**Safeguarding Ethos**

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

As an Early Years setting, we aim to keep children safe by adopting the highest possible standards and taking all reasonable steps to promote children’s welfare, prevent impairment of children’s mental and physical health and protect children from harm.

All parents and carers are asked to read this document carefully, prior to a child being placed.

The purpose of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is to set a clear protocol of action and a framework of our responsibilities and legal duties in relation to your child’s welfare. As such, it complies with all relevant legislation and other guidance and advice from [City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership](http://www.chscb.org.uk) (CHSCP) and the [London Safeguarding Children Procedures](http://www.londoncp.co.uk/).

All staff, volunteers and students are expected to abide by this policy and any other connected to it.

We aim to put children’s needs first at all times. We hope to encourage children to be confident and assertive, and to develop a trusting and respectful relationship with the children in our care, so that they know they will be listened to and believed.

This policy adheres to the following concepts from the [United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child:](https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC_summary-1_1.pdf)

***Non-discrimination*** - All the rights apply to all children equally regardless of their race, sex, religion, language, disability, opinion or family background. (Article 2)
***Best interests of child*** - When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what is best for the child. (Article 3)
***The child’s view*** - Children have the right to say what they think about anything which affects them. When courts or official organisations make decisions which affect children, they must listen to what children want and feel. (Article 12)

[**Early years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/659d3e68aaae22001356dc46/Early_years_foundation_stage_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school-based_providers.pdf)

The [EYFS](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65aa5e42ed27ca001327b2c7/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf) states “A practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children. The lead practitioner is responsible for liaison with local statutory children’s services agencies, and with the LSP (Local Safeguarding Partners). All practitioners must be alert to any issues of concern in the child’s life at home or elsewhere.”

In accordance with the EYFS, as providers, if we have concerns about children’s safety or welfare, we must immediately notify our local authority children’s social care team, in line with local reporting procedures, and, in emergencies, the police.

In line with the EYFS, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will provide support, advice and guidance to all staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The DSL must have attended a child protection training course (taking account of any advice from the local authority on appropriate training courses) that enables them to identify, understand and respond appropriately, to signs of possible abuse and neglect.

**A Designated Lead for Safeguarding will be available at all times the setting is open, for staff to discuss any concerns.**

As providers, we must have regard to the government’s statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf) and [Prevent duty guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-accessible) for England and Wales*.*

All schools are required to have regard to the government’s statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf) and it is helpful for other childcare providers to read this guidance.

Suitable people

We will ensure that people looking after children are suitable; they must have the relevant qualifications, training and have passed any required checks to fulfil their roles. We will also ensure that any person who may have regular contact with children (e.g. someone living or working on the same premises the early years provision is provided), is suitable.

We will not allow anyone whose suitability has not been checked, including through a criminal records check, to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for.

As providers, we will notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the premises where childcare is provided.

All staff will receive Induction training which includes information about safeguarding and child protection.

Safeguarding training

We will train all staff to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Training will enable staff to identify signs of abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

* Significant changes in children’s behaviour.
* A decline in children’s general well-being.
* Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
* Concerning comments from children.
* Inappropriate behaviour from practitioners, or any other person working with the children. This could include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond what is required through their role; or inappropriate sharing of images.
* Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child’s home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) [female genital mutilation](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation).

We will refer to ‘[What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80597640f0b62302692fa1/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)’.

Supervision of children

Staffing arrangements will be in place, in line with the EYFS, to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Children will be adequately supervised and will usually be within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing. Whilst eating, children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff. Sleeping children will be frequently checked to ensure that they are safe.

Medicines

We have a policy and procedures for administering medicines to children, in line with the EYFS.

Food and drink

When meals, snacks and drinks are provided, they will be healthy, balanced and nutritious. Before a child is admitted, we will obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies that the child has and any special health requirements.

Fresh drinking water will always be available and accessible to the children.

Supporting and understanding children’s behaviour

We will support, understand and manage children’s behaviour appropriately.

As outlined in the EYFS, early years providers must not give or threaten corporal punishment or any punishment which could negatively affect a child’s wellbeing. As providers, we must take reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by anyone who is caring for or is in regular contact with a child, or by anyone living or working in the premises where care is provided. Any early years provider who does not meet these requirements commits an offence.

A person will not be considered to have used corporal punishment (and therefore will not have committed an offence), if physical intervention was taken to avert immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child’s behaviour if absolutely necessary.

We will keep a record of any occasion where physical intervention is used, and parents and/or carers will be informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonable practicable.

Special educational needs

Arrangements will be in place to support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Accident or injury

A first aid box with appropriate items for use on children, is always accessible. We will keep a written record of accidents and injuries and first aid treatments. We will inform parents and/or carers of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any first aid treatment given.

As an early years provider, we have to notify Ofsted of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of, any child while in our care, and the action taken. We have to notify local child protection agencies of any serious accident or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and must act on any advice from those agencies.

Safety

As providers, we ensure that our premises are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of the children we care for and the activities provided on the premises. We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements. We carry the appropriate insurance required.

We will ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. Children will only be released into the care of individuals of whom the parent has explicitly notified us. We will take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises and we have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors.

We will keep children safe while on outings and follow our risk assessment procedures.

Information and record keeping

We will maintain records in line with the EYFS and the relevant Data Protection legislation, obtain and share relevant information with parents and carers, other professional working with the child, the police, Children’s Social Care and Ofsted, as appropriate.

Parents’ & carers’ responsibilities: The best way to ensure the highest care for your child is to develop a good partnership and to ensure a continuity of care between your home and our care. We can do this together by **sharing information** **regularly** about your child. If your child has any health problems or has suffered an accidental injury away from our care, you must inform us when you leave a child in our care so that we can keep a record of it. We will both sign and date this record. Likewise, if your child suffers an injury in our care, we will inform you, record it and we will both sign and date this record.

Complaints

We have a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers and will keep a written record of any complaints and their outcome.

We will make available to parents and/or carers the details about how to contact Ofsted, if they believe that we are not meeting the EYFS requirements.

Definition of Abuse

A form of maltreatment. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children can be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Children’s Social Care will be notified if any professional suspects that a child is either suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm. Significant harm may constitute a single traumatic event or a build-up of concerns or a series of incidents over time.

There may be additional barriers to recognising signs of abuse and neglect of children who have additional needs and/or disabilities. We aim to be aware of any potential vulnerabilities of the children in our care and of their families.

The law recognises the following categories of abuse under the Children Act (1989):

**Responsibilities**

*Attendance*

*Prevent*

**Information Sharing**

Effective sharing of information is essential for early identification of need, assessment and service provision to keep children safe. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation allows for storage and sharing of information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, which should be treated as ‘special category personal data’.

Practitioners are allowed to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk. When information is shared, it will be necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure. The safety and well-being of the child will always be the primary consideration.

We have will have regard to HM Gov (2018) [***Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and* Managers**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf).

**Record Keeping**

Records will be kept whenever there are any concerns that might indicate possible abuse or neglect. This includes physical presentations on the child’s body, change in moods or behaviour, statements or drawings from the child, and any concerns around parental behaviour or non-attendance.

Records will include specific and objective accounts, the date and time of the incident, the name, date of birth and address of the child, action taken, who information has been shared with and a stated opinion or interpretation of the facts.

When a child leaves the setting, any child protection records will be sent to the new setting, addressed to their Designated Professional Lead for Safeguarding. The setting will keep copies of these records.

**Safer Recruitment**

As an early years provider, it is vital that we adopt recruitment and selection procedures that help deter, detect, and reject people who might harm children, or are otherwise considered unsuitable to work with them. We are committed to ensuring that all staff members are vetted, qualifications and identity checked, subject to Disclosure and Barring Service checks and written references are taken up, with one from the most recent employer.

We will adhere to the [City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership’s ‘Safe Recruitment Minimum Expectations’.](https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/CHSCP-Minimum-Standards-for-Safe-Recruitment-Reviewed-2023-FINAL.docx.pdf)

**Domestic Abuse** Seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members, including where those being abusive do not live with the child, can be traumatic for children and can have long-term damaging emotional and psychological effects.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021, recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right. Wherever domestic abuse is suspected in a home where a child is resident, we have a duty under the [London Safeguarding Children Procedures](http://www.londoncp.co.uk/) to refer this information to Children’s Social Care services.

 **Child Protection Procedures**

**Early Help - The Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework - for children and families with support needs**

Mostly we work with children who have additional needs before they meet the acute threshold that demands a child protection referral. As an early years setting, we can support these children by working with other relevant professionals, using the [***Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework*.**](https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Hackney-Child-Wellbeing-Framework-refresh-v6-.pdf) This framework focuses upon the needs and risk to children and families within their family environment or extra-familial context. It is designed to equip professionals to know how to respond when they have a concern about a child, by supporting discussion about levels of harm and attempting to give an indication of what might be an appropriate response to the needs of a child, family or context by defining four levels: **Universal needs (Prevention)** – Children with no additional needs or emerging needs that can be met by universal services.

**Low level needs (Early help)** – Children with some additional needs, who may benefit from additional support via a multi-agency network working alongside their parents/carers.

**Complex needs (Child in need) –** Children who are disabled and/or for whom specialist support is needed to promote their safety and welfare.

**Acute needs (Child protection)** – Children who are at risk of significant harm.

Some of the targeted services that can support universal services include Children & Family Hubs, children’s centres, family support services, First Steps, Young Hackney, Special Educational Needs & Disability, behaviour & educational support, speech & language, short breaks & transition, and voluntary & community services.

When needs are numerous or sufficiently intense to require a low level response, this will often require a written early help plan, so that the family and all workers involved are aware of the outcomes we hope to achieve, who is responsible for the actions to achieve them and how we will know when we are successful.

When children, families or contexts have complex or acute needs or are high risk, specialist support will sometimes be provided by statutory social work services or through multi-agency partnerships. These are often situations where the child is at risk because of issues in parenting or carer capacity or risks outside the family home. The pathway and processes for responding to need are described in the [***Hackney Children & Young People’s Services Resource Guide for Professionals***](http://www.chscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/CYPS-Resource-Guide-for-Professionals-July-2016.pdf)***.***

It is important to build on family strengths and resources. Parents/carers have the right to be told when a professional is worried about their child’s safety or wellbeing, have their consent obtained when someone makes a request for support on their behalf and to be at the centre of any plan to keep their child safe and well. Consent for referral is not required if it is felt that the child may be at risk of serious harm.

Professionals should be alert to the likely cumulative effect on children and young people of multiple concerns and consider whether the presence of numerous indicators (about the parenting being provided or within the extra-familial environment) amounts to the child’s needs not being met. Early years professionals can access support through Hackney Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

**Allegations against people working with children**

**All** staff have a legal responsibility to report concerns about professional conduct of colleagues whose behaviour might harm a child. All staff should be aware of how to identify and respond in a timely appropriate way to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with children e.g. inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention or inappropriate sharing of images. Any allegation against a member of staff should be given consistent and fair consideration. An allegation is information or a concern which suggests that an adult working with children and young people has: **All** allegations against staff members should be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. See [London Safeguarding Children Procedures](http://www.londoncp.co.uk/) for a thorough outline of allegations procedures.

**Important Contacts**

**If allegation is substantiated & employee is dismissed or resigns; report to DBS**

**References: Legislation and Relevant Guidance**

**Children Act 1989**

**Children Act 2004**

**Education Act 2002**

**Human Rights Act 1989**

**Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

**Domestic Abuse Act 2021**

DoH (1995) ***Child Protection: Messages from Research***

D ES (2004) ***Safeguarding Children***.

DfEd (2024***)*** [***Early Years Foundation Stage***](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65aa5e42ed27ca001327b2c7/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf) ***Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers***

HM GOV (2023) [***Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children***](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)**.** London: HMSO.

HM Gov (2015) [***What to Do If You’re Worried a Child is Being Abused***](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)**.** London: HMSO.

London Safeguarding Children Partnership (2022). [***London Safeguarding Children Procedures***](http://www.londoncp.co.uk/)***,*** 7th Ed. London: LSCB.

HM Gov (2018) [***Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and* Managers**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf). London: HMSO.

HM Gov (2023***)*** [***Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023***](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf)

[***Home Office Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance (2022)***](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1089015/Domestic_Abuse_Act_2021_Statutory_Guidance.pdf)

HM Gov (2023) ***[Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f8498efdc5d10014fce6d1/14.258_HO_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_v5c.pdf)***[.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f8498efdc5d10014fce6d1/14.258_HO_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_v5c.pdf)

HM Gov (2020) [***Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on FGM*.**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation)

[***Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings* (2022)**](https://c-cluster-110.uploads.documents.cimpress.io/v1/uploads/d71d6fd8-b99e-4327-b8fd-1ac968b768a4~110/original?tenant=vbu-digital)

Hackney Children & Young People’s Services (2016) [***Children and Young People’s Services Resource Guide for Professionals***](http://www.chscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/CYPS-Resource-Guide-for-Professionals-July-2016.pdf)**.**

[**City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership**](http://www.chscb.org.uk/)

***[City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership Escalation Policy](https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/7.-ESCALATION-POLICY-Final_December-2021.pdf)***

City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership ***[Safe Recruitment Minimum Standards](https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/CHSCP-Minimum-Standards-for-Safe-Recruitment-Reviewed-2023-FINAL.docx.pdf)***

***Please sign this page and return to the setting.***

**I confirm that I have read and understood this safeguarding and child protection policy.**

Child’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I confirm that I have read and understood this safeguarding and child protection policy.**

Staff/Volunteer/Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Staff/Volunteer/Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_