



Early Education & Childcare

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Aims:

- To ensure staff remain vigilant and are aware of the appropriate response in the event of concern regarding a child's safety.
- To ensure the BS3 Community Early Education & Childcare team follow the South-West Child Protection Procedures, Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP) and meets the statutory requirements set by the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To ensure all staff understand what to do in the event of an allegation against a member of staff.
- To communicate the procedures which are in place for child protection to staff, parents/carers, and any other relevant parties.
- To have regard for Working Together to Safeguard children (2023) and Prevent Duty guidance.

The Children Act 1989 provides the legislative framework for child protection in England. This is strengthened by the Children's Act 2004, which encourages partnerships between agencies and creates more accountability. Children have the right to be protected from harm.

Definitions of Abuse:

The Children Act recognises four categories of abuse:

- **Physical Abuse** - actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** - actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. The child may be dependent or developmentally immature. Sexual abuse also includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual images.
- **Emotional Abuse** - severe or persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection likely to cause adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in the significant impairment of a child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Procedures:

N.B. in an event of an emergency a member of staff should always call 999.

Everyone is accountable when keeping children safe.

Recognising signs – All staff to be vigilant and able to recognise the signs of abuse is an essential element of safeguarding children. It is important that all staff members are alert to any signs or behaviours which make them feel concerned. This may include (EYFS Section 3, p23):

- Significant changes in children's behaviour.
- Deterioration in a child's general wellbeing.
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- A child making comments which lead to concern.
- 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; and/or
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with children, for example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate image sharing.

Not all concerns about children or young people relate to abuse, there may well be other explanations. It is important to keep an open mind and consider what you know about the child and their circumstances.

If staff members are worried, it is not their responsibility to investigate and decide if it is abuse, it is their responsibility to act on these concerns and follow the relevant procedures.

Recording –

The Designated Person for Child Protection should ensure any information which causes any amount of concern is recorded in the child's chronology and stored in the locked file. If a child arrives at nursery with an injury, then this should be recorded in the accident file (accident at home) and signed by the parent when they are dropped off, if an injury is noted after a child has been already dropped off, then this should be followed up with both the key person and the parent/ carer. Any discussions or decisions made relating to safeguarding a child/ren should be recorded. Parents have a right to access information held by the setting about their child unless it is deemed that this may lead to an increased risk of significant harm to an adult or child.

Any information relating to children attending the setting should be treated as confidential, inappropriate discussion of child protection concerns could jeopardise children's safety and any future investigations.

Staff members should consider that recording may be needed for evidence in legal proceedings. Therefore, ensure that you record facts as facts. Your opinion should be clearly labelled as such.

Disclosure –

If a child discloses abuse, members of staff should ensure the following occurs:

- They remain calm.
- They listen properly to what the child is saying.
- They can reassure the child where appropriate.
- They record all relevant information in as much detail as soon as possible, including date, time, exact wording used, responses, all contextualizing information and anything else which seems relevant.
- They do not interrogate, ask leading questions, or ask the child to repeat what they have said.
- The information should not be shared with others in the space, and the DSL should be contacted immediately.
- Discussions are held with the Southville and Chessel Centre's designated person for safeguarding children (see list at the end of the document).

As with any discussions with children, adults should ensure their responses are appropriate to the developmental level and age of the child. It is unusual for children to make false disclosures regarding abuse, therefore if disclosure occurs the information will be shared with the designated person for child protection, who will contact First Response, in line with the South-West Child Protection Procedures.

Referral –

In the event of a concern staff members should accurately record details and refer their concern to the designated person for child protection (who may seek further information from the parent/carer). Once a discussion has been held a decision as to whether referral is necessary will be made.

- Staff members keep monitoring the child's behaviour, making a note of any concerns (when, where and what happened).
- Staff members should discuss concerns with the designated person responsible for child protection. The child's parents / carers should be seen at the earliest opportunity to ascertain if there is a known reason for a change in behaviour (e.g., a change in family make-up, death of family member, pet).
- Any member of staff or volunteer can contact the relevant agency (as listed below).
- Should you wish to discuss any concerns you may have, please include your line manager as they may have guidance before reporting any child protection issues.
- If you are still concerned about the welfare of the child / young person, this information must be passed on to the appropriate agency. It is important to remember that if you report concerns, you are not reporting the parents / carers – you are reporting to protect the welfare of the child.
- If appropriate, inform parents / carers that you are going to report your suspicions / concerns. This might not always be possible and should not put the child or yourself at risk. When you report an incident, First Response will ask you if the parent / carer has been informed. If they have not, they will want to know the reasons why.
- If First Response has been contacted and they pass you to Children's Social Care (Social Services), Social Care should let you know that they are responding to what you have told them. It is unlikely that you will be told what action has been taken unless it has implications for the scheme. If you have not heard from the Social Care team, it may be appropriate to contact them to ensure that the details you gave them have been taken into consideration and acted upon.

First Response can be contacted on:

- **First Response – 0117 9036444 (all Bristol)**
- **South West Child Protection Procedures – Getting Help (2014)**

In an emergency where you are worried a child may be hurt or if you are unable to speak to someone and you have immediate concerns for a child, dial 999 and ask for the police.

1. If you are a professional and want advice on whether to make a child protection referral
Call First Response
0117 9036444

2. Where you think a child is at **imminent risk of significant harm**
Call First Response
0117 9036444

Online Safety:

Monthly online safety audits completed by Head of Early Years and Education (Kelly Murphy) and Designated Consultant from Sharp IT (Tony Edmonds). Supported by Head of IT and Data Processor, (Becca McDougall).

The DSL is also responsible for implementing additional measures for online safety. For example, ICT checks and commercial blocks etc.

Children within the rooms are not left unattended with the setting's devices, for example nursery tablets.

All the IT equipment is owned by BS3 community Development, therefore should be accessed, and stored on site. In exceptional circumstances, the equipment can be signed out for offsite use (when travelling between The Southville Centre and The Chessel Centre).

Our online journal is with Family, any contact with families via this app need to include the CC of Family Services.

Under no circumstances will a member of staff share details about children with parents, family members or any others through personal forums, such as social media accounts.

Other types of Abuse:

Peer on Peer Abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer-on-peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/ hazing type violence and rituals. (Source: Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019,2023)

Historical Abuse

There may be occasions when a child will disclose abuse (either sexual, physical, emotional or neglect) which occurred in the past. This information needs to be treated in exactly the same way as a disclosure of current child abuse. Reasons for this include the possibility that the abuser may still represent a risk to children now.

Domestic Abuse

Staff may be working with children experiencing violence at home. Children experiencing this may demonstrate many of the signs below. Practitioners will need to treat this sensitively, record their concerns and consider informing First Response.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female circumcision is illegal in the UK and it is an offence to take UK nationals abroad to aid, abet or carry out FGM. All agencies have a statutory responsibility to safeguard children from being abused through FGM. If there is concern that a girl is at risk of FGM, then this is a child protection issue and should be documented and reported to First Response and or the police.

It is crucial to report absences on the child's chronology and any conversation with parent/carers that may seem unusual.

For more information on this topic, see the online South-West Child Protection Procedures or the contact the NSPCC. Contact details in the appendix.

The Prevent Duty:

The Prevent Duty requires that staff members are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. The BS3 Community Development Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection is responsible for attending relevant briefings and supporting others to understand this responsibility.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology, as with managing other safeguarding risks, practitioners will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. In the event of any behaviour of concern, clear records will be kept, and any concerns will be referred through First Response in the first instance.

An email address for the local Channel process co-ordination is included at the end of this policy. The Channel process is aimed at supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into extremism.

The BS3 Community Development Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection is responsible for attending relevant briefings and cascading the updates to DSL deputies and other staff members.

Confidentiality and Appropriate Disclosure of Information:

Confidentiality is crucial to all our relationships, but if the concern is in relation to the welfare of the child this is overturned. Everyone who works with children is responsible in keeping them safe, and linking with our DSL's are paramount. The law does not allow anyone to keep concerns relating to abuse to themselves. Therefore, confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the child.

All information that has been collected on any child will be kept locked and secure and access will be limited to the appropriate staff, management, and relevant agencies.

In the event of an investigation, it is essential that no information on child protection concerns relating to a child is disclosed inappropriately. Any such leaks could have serious consequences for both the child concerned and any investigation.

In the event of any uncertainties about what information may be shared, advice should be taken from Bristol's Information Sharing protocol.

- Whilst parents / carers have the right to see any records kept on their child, this might not always be appropriate and should not put the child or yourself at risk.
- It is very important that only those who need to know, to avoid rumour and gossip that could affect the child, parent / carer, and the group.

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Transfer of a Child Protection Safeguarding file from One Education Setting to Another:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead must inform the receiving setting that the child has a child protection file and must do so within 5 school days of being notified of the transfer.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should pass the original copy of the child protection/ safeguarding file to the receiving setting; this should be delivered separately to the child's main file and be delivered either by hand or by recorded delivery. The parents/carers of the child must never be used to transfer the child protection file. The transfer must happen within five school days from notification and the setting should record that the transfer has been made.
- Confidentiality should be maintained, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure that the transfer process is as safe as possible.
- If a new child joins the centre, then their previous setting should be asked if the child has a child protection/ safeguarding file.
- If so, once the transfer of the file has been made, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should record that the file has been received (receipt) and keep this record for 6 years.
- Copies of transferred files will be kept for a minimum of 6 years and/or until the child reaches their 25th birthday.

Please refer to the KEEPING BRISTOL SAFE PARTNERSHIP "Guidance on the Transfer of a Child Protection Safeguarding file to another education setting", for full details of what should be in a file, how to transfer it and what records should be retained.

Parents/carers will be made aware that as an education provider we have a duty to share/pass on child protection/safeguarding information to the next education provider.

Staffing:

Designated Responsibility –

Each Designated Person and Designated Committee Member for Child Protection will have attended a KBSP approved child protection course. BS3 Community Development will provide annual Safeguarding and Child Protection training to all permanent staff, and it is a statutory training so should be attended.

It is required that all staff familiarise themselves with the South-West Child Protection Procedures guidance as well as this policy. Links to this information are available at the end of this policy document. We ask you to sign this policy to ensure you understand your responsibility with Safeguarding children.

Suitability –

The settings will require DBS checks and two references for all staff/students/volunteers who commence work with children. One verbal will be obtained as well. These are also required for BS3 Community management committee members.

Please also refer to BS3 Community Development's Recruitment Policy for more detailed information regarding safe recruitment.

Recognising inappropriate behaviour in staff, volunteers, and other adults.

HR and Management teams have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

There is no guaranteed way to identify a person who will harm children. However, there are possible warning signs. These may include:

Paying an excessive amount of attention to a child or groups of children, providing presents, money or having favourites

- Seeking out vulnerable children, e.g., disabled children.
- Trying to spend time alone with a child or group of children on a regular basis.
- Making inappropriate sexual comments.
- Sharing inappropriate images.
- Being vague about where they have worked or when they have been employed.
- Encouraging secretiveness.

Changes to the organisation – when an employee leaves our company:

It is the Lead Practitioners of the rooms, and Deputy Managers responsibility to action the removal of accounts and access to the Family online journal.

The HR team ensure that the member of staff's exit interview has been completed, with all items returned to BS3 Community.

The Facilities team ensure that door codes have been changed, both to external entrances and internal doors into the nursery spaces.

There may be other sources of concern; this is not a conclusive list. If you are concerned about another staff member or volunteer's behaviour, you need to pass this on to the designated person for child protection. **You can always call LADO Nicola Laird on 0117 903 7795. OR email nicola.laird@bristol.gov.uk LADO@bristol.co.uk**

Allegations –

Any member of staff/student/volunteer who is subject to an allegation of child abuse will be suspended whilst this allegation is investigated. This includes where it is alleged an offence has occurred outside of their role at BS3 Community Development. In the event of any investigation determining that a member of staff has committed such offence then they will be dismissed immediately.

The Head of Early Education & Childcare will inform the LADO and await a formal investigation. Should it be deemed an inappropriate incident has occurred, Children's Social Care will be contacted and updated of any allegation and in addition Ofsted. If a member of staff is dismissed for misconduct in relation to children, or resigns before they would have been dismissed, BS3 Community Development also has a duty to report this to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Contact Details (Bristol) Nicola Laird

Telephone: 0117 903 7795 or

Work Mobile: 07795 091 020

Email: LADO@bristol.gov.uk

Sign here to show you understand your responsibility for keeping

children safe whilst in our care.

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Technology:

New technologies present potential risks for children and young people, including the potential to access inappropriate materials or online communication and activity. The use of all BS3 Community Development electronic devices is monitored and appropriate filters and controls are in place to prevent inappropriate use. Please refer to the Screen time Policy and E-Safety Policy for further information.

Where children are accessing online material, the organisation has a role in implementing strategies to help keep them safe online (Our data processor ensures filters are in place) and in supporting them to develop their own understanding of online risks and how to prevent them (cyberbullying, grooming, radicalisation, and online abuse). This may include communicating with parents and/or teachers if they are aware of inappropriate use.

Use of Mobile Phones & Cameras:

The use of personal mobile phones and cameras within The Southville Centre and The Chessel Centres nursery rooms are prohibited. Members of staff who work directly with children are requested to store their mobile phones in the designated storage spaces along with their other personal belongings.

In the event that a member of staff may need to be contacted (by family or medical professionals etc.), they are permitted to keep their phones in the office and will be notified if a contact attempt has been made.

BS3 Community does not allow staff to have any device that holds a camera or recording device within any of our nursery spaces. Should a smart watch be worn and have access to these functions you will be asked to remove them.

The use of a smart watch/Fitbit is acceptable. It is each member of staff's duty to declare to their Line Manager that they are wearing a smart watch to work and specify whether their device has camera or recording functions. If you do have access to a camera, or recording function you are not allowed to wear this within our nursery environments.

Should you not declare these functions are present on your smart watch, the disciplinary procedure will be followed.

The expectation is that these devices are not used within Ofsted registered spaces or designated open hours. Lead and Senior Practitioners are permitted to use a room mobile phone during outings and in an emergency, for communication purposes only (not for taking photographs as they do not have cameras). The number of the mobile phone used on an outing should be recorded on an outings form. BS3 Community Development also has laptops, tablets and iPads which are monitored and used for assessment purposes. Parental permission is required for photographs, including specific permissions for sharing or displaying these in any format. This also is the situation for staff members with apple watches and other devices on their persons.

Support & Advice:

Dealing with processes for recognising and responding to potential child protection concerns can sometimes be very difficult and emotive for early years staff members. BS3 Community Development recognises this and has a commitment to providing appropriate support for employees. In addition to regular supervision, early years staff can also request supervision sessions at any point and will be directly offered additional supervision if they have been/are involved in any form of incident or situation related to child protection. Supervision sessions may also lead to further signposting for support and advice and contact details for several relevant agencies are included at the end of this document.

Please sign this policy to ensure you agree to this measure.

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Safeguarding Children Statement:

Safeguarding is a relatively new term which is broader than 'child protection' as it also includes prevention. Safeguarding has been defined as:

- All agencies working with children, young people and their families taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimized.

- Where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies taking appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

Safeguarding children is of paramount concern to BS3 Community Development; it is part of the legal requirements of our Ofsted registration, and highly relevant to our objectives and responsibilities as a charity.

Whilst this policy is central to our efforts to safeguard children, this does not sit in isolation as we acknowledge that safeguarding is relevant to all our policies, procedures, and practice.

Other useful contacts

DBS: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Bristol Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 0117 903 7795 or 07795 091020

OFSTED: 0300 123 4666

First Response: 0117 903 6444 (all Bristol)

Disabled Children Team (all Bristol) - Tel: 0117 903 8250

Emergency Duty Team: Out of Office Hours Tel: 01454 615 165 (all Bristol): childprotection@bristol.gov.uk

Police: Non-emergency – Tel: 101 **Emergency – Tel:** 999

NSPCC: 0800 800 5000 (or text 88858)

Child Line: 0800 1111

Channel info: channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

Families in Focus Team, South: 0117 903 7770

Trustee responsible for Child Protection (Child Protection Officer)

Name: Elizabeth Normand

Email: Safeguardingtsc@bs3community.org.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for Child Protection –

Head of Early Education and Childcare: Kelly Murphy

Deputy Leads for Child Protection –

Deputy Managers: Joanna Smith and Hannah Brewer

Lead Practitioner (room-based) with DSL Training –

Charlotte Wrigglesworth

Trustee responsible for Child Protection (Child Protection Officer)

Name: Elizabeth Normand

Email: Safeguardingtsc@bs3community.org.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for Child Protection –

Head of Early Education and Childcare: Kelly Murphy

Deputy Leads for Child Protection –

Deputy Managers: Joanna Smith and Hannah Brewer

Lead Practitioner (room-based) with DSL Training –

Charlotte Wrigglesworth

Training & Development –

A yearly Child Protection audit is completed and sent to Bristol City Council. This identifies training development needs and aspirations.

The named person for Child Protection attends relevant training each year, with an aim that all other staff access training every 2 years. We have an annual refresher for Child Protection and Prevent training.

jeanette.plumb@bristol.gov.uk – KBSP Level One Training

www.band.org.uk

www.peytu.co.uk

Reviewed: 09/01/2024

Related documentation:

- BS3 Community Recruitment Policy
- EYFS Statutory Requirements
- Working together to Safeguard Children
- South-West Child Protection Procedures
- E-safety Policy
- Screen time Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Mobile Phone and Camera Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy

