

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Statement of intent

Safeguarding forms an important part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory requirements. Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

The key commitments of the Preschool's policy for safeguarding children are:

1. Impstone & Cherry Trees Preschools are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.
2. Impstone & Cherry Trees Preschools are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that occur and to working with statutory agencies in accordance with Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership ("HSCP") guidelines as set down in "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" (HMG 2018). We recognise this can take the form of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect. It can also be drawing a child into extremism, radicalisation, terrorism or exploitation.
3. Impstone & Cherry Trees Preschools are committed to:
 - (a) promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults and;
 - (b) empowering young children, regardless of ability, promoting their right to be safe, resilient and listened to.

Aims

Our aims are to promote a child's right to be safe and listened to by:

- creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural tradition, home background or disability;
- encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;
- helping children to establish and sustain fulfilling relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children;
- treating all children and parents within the Preschool setting equally; and
- promoting 'British Values', of which the main principles are democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect for and tolerance of, those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith. We incorporate these into our daily practice.

KEY COMMITMENT 1

Impstone & Cherry Trees Preschools are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Staffing and volunteering

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who co-ordinates Safeguarding & Child Protection issues is the Impstone & Cherry Trees Preschool Manager, Amanda Davies, supported by an Assistant DSL at each site, Vickie Jones at Impstone and Katie Reid at Cherry Trees.
- Our "Designated Officer" who oversees this work is the Parent Management Committee Chair, Jenny Marshall.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our Safeguarding policies & procedures and parents are made aware of them too.
- The named DSL has regular training and attends local authority Safeguarding briefings.
- All staff receive regular training in accordance with legislation.
- At each regular staff meeting (or sooner should the need arise), staff receive an update of Safeguarding issues, given only the knowledge needed and acceptable.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.

Safer Recruitment

- Applicants for posts within the setting, are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out enhanced disclosure checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children alone.
- All qualifications & suitability checks about staff are recorded in personal files, in a lockable cabinet or on our online system.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us). They sign a disclaimer at each supervision to confirm this.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised at any time.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act & Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.

Safe Environment

- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting. The Visitor's Log is with the register.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us.
- Parents sign a consent form as part of registration and can have access to records holding visual images of their child.

KEY COMMITMENT 2

Impstone & Cherry Trees Preschools are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that occur and to working with statutory agencies in accordance with Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership ("HSCP") guidelines as set down in "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" (HMG 2018). We recognise this can take the form of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect. It can also be drawing a child into extremism, radicalisation, terrorism or exploitation.

Prevent abuse by means of good practice and promoting fundamental British Values.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of independence through adult support to help them make their own choices and to find ways to express their own feelings. By means of consistent everyday good practice we promote British values with regards to the following:

Democracy - making decisions together and listening to children's and parent's voices. Giving children opportunities to make decisions about what activities and resources they choose to play with as well as encouraging questions to develop enquiring minds. Allowing the children to have their say in deciding the house rules and code of behaviour of the setting and valuing their opinions.

Rule of Law - helping children to understand that the rules matter and as a team consistently reinforce our high expectations of the children. Children will be supported to understand the value and reasons of having rules in the setting, and that we all have a part to play. Being clear that when rules are broken there are consequences.

Individual Liberty - accepting and encouraging all to have the freedom to voice different opinions and actively promoting children to make their own choices in a safe and caring environment. Providing appropriate boundaries in order for children to make choices safely.

Mutual respect - treating other as we wish to be treated. Being good role models to demonstrate positive, caring and polite behaviour to each other. To teach mutual respect for ourselves, one another and our surroundings. Provide resources and activities that challenge gender, disability, cultural and racial stereotyping.

Tolerance of those of different beliefs and faiths - we aim to enhance children's understanding of different beliefs and faiths relevant to the families within our setting by participating in a range of celebrations throughout the year. Children will have opportunities to explore customs, dress and foods from other cultures.

Good practice

- We will help children gain confidence to use the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches from adults or other children.
- Staff should use their observational skills to gather information and document any reason for concern.
- The layout of the preschool rooms will permit constant supervision.
- Staff will follow guidelines in Safeguarding Procedure.
- The use of mobile phones and cameras are strictly controlled within the setting - please refer to '*Safeguarding - Photographs, Mobile Phones and Electrical Devices Policy*'

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls. FGM is illegal in the UK. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act 2003.

Other than in medical circumstances, it is an offence for any person (regardless of their nationality or residence status) to:

- perform FGM in England, Wales or Northern Ireland (section 1 of the Act)
- assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself in England, Wales or Northern Ireland (section 2 of the Act)
- assist (from England, Wales or Northern Ireland) a non-UK person to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or permanent UK resident (section 3 of the Act).

If we have concerns that any child in our preschool community is at risk or has been a victim of FGM then we refer to our local social care authority. All staff should be aware of the indications that FGM has taken place or if a child may be of significant risk of becoming a victim of FGM. These can include:

- Prolonged absence from preschool with noticeable behaviour change - especially after returning from a holiday
- If a child seems withdrawn and lacks interaction with others
- If a child says they are hurting "down there" or on their bottom
- The family comes from a community that is known to practice FGM - especially if there are elderly women present
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM or something related that they are anxious about
- A child may express anxiety about a 'special ceremony'.

If it comes to our attention that a woman has already undergone FGM, consideration needs to be given to any child protection implications such as a risk to younger siblings and extended family members. This should be reported to our local social care authority or the Police if appropriate. Further help and guidance can be obtained from:

FGM Helpline - 0800 028 3550 or fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;
 - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.

- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children such as through internet abuse and Female Genital Mutilation that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision. We have a duty under the FGM Act 2015 to report any suspicion of Female Genital Mutilation of any girl under the age of 18, to the police.
- We are aware of the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism which is referred to in the Prevent Duty Act and 'Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015'. All staff have been trained on the signs and indicators of extremism and radicalisation. If we had any concerns, we would contact the local Prevent Officer and the HSCP. Concerns can also be raised by email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour-based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe a child in our care, or known to us, may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the staff member who has witnessed the concern makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the DSL. The information is stored on the child's personal file and kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know.
- We refer applicable concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. (In some cases, this may mean the Police, or another agency identified by the Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership).
- In some cases, the DSL (or assistants) may contact Children Services to discuss a concern without identifying the child/family.
- We take care not to influence the outcome, either through the way we speak to children or by asking leading questions of children.

Unexplained Absences

If possible, please contact the Preschool when your child is unable to attend. Unexplained absences will be followed up and patterns of absence that may indicate safeguarding concerns will be recorded and monitored.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - ⋆ the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - ⋆ the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - ⋆ the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time;
 - ⋆ the names of any other person present at the time; and
 - ⋆ any initial action taken.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept secure and confidential.

- The DSL (or assistant DSL) is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by them.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team

- We use the Hampshire Threshold Chart 2015 to help us identify the level of need for the family involved and how to progress. This is based on 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2018).
- We keep a copy of this document alongside procedures set down by our Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Liaison with other bodies:

- We work within the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines - which can be found at: <http://hampshirescb.org.uk>

- Hampshire's Children's Reception Team can be contacted on:
0300 555 1384 (8.30am - 5pm Mon - Thu / 8.30am - 4.30pm Fri)
0300 555 1373 (out of hours)

<https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/faq/childrens-reception-team-crt-frequently-asked-questions>

- We have access to the current version of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on safeguarding children issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Preschool and social services to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted on 0300 123 1231 if a referral is made and may also notify Ofsted of any incident/accident/change in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- We may contact the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 and/or the police on 101.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social services department, we act within the HSCP guidelines in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Supporting families

- We work hard to build a trusting and supportive relationship between families and staff.
- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in further danger.
- Dependent on the concern, we inform parents when we make a confidential record in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the social workers will inform parents.
- Throughout any investigation, we will work with and support the family.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the provision, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, or any other person working with the children, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments;
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or
 - inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the provision, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the DSL who then reports to the LADO. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (asap but within 14 days) and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- All information and actions taken are recorded on the relevant paperwork and held confidentially with the DSL.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by LADO in conjunction with the police if required.
- Where the management team and LADO agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chair will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and Ofsted of relevant information so that individuals who pose a threat to children (and vulnerable groups), can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

KEY COMMITMENT 3

Impstone & Cherry Trees Preschools are committed to:

- (a) promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults and;
- (b) empowering young children, regardless of ability, promoting their right to be safe, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We ensure all adults involved in the setting are fully up to date trained to be able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect and that they are aware of our procedures, as well as local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that designated persons receive further up to date training in accordance with that recommended by the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting, which includes whistleblowing.

Environment

- The layout of the rooms and outdoor space allow for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible or within hearing distance of others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- Within the setting we create an inclusive culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background as well as any disability.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- If we were unhappy with how a reported concern was dealt with, we would email the Children's Services Complaint Team at childrens.services.complaints@hants.gov.uk.

The legal framework we follow is:-

- The Children Act 1989 s47 s17
- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012
- Data Protection Act 2018 inc GDPR
- The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Education Act 2011
- Childcare Act 2016
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act 2003
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Equalities Act 2010
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Guidance

- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- EYFS Framework (2017)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Hampshire Children's Services inter-agency child protection and safeguarding children procedure
- Prevent Duty 2015
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers 2018
- Disclosure and Barring Service
- Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP)
- Munro review of Child Protection (2011)

<u>Useful Telephone Numbers</u>	
Hampshire Children's Services - for members of the public to report concerns 24 hours a day	0300 555 1384
Hampshire Police - in an emergency dial 999	101
Ofsted - to advise them of anything relating to your child's care	0300 123 1231
ChildLine - www.childline.org.uk	0800 1111
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
Women's Aid	0808 2000 247
For further information on all services for children, young people and their families in Hampshire please see the Family Information and Services Hub: https://fish.hants.gov.uk	