

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.



Safeguarding children and Child Protection

Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the 5 guiding principles from “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (statutory guidance for schools and colleges) 2024.

These are:

1. Protecting children from maltreatment
2. Preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
3. Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
4. Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
5. Children includes everyone under the age of 18

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the commitments Safeguarding Children as outlined in “Keeping Children Safe in Education” as well as the EYFS.

Suitable People

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

- Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who co-ordinates and oversees this work at the Common is **LAURA BROWN**
- Our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who co-ordinates and oversees this work at the Cowshed is **PIPPA COLLINS**
- In the absence of the DSL, the Deputy managers are also trained.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.

- We follow Safer Recruitment Policies when appointing new staff, and anyone involved in the interview process has Safer Recruitment training.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and other suitability checks are carried out for staff prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Enhanced criminal records are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - details of who obtained it.
- All staff and volunteers are informed 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).
- We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
- Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Steps are taken 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 on the Registration form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Photos may be used for promotional purposes but only with the written consent of parents

Suspicious of Abuse

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect. Children can also be victims of Domestic Abuse (by witnessing events), can be drawn into

terrorism or subject to Female Genital Mutilation, Forced marriage, “honour” killings, child trafficking, Criminal exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults

- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or 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, parent’s 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 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 that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the “Safeguarding Lead”. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children’s social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Partners.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- 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 views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person’s refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing

confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give 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 the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the Safeguarding Lead is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Partners stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Partners. Please refer to the Safeguarding File in the office of Cotswold Bunnies and/or to computer under file named GDPR.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

- We keep a copy of this document alongside the procedures for recording and reporting set down by our Local Safeguarding Partners.
- **MASH number for urgent safeguarding concern is 01452 426565, select option 3**
- **Non urgent concerns contact Community social Work Team on 01452 425263**
- **All referrals to MASH : <https://children.gloucestershire.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>.**
- **Stroud Referral Assessment Team:01452 583725, stroudrat@gloucestershire.gov.uk**
- **Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team: 01452 614194. For concerns about immediate safety of a child or concern about a serious criminal offence that needs immediate intervention Call the EDT or the police on 101**

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child in greater danger.
- Parents are informed when 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.

- 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 Local Safeguarding Partners 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.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Partners guidelines.
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate 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.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, 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, volunteer or any other person living or working on the premises, 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 Local Safeguarding Partners when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, 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
 - behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate:
 - **Nigel Hatten and Team** amadmin@gloucestershire.gov.uk
 - An Allegations Management Referral Form will need to be completed

- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this. **Ofsted telephone number is 03001231231.**
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will 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, 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 Disclosure and Barring Service 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.

Procedures to ensure safety within the setting

Training

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect, domestic abuse, FGM, prevent and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- The Safeguarding Lead, manager and deputy managers receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Partners.
- All staff must complete their Level 2 Safeguarding qualification and regularly update
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision.
- No child is left alone with volunteers in a one-to-one situation.
- No child will be left alone for any length of time without being visible to others.
- In some circumstances it may be that there is only one member of staff with a child (eg late collection/ unwell child not allowed out). In this case the member of staff will be a senior member. Refer to the Lone Working Policy for more information

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 so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- 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 Local Safeguarding Partners.
- For further information, see "Information Sharing and Confidentiality Policy"

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, 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 Information Sharing and Confidentiality Policy and GDPR (2018) and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Partners.
- All confidential records are stored, accessed and made available in a way that is compliant with the GDPR (2018)

Mobile phone use

- Cotswold Bunnies on the Common has 2 mobile phones, and Cotswold Bunnies in the Cowshed has 3. These mobile phones to be used for taking photos /videos of the children for Tapestry use. They are both password protected and are kept in a locked cupboard or filing cabinet when the nursery is closed. The phones are taken out when the children go for their outdoor play.
- Personal mobile phones of all staff are kept in a designated area in both settings. They are not used in the daytime except in an emergency and with the permission of the manager.
- At the manager's discretion they may be used by staff on their 10 minute break at lunchtime (or half hour unpaid break). Calls must be made away from the premises of the nursery.
- For further information see "Use of Mobile Phones, Cameras and Smart Devices Policy" and "Acceptable use policy"

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (2018)
- Data Protection Act (2019)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- General Data Protection Regulation (2018)
- Keeping children safe in Education (2024)
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017


Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- Prevent Duty Guidance

Further guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2006)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- 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 (HMG 2008) (HMG 2006)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check

This Policy was adopted by:		Cotswold Bunnies Nurseries Ltd	
On:	07.10.2024	Date to be reviewed:	07.10.2025

Signed on behalf of the Provider:			
Name of Signatory:	Pippa Collins		
Role of Signatory (e.g, Chair, Director or Manager)	Manager		