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Child Protection Policy

**based on Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021 and ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (KCSIE) 2021**

**This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents**.

Date written: September 2022

Date of last update: November 2021

Date agreed and ratified by; The Committee of Minster Playgroup

Date of next full review: September 2023

**This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.**

**Key Contacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Name** | **Contact information** |
| **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** | KIRSTY PEARN | 01795 871120 |
| **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead** | KAREN MATTHEWS | 01795 871120 |
| **Manager** | KIRSTY PEARN | 01795 871120 |
| **Other key staff** | COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON  SARAH MUSTAFA | 07919 177654 |

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**Act immediately and record your concerns. If urgent, speak to a DSL first (Kirsty Pearn/Karen Matthews.**

Follow the settings procedure

* Reassure the child
* Clarify concerns, using open questions if necessary (**TED**: **T**ell, **E**xplain, **D**escribe)
* Use child’s own words, record facts not opinions.
* Sign and date your records
* Seek support for yourself if required from DSL (Kirsty Pearn DSL/Karen Matthews, deputy DSL)

**Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead** (Kirsty Pearn DSL/Karen Matthews Deputy DSL) **or refer if appropriate**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

* Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm e.g. unsafe to go home
* Access the Kent Safeguarding Support Level Guidance document and procedures: [www.kscmp.org.uk](http://www.kscmp.org.uk/)
* Refer to other agencies as appropriate e.g. Internal or community services, early help open access, LADO, Police or Request for Support for integrated children’s services
* If unsure then consult with Area Education Safeguarding Advisor (**03000** 418503) or Local Authority Social Worker at the Front Door.

**If you are unhappy with the response**

**Staff:**

* Follow local escalation procedures
* Follow whistleblowing procedures

**Children and Parents:**

* Follow setting complaints procedures (Available from the office or the cloakroom)

At all stages, the child’s circumstances will be kept under review

The DSL/Staff will request further support if required to ensure the **child’s safety** is **paramount**

**Record decision making and action taken in the child’s child protection file**

**Review** and **request further support** if necessary

**Why are you concerned?**

For example

* Something a child has said – e.g. allegation of harm
* Child’s appearance – may include unexplained marks as well as dress
* Behaviour change
* Witnessed concerning behaviour

**What to do if you have a welfare concern in Minster Playgroup**

**Monitor**

Be clear about:

* What you are monitoring e.g. behaviour trends, appearance etc.
* How long you will monitor
* Where, how and to whom you will feedback and how you will record

1. **Child Focused Approach to Safeguarding**

‘*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.’* Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021

* 1. **Introduction**
* The committee and management of Minster Playgroup believe that all those directly involved with our setting have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. Our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child can achieve their full potential and we take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.

Minster Playgroup recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility and all those directly connected (staff, volunteers, governors, leaders, parents, families, and children) are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and have an essential role to play in making this community safe and secure.

* Minster Playgroup believe that the best interests of children always come first. All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.

Staff working with children at Minster Playgroup will maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child and if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.

* As part of the safeguarding ethos of the setting we are committed to:
  + Maintaining children’s welfare as our paramount concern
  + Providing an environment and culture in which children feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
  + Developing appropriate and positive relationships between children and the adults that care for them
  + Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties
  + Using learning opportunities to increase self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness, and decision making. This is so that young children develop a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others
  + Working with parents/carers to build an understanding of the setting’s responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations
  + Ensuring all staff have regular and appropriate training (including induction) to enable them to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and ensure they are aware of the setting’s procedures and reporting mechanisms
  + Monitoring children who have been identified as ‘in need’ including the need for protection, keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
  + Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
* The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, including and governors, temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers).
* Minster Playgroup adheres to the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) safeguarding children procedures. The full KSCMP procedures document and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the KSCMP website: [www.kscmp.org.uk](http://www.kscmp.org.uk)
  1. **Policy Context**
* This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and has due regard to the related guidance. This includes:
  + DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (KCSIE)
  + Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTSC)
  + Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework’
  + Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000
  + Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (Online)
  + Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework 2021 (EYFS)
* This policy has been implemented to ensure compliance with section 3, the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS.
* Minster Playgroup is currently operating in response to coronavirus (Covid-19), however, our safeguarding principles, remain the same. We will continue to follow government guidance and will amend this policy and our approaches, as necessary.
  + As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic some members of our community may have been exposed to a range of adversity and trauma including bereavement, anxiety and in some cases increased welfare and safeguarding risks. We will work with local services, such as health and the local authority, to ensure necessary support is in place.
  1. **Definition of Safeguarding**
* Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) states that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
  + protecting children from maltreatment.
  + preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
  + ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
  + taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
* It also reminds us that safeguarding **“*is everyone’s responsibility”*** *and e*veryone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. Everyone should consider wider environmental factors in a child’s life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
* The setting acknowledges that safeguarding includes a wide range of specific issues including (but not limited to):
* Abuse and neglect
* Bullying, including cyberbullying
* Children with family members in prison
* Children Missing Education (CME)
* Child missing from home or care
* Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
* Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
* Contextual safeguarding (risks outside the family home)
* County lines and gangs
* Domestic abuse
* Drugs and alcohol misuse
* Fabricated or induced illness
* Faith abuse
* Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls
* Hate
* Homelessness
* Human trafficking and modern slavery
* Mental health
* Nude or semi-nude image sharing, aka youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “Sexting”
* Online safety
* Peer on peer abuse
* Preventing radicalisation and extremism
* Private fostering
* Relationship abuse
* Serious violence
* Sexual violence and sexual harassment
* So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
* Upskirting
* Annex B of ‘[Keeping Children Safe in Education’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) (KCSIE) contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. Staff at the setting who work directly with children will read this annex.
* If staff have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow this policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Kirsty Pearn (or deputy, Karen Matthews)
  1. **Related Safeguarding Policies**
* This policy is one of a series of our integrated safeguarding portfolio, and should be read and actioned in conjunction with the policies as listed below (some are standalone policies and some are covered within this policy):
  + Behaviour Management (also known as supporting children’s self-regulation)
  + Code of Conduct
  + Online Safety
  + Mobile and smart technology
  + Social Media
  + Anti-bullying
  + Data protection and information Sharing
  + Image/Camera use
  + Drugs
  + Personal and intimate care
  + Health and safety
  + Risk assessments (e.g. trips, use of technology, setting reopening)
  + First aid and accidents (including medicines)
  + Managing allegations against staff
  + Behaviour policy/code of conduct for staff, including Acceptable Use of Technology (AUP)
  + Safer Recruitment
  + Whistleblowing
* **Supporting Guidance (to be read and followed alongside this document)**
* “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings” - Safer Recruitment Consortium, May 2019.
* “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused” – DfE, March 2015
* Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 Welfare Requirements
* These documents can be found in **the office and the staff work room**.
  1. **Policy Compliance, Monitoring and Review**
* Minster Playgroup will review this policy at least annually (as a minimum) and will update it as needed, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt. The policy will also be revised following any national or local updates, significant local or national safeguarding events and/or learning, and/or any changes to our own procedures.
* All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy and Part One and/or Annex A of KCSIE 2022 as appropriate
* Parents/carers can obtain a copy of the Child Protection Policy and other related policies on request
* The policy forms part of our development plan and will be reviewed annually by the management and committee of Minster Playgroup which has responsibility for oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems.
* The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managers will ensure the chairperson receives regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems. They will not receive details of individual children’s situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

**1.6 Disclosure**

* Children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, domestic abuse has been added to the list of safeguarding issues that all staff should be made aware of, the guidance makes it clear that domestic abuse can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional and can impact the children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing through their own intimate relationships. (add September 2022)

1. **Key Responsibilities** 
   1. **Leadership and Management**

* The manager and committee chairperson have a strategic responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements and will comply with their duties under legislation.
* The manager and committee chairperson have regard to the EYFS 2021 and KCSIE 2022 guidance and will ensure our policies, procedures and training is effective and complies with the law at all times. Committee will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and at regular intervals. The training will provide them with the knowledge to ensure that the playgroup safeguarding policies and procedures are effective.
* The manager and committee chairperson will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is supported in their role and is provided with sufficient time so they can provide appropriate support to staff and children regarding any safeguarding and welfare concerns.
* The manager and deputy will ensure that our child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures are understood and followed by all staff.

**Human rights Legislation:**

* Being subject to harassment, violence or abuse may breach children’s right as set out in the Human Right’s Act (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents)

**Equality legislation:**

* Equality legislation The guidance sets out the significance of the Equality Act 2010 to school safeguarding, including that schools and colleges

• must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics

• must consider how they are supporting pupils with protected characteristics

• must take positive action, where proportionate, to deal with the disadvantages these pupils face. For example, by making reasonable adjustments for disabled children and supporting girls if there is evidence they are being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment. It also looks at the implications of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) for education settings. This includes a need to be conscious that pupils with protected characteristics may be more at risk of harm and integrate this into safeguarding policies and procedures

**LGBTQ+ pupils:**

* LGBTQ+ children must have a voice and any disclosures or concerns be heard by members of staff and manage appropriately.
  1. **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
* The EYFS states; *‘a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in every setting’.* The committee of Minster Playgroup have appointed an appropriately qualified and experienced Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to fulfil this role in our setting.
  + Minster Playgroup has appointed **Kirsty Pearn, Manager** as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
* The DSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety) in the setting. Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.
* The setting has also appointed Deputy DSLs who will have delegated responsibilities and act in the DSLs absence.
* **Karen Matthews, Deputy manager and early years teacher**
* It is the role of the DSL to:
  + Acting as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
  + Maintaining a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns
  + Coordinating safeguarding action for individual children
    - When supporting children with a social worker or looked after children the DSL should have the details of the child’s social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child (with the DSL liaising closely with the designated teacher)
  + Liaising with other agencies and professionals in line with KCSIE 2022 and WTSC 2018
  + Ensuring that locally established procedures as put in place by the three safeguarding partners as part of the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures (KSCMP), including referrals, are followed, as necessary.
  + Representing, or ensure the setting is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including child protection conferences)
  + Managing and monitoring the setting role in any multi-agency plan for a child.
  + Being available during setting hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns and ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and out of hours and/or out of term activities.
  + Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within EYFS 2021.
* The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSLs training will be updated formally at least every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.
  1. **Members of Staff**
* The EYFS 2021 requires providers *‘to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well’*’ and accordingly, everyone involved in the care of young children has a role to play in their protection. All members of staff in the setting are part of the wider safeguarding system for children and are in a unique position to observe any changes in a child’s behaviour or appearance.
* All members of staff have a responsibility to:
* Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
* Be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.
* Know what to do if a child tells them that he or she is being abused or neglected and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child.
* Be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
* Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
* Understand the early help process and their role in it.
* Understand the settings safeguarding policies and systems.
* Undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated.
* Be aware of the local process of making referrals to children’s social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
* Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
* Reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
  1. **Children**
* Children have a right to:
* Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
* Confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
* Receive help from a trusted adult.
* Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.
  1. **Parents and Carers**
* Parents/carers have a responsibility to:
* Understand and adhere the relevant policies and procedures.
* Talk to their children about safeguarding issues with their children and support the setting in their safeguarding approaches.
* Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online.
* Seek help and support from the setting or other agencies.

1. **Child Protection Procedures** 
   1. **Recognising Indicators of Abuse and Neglect**

* All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), EYFS 2021 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022. This is outlined locally within the [Kent Support Levels Guidance](https://www.kscmp.org.uk/guidance/kent-support-levels-guidance).
* Minster Playgroup recognise that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse:
* Physical abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Emotional abuse
* Neglect
  + For further information see Appendix 1.
* Minster Playgroup recognises that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused however all concerns should be taken seriously and will be explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.
* Minster Playgroup recognises abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot always be covered by one definition or one label alone. In many cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff will always be vigilant and always raise concerns with a DSL.
* Parental behaviors can indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff will be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.
* Children may report abuse happening to themselves, their peers or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.
* Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors and risks outside the setting. Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families; extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.
* Technology can be a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face and in many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online.
* By understanding the indicators or abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow this approach if they are concerned about a child:



‘[What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2) 2015

* In all cases, if staff are unsure, they will always speak to the DSL, Kirsty Pearn (or deputy, Karen Matthews).
* Minster Playgroup recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.
  1. **Responding to Child Protection Concerns**
* If staff are made aware of a child protection concern, they are expected to
  + listen carefully to the concern and be non-judgmental.
  + only use open questions to clarify information where necessary, e.g. who, what, where, when or Tell, Explain, Describe (TED).
  + not promise confidentiality as concerns will have to be shared further, for example, with the DSL and potentially Integrated Children’s Services.
  + be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed.
  + record the concern in line with setting record keeping requirements.
  + inform the DSL (or deputy), as soon as practically possible.
* The DSL or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, a DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should speak to the chairperson of the committee or DSL from the Minster Playgroup at the Abbey (Debbie Harrison) and/or take advice from Education Safeguarding Service or via consultation with a social worker from the Front Door. In these circumstances, any action taken will be shared with a DSL as soon as is practically possible.
* Minster Playgroup will respond to concerns in line with the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership procedures (KSCMP).
  + The full KSCMP procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on their website: [www.kscmp.org.uk](http://www.kscmp.org.uk)
  + Specific information and guidance to follow with regards to accessing Early Help and Preventative Services and/or Children’s Social Work Services as part of Integrated Children’s Services (ICS) in Kent can be found here: [www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/integrated-childrens-services](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/integrated-childrens-services)
* Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger, a ‘request for support’ will be made immediately to Integrated Children’s Services (via the ‘Front Door’) and/or the police, in line with KSCMP procedures.
  + Minster Playgroup recognise that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns for a child as identified in line with Support Level Guidance, it is NOT to investigate as a single agency, but to act in line with KSCMP guidance which may involve multi-agency decision making**.**
  + The DSL may seek advice or guidance from their Area Education Safeguarding Advisor from the Education Safeguarding Service before deciding next steps.
  + They may also seek advice or guidance from a social worker at the Front Door service who are the first point of contact for Integrated Children’s Services (ICS).
* In the event of a request for support to the Front Door being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by KSCMP and ICS. Parents/carers will be informed of this, unless there is a valid reason not to do so, for example, if to do so would put a child at risk of harm or would undermine a criminal investigation.
* All staff are aware of the process for making request for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
* Where is it is identified a child may benefit from Early Help support (as provided by ICS), the DSL (or deputy) will generally lead as appropriate and make a request for support via the Front Door.
  + The DSL will keep all early help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to escalating concerns to the Front Door or seeking advice via the Education Safeguarding Service if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.
* If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child’s situation does not appear to be improving or there is a concern regarding decisions made, the DSL will consider following [KSCMP escalation procedures](https://www.proceduresonline.com/kentandmedway/chapters/p_resolution.html) to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child’s situation improves. DSLs may request support with this via the Education Safeguarding Service.
  1. **Recording Concerns**

All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions, and reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing on the setting safeguarding ‘Welfare Incident Concerns form’ (The Green Form) and passed without delay to the DSL or deputy.

* Welfare Incident Concerns form’ (The Green Form) concern forms are keptin the office, on the safeguarding board in the staff work room and in the safeguarding portfolios.
* Records will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child’s words and will be signed and dated by the member of staff. Child protection records will record facts and not personal opinions. A body map will be completed if injuries have been observed.
* If there is an immediate safeguarding concern the member of staff will consult with a DSL before completing the form as reporting urgent concerns takes priority.
* If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they will discuss their concerns with the DSL.
* Child protection records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and details regarding any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
* Child protection records will be kept confidential and stored securely. Child protection records will be kept for individual children and will be maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the setting. Child protection records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained centrally and securely by the DSL.
* All child protection records will be transferred in accordance with data protection legislation to the child’s subsequent setting, under confidential and separate cover as soon as possible. Child Protection files will be transferred securely to the new DSL, separately to the child’s main file, and a confirmation of receipt will be obtained.
* In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new setting in advance of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new setting to continue to provide support.
* Where the setting receives child protection files, the DSL will ensure key staff such as the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will be made aware of relevant information as required.
  1. **Multi-Agency Working**
* Minster Playgroup recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work within the KSCMP multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The management team and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies in line with statutory guidance.
* Minster Playgroup recognises the importance of multi-agency working and is committed to working alongside partner agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children’s welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to KSCMP processes as required, such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings.
  1. **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**
* Minster Playgrouprecognises our duty and powers to hold, use and share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity as per statutory guidance outlined within WTSC 2018 and KCSIE 2022.
* Minster Playgroup has an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to ensure that our setting is complaint with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements. **Kirsty Pearn (Karen Matthews, deputy)**
* The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. DfE ‘['Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners'](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice)’ (2018) provides further detail. This can be found using the link or in the safeguarding portfolio in the office and the staff work room.
* The manager and DSL will disclose relevant safeguarding information about a child with staff on a ‘need to know’ basis.
* All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep information confidential, in line with our confidentiality policy they also have a professional responsibility to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children; this may include sharing information with the DSL and with other agencies as appropriate. All staff are aware they cannot promise confidentiality in situations which might compromise a child’s safety or wellbeing.
  1. **Complaints**
* All members of our community should feel able to raise or report any concerns about children’s safety or potential failures in our safeguarding regime. The setting has a complaints procedure available to parents, members of staff and visitors who wish to report concerns or complaints. This can be found in the policy folder in the office.

* Whilst we encourage members of our community to report concerns and complaints directly to us, we recognise this may not always be possible. Children, young people, and adults who have experienced abuse can contact the NSPCC ‘Report Abuse in Education’ helpline on [0800 136 663](tel:0800%20136%20663) or via email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
* Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.
  + Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).
* The leadership team at will take all concerns reported seriously and all complaints will be considered and responded to in line with the relevant and appropriate process.
  + Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with in line with section 8 of this policy.

1. **Specific Safeguarding Issues**

Minster Playgroup is aware of a range of specific safeguarding issues and situations that can put children at greater risk of harm. Whilst some of these issues may be more likely to involve older children, early years children may still be at risk at harm, for example where there are concerns involving family members.

* Where staff are unsure how to respond to specific safeguarding issues, they should follow the processes as identified in part 3 of this policy and speak with the DSL or a deputy.
  1. **Peer on Peer Abuse**
* All members of staff at Minster Playgroup recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, and that it can happen both inside and outside of the setting and online.
* Minster Playgroup recognises that peer on peer abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:
  + Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
  + abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
  + physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
  + sexual violence and sexual harassment
  + consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
  + causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
  + upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
  + initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
* Minster Playgroup believes that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or dismissed as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.
* Minster Playgroup recognises that even if there are no reported cases of peer on peer abuse, such abuse is still likely to be taking place.
* All staff have a role to play in challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. Staff recognise that that some peer on peer abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved, i.e. for gender based abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators.
* In order to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse Minster Playgroup will:

* Minster Playgroup want children to feel able to confidently report abuse and know their concerns will be treated seriously. All allegations of peer on peer abuse will be reported to the DSL and will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with associated policies, including child protection, anti-bullying and behaviour. Children who experience abuse will be offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.
* Alleged victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by peer on peer abuse will be supported by:
  + We will take reports seriously, listen carefully, avoid victim blaming, provide appropriate pastoral support, work with parents/carers, review educational approaches, follow procedures as identified in the behaviour policy and where necessary and appropriate, informing the police.
  1. **Child on Child Sexual Violence or Harassment**
* When responding to concerns relating to child on child sexual violence or harassment, Minster Playgroup will follow the guidance outlined in Part Five of KCSIE 2022 and the DfE ‘[Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges) guidance.

* Minster Playgroup recognises sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.
* All victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment or be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
* When there has been a report of sexual violence or harassment, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).
  + The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, adult students) and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.
* Reports will initially be managed internally by the setting and where necessary will be referred to Integrated Children’s Services and/or the Police.
  + The decision making and required action taken will vary on a case by case basis, but will be informed by the wishes of the victim, the nature of the alleged incident (including whether a crime may have been committed), the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance, if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse, if there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or setting staff, and, any other related issues or wider context.
* If at any stage the DSL is unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service.
  1. **Nude and/or Semi-Nude Image Sharing by Children**

The term ‘sharing nudes and semi-nudes’ is used to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams of/by young people under the age of 18. Creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal which makes responding to incidents complex.

The [UKCIS [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)’guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people) outlines how all educational settings should respond to incidents and should be read and understood by DSLs working will all age groups, not just older learners.

* Minster Playgroup recognises that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “sexting”) can be a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).
* When made aware of concerns involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos by children, staff are advised to:
  + Report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
  + Never view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it – this may be illegal. If staff have already viewed the imagery by accident, this will be immediately reported to the DSL.
  + Not delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it.
  + Not say or do anything to blame or shame any children involved.
  + Explain to child(ren) involved that they will report the issue to the DSL and reassure them that they will receive appropriate support and help.
  + Not ask the child or children involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery and not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child(ren) involved or their, or other, parents and/or carers. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
* DSLs will respond to concerns as set out in the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)’ and the local [KSCMP](http://www.kscb.org.uk/guidance/online-safety) guidance. When made aware of a concern involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos:
  + the DSL will hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.
  + parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.
  + All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.
  + a referral will be made to ICS and/or the police immediately if:
    - the incident involves an adult (over 18).
    - there is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.
    - the image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of 13, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child’s developmental stage, or are violent.
    - a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
  + The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.
  + If DSLs are unsure how to proceed, advice will be sought from the Education Safeguarding Service.
  1. **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**
* Minster Playgroup recognises that CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.
* If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of CSE or CCE, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.
  1. **Serious Violence**
* All staff are made aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include unexplained gifts or new possessions, increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
* Any concerns regarding serious violencewill be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns.
  + The initial response to child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.
  1. **So-Called Honour Based Abuse**
* So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.
* All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and concerns should be responded to in line with section 3 of this policy. Staff will report any concerns about HBA to the DSL (or a deputy).
  1. **Preventing radicalisation**
* Minster Playgroup is aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, also known as the Prevent duty and the [specific obligations](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-further-education-institutions-in-england-and-wales) placed upon us as an education provider regarding risk assessments, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.
* Minster Playgroup recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and staff will be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.
* All practitioners have completed Prevent training to enable them to be alert to changes in children’s behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.
* Staff will report any concerns to the DSL (or a deputy), who is aware of the [local procedures](https://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/prevent-within-schools) to follow.

1. **Supporting Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm**

* Whilst all children should be protected, some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm.
  1. **Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)**
* Minster Playgroup acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect.
* Minster Playgroup recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children with SEND will be appropriately supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.
* All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child’s disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND or certain medical conditions may be disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as abuse or bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
* Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionally impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.
* To address these additional challenges, our setting will always consider implementing extra support and attention for children with SEND. The DSL will work closely with the SENCO (Kirsty Pearn) to plan support as required.
  1. **Children Requiring Mental Health Support**
* All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are aware that children’s experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
* Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
* If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or deputy.
  1. **Children who need a Social Worker**
* The DSL will hold details of social workers working with children in the setting so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child’s safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.
* Where children have a social worker, this will inform setting decisions about their safety and promoting their welfare, for example, responding to unauthorised absence and provision of pastoral and/or academic support.
  1. **Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers**
* Minster Playgroup recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.
* Where a child is looked after, the DSL will hold details of the social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.
* Where the setting believes a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement (occurs when a child under 16 or 18 if the child is disabled is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more) we have a duty to recognise these arrangements and inform the Local Authority via the front door.

1. **Online Safety**

**The EYFS 2021 recommends settings access the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) ‘**[**Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations’**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations) **guidance.**

* It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material or behaviours online. Minster Playgroup will adopt a whole setting approach to online safety which will empower, protect, and educate children and staff in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.
* Minster Playgroup identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:
  + Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
  + Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
  + Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
  + Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.
* Minster Playgroup will ensure online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies. Online safety is considered as a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing our policies and procedures and when planning our curriculum, staff training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement.
* Minster Playgroup recognises that technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and changes rapidly. The setting will carry out an annual review of our approaches to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment which considers and reflects the risks our children face.
* The manager and committee chairperson will be informed of online safety concerns by the DSL, as appropriate.
  1. **Policies and Procedures**
* The DSL has overall responsibility for online safety within the setting but will liaise with other members of staff, for example, the health and safety office and IT technicians as necessary.
* The DSL will respond to online safety concerns reported in line with our child protection and other associated policies, including our
  + Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate.
  + Where necessary, concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with local policies and procedures.

Minster Playgroup uses a wide range of technology. This includes; computers, laptops, tablets and other digital devices, the internet, our learning platform, intranet and email systems.

* + All setting owned devices and systems will be used in accordance with our acceptable use policies and with appropriate safety and security measures in place.
* Minster Playgroup recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile and smart technology, including mobile phones, cameras and wearable technology. In accordance with the EYFS 2021) Minster Playgroup has appropriate mobile and smart technology and image use policies in place, which are shared and understood by all members of the community.These policies can be found in the policy folder in the office.

**Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring**

* Minster Playgroup will do all we reasonably can to limit staff and children’s exposure to online risks through setting provided IT systems and will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
  + - If children or staff discover unsuitable sites or material, they are required to take the device directly to a DSL.
  + All users will be informed that use of our systems can be monitored, and that monitoring will be in line with data protection, human rights, and privacy legislation.
  + Filtering breaches or concerns identified through our monitoring approaches will be recorded and reported to the DSL who will respond as appropriate.
  + Any access to material believed to be illegal will be reported immediately to the appropriate agencies, such as the [Internet Watch Foundation](https://www.iwf.org.uk/) and the police.
  + When implementing appropriate filtering and monitoring, Minster Playgroup will ensure that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
* Minster Playgroup acknowledges that whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of our online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our approach to online safety.
  + Children will use appropriate search tools, apps and online resources as identified following an informed risk assessment.
  + Children’s internet and technology use will be directly supervised by staff.
  + Children will be directed to use age appropriate online resources and tools by staff.
  1. **Information Security and Access Management**

Minster Playgroup is responsible for ensuring an appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place, in order to safeguard our systems as well as staff and children. Further information can be found in the safeguarding portfolio and policy folder (in the staff/work room and office).

* Minster Playgroup will review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.
  1. **Staff Training**
* Minster Playgroup will ensure that all staff receive online safety training as part of induction and that ongoing online safety training and update for all staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of our overarching safeguarding approach.
  1. **Educating Learners**
* Minster Playgroup will ensure a comprehensive response is in place to enable all children to learn about and manage online risks effectively as part of providing a broad and balanced age appropriate curriculum.

**Working with Parents/Carers**

* Minster Playgroup will build a partnership approach to online safety and will support parents/carers to become aware and alert of the potential online benefits and risks for children by:
  + Sharing through existing communication channels (such as official social media, newsletters etc.), highlighting online safety at existing events and signposting to relevant information.
  1. **Remote Learning**

**Not applicable**

1. **Staff Engagement and Expectations** 
   1. **Awareness, Induction and Training**

* All members of staff have been provided with a copy (by email) of ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ 2022 which covers safeguarding information for staff.
  + Setting management staff, including the DSL will read KCSIE in its entirety.
  + Setting management staff and all members of staff who work directly with children will read annex B.
  + All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood the national guidance shared with them.
* The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety), including information to ensure they are aware of the setting internal safeguarding processes, as part of their induction. This will take place through their induction, the child protections policy and online training (KSCMP) as well as through the DSL’s.
* All staff members (including agency and third-party staff) will receive appropriate child protection training (including online safety) to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues; this training will be updated at least annually.
* In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This will take place through staff meetings, online training (KSCMP, NoodleNow) and supervisions.
* Staff will be encouraged to contribute to and shape setting safeguarding arrangements and child protection policies. This will be at regular staff meetings, during supervisions and via input from knowledgeable and experienced staff, for example, DSL’s, recognised training providers.
  1. **Safer Working Practice**
* All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in our staff behaviour/code of conduct.
* The DSL will ensure that all staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) have read the child protection policy and are aware of our expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff code of conduct as well as the safety and use of electrical devices.
* Staff will be made aware of the setting behaviour management and physical intervention policies. Staff will manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and will have a clear understanding of the needs of all children. Physical interventions and/or use of reasonable force will be in line with our agreed policy and procedures and national guidance.
* All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking). Staff will adhere to relevant policies including the staff code of conduct as well as the safety and use of electrical devices.
  1. **Supervision and Support**
* The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if members of staff have any concerns about a child’s safety or welfare.
* The setting will ensure that members of staff are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021.
* The committee and managers of Minster Playgroup recognise regular, planned, and accountable supervision, which is a two-way process, offers support and develops the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. We see its purpose is to monitor the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children as well as achieving agreed objectives. Supervision also provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any concerns raised about an individual or colleague’s practice.
* The setting will ensure all members of staff and volunteers will receive regular and planned supervision sessions. Uninterrupted time will be set aside to ensure any supervision sessions effective for both practitioner and management to ensure that:
  + All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
  + All staff are supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
  + All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
* Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children’s welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.
* The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union, the Education Support Partnership or other similar organisations directly.

1. **Safer Recruitment and Allegations**
   1. **Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding Checks (including obtaining references)**

* Minster Playgroup is committed to ensure that develop a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with children and staff.
* The Chairperson of the committee of Minster Playgroup are responsible for ensuring that the setting follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance, including accurate maintenance of the staff records/Single Central Record (SCR). The SCR is a list of staff, volunteers and registered person/trustees/committee members and includes appropriate information which may include:
  + Dates of recruitment
  + References
  + Identity checks
  + Criminal records check reference number, including date and details of person who completed it
  + Eligibility to work in the UK checks
  + Other essential key data.
* The setting will obtain an enhanced check by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of every person aged 16 and over (including for unsupervised volunteers, and supervised volunteers who provide personal care) who:
  + works directly with children
  + lives on the premises on which the childcare is provided and/or
  + works on the premises on which the childcare is provided (unless they do not work on the part of the premises where the childcare takes place, or do not work there at times when children are present).
* An additional check by the DBS (or checks if more than one country) will also be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.

* The chairperson and management of Minster Playgroup are is responsible for ensuring that the setting adopts an application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its center, regardless of employee or voluntary role. C.V’s will only be accepted alongside a completed application form.

**Checks:**

* We may carry out online searches as part of our due diligence checks on short listed candidates.
* The chairperson and management of Minster Playgroup are responsible for ensuring that the setting follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance. At least one member of the interview panel must have completed safer recruitment training.
* Obtaining references - Minster Playgroup will always ask for a minimum of 2 references when a member joins the team, in any capacity. At least one of these would be expected to be from the member’s most recent/last employee. Once these references are received, Minster Playgroup will verify the reference by contacting the referee and confirming that they have provided the reference and ask if there is anything else that they would like to add. If there has not been any previous employment or there had been a gap other references will be requested from people that are deemed suitable – references from family members are accepted.
* Providing references – Minster Playgroup will obligingly respond to reference requests made by member’s new employers. References will be honest and fair, if there have been any disciplinary procedures during the duration of the member’s employment these will be disclosed accordingly.
* The Chairperson and management of Minster Playgroup is aware of the requirements to make appropriate checks regarding the disqualification status of all staff, including volunteers and temporary staff.
* We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, cautions and warnings.
* We will ensure that all staff and volunteers have read the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and understand that their behaviour and practice must be in line with it.
  1. **Allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to staff and volunteers**
* Minster Playgroup recognises that it is possible for any member of staff, including volunteers, contractors, agency and third-party staff (including supply staff) and visitors to behave in a way that:
  + Indicates they have harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
  + Means they have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
  + behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children or
  + behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
* In depth information regarding staff allegations can be found within our ‘Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff policy’**.** This can be found within the policy folder.
* As part of our approach to safeguarding, the setting adopts an open and transparent culture in which all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the setting safeguarding regime. The leadership team at Minster Playgroup will takes all concerns or allegations received seriously.
* Allegations should be referred immediately to the manager who will contact the [Local Authority Designated Officer](https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures/local-authority-designated-officer-lado) (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the manager, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the next senior management who will contact the LADO.
* Where managers are unsure how to respond to a concern about a member of staff, advice will be sought via the [Local Authority Designated Officer](https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures/local-authority-designated-officer-lado) (LADO) Enquiry Line and/or the [Education Safeguarding Service](https://www.theeducationpeople.org/our-expertise/safeguarding/safeguarding-contacts/).
* All members of staff are made aware of the settings Whistleblowing procedure It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.
* Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).
* Minster Playgrouphas a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.

* Minster Playgroup have a duty to inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). We will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations. Notifications will be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made and are aware that to not do so would be an offence.
* Reflections and evaluations will be made on all allegations, not just those which are concluded and found to be substantiated.

1. **Opportunities to teach safeguarding**

* Minster Playgroup recognises that 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. Our setting will provide a welcoming, safe, and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.
* We recognise that early years settings play an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is ‘safe’; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.
* Minster Playgroup will provide age appropriate educational opportunities to enable early years children to develop self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness, and decision making so that they have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, including online.
* Minster Playgroup recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.
* Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff. Children at Minster Playgroup will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

1. **Physical Safety**

* Staff will be made aware of the behaviour management and physical intervention policies*,* and any physical interventions and/or use of reasonable force must be in line with our agreed policy and procedures and national guidance.
  1. **The Use of Premises by Other Organisations**

**Our site is not used by others, however if it was, the following would be adhered to;**

* Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the setting facilities/premises, the manager and/or the chairperson will seek written assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection, and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers. If this assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused.
* Safeguarding requirements will be included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises. Failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.
  1. **Site Security**
* All members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light.
* Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into the setting as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to, sign in and out in the visitors’ log and to wear a visitor lanyard.
* Staff and visitors will be expected to adhere to any safety arrangements implemented because of Covid-19 restrictions.
* Any individual who is not known or identifiable on site should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.
* Minster Playgroup will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the site.

1. **Local Support**

* All members of staff in Minster Playgroup are made aware of local support available.

* **Education Safeguarding Service** 
  + **Area Safeguarding Advisor** 
    - <https://www.theeducationpeople.org/our-expertise/safeguarding/safeguarding-contacts/>
  + **Online Safety in the Education Safeguarding Service**
    - **03000 415797**
    - [esafetyofficer@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:esafetyofficer@theeducationpeople.org) **(non-urgent issues only)**
* **LADO Service**
  + **Telephone: 03000 410888**
  + Email: [kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk)
* **Integrated Children’s Services** 
  + Front door: 03000 411111
  + Out of Hours Number: 03000 419191
* **Kent Police**
  + 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm
* **Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP)**
  + [kscmp@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kscmp@kent.gov.uk)
  + 03000 421126
* **Adult Safeguarding**
  + Adult Social Care via 03000 41 61 61 (text relay 18001 03000 41 61 61) or email [social.services@kent.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk)

Appendix 1: Categories of Abuse

**All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.**

**Abuse:** 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women, and children.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse**

* Sudden changes in behaviour and performance
* Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
* Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
* Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
* Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
* Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
* Distrust of familiar adults e.g. anxiety of being left with relatives, a childminder or lodger
* Unexplained gifts or money
* Depression and withdrawal
* Fear of undressing for PE
* Sexually transmitted disease
* Fire setting

**Physical abuse**: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Signs that MAY INDICATE physical abuse**

* Bruises and abrasions around the face
* Damage or injury around the mouth
* Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
* Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
* Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
* Bite marks
* Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
* Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns
* Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
* Covering arms and legs even when hot
* Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
* Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent, or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Signs that MAY INDICATE emotional abuse**

* Over reaction to mistakes
* Lack of self-confidence/esteem
* Sudden speech disorders
* Self-harming
* Eating Disorders
* Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
* Compulsive stealing
* Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
* Fear of parents being contacted
* Unwillingness or inability to play
* Excessive need for approval, attention, and affection

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**Signs that MAY INDICATE neglect.**

* Constant hunger
* Poor personal hygiene
* Constant tiredness
* Inadequate clothing
* Frequent lateness or non-attendance
* Untreated medical problems
* Poor relationship with peers
* Compulsive stealing and scavenging
* Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
* Running away
* Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
* Low self esteem

Appendix 2: Support Organisations

**NSPCC ‘Report Abuse in Education’ Helpline**

* [0800 136 663](tel:0800%20136%20663) or [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**National Organisations**

* NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
* Barnardo’s: [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)
* Action for Children: [www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk)
* Children’s Society: [www.childrenssociety.org.uk](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk)

**Support for Staff**

* Education Support Partnership: [www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk](http://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk)
* Professional Online Safety Helpline: [www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline)

**Support for Learners**

* ChildLine: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
* Papyrus: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)
* The Mix: [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)
* Shout: [www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org/)
* Fearless: [www.fearless.org](http://www.fearless.org)
* Victim Support:[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/)

**Support for Adults**

* Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
* Crime Stoppers: [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/)
* Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
* The Samaritans: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)
* NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): www.[napac.org.uk](https://napac.org.uk/)
* MOSAC: [www.mosac.org.uk](http://www.mosac.org.uk)
* Action Fraud: [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)
* Shout: [www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org/)
* Advice now: www.advicenow.org.uk

**Support for Learning Disabilities**

* Respond: [www.respond.org.uk](http://www.respond.org.uk)
* Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
* Council for Disabled Children: [https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/)

**Contextual Safeguarding Network**

* <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

**Kent Resilience Hub**

* <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk/>

**Substance Misuse**

* We are with you (formerly Addaction): [www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/](http://www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/)
* Talk to Frank: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com/)

**Domestic Abuse**

* Domestic abuse services: [www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk](http://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk)
* Refuge: [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)
* Women’s Aid: [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)
* Men’s Advice Line: [www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk)
* Mankind: [www.mankindcounselling.org.uk](http://www.mankindcounselling.org.uk)
* National Domestic Abuse Helpline: [www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/)
* Respect Phoneline: [https://respectphoneline.org.uk](https://respectphoneline.org.uk/)

**Criminal and Sexual Exploitation**

* National Crime Agency: [www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are](http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are)
* It’s not okay: [www.itsnotokay.co.uk](http://www.itsnotokay.co.uk)
* NWG Network: [www.nwgnetwork.org](http://www.nwgnetwork.org)

**Honour Based Abuse**

* Forced Marriage Unit: [www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage)
* FGM Factsheet: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf>
* Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information)

**Peer on Peer abuse, including bullying, sexual violence and harassment**

* Rape Crisis:[https://rapecrisis.org.uk](https://rapecrisis.org.uk/)
* Brook: [www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk/)
* Disrespect Nobody: [www.disrespectnobody.co.uk](http://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/)
* Upskirting – know your rights: [www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights)
* Lucy Faithfull Foundation: [www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk](http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk)
* Stop it Now! [www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk)
* Parents Protect: [www.parentsprotect.co.uk](http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk)
* Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/)
* Diana Award: [www.antibullyingpro.com/](http://www.antibullyingpro.com/)
* Bullying UK: [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)
* Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

**Online Safety**

* CEOP: [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)
* Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)
* Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
* Childnet: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
* UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
* Report Harmful Content: [https://reportharmfulcontent.com](https://reportharmfulcontent.com/)
* Marie Collins Foundation: [www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk](http://www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk)
* Internet Matters: [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org/)
* NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety) and [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)
* Get Safe Online: [www.getsafeonline.org](https://www.getsafeonline.org/)
* Parents Protect: [www.parentsprotect.co.uk](http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk)
* Cyber Choices: <https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyberchoices>
* National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC): [www.ncsc.gov.uk](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk)

**Mental Health**

* Mind: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
* Moodspark: [https://moodspark.org.uk](https://moodspark.org.uk/)
* Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
* We are with you (formerly Addaction): [www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/](http://www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/)
* Anna Freud: [www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/](http://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/)

**Radicalisation and hate**

* Educate against Hate: [www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)
* Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: [www.gov.uk/report-terrorism](http://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism)
* True Vision: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)

**Children with Family Members in Prison**

* National information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO): <https://www.nicco.org.uk/>

**Appendix 3:** **Role of the designated safeguarding lead**

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff,

from the school or college leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated

safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for

safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the

role holder’s job description.

The designated safeguarding lead should have the appropriate status and authority

within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the designated

safeguarding lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given

the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the

role effectively. Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to

other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in

strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so,

and contributing to the assessment of children.

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one

or more deputy designated safeguarding leads. Any deputies should be trained to the

same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in

their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be

delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child

protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead

responsibility should not be delegated.

Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be

available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any

safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or a

deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools

and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what “available”

means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or

other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the

designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements

for any out of hours/out of term activities.

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Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

• of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children’s social care as

required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social

care

• to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and

support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme

• where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure

and Barring Service as required, and

• where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When

to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and

what to expect when working with the police.

Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

• act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff

• act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners

• liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially

ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police

investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to

have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory

guidance - PACE Code C 2019.

• as required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the local

authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which

concern a staff member

• liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT

technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCO’s), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college

and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare

(including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral

by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered

holistically

• liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health

support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health

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• promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and

promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing

challenging circumstances

• work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility

for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and

child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have

experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on

children’s attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college155. This

includes:

o ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who

have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic

progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for

this cohort, and

o supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or

reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social

worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social

care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children’s

educational outcomes.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files

are kept up to date.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep

concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

• a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern

• details of how the concern was followed up and resolved

• a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

155 We recognise that in some settings there may be a different strategic lead for promoting the educational

outcomes of children who have or have had a social worker, particularly in larger schools or colleges.

Where this is the case, it is important that the DSL works closely with the lead to provide strategic oversight

for the outcomes of these children and young people.

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They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the

file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as

set out in Part one and Part two of this guidance.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated

safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school

or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first

5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main

pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding

leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO’s) or the named person with

oversight for SEND in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child’s safety, welfare

and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated

safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional

information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put

in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school

or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to

continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse

and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Raising awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

• ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school’s or

college’s child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff

• ensure the school’s or college’s child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a

minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed

regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this

• ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that

referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the

school or college in this

• link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of

any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding

arrangements, and

• help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare,

safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a

social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership

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staff.

Training, knowledge and skills

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide

them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be

updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies)

should also undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated

safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify,

understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children,

as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and

responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children’s social care, so

they:

• understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory

intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children’s social

care referral arrangements156

• have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case

conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and

contribute to these effectively when required to do so

• understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in

providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to

safeguard and promote the welfare of children

• understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on

children’s behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in

responding to this in promoting educational outcomes

• are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational

needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young

carers157

• understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and

college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and

practitioners

• understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of

156 Full details in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children. 157 Section 17(10) Children Act 1989: those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and

development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be

significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.

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the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting

children from the risk of radicalisation

• are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be

confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required

to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college

• can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and

disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and

radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with

SEND to stay safe online

• obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses,

and

• encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and

feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to

protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be

refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or

simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as

required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any

developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

Training should support the designated safeguarding lead in developing expertise, so

they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding

and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

• ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and

• support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are

linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated

safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and

skills to:

• encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and

feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in

place to protect them, and,

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• understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their

circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate

communication.

Holding and sharing information

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is

set out in Parts one, two and five of this document, and therefore the designated

safeguarding lead should be equipped to:

• understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and

college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and

between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners,

other agencies, organisations and practitioners

• understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the

Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK

GDPR), and

• be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and

referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping

(take from KCSIE 2022).