

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

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

Safeguarding children and child protection

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Policy statement

Buttsbury Pre-school will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the three key commitments of the Early Years Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. 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.'

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) (Department for Education, 2023)

Statutory framework

There is government guidance set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (HMG, 2018) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The statutory partners in Essex are Essex County Council, Essex Police and five of the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups covering the county and the partnership arrangements sit under the [Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) (ESCB).

Early years providers have a duty under section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006 to comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, under which providers are required to take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of young children.

Everyone working in early years services should know how to recognise and respond to signs of possible abuse or harm.

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults during the COVID-19 pandemic

All staff remain alert to any signs that during the current COVID-19 outbreak a child in their care is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. This include signs of neglect that may be caused by extraordinary

circumstances due to measures to curb the spread of the virus. Both managers are safeguarding leads, (main and deputy) and even though they will not be in the pre-school at all times they are always contactable by phone.

All staff and managers to make contact with all parents/carers, any concerns are reported to the Managers. Support is offered to the parent/carer. Managers will keep a record of parents who have not made contact and endeavour to be in touch by telephone call, email or Facebook.

Telephone calls have been made regularly to those parents who we consider needing support.

Online support via emails and Facebook posts are monitored by managers. We have posted daily ideas, songs, stories and activities performed by members of staff. We are sending weekly emails with suggestions of ideas and activities for parent/carers to do at home.

Managers are making regular calls with staff to support their wellbeing.

Procedures

We are committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and will do this by putting young people and vulnerable adult's right to be '*strong, resilient and listened to*' at the heart of all our activities.

The Early Years Alliance 'three key commitments' are broad statements against which policies and procedures across the organisation will be drawn to provide a consistent and coherent strategy for safeguarding children young people and vulnerable adults in all services provided.

NB: A 'young person' is defined as 16–19-year-old. In an early years setting, they may be a student, worker, or parent.

A 'vulnerable adult' (see guidance to the Care Act 2014) as: 'a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may need community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'. In early years, this person may be a service user, parent of a service user, or a volunteer.

Key commitment 1 - The Alliance is committed to building 'a culture of safety' in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Our Pre-school works with local statutory services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of Early Help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support, for example Child in Need or Child Protection plans.

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the pre-school who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred, **must** report it immediately to the Designated Lead Practitioner (or, in their absence, the Deputy Lead Practitioner).

Where there is risk of immediate harm, the setting will telephone the Essex Social Care Children & Families Hub and / or the police. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to the Children and Families Hub via the [Essex Effective Support portal](#). We may also seek advice from Essex Social Care or another appropriate agency about a child protection concern, if we are unsure how to respond to it.

Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to make a request for support to Essex Social Care, with parents / carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that it could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the Children and Families Hub and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should press for re-consideration of the case with the Designated Lead Practitioner. The Deputy Lead Practitioner should be consulted if the Designated Lead Practitioner is not available.

If, for any reason, the Designated Lead Practitioner or Deputy Lead Practitioner is not available, this will not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the pre-school to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may request support from Essex Social Care where it is suspected that a child has been harmed, or where there is a risk of harm to a child.

When new staff, volunteers or visitors join our pre-school, they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the Designated Lead Practitioner and Deputy Lead Practitioner, and how to share concerns with them.

Staff and volunteers

- Our designated person/s (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child, young person and vulnerable adult protection issues are:
Mrs Crosby and Mrs Woodman
- Our designated officer (a Trustee) who oversees this work is:
Our Chairperson
- The designated person, the suitably trained deputy and the designated officer ensure they have relevant links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.

- The designated person (and the person who deputises for them) understands LSCB safeguarding procedures, attends relevant LSCB training at least every two years and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding at least annually.
- We ensure all staff, parents and visitors are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures through the use of our induction process, a copy on our parent noticeboard and updated list of policies in our new starter pack.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children's social care team or the NSPCC. They receive updates on safeguarding at least annually.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.
- All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2018) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All staff understand the thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm, according to arrangements published by the LSCB or safeguarding partners in areas where the safeguarding partners have replaced the LSCB.
- All staff understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018, and understand relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements and local safeguarding partner requirements and ensure that any information they may share about parents and their children with other agencies is shared appropriately and lawfully.
- We will share information lawfully with safeguarding partners and other agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.
- We will be transparent about how we lawfully process data.
- Any records relating to child protection are kept on an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to any other child file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially until the child transfers to another educational setting.
- Where a child transfers from our pre-school to another educational setting, their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the Lead Practitioner (or in the case of a school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead) at the new educational setting, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new setting, and then destroy any copies held in our setting. Where appropriate, the Designated Lead Practitioner may also contact the new educational setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives.
- Where a child joins our pre-school, we will request child protection records from the previous educational setting (if applicable, and if none are received).

- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard and know how to follow local safeguarding procedures to resolve professional disputes between staff and organisations.
- All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of cameras and mobile phones), whistleblowing and dignity at work.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age-appropriate way.
- All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the pre-school are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and long term volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the pre-school or has access to the children.
- Volunteers must:
 - be aged 17 or over;
 - be considered competent and responsible;
 - receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings;
 - be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
 - be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.
- Where applications are rejected because of obtaining information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the Disclosure Barring Service check reference number;
 - certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - details of who obtained it.
- We inform all staff and long-term volunteers 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).
- Staff receive regular supervision, which includes discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs are reviewed regularly.

- In addition to induction and supervision, staff are provided with clear expectations in relation to their behaviour [outlined in the employee handbook].
- 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.
- 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 and have access to records holding visual images of their child. Any images of children are held securely. Staff do not use personal cameras or filming equipment to record images.
- Personal mobile phones are not used where children are present.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO.
- The designated person in the pre-school has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate e-safety policy in place. This is covered in our Social Media policy.
- When a child doesn't attend pre-school, one of the managers or office staff will put a telephone call into the parents via our contact card information to find out if the child is ill, on holiday or another reason for their absence. We will check our office diary before putting in a call to ensure we haven't been advised of the child's absence already. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately and LSCB procedures are followed. If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the pre-school through the use of our visitors book maintained by our office staff. Visitors are required to wear a visitors badge whilst on the premises.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the pre-school so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
 - Our internal doors are key coded so only staff and the Buttsbury Infant School (BIS) business manager and site manager have automatic access to the playroom, kitchen, training and sensory room and office. When our children are in session, the BIS site manager is accompanied around the premises by a member of staff. Outside of session hours, the site manager may be unaccompanied.
 - Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present, both inside the main playroom, in the kitchen, training or sensory room (when used) and in the outside area. In certain circumstances i.e. targeted support, some children are in the training or sensory room with one practitioner (this is with consent of the child's parent/carer).
 - We carry out risk assessments to ensure children are not made vulnerable within any part of our premises.
 - Where possible we book appointments for persons wishing to visit the pre-school so we can anticipate them. For further information please refer to our 'Maintaining children's safety and security on premises' policy.

- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
- The designated person will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to children's social care on 0345 603 7627, or where appropriate, the LADO on 03330 139797, Ofsted on 0300 123 1231 or RIDDOR.

Key commitment 2 - The Alliance is 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 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- 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 sunburn, bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the pre-school.
- We understand how to identify children who may be in need of early help, how to access services for them
- We understand that we should refer a child who meets the s17 Children Act 1989 child in need definition to local authority children's social work services
- We understand that we should refer any child who may be at risk of significant harm to local authority children's social work services.

- We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; 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, radicalisation or extremism; that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.
- In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCB procedures on responding to radicalisation.
- The designated person completes online Channel training, online Prevent training and attends local WRAP training, where available, to ensure they are familiar with the local protocol and procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation.
- We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police. We are also aware that early years practitioners should follow local authority published safeguarding procedures to respond to FGM and other safeguarding issues, which involves contacting police if a crime of FGM has been or may be about to be committed.
- 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.
- If we become concerned that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking we will refer to the National Referral Mechanism, as soon as possible and refer and/or seek advice to the local authority children's social work service and/or police.
- We will be alert to the threats children may face from outside their families, such as that posed by organised crime groups such as county lines and child sexual exploitation, online use and from within peer groups and the wider community.
- 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 and child in need concerns and follow the LSCB procedures, or when they come into force replacing the LSCB, we will follow the local procedures as published by the local safeguarding partners.
- Where such indicators are apparent, the child's key person or member of staff in session makes a signed and dated record detailing the concern/s and discusses what to do with the 'designated person'

or Manager/Assistant Supervisor who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file in a confidential locked cabinet.

- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
- We refer concerns about children's welfare to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. Note - In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (or the local safeguarding partners when their published safeguarding arrangements take over from the LSCB).
- We respond to any disclosures sensitively and appropriately and take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children (although we may check out/clarify the details of what we think they have told us with them).
- 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 or neglect 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 in an age appropriate way, but the pre-school 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.
- All staff are also aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.
- All staff know that they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they feel that or organisation and the local authority have not taken appropriate action to safeguard a child and this has not been addressed satisfactorily through organisational escalation and professional challenge procedures.
- We have a whistleblowing policy in place.
- Staff/volunteers know they can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing dilemmas.

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 sunburn, 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; although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification;
 - 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; 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 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity and always within 1 working day.
- The managers understand some cases where a child/ren need/s to be safeguarded can be distressing for those staff involved. Managerial advice and support will be given to those members of staff involved when reporting concerns about a child/ren.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners safeguarding procedures 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 Children Board.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team

- The Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) procedures contains detailed procedures for making a referral to the local social care team. The pre-school has a safeguarding form for recording concerns and to assist with making a referral.
- We keep a copy of these SET procedures on our computer and follow the detailed guidelines given when necessary.
- All members of staff are familiar with the 'Children and Families Service Map and Key Contacts' (Essex County Council Early Years and Childcare 2022) referral flowchart <https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/media/2238/children-and-families-hub-process-map.docx> and follow the procedures for recording and reporting. Staff are regularly reminded to review this flowchart at our staff meetings.

Escalation process

- If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCB escalation process.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.
- We will follow local procedures published by the LSCB or safeguarding partners to resolve professional disputes.

Interagency working

It is the responsibility of the Lead Practitioner to ensure that the pre-school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any Child Protection Conference called for children registered with us, or previously known to us. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with parents / carers. The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the pre-school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

If a child is subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the Lead Practitioner will ensure the child is monitored regarding their attendance, emotional wellbeing, developmental progress, welfare and presentation. If the pre-school is part of the Core Group (interagency forum for achieving the outcomes of a

Child Protection plan), the Lead Practitioner will ensure the pre-school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the Core Group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Lead Practitioner will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so, and the actions agreed.

We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes 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 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.

*Ofsted telephone number 0300 123 4666, email CIE@ofsted.gov.uk, or see their [website](#).

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. We normally discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events, unless we feel this may put the child or other person at risk or may interfere with the course of a police investigation or may unduly delay the referral, or unless it is otherwise unreasonable to seek consent. Advice will be sought from social care, or in some circumstances police, where necessary.
- Parents are informed that we make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants a referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board/Local Safeguarding Partners does not allow for this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed at risk.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser or where sexual abuse may have occurred.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk (or interfere with a police response) the designated person should consider seeking advice from children's social care, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Allegations against staff and persons in position of trust

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in our Staff Code of Conduct. The pre-school works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures <https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2737/set-procedures-may2022.pdf> (ESCB, 2022) in relation to allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity).

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the pre-school, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the pre-school, which may include an allegation of abuse.

- We ensure that all staff volunteers and anyone else working in the pre-school knows how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct or behaviour of other people including staff/colleagues.
- We differentiate between allegations, and concerns about the quality of care or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
- 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 will recognise and respond to allegations that a person who works with children 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
- We ensure that all staff or long term volunteer knows how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the pre-school. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the pre-school, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the pre-school, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to a senior manager within the organisation and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as necessary to investigate and/or offer advice:
03330 139797 lado@essex.gov.uk (phone number & email)
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the committee trustees and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson 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. Where it is appropriate and practical and agreed with LADO, we will seek to offer an alternative to suspension for the duration of the investigation, if an alternative is available that will safeguard children and not place the affected staff or volunteer at risk.

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

(DBS) 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 - The Alliance is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering children, young people, and vulnerable adults, through its curriculum, promoting their right to be 'strong, resilient and listened to'.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the pre-school to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. Training opportunities should also cover extra familial threats such as online risks, radicalisation and grooming, and how to identify and respond to families who may be in need of early help, and organisational safeguarding procedures.
- Designated persons receive appropriate training, as recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, every two years and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually.
- We ensure all of our staff undertake an annual Level one online safeguarding course via our online training platform - Educare or ESCB training.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the pre-school. We do this through regular communications at our staff meetings.
- We ensure that all staff receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters, online training and/or discussion at staff meetings at least once a year.
- New staff are informed of our designated person at their initial induction before commencing employment.
- Our safeguarding guidelines are also published in our staff handbook (implemented Summer 2013).

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being within sight and/or hearing of other staff or volunteers.

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.
- We create within the pre-school a 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.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

The Prevent Duty

In order for schools and childcare providers to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and childcare providers' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

Schools and childcare providers can also build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, schools should provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments. For early years childcare providers, the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets standards for learning, development and care for children from 0-5, thereby assisting their personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world.

iReportit App

https://www.report-it.org.uk/national_public_referral_tool_for_counter_terror

City Hall commissioned research shows that the public want to play a role in countering extremist content but lack awareness of how to do so. Reporting channels are reported to be difficult to use and people aren't confident that current referral systems are anonymous - which is currently prohibiting the public from raising concerns.

The iREPORTit app will allow people to refer worrying or disturbing content to the CTIRU easily, effectively and, crucially, completely anonymously. There should be no safe space for terrorists online – the CTIRU have a team of specially trained officers who can assess each referral and take appropriate action.

The iREPORTit app is compatible with both iOS and Android. The app carries the Action Counters Terrorism (ACT)

The app has been created in London but is built for use across the country as extremism does not recognise the invisible borders that separate us.

British Values

We actively promote inclusion, equality of opportunity, the valuing of diversity and British values.

Under the Equality Act 2010, which underpins standards of behaviour and incorporates both British and universal values, we have a legal obligation not to directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or

victimise those with protected characteristics. We make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not at a substantial disadvantage.

Social and emotional development is shaped by early experiences and relationships and incorporates elements of equality and British and universal values. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) supports children's earliest skills so that they can become social citizens in an age-appropriate way, that is, so that they are able to listen and attend to instructions; know the difference between right and wrong; recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others; make and maintain friendships; develop empathy and consideration of other people; take turns in play and conversation; avoid risk and take notice of rules and boundaries; learn not to hurt/upset other people with words and actions; understand the consequences of hurtful/discriminatory behaviour.

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 Children Board/Local Safeguarding Partners and in line with the GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and Working Together 2018.

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, 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 pre-school's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- We will engage with any child in need plan or early help plan as agreed.
- 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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Use of reasonable force

The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children, but these are exceptional circumstances and do not form part of our routine approach to managing behaviour. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. Our

pre-school works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

Whistleblowing

All members of staff and the wider pre-school community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the leadership team. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place, and these are available in our Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Parents / carers or others in the wider setting community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24-hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Online Safety

Technology forms part of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage. We help our children to begin to learn how to use technology safely, and to be safe online as we recognise computer skills are key to accessing learning.

We will engage with our parents / carers about online safety to support them in keeping their children safe at home when using technology.

Use of mobile phones/smart watches

We acknowledge that mobile phones/smart watches are often the only means of contact available and can be helpful in supporting safeguarding arrangements in settings, including when on outings. In our pre-school, when mobile phones/smart watches are used, this is underpinned by a risk assessment and within a clear framework, so everyone understands their responsibilities in ensuring phones are used safely.

We will ensure that staff personal mobiles:

- are stored securely in their handbag in the office/kitchen and will be switched off or on silent whilst staff are on duty;
- are not used to take pictures of the children attending the pre-school;
- will not be used to take photographs, video or audio recordings in our pre-school;
- are not used to contact parents / carers or children except in the event of an emergency; and
- are not used by visitors.

We will ensure that staff personal smart watches are disconnected from their mobile phones while in session.

Cameras, photography and images

Most people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for acceptable reasons. However, due to cases of abuse to children through taking or using images, we must ensure that we have safeguards in place.

To keep our children safe, we will:

- obtain parents' / carers' consent for photographs to be taken, used, or published (for example, on our website or displays);
- ensure only the pre-school's designated cameras are used when photographing our children;
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed;
- ensure that children's names are not used;
- ensure that personal cameras are not used to take photographs, video or audio recordings in our pre-school without prior explicit written consent from the pre-school;
- ensure that all images are stored securely and in accordance with statutory guidance; and
- ensure where professional photographers are used that the appropriate checks such as those with the Disclosure and Barring Service, references and parental consent are obtained prior to photographs being taken.

Safeguarding guidelines by external users of the training room or sensory room

As a pre-school, we will adhere to the procedures above and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the pre-school so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to our children.

We require our external users to ensure:

- Whenever external children are on the premises at least two adults are present, either inside the sensory room or in the training room.
- We expect our external users to carry out risk assessments to ensure their adults/children are not made vulnerable within any part of our premises. Our admissions officer will require sight of the external users risk assessment and public liability insurance policy prior to use.
- We will book appointments for external users wishing to visit the pre-school so we can anticipate them. All users will need to sign in using our visitors book and wear a visitors badge at all times.
- For further information please refer to our 'Risk Assessment' and 'Maintaining children's safety and security on premises' policies.

A 'young person' is defined as 16 to 19 years old – in our pre-school. They may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent.

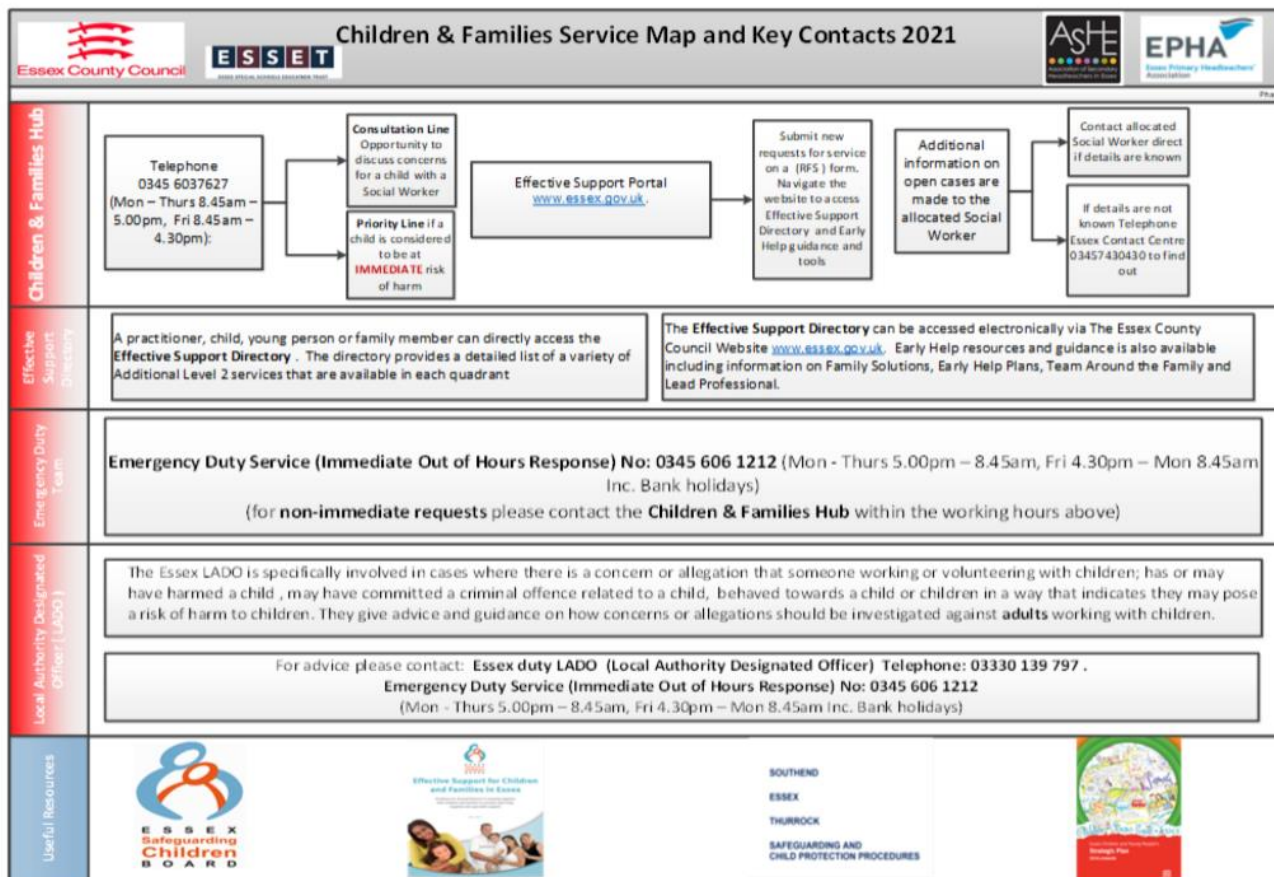
This policy should be read in conjunction with other statutory and local guidance:

- [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/111111) (DfE, 2023)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#) (DfE, 2021)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#) (HMG, 2018)
- [SET procedures](https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2737/set-procedures-may2022.pdf) <https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2737/set-procedures-may2022.pdf> (ESCB, 2022)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HMG, 2015)
- [The Prevent Duty guidance](#) (Home Office, 2015)
- [Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) (ESCB, 2021)
- [The Common Assessment Framework \(2006\)](#)
- [Education Inspection Framework \(Ofsted, 2019\)](#)
- [Children Act](#) (HMG, 1989)
- [Children Act](#) (HMG, 2004)

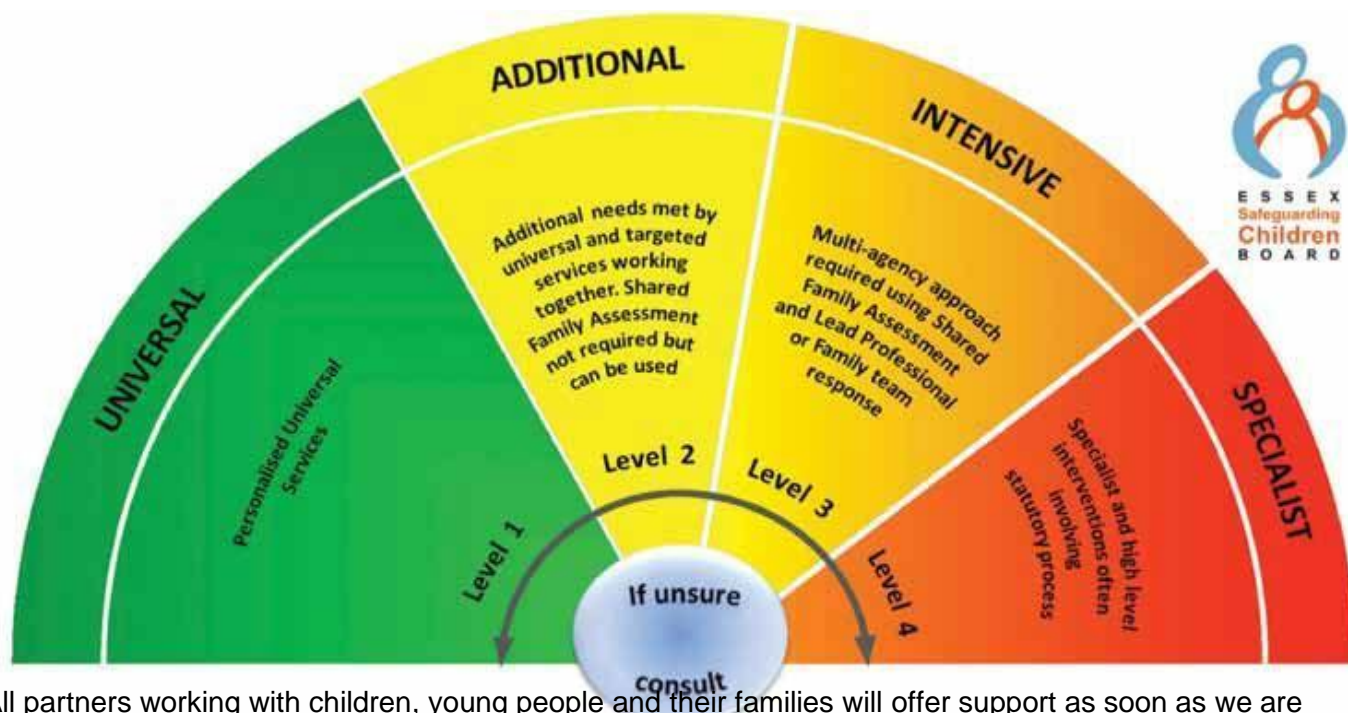
This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Buttsbury Pre-school	name of setting
Held on	_____	(date)
Date to be reviewed	_____	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	_____	
Name of signatory	_____	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	Chairperson	

Appendix A: Children and Families Hub flow chart

Please note: these procedures are also set out on the [Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) website.



Appendix B: Essex Windscreen of Need and levels of intervention



All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs

Children with **Additional** needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as Family Hubs or schools and other educational settings, organising additional support with local partners as needed. When an agency is supporting these children, an Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional are helpful to share information and co-ordinate work alongside the child and family.

For children whose needs are **Intensive**, a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, involving either an Early Help Plan or a Shared Family Assessment (SFA), with a Lead Professional to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. Examples of intensive services are children's mental health services and Family Solutions.

Specialist services are where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Examples of specialist services are Essex Social Care or Youth Offending Service. By working together effectively with children that have additional needs and by providing coordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services.

Appendix C – types of abuse and harm

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. A child may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children – categories:

- physical
- emotional
- sexual
- neglect

Signs of possible abuse

- significant changes in children's behaviour
- deterioration in children's general well-being
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- children's comments which give cause for 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 the children, for example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Our setting understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- that they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- the potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can take many forms, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. Our setting recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside our setting. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and that they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and / or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

Children not attending

Our setting recognises that not attending is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. It is also recognised that, when not in the setting, children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents / carers and other partners where appropriate to keep children in the setting whenever possible. Parents / carers should always inform us of the reason for any absence [*insert arrangements for acting on absence / refer to any other relevant policies*].

Further information about types of abuse and harm is given in [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners](#) (HMG, 2015) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE, 2020).

Children potentially at risk of greater harm

We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care or previously in Care or those requiring mental health support. We work with Essex Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

Mental health and wellbeing

Our staff are aware that mental health and wellbeing problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns that this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that educational settings play a key part in this. Our setting aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all children and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability, and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience.

Prevention of radicalisation

The [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act](#) (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on childcare providers and schools. Under section 26 of the Act, childcare providers and schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the **Prevent duty**.

As an early years setting, we recognise that we serve arguably the most vulnerable and impressionable members of society. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) makes clear that to protect children in their care, providers must be alert to any safeguarding and child protection issues in the child's life at home or elsewhere. We must take action to protect children from harm and be alert to harmful behaviour by other adults in the child's life.

We already focus on children's personal, social and emotional development, in an age appropriate way, in the following ways:

- ensuring that children learn right from wrong
- mix and share with other children
- value other's views
- know about similarities and differences between themselves and others
- challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.

Channel is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Our setting works in accordance with local procedures for Prevent and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to Essex Social Care and / or Channel.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

Our setting will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.