



Safeguarding Policy (including Child Protection)

Aim of Policy

At Peapod Pre-School all adults, whether employed or voluntary have a duty to safeguard each and every child who attends our setting. Peapod Preschool supports a culture where all individuals feel confident to raise concerns about children or adults in a timely and appropriate way. Our Safeguarding Policy will outline the necessary steps we will take to ensure the safety and welfare of all our children and to make sure they are protected from harm.

Definition of terms

Safeguarding: taking the necessary steps to protect children from harm and to ensure their safety.

Child Protection: part of the safeguarding of children, and is an activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm.

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead whose role it is to support children, staff, parents and external professionals by providing guidance and support on issues, procedures and training.

Contacts

Kerri Jefferson: DSL

Mary Newman: DSL

Sarah Riley: DSL

Fran O'Neill: DSL

CADS (Children's Advice and Duty Service): Professionals: 0344 800 8021

Public: 0344 800 8020

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): 01603 223473

NSCB (Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Board): www.norfolkscb.org

NSPCC (National Society for Protection of Cruelty to Children): 0800 800 5000 Monday-Friday 8am-10pm; weekends: 9am-6pm or help@nspcc.org.uk

The Legal Framework

There is certain legislation and guidance that this policy needs to be based on:

- NSCB Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Board
- Norfolk Continuum of Needs Guidance



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- The Children Act 1989
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- FGM Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) 2004
- What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- EYFS Statutory Framework 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations

Duty of Care

At Peapod Pre-School we all have a responsibility and duty of care to:

- Protect children from ill-treatment and harm.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure children's health and development are never compromised.
- Ensure that children are provided with safe and effective care whilst at our setting.
- Treat children with dignity and respect at all times.
- Raise concerns about children or adults in a timely and appropriate way.
- Ensure that any child protection concerns are recorded and reported through the appropriate channels according to our procedures as outlined by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Board, (NSCB).

Safeguarding Procedures

Staff and Volunteers

Recruitment

At Peapod Pre-School we adopt tight and rigorous recruitment procedures to ensure that no disqualified or unsuitable people work at our setting or have access to the children.

Applicants for posts within our Pre-School are clearly informed that all positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Posts are subject to references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service. This also applies to all those that volunteer at our Pre-School, helping within the classrooms or as a director on our Board. New directors should apply for their DBS certificates within 4 weeks of joining the Board. New directors will not be able to attend meetings until both their DBS and EY2 Ofsted forms have been verified and processed.

Staffing and Training



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We abide by Ofsted requirements and always make sure that we have appropriate staff to children ratios at all times: 1 member of staff for at least every 5 children for the supervision of 2 year olds, with 1 member of staff for at least every 8 children for the supervision of 3-4 year olds. Volunteers are not left alone with the children and will always be supervised by an employed member of staff. As part of their annual appraisal interview all employed staff must sign a declaration clause that confirms they have not committed a criminal offence in the last 12 months that would prevent them from continuing with their post.

All staff and volunteers are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures, as part of their training and induction to our Pre-School. Employed staff follow statutory requirements by undergoing training endorsed by the NSCB (Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Board) and will update their training every third year. They are trained to identify different forms of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect and how to deal with and report and record any concerns. In addition, Peapod Pre-School will ensure that staff understand the risks of radicalisation and extremism, in order to adhere to and achieve the **Prevent Duty**, that forms part of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

See *The Prevent Duty & Promoting British Values Policy*.

Staff will also undertake refresher safeguarding induction training following their return after a period of absence.

We have four Safeguarding Leads: **Kerri Jefferson, Mary Newman** and the managers: **Sarah Riley** and **Fran O'Neill** who are appropriately trained and are responsible for co-ordinating child protection issues.

Only those staff with current DBS checks are allowed to enter the toilet areas with children and assist with toileting and nappy changing. Volunteers, including work experience people will be supervised by a member of staff if, on occasion, they need to assist with children's handwashing.

Security

Visitors and Pick Up-Time Arrangements

Through our buzzer and keypad entry system 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. Visitors to the setting are always accompanied and are asked to sign in and out of our visitors' book. We ask parents to inform us of any changes to their child's pick-up arrangements and discuss this directly with a member of staff; (we will not let a child leave with an unauthorised person, for example, someone who is not an emergency contact, if we have not been informed by the parent).

Mobile Phones

We ask all users of our setting, including staff, parents and visitors not to use their mobile phones and we have signs throughout our Pre-School to remind people. Visitors to the Pre-School will be asked to leave their mobile phones in our Office where they will be kept for the duration of their visit. Staff are allowed to bring their mobile phones to work but are not



allowed to use them unless they have taken a break and are away from the children. Staff keep their mobiles securely locked away in their personal lockers in the staff room.

See *Acceptable Use Policy* and *Tapestry Policy* for further information.

Use of Photography and Videos

Working with children may involve taking or recording images; it is a statutory requirement of the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) to observe and assess all children as part of their learning and development. To do this, we routinely take photos and videos of children at play using our secure online software system, Tapestry. We ask for parental consent for their child's images to be included in other children's Tapestry learning journals. Parental request is also required for children's images to be included on our website and in other agencies publicity material. Our staff are encouraged to be sensitive to any child who appears uncomfortable about being photographed and to respect their safety, privacy and dignity. Under no circumstances must devices of any kind be taken into the toilet area without prior consultation with the managers or supervisors. If photographs need to be taken in this area, i.e. photographs of the children washing their hands, then the manager or supervisor must be asked first and staff be supervised whilst carrying out this kind of activity.

See *Acceptable Use Policy* for further information.

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 the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play. Staff may observe signs or signals that raise concerns, such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.

At Peapod Pre-School it is our duty to respond to any concerns regarding the health and welfare of a child such as those outlined. Additionally, we have a statutory obligation (see *Working together to safeguard children*) to protect young girls and women from FGM or female genital mutilation, as it is an illegal, extremely harmful practise and a form of abuse. If we suspect a child has suffered or is likely to suffer FGM it is essential that we work closely with other agencies. When a child is identified as "at risk" of FGM, this information **MUST** be brought to the child's GP attention and health visitor (as per section 47 of The Children's Act 1989) and we will proceed to adopt our safeguarding referral procedures as outlined below.

Staff are aware of the importance of raising any concerns they may have regarding the welfare of a child. Staff know they must refer their concerns to one of the Safeguarding Leads and the details will be recorded.

If we have a concern about a child or children, we will telephone the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on **0344 800 8021** immediately. We will be put through to a Social



Worker who will take the relevant details. We will make sure we are prepared with full details of the child and family, plus what our concerns are, details of any support we have provided to the child/family and what we would like to happen. We will ensure we gain consent from the parent/carer unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm or undermine a criminal investigation. If we have not sought consent from the parent/carer we will inform the CADS worker of this and the reason for this.

The CADS worker will agree a way forward with us and keep us informed. They will send us a written record of our conversation within 5 working days. The outcomes could include a full referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further investigation, the Police, or for work with Early Help. We will not investigate and will be led by the Local Authority and/or the Police.

We will make careful records of all conversations, including the dates and times of who we spoke to, the information shared and the action agreed. We do not need to send a written referral. Full details on this process can be found at www.norfolkscb.org under 'How to Raise a Concern'.

Peapod Pre-School understands if we are unhappy about a decision made by CADS or MASH we can use the Resolving Professional Disagreements policy on www.norfolkscb.org and contact the Safer Programme for more advice on this process.

Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

A disclosure is where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern. Should this instance occur staff will:

- Remain calm, listen to the child and offer reassurance.
- Take care not to influence the outcome of discussion during a disclosure by not asking questions.
- Make a written record as soon as is practicably possible, to be kept securely and confidentially, 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;
 - and the names of any other person present at the time.

A disclosure from a child may prompt our staff to telephone the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) immediately, as outlined above.

Informing Parents

Positive relationships with our parents are important to us. Should we have any concerns regarding a child we would discuss these with the parents to gain their view of events unless



we feel this may put the child in greater danger. We inform parents where we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern. Under the terms of section 47 of The Children's Act 1989, we do not need parental consent if a suspicion of abuse warrants immediate contact to the CADS team. If we have not sought consent from the parent/carer we will inform the CADS worker of this and the reason why.

Confidentiality

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Information can be shared with other agencies when it relates to the safety of a child, such as a disclosure of abuse, and is by no means a breach of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), May 2018.

See *Confidentiality Policy* and *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy* for further information. If a child leaves our setting, information records can be shared with their receiving setting if it is deemed to be in their best interest and welfare. Again, this is not a breach of GDPR and informs our duty of care. We will complete a record of transfer form that identifies the contact details of the new setting, including a designated safeguarding lead and the date of transfer. Any transferring records must be signed for by the new setting.

Allegations Against Staff

We follow the guidance of the NSCB or Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting has abused a child. We respond to any disclosure from children or staff, that abuse by a member of staff or a volunteer within the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident. Statements should be collected as soon as is practicably possible. We refer any such complaint immediately to the LADO or Local Authority Designated Officer to investigate (**01603 223473**). We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted detailing the measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this. We would co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by the Local Authority in conjunction with the police.

Where the Board of Directors and Local Authority agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the staff member, whether employed or voluntary, would be suspended 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 member as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

Where a staff member or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting because of misconduct relating to a child, we would notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) 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.

Other Related Safeguarding Policies & Procedures

The following policies provide additional information regarding the safeguarding and welfare of the children in our care:

- Children's Rights and Entitlements Policy
- Prevent Duty & Promoting British Values Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Tapestry Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy
- Appropriate Contact
- Uncollected Child Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Looked After Children Policy
- Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography Policy

Authorised by Managers, Sarah Riley & Fran O'Neill
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