parent/carer before making a referral. However, consent will not be sought where doing so may place a child or another person at risk of harm, may prejudice a safeguarding or police investigation, or where an offence may have been or may be committed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will seek advice from the Children's Resource Service (CRS) and follow the appropriate local procedures when deciding whether consent should be sought.

The DSL will be mindful that discussing a potential referral may be upsetting for the child and their family. Where appropriate, initial advice may be sought from the relevant safeguarding or Prevent service without providing identifying information.

Consent is required before an individual participates in a Channel intervention. The setting will follow the current Channel procedures regarding how and when this consent is obtained.
If there is an immediate concern that a person is involved in terrorist activity or that there is an imminent threat, the Police will be contacted immediately. Information and advice can also be obtained through the appropriate current Prevent and counter-terrorism channels.

Concerns about children affected by gang activity/serious youth violence

Staff should be aware that children can be affected by gang activity and serious youth violence,

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including through the involvement of others in their household, such as an older sibling or parent/carer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will familiarise themselves with relevant Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and local contextual safeguarding procedures and ensure these are followed where relevant.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, the DSL will contact the Children's Resource Service (CRS) and follow the advice provided.

Where there is non-urgent information or intelligence that does not amount to a crime or safeguarding concern, a Community Partnership Information (CPI) form may be completed to share information with the Police. The current form and guidance are available through Safe4Me. https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/sharing-information/

Forced Marriage / Honour-Based Violence

Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both people do not consent and are pressured or coerced into it. This may involve physical, psychological, financial, sexual or emotional pressure. Forced marriage is different from an arranged marriage, where both individuals have a free choice whether to accept the arrangement.

Forced marriage is a criminal offence in the UK and can affect both children and adults. It may also be linked to honour-based violence, including threats, assault, imprisonment or other forms of harm.

Staff should be alert to concerns that a child may be at risk of forced marriage or honour-based violence and report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. Staff must not approach family members or attempt to investigate concerns themselves where doing so could place the child at further risk.

The DSL will contact the Children's Resource Service (CRS) for advice and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures. Where there is immediate danger, the Police should be contacted on 999.

Forced Marriage Unit: 020 7008 0151
Email: fmu@fcdo.gov.uk **Forced Marriage Unit - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage**

Sticky Fingers Pre-School
Newlands
% Newlands Primary School
Windermere Avenue
Millbrook
SO16-9QX
023 80764499
SF.Newlands@
stickyfingersps.co.uk

Sticky Fingers Pre-School
Redbridge
% Redbridge Primary school
Studland Road
Millbrook
SO16-9BB
02380 764717
07726772381
SF.Redbridge@
stickyfingersps.co.uk

Sticky Fingers Pre-school
Tanners Brook
% Regents Park
Community centre
Elmes Drive
Millbrook
SO15-4PF
02380 703571
07470015388
SF.Tannersbrook@
stickyfingersps.co.uk

Sticky Fingers Pre-school
Spring road
% 14th Itchen Scout hut
Spring road
Sholing
Southampton
SO19-2NZ
07586560936
SF.Springroad@
stickyfingersps.co.uk

Sticky Fingers Pre-school
Portswood
Portswood Primary school
Somerset road,
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06 Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

06.02 Low level concerns and allegations of harm or abuse against staff, volunteers or agency staff

Approved by: Senior Leadership Team
Date Implemented: September 2026
Last Edited: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

Concerns may come from a parent, child, colleague, volunteer, agency worker or member of the public. Any concern or allegation about the conduct of an adult working in or on behalf of the setting must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay, even if the person making the allegation later withdraws it.

What is a low-level concern?

A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the setting may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the setting's professional expectations or code of conduct, but does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). A low-level concern does not mean that the behaviour is insignificant.

Low-level concerns may include:

- inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour;
- behaviour that may be inappropriate depending on the circumstances;
- behaviour that is inconsistent with the setting's staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work;
- being over-familiar with children;
- showing favouritism towards particular children;
- taking photographs of children using a personal mobile phone or other unauthorised device;
- seeking unnecessary one-to-one contact with a child in a secluded area;
- using inappropriate, sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low-level concerns may form part of a wider pattern of behaviour. Staff should report concerns rather than making their own judgement about whether behaviour is sufficiently serious to be reported.

Responding to low-level concerns

All low-level concerns about the conduct of staff, students, volunteers or agency staff must be reported to the DSL and recorded on CPOMS.

The DSL will review the concern and determine the appropriate response. This may include supervision, training, support, changes to working arrangements or the setting's disciplinary procedures. Where there is uncertainty about whether a concern meets the threshold for referral, the DSL will seek advice from the LADO.

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Low-level concerns will be reviewed for patterns or repeated behaviour which may indicate a wider safeguarding concern. Appropriate records will be maintained on CPOMS.

Reporting low-level concerns supports an open and transparent safeguarding culture, helps ensure that adults consistently model the setting's expectations and can also protect staff from misunderstandings or unfounded allegations.

Allegations of harm or abuse

An allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or agency worker must be referred to the LADO where it is alleged that the person has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, 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; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

These criteria apply whether the behaviour occurred in the setting or elsewhere, where it may indicate a risk to children.

Informing and responding to allegations

- All staff must report allegations immediately to the DSL.
- The DSL will take immediate action to safeguard children and any other person who may be at risk.
- The DSL will contact the LADO as soon as possible and within one working day where an allegation meets, or may meet, the above criteria. If it is unclear whether the threshold is met, the DSL will seek advice from the LADO.
- The DSL will contact the Children's Resource Service (CRS) where a child protection referral is required and will follow the advice provided.
- Where a criminal offence may have been committed, the Police will be contacted as appropriate. This must not be delayed where immediate police action is required.
- The DSL will not conduct an investigation or ask leading questions. Only the information necessary to understand the nature of the allegation and take immediate safeguarding action will be obtained. Any further investigation will be agreed with the LADO and/or other relevant agencies.
- The DSL will follow the advice of the LADO regarding next steps, including whether an internal investigation should take place, whether the Police or CRS should be involved, and whether any changes to working arrangements are required.
- Appropriate temporary measures may be put in place to safeguard children while advice is being sought. Suspension will only be considered where appropriate and following relevant advice.
- Parents/carers will be informed about an allegation involving their child when appropriate, following discussion with the LADO and/or relevant agencies. Parents will not be informed where doing so could place a child or another person at risk, prejudice an investigation or where the Police or CRS advises that they should not be informed.
- The DSL will keep a clear record on CPOMS of the allegation, advice received, decisions made, actions taken and subsequent updates.
- Any child protection concerns relating to the child will also be managed and recorded in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.

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- Where an allegation is substantiated, the setting will review whether any changes to procedures, training, supervision or risk assessments are required.
- Allegations will continue to be managed appropriately even if the person concerned resigns, ceases to volunteer or otherwise leaves the setting.

Risk assessment and safeguarding arrangements

The DSL will consider whether the incident identifies any wider safeguarding or environmental risks. Where appropriate, the setting will review or create a risk assessment and consider whether changes are required to working practices, supervision, the environment or other safeguarding arrangements.

Allegations against agency staff

Any allegation against agency staff will be managed in accordance with this procedure. The DSL will inform the agency where appropriate and in accordance with advice from the LADO. The setting will continue to follow the LADO process regardless of the employment arrangements of the individual.

Allegations against the Designated Safeguarding Lead

If a concern or allegation is made about the DSL, it must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) without delay. The DSO will take responsibility for managing the concern and will contact the LADO where required.

If an allegation is made against the DSO, the Chair of the Management Committee will be informed and will take responsibility for ensuring that the matter is managed appropriately.

If an allegation is made against a member of the Management Committee, the DSO will be informed.

Where the DSL is unable to carry out their safeguarding role because they are the subject of an allegation, the DSO will ensure that another suitably experienced person takes responsibility for safeguarding arrangements while the matter is managed.

Recording

A clear and factual record of every allegation or concern is made on CPOMS, including:

- the nature of the concern or allegation;
- the date and time it was reported;
- who reported it and who it concerns;
- any immediate safeguarding action taken;
- advice received from the LADO, CRS, Police or other relevant agencies;
- decisions made and the reasons for those decisions;
- action taken and any follow-up required.

Where the concern relates to a particular child, relevant safeguarding information will also be recorded on the child's safeguarding record.

Where more than one child is involved, information relevant to each child will be recorded on their individual safeguarding record, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

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Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Where an individual is dismissed, or would have been dismissed had they not left, because they have harmed or may have harmed a child or otherwise meet the legal criteria for a referral, the setting will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where required.

The setting will seek advice where necessary to ensure that any DBS referral is made in accordance with the relevant legal requirements.

Ofsted notification

The setting will notify Ofsted of any allegation of harm or other significant event that is required to be notified under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.

Notifications will be made within the required timescale. The DSL/management will liaise with the LADO and relevant agencies where appropriate.

Escalating concerns

If a member of staff believes that children may be at risk because of the actions or behaviour of a member of staff, volunteer or agency worker, they must report their concern immediately to the DSL.

If the staff member remains concerned that appropriate action has not been taken, they must raise the matter with the DSO.

If concerns remain unresolved, the setting's whistleblowing procedure must be followed as set out in *06.03 Whistleblowing.*

Safeguarding concerns must not be delayed because of supervision, management or internal procedures.

Further guidance

NSPCC – Low-level safeguarding concerns
https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/low-level-concerns

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06.03 Whistleblowing

This policy applies to all those involved with the early years setting, including employees, authorised visitors or work experience students, who should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing. We encourage all individuals to be mindful of and report any concerns that they may have about the illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct of others in the early years setting or the way in which the early years setting is run.

Employees and workers who make public disclosures, generally about wrong doings in the workplace, are commonly referred to as “whistle-blowers”.

Whistleblowing is separate from the grievance procedure. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances, you should use the normal grievance procedure.

The whistle blowing procedure must be followed in the first instance if:

- Abuse of a child or vulnerable person,
- A child, parent, employee or volunteer being put at risk of harm,
- Unsafe working practices or the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered,
- A person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject. This includes non-compliance with policies and procedures, breaches of EYFS and/or registration requirements,
- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed,
- The use of unsafe equipment,
- the working environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged;
- A miscarriage of justice, is occurring or likely to occur,
- Falsification of financial records,
- Bribery and/or corruption which has taken or is about to take place.

An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If you are told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. In this event you should report the matter to the Manager or Chair person.

Any concerns should be reported as quickly as possible. There are 3 stages to raising concerns

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as follows:

1. If staff wish to raise or discuss any issues which might fall into the above categories, they should normally raise this issue with the setting manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead.
2. Staff who are unable to raise the issue with the setting manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead should raise the issue with the pre-school manager/Designated Officer.
3. If staff are still concerned after the investigation, or the matter is so serious that they cannot discuss it with the pre-school manager/Designated officer, they should raise the matter with the Chairperson.

If an employee, volunteer or family member feels the matter cannot be discussed at the Pre-school then you can contact the Pre-school Manager via the telephone or email address.

Anonymous allegations
This policy encourages you to put your name to your allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are less powerful, but they will be considered against the following criteria:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources
- The Pre-school's best interests
- The protection of the Pre-school's assets

You should also bear in mind if you do wish to raise a concern anonymously; it would be more difficult for the matter to be investigated and for you to be provided with feedback.

What happens next?

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Designated Officer/Chairperson will follow the procedures set out in *06.02 Low level concerns and allegations of serious harm or abuse against staff, volunteers or agency staff* and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be notified of the allegation within 24 hours.
- All employees are legally protected if they make a qualifying disclosure relating to any of the above points.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualifying disclosure (something that it is in the public interest to disclose) will be a disciplinary offence.
- Any matter you raise under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation, if you request it, will be reported back to you.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- You will not be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that your continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because you have raised a legitimate concern.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure, the early years setting disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- If you make a malicious, vexatious, or false allegation, this will be considered to be a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken against you.

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Ultimately, if an issue cannot be resolved and the member of staff believes a child remains at risk because the setting or the local authority have not responded appropriately, then you can refer to the *10.02 complaints* procedure or Ofsted Complaints Procedure (www.gov.uk)

The NSPCC have introduced a whistle-blowing helpline 0800 028 0285 (08.00 - 20.00 Monday - friday, 9.00 - 18.00 weekends) for professionals who believe that:

- their own or another employer will cover up the concern
- they will be treated unfairly by their own employer for complaining
- if they have already told their own employer and they have not responded.

They can also be contacted by email: help@nspcc.org.uk or written to at:

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC),
Weston House,
42 Curtain Road,
London,
EC2A 3NH

General guidance on whistleblowing can also be found at https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing

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

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06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

06.04 Visitor or intruder on the premises

The safety and security of the premises is maintained at all times and staff are vigilant in areas that pose a risk, such as shared premises. A risk assessment is completed to ensure that unauthorised visitors cannot gain access.

Visitors with legitimate business *(also see our working in partnership with other agencies policy)* **-** generally a visitor will have made a prior appointment

- On arrival, they are asked to verify their identity and confirm who they are visiting.
- Staff will ask them to sign in and explain the procedures for the use of mobile phones and emergency evacuation.
- Visitors (including visiting VIPs) are never left alone with the children at any time.
- Visitors to the setting are monitored and asked to leave immediately should their behaviour give cause for concern.

Intruder

An intruder is an individual who has not followed visitor procedures and has no legitimate business to be in the setting; he or she may or may not be a hazard to the setting.

- An individual who appears to have no business in the setting will be asked for their name and purpose for being there.
- The staff member identifies any risk posed by the intruder.
- The staff member ensures the individual follows the procedure for visitors.
- The setting manager is immediately informed of the incident and takes necessary action to safeguard children.
- If there are concerns for the safety of children, staff evacuate them to a safe place in the building and contact police. In some circumstances this could lead to 'lock-down' of the setting

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and will be managed by the responding emergency service (see procedure 01.21 Terrorist threat/attack and lock-down).

- The Designated person informs their Designated officer of the situation at the first opportunity.
- In the case of a serious breach where there was a perceived or actual threat to the safety of the children, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Area managers (Designated Safeguarding Officers) will follow advice from the police and complete 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form before informing the chairperson on the day of the incident. The trustees/managers (Designated Safeguarding Officers) ensure a robust organisational response and ensure that learning is shared. Ofsted may also be informed.

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06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

06.05 Uncollected child

Parents are asked to provide the following specific information when their child enrols at the setting, which is recorded on our Registration Form:

- Home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.
- Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable).
- Mobile telephone number,
- Names, addresses, telephone numbers and the relationship to the child of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
- Who has parental responsibility for the child.
- Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child,
- A password for communications with the setting.

On occasions when parents, or the persons normally authorised to collect the child, are not able to collect the child, they provide us details of the name and a description of the person of the person collecting. The parent will give this person a password that is different to the password that they chose when registering their child, and agree this with the setting. This information will also be logged on CPOMS.

If a child is not collected by closing time, or the end of the session and there has been no contact from the parent, or there are concerns about the child's welfare then this procedure is followed.

- The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.

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- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed of the uncollected child as soon as possible and attempts to contact the parents by phone.
- If the parents cannot be contacted, the Designated Safeguarding Lead uses the emergency contacts to inform a known carer of the situation and arrange collection of the child.
- The child stays at the setting in the care of two of our fully-vetted workers, one of whom will be our manager or deputy manager until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker, or by another person specified by social care.
- We ensure that the child is not anxious, staff will distract the child through play and we do not discuss our concerns in front of them.
- After one hour, the Designated Safeguarding Lead contacts the local social care out-of-hours duty officer if the parents or other known carer cannot be contacted and there are concerns about the child's welfare or the welfare of the parents. Social care will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should arrange for the collection of the child by social care. Where appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also notify police.
- Members of staff do not:
- Go off the premises to look for the parents,
- Leave the premises to take the child home or to a carer,
- Offer to take the child home with them to care for them in their own home until contact with the parent is made.

Following the child being collected from the setting:

- Staff make a record of the incident on CPOMS. A record of conversations with parents should be made, staff members present and time logs, along with the actions taken including if there are safeguarding and welfare concerns about the child, or if Social Care have been involved due to the late collection.
- If there are recurring incidents of late collection, a meeting is arranged with the parents to agree a plan to improve time-keeping and identify any further support that may be required. Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked.

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06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

06.06 Missing child

Children's safety is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. Every attempt is made, through the implementation of our outings procedure and our exit/entrance procedure, to ensure the security of children is maintained at all times. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

In the building

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the member of staff informs the setting manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead who initiates a search within the setting.
- Another staff member will call all of the other children to the carpet area and the register is checked to ensure that no other child/children have gone astray.
- If the child is found on-site, the Designated Safeguarding Lead checks on the welfare of the child and investigates the circumstances of the incident.
- If the child is not found on site, the Setting Manager will nominate one member of staff to search the immediate vicinity. . If there is no sign of the child, the Setting Manager talks to our staff to find out when and where the child was last seen and the police are called immediately. A recent photo and a note of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- The parents are then called and informed.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead contacts their Designated Safeguarding Officer, to inform them of the situation and seek assistance.

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Off-site (outing or walk)

This describes what to do when our staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving our manager and/or other staff back in our setting premises. If our manager has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly. What to do when a child goes missing from a whole group outing may be a little different, as parents usually attend and are responsible for their own child.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the senior staff present carries out a headcount.
- One member of staff searches the immediate vicinity.
- Our staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- If the child is not found, the senior staff member calls the police and reports the child missing then contacts the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A recent photo and a description of what the child is wearing is given to the police.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead informs the parents.
- Members of staff return the children to the setting as soon as possible if it is safe to do so. According to the advice of the police, one senior member of staff should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- The designated person contacts the Designated officer, who attends the setting.

The investigation

- Ofsted are informed as soon as possible (and at least within 14 days).
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer carries out a full investigation.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Officer speak with the parents together and explain the process of the investigation
- Each member of staff present during the incident writes a full report as part of the investigation.
- Staff do not discuss any missing child incident with the press.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all our staff cooperate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff and parents. Children's social care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- Our staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- They may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Our setting Manager ensures that any staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame our staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at our manager. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is our manager and the other should be another representative of the management committee. No matter

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how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against our staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.

- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. Our remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly, but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the outcome, our staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. Our Managers will use their discretion to decide what action to take.

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06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

06.07 Incapacitated parent

Incapacitated refers to a condition which renders a parent unable to take responsibility for their child; this could be at the time of collecting their child from the setting or on arrival. Concerns may include:

- appearing drunk
- appearing under the influence of drugs
- demonstrating angry and threatening behaviour to the child, members of staff or others
- appearing erratic or manic

Informing

- If a member of staff is concerned that a parent displays any of the above characteristics, they inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

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- The Designated Safeguarding Lead assesses the risk and decides if further intervention is required.
- If it is decided that no further action is required, a record of the incident is made on CPOMS.
- If intervention is required, the Designated Safeguarding Lead speaks to the parent in an appropriate, confidential manner.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will, in agreement with the parent, use emergency contacts listed for the child to ask an alternative adult to collect the child.
- The emergency contact is informed of the situation by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and of the setting's requirement to inform social care of their contact details.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officers are informed of the situation as soon as possible and they provide advice and assistance as appropriate.
- If there is no one suitable to collect the child, social care are informed.
- If violence is threatened towards anybody, the police are called immediately.
- If the parent takes the child from the setting while incapacitated the police are called immediately and a referral is made to social care.

Recording

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead records the incident on CPOMS including whether social care or the police were contacted and advice given. Further updates/notes/conversations/telephone calls are recorded.

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06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

06.08 Death of a child on-site

Identifying

- If it is suspected that a child has died in the setting, emergency resuscitation will be given to the child by a qualified First Aider until the ambulance arrives.
- Only a medical practitioner can confirm a child has died.

Informing

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures emergency services have been contacted; ambulance and police.
- The parents are contacted and asked to come to the setting immediately, informing them that there has been an incident involving their child and that an ambulance has been called; asking them to come straight to the setting or hospital as appropriate.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead calls the Designated Safeguarding Officer and informs them of what has happened.
- The trustees/managers (Designated Officers) are contacted and 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form prepared by the designated person and designated officer.
- A member of staff is delegated to phone all parents to collect their children. The reason given must be agreed by the Designated Officer and the information given should be the same to each parent.
- The decision on how long the setting will remain closed will be based on police advice.
- Ofsted are informed of the incident by the nominated person and a RIDDOR report is made.
- Staff will not discuss the death of a child with the press.

Responding

- The trustees/managers (Designated Safeguarding Officers) will decide how the death is investigated within the organisation after taking advice from relevant agencies. We would also contact our legal body for advice.

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- The trustees/managers (designated officers) will coordinate support for staff and children to ensure their mental health and well-being.

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06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

06.09 Looked after children

We are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff in our provision are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in our care to achieve and reach their full potential.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Children Looked After and Education Achievement officer (CLA) is:

Kayleigh C (Newlands)

Rachel C (Redbridge)

Diane B-H (Tanners Brook)

Abbi B (Spring Road)

Sarah H/ Chloe H (Portswood)

Identification.

A 'Looked after Child' is a child in public care, who is placed with foster carers, in a residential home or with parents or other relatives. This term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others.

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken into the care of the local authority.

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Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being. Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home; however, there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who works.

We place emphasis on promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on two important concepts: attachment and resilience. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives, as the foundation for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and enable the development of positive dispositions for learning.

Every Looked After Child must have a Care Plan which is completed and updated by their allocated social worker. The Care Plan must be prepared prior to a child's first placement, or, if it is not practicable to do so, within 10 working days of the first placement. The setting will then follow the care plan to provide a consistent approach to supporting the child.

The care plan needs to consider issues for the child such as:

- their emotional needs and how they are to be met;
- how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
- their sense of self, culture, language(s) and identity – and how this is to be supported;
- their need for sociability and friendship;
- their interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
- how any special needs will be supported.

In addition the care plan will also consider:

- how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
- what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be at the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;
- what written reporting is required;
- wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child to return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and
- with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings and fun-days etc alongside the foster carer.

Services provided to Looked After Children

<u>All children 2-5 years</u>

- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
- We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is two to five years old who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.
- Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.

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- The setting recognises the role of the local authority children's social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting, without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.

Two-year-olds

- Places will be offered to two-year-old children who are looked after; where the placement in the setting will normally last a minimum of three months. In such cases, the child should have been with the carer for at least two months and show signs of having formed a secure attachment to the carer, to enable them to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them and in order to get the most out of educational opportunities in the setting.
- Where the child is already in attendance and has a secure attachment with an existing key person a continuation of the existing place will be offered.

Three- and four-year-olds

- Places will be offered for funded three- and four-year -olds who are looked after; where the placement in the setting will normally last a minimum of six weeks. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and that they will have formed a secure attachment to the carer to enable them to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them and in order to get the most out of educational opportunities in the setting
- If a child who attends a setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local carer the place will continue to be made available to the child.

Additional Support

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and key person liaise with agencies and professionals involved with the child, and his or her family, and ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.
- A meeting of professionals involved with the child is convened by the setting at the start of a placement. A Personal Education Plan (PEP) for children over 3 years old is put in place within 10 days of the child becoming looked after.
- This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks, three months, and thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
- Regular contact will be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings, which will include contribution to the PEP which is reviewed annually.

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Sticky Fingers aspires to provide a safe, fun and welcoming environment for everyone.
We offer children experiences to support their development, empowering them to reach their full potential.

06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

06.10 Online Safety and Digital Safeguarding

Approved by: Senior Leadership Team
Date Implemented: September 2026
Last Edited: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

This policy has been developed with reference to current legislation, statutory frameworks and national guidance relating to safeguarding children, online safety, digital safeguarding, data protection and the use of technology in early years settings.

It should be read alongside Sticky Fingers Pre-school's policies and procedures on child protection and safeguarding - 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy booklet.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children is paramount when children or adults are using the internet, social media or digital devices, recognising that children may be exposed to online risks even when they are not directly using a device.
- Make clear that children at Sticky Fingers Pre-school do not routinely use screens or access the internet directly as part of their daily provision, although audio-enabled technology, such as Alexa, may occasionally be used by staff for appropriate activities, routines or learning. Such devices are used by adults and are not made available for children to independently access.
- Provide staff with clear expectations, guidance and support about the safe and professional use of digital devices, online services, social media and electronic communication.
- Support parents/carers with information and guidance to help them understand and manage online-safety risks affecting their children at home and in the wider community.

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- Support children to develop age-appropriate awareness of online safety and understand how to seek help if they encounter something that makes them feel worried, uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Protect children, families and staff from risks associated with inappropriate use of technology, including online abuse, inappropriate content, contact, conduct and commercial risks.
- Promote a consistent approach to online safety between the setting, staff and families.
- Ensure that the setting's use of digital technology, including voice-activated devices such as Alexa, is consistent with safeguarding, data protection and confidentiality requirements.

This procedure applies to all staff, volunteers, students, children, parents/carers and visitors where relevant to their use of digital devices or online services in connection with the setting.

Online Safety

The setting recognises that digital technology is an important part of children's lives and can provide valuable opportunities for learning, communication, creativity and exploration. However, children can also be exposed to inappropriate or harmful content, communication or behaviour.

The setting therefore takes a proportionate and age-appropriate approach to online safety. Children are supported to develop an understanding of how to use technology safely and how to seek help if something makes them feel worried, uncomfortable or unsafe.

The issues are:

Content **(what they may see)** - *being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material*

Children may accidentally encounter inappropriate images, videos, information or advertising when using internet-connected devices. Content that is frightening, confusing or inappropriate for their age can be harmful. Appropriate supervision, security and filtering arrangements help to reduce these risks.

Contact **(who might communicate with them)** – *being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users*

Children may be exposed to inappropriate communication or contact from people they know or people they do not know. This may include unkind or harmful messages, inappropriate language, manipulation, grooming or other forms of abuse. Children may also be exposed to online risks through the use of devices or services by adults around them.

Conduct **(how they might behave)** – *online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm*

Young children are still developing their understanding of boundaries, relationships and appropriate behaviour. They may not understand that something they see, say, share or do online could be inappropriate or harmful. Children may also accidentally share personal information, images or other content. Age-appropriate support and supervision helps children develop safe and respectful behaviours when using technology.

Commerce - *risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.*

Children may be exposed to commercial content or opportunities to make purchases when using internet-connected devices. Staff may also encounter phishing, scams or other online financial risks when using digital devices or online services.

If you feel you or someone you know is at risk from phishing or another online scam, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group: https://apwg.org/

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We believe that:

- Children should never experience abuse or harm of any kind, including through the use of digital technology or online services.
- Children should be protected from online risks and supported to develop an age-appropriate understanding of safe and responsible use of technology.
- Staff and parents/carers should be supported with clear information and guidance to help them keep children safe online.

We recognise that:

- The online world provides valuable opportunities for adults and families, but it can also present risks and challenges.
- Children may be exposed to online risks even when they are not directly using a digital device themselves, including through the use of technology by adults or other children around them.
- We have a responsibility to help keep children safe online whether they are using technology at home, in the wider community or are exposed to technology used by others.
- Staff also need support and guidance to recognise and manage online-safety risks in their professional and personal use of technology.
- Working in partnership with children, parents/carers and other relevant agencies is important in promoting children's safety and wellbeing online.
- All children have the right to equal protection from harm or abuse, and their individual needs, abilities and circumstances will be taken into account when promoting online safety.

Children's use of screens and digital technology

Sticky Fingers Pre-school takes a precautionary approach to children's screen use and does not routinely use screens as part of children's daily provision.

The setting recognises the Department for Education's guidance on screen use for children aged 0–5 and the importance of considering children's overall screen exposure alongside their health, wellbeing, physical activity, sleep, social interaction, communication and learning.

Current government guidance recommends:

- For children under 2 years, avoiding screen time altogether other than in exceptional circumstances, such as a video call with parents or carers.
- For children aged 2–5 years, limiting screen time to 1 hour a day, less if possible.
- Screen-based assistive technology required to support children with SEND is not subject to these time limits.
- Avoiding screens during mealtimes and within an hour of a sleep period.

Department for Education (DfE), ***Screen use – Help for early years providers****, published 13 July 2026, updated 15 July 2026. Screen use – Help for early years providers*

Parents and carers should refer to the latest government guidance, as recommendations may be updated.

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The government's parent guidance is also available through *Best Start in Life – Screen time guidance for children under 5*: https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/screen-time-under-5s/

As the setting cannot know or control a child's screen use outside the setting, Sticky Fingers Pre-school considers that routinely providing screen use during the pre-school day could contribute unnecessarily to a child's overall daily screen exposure.

Our provision therefore prioritises real-world experiences, physical activity, active play, communication, social interaction, hands-on learning, exploration and responsive relationships with adults and other children.

We recognise that some children may require access to a screen or digital device for a specific individual need, such as communication, accessibility or assistive technology. Where this is identified, the setting will consider the child's individual needs and use appropriate technology where necessary.

The setting will support parents/carers by sharing information about current government recommendations and promoting healthy approaches to screen use at home. Parents/carers are encouraged to consider their child's overall daily screen use and to follow the most up-to-date government guidance.

The setting will review its approach to screen use in line with changes to Department for Education guidance and the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Recognising an online safety coordinator in each setting. The setting Manager (DSL) will hold the lead responsibility for online safety within their safeguarding role.
    - Kayleigh C (Newlands)
    - Rachel C (Redbridge)
    - Diane B-H (Tanners Brook)
    - Louise S/Abbi B (Spring Road)
    - Sarah H/Chloe H (Portswood)

  This is overseen by Sarah H (Area Manager) and Louise S (Deputy Area Manager)
- Providing clear and specific guidance to staff and volunteers about appropriate use of the internet, social media, mobile phones and other digital technology, as detailed in this policy.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate online-safety training as part of their Safeguarding training and professional development.
- Including online safety within safeguarding discussions and staff meetings where relevant, so that staff remain aware of emerging online risks and issues affecting young children and families.
- Supporting parents and carers to understand and manage online risks and to promote safe and age-appropriate use of technology at home.

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- Sharing relevant online-safety information and guidance with families through appropriate communication channels, including Tapestry, the setting website or other setting communications.
- Recognising that children may be exposed to online content, communication or risks outside the setting and ensuring staff know how to respond to concerns in accordance with the setting's safeguarding procedures.
- Ensuring that any online-safety concern involving a child, parent/carer, member of staff, volunteer or other person is dealt with in accordance with the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Ensuring personal information about children, families and staff is held securely and only accessed or shared appropriately, in accordance with *07 Record Keeping procedures*.
- Ensuring that photographs and recordings of children are only taken using authorised setting equipment and where the appropriate parental consent or other lawful basis is in place.
- Ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities when using social media and other online platforms and that professional boundaries are maintained.
- Providing parents and carers with information about current online-safety guidance, including age-appropriate approaches to screen use and the risks children may encounter online.
- Considering online-safety risks when introducing or using any new digital technology, online platform, software or service within the setting.

Online Safety Education and support

Although children do not routinely access the internet or screens at the setting, staff recognise that children may encounter digital technology and online content at home or in other environments.

Staff will therefore support children's understanding of online safety through age-appropriate conversations and activities where appropriate. Children are taught the following stay-safe principles:

- Only go online with a grown up.
- Be kind online and keep information about me safely.
- Only press buttons on the internet to things I understand.
- Tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet.
- If I get stuck or lost on the internet, I will ask for help.

Staff will support children's resilience in relation to issues they may face online through age-appropriate conversations and activities. This includes helping children understand that they should not keep unsafe secrets, that personal information should be kept private, how to develop appropriate friendships, and that they can talk to a trusted adult if they are unsure about something or if something they see, hear or experience online makes them worried, upset or uncomfortable. This forms part of children's social and emotional development and supports them to recognise when they need help and how to seek it.

The setting will also support parents and carers by sharing appropriate information and guidance about online safety, screen use and emerging digital risks.

Responding to online safety concerns

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Any concern that an adult is attempting to make inappropriate contact with a child online, including suspected grooming or online sexual abuse, must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Where appropriate, concerns may also be reported to the National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Command through www.ceop.police.uk.

Staff must report any concerns about online child sexual abuse material through the appropriate safeguarding and reporting procedures. Suspected child sexual abuse images or videos may be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) through its reporting service at www.iwf.org.uk/report.

Where a concern may require the involvement of Children's Social Care or the Police, the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures will be followed.

If a child is considered to be in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted on 999.

Digital Devices and Equipment

Although children do not routinely use screens or internet-enabled devices as part of the setting's daily provision, the setting uses digital technology for appropriate administrative, communication, safeguarding and record-keeping purposes.

- Setting laptops, computers, tablets and other authorised devices are password protected and kept secure.
- Staff must use setting equipment responsibly and in accordance with the setting's confidentiality, data protection and safeguarding procedures.
- Staff must not download or install software or applications onto setting equipment without appropriate authorisation.
- Setting devices must be stored securely when not in use.
- Staff must take appropriate precautions when accessing setting systems away from the setting to protect confidential information and prevent unauthorised access.
- Personal information and photographs of children must only be stored, accessed or transferred using authorised systems and equipment.
- Digital devices used for setting business, safeguarding, assessment or communication purposes must be used proportionately and securely and in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework, data protection requirements and the setting's record-keeping procedures.
- The number of photographs and videos taken of children will be kept to a minimum and images will only be shared with parents/carers through the setting's authorised and secure systems.
- Any loss, theft, unauthorised access or suspected data breach involving setting equipment must be reported to management immediately.
- Staff have a duty to use the internet and digital services responsibly and professionally. Staff must not intentionally access, download, display or share sexually explicit, offensive, illegal or otherwise inappropriate material using setting equipment or systems.

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- If a member of staff unintentionally accesses or receives inappropriate or potentially harmful material, they must stop viewing it, close the relevant page or application and inform management immediately. The material must not be copied, saved, forwarded or shared.
- Any incident involving material that may present a safeguarding concern must be managed in accordance with the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- All staff, including setting managers, are provided with an individual work email address when they commence employment. This email address is for work-related purposes only, such as receiving training information, staff updates and other internal work-related communications.
- Individual work email addresses must not be provided to parents or carers or used to communicate directly with them about the setting or their child.
- All communication with parents and carers must be sent from the setting's authorised email address or through another approved setting communication platform, including communication from setting managers.
- All electronic communication must be professional and comply with the setting's safeguarding, confidentiality, data protection and record-keeping procedures.

Mobile Phones – Children

Children do not bring mobile phones or other personal electronic devices with them to the setting.

If a child is found to have a mobile phone or other personal electronic device with them, this will be removed and stored securely in the office until the parent/carer collects the child at the end of the session.

Personal Mobile Phones and Personal Devices – Staff and Visitors

This includes mobile phones, smartwatches, tablets and other personal internet-enabled or electronic devices.

- Where a work mobile phone is provided, it is used only for making and receiving telephone calls and sending and receiving messages. The camera is covered and the phone is not used for photographs, videos or other recording.
- Personal mobile phones and other personal internet-enabled or electronic devices must not be used by staff, students, volunteers or visitors while children are present.
- Personal mobile phones and other personal internet-enabled or electronic devices must be kept on silent and locked away during working time and must not be accessible to children. Staff may access their personal devices during authorised breaks, in accordance with the setting's arrangements.
- Where a setting has an authorised staff area away from children, personal devices may be used during staff breaks, such as lunchtime, in accordance with the setting's arrangements.
- At settings where there is no dedicated area for personal device use, staff who wish to use their personal mobile phone during a break should do so off the premises.
- For important or urgent calls, staff may use their personal mobile phone in the office with management's permission, provided this does not interfere with the normal use of the office by management or compromise confidentiality or safeguarding arrangements.

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- Personal mobile phones must not be used to take photographs, videos or recordings of children or to access, store or share information relating to children or families.
- Staff should not take personal mobile phones on local outings. Where personal mobile phones may be required for a large-scale outing, including outings involving parents/carers, this will be considered as part of the relevant risk assessment.
- Where possible, staff should provide their emergency contacts with the setting's telephone number so that urgent messages can be received through the setting.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that the Lead Practitioner has up-to-date emergency contact and next-of-kin information.
- Personal devices may be used in an emergency where this is necessary to protect someone's safety. Where reasonably possible, management should be informed.
- Parents/carers and visitors must not use personal mobile phones or other recording devices while in areas where children are present. Where a visitor needs to make an essential call, they will be directed to an appropriate private area where available.
- All visitors sign in on arrival and follow the setting's arrangements for storing personal belongings and devices safely.
- Smartwatches and other wearable or recording devices must not be worn by staff, students, volunteers, visitors or parents/carers where the device has recording or communication functions that could compromise children's privacy or safeguarding.

Cameras, Photographs, Videos and Other Recording Devices

- Members of staff must not bring personal cameras or video-recording equipment into the setting.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for appropriate and legitimate setting purposes and only using equipment belonging to the setting.
- Parental/carer consent for photographs to be taken and used on Tapestry is obtained as part of the setting's enrolment paperwork. The enrolment paperwork also includes consent for authorised staff to access Tapestry from home where required for their work, such as completing children's learning records. Staff must ensure that Tapestry is accessed securely and that children's information remains confidential and is not accessible to other people.
- Access to children's photographs and learning records on Tapestry is restricted to authorised individuals with appropriate access permissions.
- Setting cameras and recording equipment must be kept secure when not in use.
- Cameras or other recording devices must never be taken into bathrooms or other areas where children may reasonably expect privacy.
- The use of setting cameras and recording equipment is monitored by the setting manager.
- Parents/carers may only photograph or record their own child at special events where the setting has specifically permitted this. Parents/carers are reminded that they must not photograph or record other children or share images of other children without appropriate permission.
- Photographs and recordings must only be made where the appropriate consent or other lawful basis is in place.
- Where photographs are used for publicity or promotional purposes, appropriate consent must be obtained and safeguarding considerations taken into account.

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- Images must be appropriate and must never place a child in a compromising, embarrassing, inappropriate or potentially harmful situation.
- Images stored on setting cameras must be transferred to the authorised setting system as soon as reasonably practicable and deleted from the camera's memory once this has been completed, in accordance with the setting's record-keeping and data protection procedures.
- Staff must not make additional copies of photographs or recordings without appropriate authorisation.
- Setting cameras and recording equipment must not be used by students, volunteers or visitors unless specifically authorised by management for an agreed purpose.
- Staff must not use personal devices to photograph, record or store images of children.
- Staff are aware that the sharing or distribution of indecent images of children and grooming children online are criminal offences.
- Any concern about the inappropriate use of a camera, recording device, photograph or video must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with *06.02 Low level concerns and allegations of harm or abuse against staff, volunteers or agency staff*.

Cyberbullying and Online Harassment

Sticky Fingers Pre-school is committed to ensuring that children, families, staff, students and volunteers are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying, harassment and abusive behaviour, including behaviour carried out using digital technology or online platforms, will not be tolerated.
Cyberbullying or online harassment may include:

- sending threatening, abusive or unkind messages;
- making harmful or offensive comments about another person online;
- sharing photographs, videos or other information about someone without their permission;
- deliberately excluding or targeting someone through online platforms or messaging services;
- using social media, messaging services, websites or other online platforms to intimidate, threaten, harass or humiliate another person;
- sharing information online that could identify or cause harm or distress to a child, family member or member of staff.

Staff must not use social media, messaging services or other online platforms to discuss children, families, colleagues or matters relating to the setting inappropriately or in a way that could breach confidentiality, professional boundaries or safeguarding arrangements.
If staff become aware that a child is experiencing cyberbullying or other harmful online behaviour at home or elsewhere, they should discuss this with the child's parent/carer where appropriate and consider whether the matter raises a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concern must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
The setting will support parents/carers by providing information and signposting to appropriate sources of advice where concerns about cyberbullying or online safety arise.

Use of social media

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Sticky Fingers Pre-school recognises that staff may use social media and other online platforms in their personal lives. Staff are expected to use social media responsibly and in a way that protects children, families, colleagues, themselves and the reputation of the setting.
Social media includes, but is not limited to:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Snapchat
- X (formerly Twitter)
- personal websites and blogs
- other social networking, messaging and online platforms.

Social media must not be accessed by staff during working time or using setting equipment, except where authorised as part of a staff member's role, for example, where management uses the setting's social media accounts for appropriate setting communications.

Staff are expected to:

- Use social media responsibly and maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Ensure that their online activity does not compromise the safety, privacy or confidentiality of children, families, colleagues or the setting.
- Not post, share or discuss information that could identify a child or family who uses or has used the setting.
- Not share photographs, videos or other images of children or families obtained through their work at the setting on personal social media accounts.
- Not discuss individual children, families, colleagues or confidential matters relating to the setting on personal social media.
- Not post comments or material that could reasonably be considered threatening, abusive, discriminatory, harassing or otherwise inappropriate in relation to children, families, colleagues or the setting.
- Remember that information, photographs and comments shared online may be copied, screenshot or shared by others and may remain accessible even after the original post has been deleted.
- Use appropriate privacy and security settings on personal social media accounts and not assume that information shared privately will remain private.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and families and never use personal social media accounts to communicate with children.
- Staff must not have parents, carers or family members of children attending the setting as friends, followers or contacts on their personal social media accounts.
- Where a staff member already has a personal social-media connection with a parent, carer or family member before the child starts attending the setting, the staff member must remove them from their personal social media accounts for the duration of the child's attendance at the setting.
- This requirement applies regardless of whether the parent, carer or family member makes the initial request to connect or whether the relationship existed before the child started attending the setting.

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- Staff must not use personal social media accounts to communicate with parents, carers or family members about the setting. All communication relating to the setting must take place through the setting's authorised communication channels.
- If a parent, carer or family member contacts a staff member through a personal social media account about a setting matter, the staff member must not engage in the conversation and should refer them to the setting's authorised communication channels. Where appropriate, the staff member should inform management.
- Report any concerns about inappropriate online behaviour, contact, content or breaches of this policy to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or management.
- Ensure that any long-term student, volunteer or other person working regularly at the setting understands that these expectations also apply to their use of social media in relation to the setting.

Staff should also be aware that online behaviour outside working hours may become a safeguarding or professional conduct matter where it affects children, families, colleagues, the setting or the individual's suitability to work with children.

Parents and carers

The setting recognises that parents and carers may use social media to communicate and share information about their experiences. Parents and carers are expected to communicate respectfully and appropriately when discussing the setting, its staff, children and families.

Parents and carers must not post, share or circulate abusive, threatening, derogatory or knowingly false statements about Sticky Fingers Pre-school, its staff, children or families.

Where a parent or carer has a concern, complaint or dissatisfaction about the setting or its staff, this must be raised directly with the setting and managed in accordance with the setting's *10.02 Complaints Procedure*. Social media must not be used as a means of making or pursuing a complaint.

Parents and carers are reminded that photographs or recordings taken at setting events must not include or identify other children without appropriate permission.

The setting will provide parents and carers with appropriate information and guidance about online safety and the responsible use of social media where relevant.

If Online Abuse or Inappropriate Online Behaviour Occurs

Any concern that a child may be experiencing online abuse, bullying, harassment, grooming, inappropriate contact or other online harm will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Where a concern relates to the conduct of a member of staff, student, volunteer or other person working on behalf of the setting, the setting will follow *06.01 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns* and *06.02 Low-level concerns and allegations of harm or abuse against staff, volunteers or agency staff*, where applicable.

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The setting will:

- Have clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse, including online abuse.
- Provide appropriate support and training for staff and volunteers on recognising and responding to online risks, including cyberbullying, online abuse, grooming, inappropriate contact and harmful content.
- Consider the needs and wellbeing of the child or person experiencing the online harm, as well as any other children, families or staff who may be affected.
- Work with parents/carers and relevant agencies where appropriate to safeguard children from online harm.
- Record and manage safeguarding concerns in accordance with the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures and *07 Record Keeping procedures*.
- Review actions taken in response to online-safety concerns where appropriate to ensure that risks have been addressed and appropriate support remains in place.
- Provide appropriate information, advice and support to parents/carers where concerns about online safety or online behaviour arise.

Monitoring

Sticky Fingers Pre-school may monitor the use of its electronic systems, equipment and communication services where this is necessary and proportionate for legitimate purposes, including safeguarding, maintaining the security and integrity of its systems, protecting confidential information, investigating suspected misuse and ensuring compliance with its policies and legal obligations.

This may include monitoring or accessing information held on setting-owned devices, email accounts, electronic storage systems and other setting-provided services.

Any monitoring or access to information will be carried out in accordance with the setting's data protection, confidentiality and record-keeping procedures and will respect the privacy of staff wherever possible.

Where there is a safeguarding, security or other legitimate concern, management may access information held on setting equipment or systems as necessary to investigate and respond to that concern.

Staff should not have an expectation that personal information or communications stored on or sent using setting-owned equipment or systems will remain private.

If a staff member is unsure whether their use of a setting device, system or online service is appropriate, they should seek advice from their Setting Manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Copyright

Staff must respect copyright law when accessing, downloading, copying, sharing or using digital content, images, photographs, videos, music, software or other materials in connection with their work.

Staff must only use materials where they have the appropriate permission, licence or other lawful basis to do so and must not knowingly copy, reproduce or distribute copyrighted material without

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permission.

Where staff create materials specifically as part of their employment duties for Sticky Fingers Pre-school, the ownership and use of those materials will be managed in accordance with their employment terms and applicable copyright law.

The relevant legislation is the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988*, as amended.

Further Information and Related Guidance

- **Department for Education (DfE) –** Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations - Online Safety Considerations for Early Years Settings
- **Department for Education (DfE) –** Screen Use: Help for Early Years Providers
  Screen Use – Help for Early Years Providers
- **Best Start in Life –** Screen Time Guidance for Under 5s
  Screen Time Guidance for Under 5s
- **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** – Children and the UK GDPR - ICO – Children's Information
- **Online Safety Act 2023 -** Online Safety Act 2023
- **NSPCC Learning – Online Safety -** NSPCC Learning – Online Safety

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Sticky Fingers Pre-School
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% Redbridge Primary school
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Community centre
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% 14th Itchen Scout hut
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Sticky Fingers Pre-scho
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Portswood Primary school
Somerset road,
Portswood,
Southampton
SO17-3AA

SF.Portswood@
stickyfingersps.co.uk

Sticky Fingers aspires to provide a safe, fun and welcoming environment for everyone.
We offer children experiences to support their development, empowering them to reach their full potential.

06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

06.11 Key person supervision

Staff taking on the role of key person must have supervision meetings in line with this procedure.

Structure

- Supervision meetings are held every half term for key persons.
- Key persons are supervised by the setting manager or deputy.
- Supervision meetings are held in a confidential space suitable for the task
- Key persons should prepare for supervision by having the relevant information to hand.

Content

The child focused element of supervision meetings must include discussion about:

- the development and well-being of the supervisee's key children and offer staff opportunity to raise concerns in relation to any child attending. *Safeguarding concerns must always reported to the designated person immediately and not delayed until a scheduled supervision meeting*
- reflection on the journey a child is making and potential well-being or safeguarding concerns for the children they have key responsibility for
- promoting the interests of children.
- coaching to improve professional effectiveness based on a review of observed practice/teaching
- reviewing plans and agreements from previous supervisions including any identified learning needs for the member of staff.

- During supervision staff can discuss any concerns they have about inappropriate behaviour displayed by colleagues, but must never delay until a scheduled supervision to raise concerns.

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- Staff are reminded of the need to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children that have occurred during their employment. New information is referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Recording

- Key person supervision discussions are recorded on the staff members personal file on CPOMS and a copy provided to the key person.
- The key person and supervisor must sign and date the minutes of supervision within 4-6 weeks of it happening and disagreements over recorded content must be minuted.
- Concerns raised during supervision about an individual child's welfare may result in safeguarding concerns not previously recognised as such, these are recorded on the child's file on CPOMS. The reasons why the concerns have not previously been considered are explored.
- Additional safeguarding or welfare decisions made in relation to a child during supervision are recorded on the individual case file.

Checking continuing suitability

- Supervisors check with staff if there is any new information pertaining to their suitability to work with children, including any changes in relation to their household members. This only needs to be recorded on the supervision meeting record.
- Regarding the position for students on placement, there is an expectation that as part of the agreement with agencies they have sought information regarding their employee's suitability to work with children. Managers must review this regularly.

Exceptional Circumstances

Where exceptional circumstances prevent staff from conducting supervision as outlined in this procedure, the lead practitioner is informed in writing, a copy placed on the supervision file and the appropriate actions agreed to ensure that the setting meets its obligations within the EYFS**.**

Further guidance

Recruiting Early Years Staff (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)
People Management in the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)

Review date: April 2027

Edited: September 2026

Chair or Manager on behalf of Sticky Fingers:

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