

Mehria Wonderland Nursery



Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Child protection and Safeguarding Policy

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Signed: Zia Qazi
Senior Manager(DSO)

Signed: Zile Humma
Assistant Manager(DSL)

Contact: Zile Humma (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
Email:zile@mehriaschool.org

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Guidance for use

This model policy has been designed to be adapted by Managers and Pre School Leaders to reflect the ethos of each early years setting. It remains the responsibility of the early years setting and the owner/committee to ensure the policy is compliant with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers (effective 1 September 2026), the guidance and procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Partners and current legislation which regulate early years settings. It is essential that all aspects of this policy are reviewed to ensure that there is similarity between the written policy and practice of the early years provision and it is personal to each individual setting. [Early years foundation stage framework \(2026\)](#)

The early years setting must review and update the safeguarding policy annually and in line with current legislation. The policy must be available publicly via the setting website or by other means.

In drawing up your safeguarding policy you will need to consider the range of people who will refer to the policy: Committee members/director/owner, all staff and practitioners in the setting, parent helpers, volunteers, students, supply staff etc. You will also need to consider such issues as:

- how will visitor's, agency and supply staff be made aware of the information contained within your safeguarding policy and their responsibility to comply?
- who will inform volunteers and students about issues like confidentiality or how to raise concerns about practice in the setting?

You may also find it useful to produce a brief "visitor's statement/welcome sheet" for visitors to your early years setting, including a summary of the safeguarding policy, procedures and the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in your setting.

Recording systems and procedures

It is essential that the early years setting include with this policy a section on the internal safeguarding recording procedures. It is highly recommended that the early years setting refer to the Safeguarding Children in Luton recording protocols as this includes the principles of effective safeguarding recording and pro-forma for use.

Maintaining an overview

Early years settings must ensure they maintain an overview, whether there is a list, index or something similar which provides an 'at a view' glance of the children where safeguarding records exist for them and whether this is an individual case record or an entry within the A-Z safeguarding chronology folder

Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangement

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 established local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements led by three statutory safeguarding partners: the local authority, police and health (Integrated Care Board). The setting will work in accordance with the current local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and the guidance and procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Partners.

Education and early years providers are relevant agencies within the safeguarding system. Mehria Wonderland Nursery will cooperate with safeguarding partners and other agencies, share relevant information, and contribute to coordinated help, support and protection for children and families.

For local referrals, thresholds, escalation and allegation-management procedures, the setting will follow the current arrangements and published procedures for Luton.

Safeguarding policy

Approved by the _____ Date: September 2026 _____

___ Designated Safeguarding Lead

To be reviewed annually _____

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Safeguarding is defined as

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSiE) 2026

Child Protection is defined as

- the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

[Working Together](#)’.

This includes, but is not limited to, safeguarding children in specific circumstances:

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Bullying, including online and prejudice-based bullying
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls
- Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- Child Sexual Exploitation and trafficking
- Child on child abuse
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Substance abuse
- Gang/youth violence including initiation/hazing
- Domestic abuse/violence
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Online including grooming via social networking, online gaming and video messaging
- The impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour e.g. Youth Product Sexual Imagery

- Self-harm behaviours
- Children with mental health difficulties or illness
- Upskirting
- Contextual/Extra familiar risks

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 sets out the statutory expectations for multi-agency working to help, support and protect children. Early years providers must comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the current EYFS statutory framework. Every person looking after children must be alert to issues of concern in a child's life at home or elsewhere, and concerns about a child's safety or welfare must be acted on immediately in line with local reporting procedures. [Luton Safeguarding Children Board Procedures](#).

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 reinforces safeguarding as a shared responsibility. It strengthens expectations for inclusive, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice; timely information sharing; support for babies and unborn children where relevant; and responses to harms including child sexual abuse, domestic abuse, coercive control, teenage relationship abuse, online harms and group-based exploitation. The setting will consider that children may experience more than one form of harm at the same time. [Working Together](#)

It is recommended that LSPs have a representative from the education sector present at strategic discussions. It is expected that all local education and childcare providers working with children up to the age of 18 will be included in local arrangements.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 requires practitioners and agencies to work together around the child and family, including through universal services, community-based early help, Family Help and statutory child protection processes as appropriate. Practitioners should:

- share the same goals
- learn with and from each other
- have what they need to help families
- acknowledge and appreciate difference
- challenge each other

Safeguarding professionals should work closely with education and childcare settings to share information, identify and understand risks of harm, and ensure children and families receive timely support.

Current statutory and government guidance

- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, where applicable to school-based provision and as helpful guidance for other childcare providers.
- Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales.

- Information sharing to safeguard children and young people (statutory guidance; Information Sharing Duty effective 30 September 2026).
- Ofsted early years inspection toolkit, operating guide and information, updated for September 2026.

All staff should be aware of the guidance issued by Luton Safeguarding Children Board (LSCP) within the [effective support](#) in order to secure support and intervention for children and young people at the earliest possible opportunity in the least intrusive way. As part of the procedures in Luton there are safeguarding case recording materials that are used for recording safeguarding concerns – see Safeguarding form, Chronology form, Body Map, Tracking monitoring form.

Mehria Wonderland Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its children. We believe that:

- all children have an equal right to be protected from harm
- all children have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs
- all children must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other
- all children have the right to be supported to meet their emotional and social needs as well as their educational needs
- our early years setting can and does contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk taking behaviours

All staff, volunteers and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the early years setting **Zile Humma**, takes lead responsibility for coordinating all child protection activity within our early years setting. They will provide support advice and guidance to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The DSL will attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C. The DSL will liaise closely with other services such as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Luton Children and Families Social Care Service, Family Partnership services (FPS), Health, Police etc. This person has lead responsibility and management oversight for safeguarding and child protection.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is trained to the same level as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and will undertake this role in their absence

- when the early years setting has concerns about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will decide what steps should be taken in accordance with the relevant Local Safeguarding Partners effective support and initiate a response accordingly [effective support](#)
- the DSL will refer to the Model Setting Concern Process if a concern becomes apparent regarding a child. For further information, please see appendix 11
- the DSL will support staff who make referrals to the Local Authority Children's Social Care/MASH and act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- the DSL will refer cases to the Police where a crime may have been committed

- the DSL will seek advice regarding safeguarding matters related to radicalisation via the MASH and contact the Police
- the DSL will liaise with the Designated Senior Manager for allegations to ensure where necessary referrals have been made to the Disclosure and Barring Service when a person is dismissed or resigned due to risk/harm to a child
- the DSL will lead regular case monitoring reviews of vulnerable children. These reviews, together with any actions arising from the review and the rationale for decision-making will be recorded in case files
- the DSL will ensure safeguarding and child protection information is handled lawfully, securely and in accordance with current statutory information-sharing guidance. Data protection law and confidentiality are not barriers to sharing information when sharing is necessary and proportionate to safeguard or promote a child's welfare. The setting will record what information was shared, with whom, when, the lawful basis or safeguarding rationale, and any outcome or action.
- staff will be informed of relevant details only when the DSL feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and / or family
- a written record will be made of what information has been shared with whom, and when
- the DSL will ensure safeguarding and child protection records will be stored securely in a central place separate from academic record. Individual files will be kept for each child
- the DSL will ensure access to safeguarding and child protection records by staff other than by the DSL will be restricted, and a written record will be kept of who has had access to them and when
- the DSL will ensure parents are usually (subject to the point below) aware of information held on their children and are kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments by the appropriate members of staff
- general communications with parents will be in line with any setting policies and give due regard to which adults have parental responsibility
- the DSL will undertake regular case monitoring reviews of vulnerable and looked after children recorded within the A-Z Chronology and within individual case files
- these reviews will be discussed within staff safeguarding supervision sessions
- any actions arising from the review and the reasoning for decision making will be recorded in the child's individual case file and a copy of this will also be filed in the staff member's personal supervision folder
- the DSL will not disclose to a parent any information held on their child, if this would put their child at risk of significant harm. In such circumstances, advice will be sought from Children's Social Care/MASH
- if a child moves from our early years setting, the DSL will ensure all records are forwarded on to the DSL at the new early years setting or school, with due regard to their confidential nature and in line with national government guidance on the transfer of such records
- we will record the date, where and to whom the records have been passed and request a signature on receipt of the child's records
- professional judgment will determine if other safeguarding recordings need to be archived or forwarded on to transitioning schools

- if sending by post, children's records will be sent by "Special/Recorded Delivery". For audit purposes a note of all children's records transferred or received should be kept in either paper or electronic format
- this will include the child's name, date of birth, where and to whom the records have been sent and the date sent and/or received

Safer recruitment

Our early years setting implements safer recruitment practices in line with the EYFS statutory framework effective 1 September 2026 and, where relevant, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

Safer recruitment includes scrutinising applications, checking identity and qualifications, exploring employment history and gaps, obtaining and verifying references, assessing suitability at interview, completing required DBS and barred-list checks, and carrying out additional overseas checks where appropriate. [government qualification](#)

We will obtain at least one written reference for every member of staff, including students and volunteers, before recruitment. We will not accept open references or references supplied by the applicant; references will be verified with an appropriate current or previous employer, training provider or education setting, discrepancies will be explored, and substantiated safeguarding concerns meeting the harm threshold will be handled in accordance with statutory guidance.

Required suitability checks include an enhanced DBS check and barred-list check for relevant staff and volunteers. From 1 September 2026, providers must not allow a new employee or volunteer who requires these checks to begin working until the enhanced criminal records and barred-list check has been received, except for occasional supervised volunteers who fall within the limited EYFS exception. No person whose suitability has not been checked may have unsupervised contact with children. [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\)](#)

Our role in the prevention of abuse

In accordance with [Working Together](#), our early years setting recognises the need to safeguard children from:

- neglect
- emotional abuse
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse

Appendix 1 contains more information about definitions and indicators of abuse.

Additional policies linked to safeguarding children in our early years setting.

- Safer Recruitment
- Code of Conduct
- Disqualification
- Whistleblowing
- Bullying

- Physical restraint
- Visitor / External speakers
- Online safety
- Health and Safety
- Managing Children's Behaviour

All staff must be able to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- significant changes in children's behaviour
- deterioration in children's general well-being
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- children's comments which give cause for concern
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation

inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example: inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities or inappropriate sharing of images.

What settings should look out for

Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- young people or family are a young carer
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- has returned home to their family from care and is a privately fostered child

The owner / committee responsibilities will ensure that:

- the nominated committee member/owner for child protection at our early years setting is Zia Qazi responsible for liaising with the Nursery Manager/Pre School Leader over all matters regarding child protection issues
- they comply with their duties under legislation and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework effective 1 September 2026, and follow the guidance and procedures of the

relevant Local Safeguarding Partners. They will ensure safeguarding policies, procedures, recruitment, training, supervision and practice are effective and kept under review.

- a member of the committee/owner is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Nursery Manager/Pre School Leader of the early years setting
- all permanent staff, temporary staff and volunteers are made aware, understand and implement our early years setting's policies and procedures for safeguarding children and child protection
- training for all staff will be renewed every two years. Some staff may need to undertake annual refresher training during any two-year period to help maintain basic skills and keep up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures or as a result of any safeguarding concerns that occur in the setting.
- committee chairperson/members/owner/director receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and renewed every two years.
- training will provide them with the knowledge to ensure their early years setting safeguarding policies and procedures are effective

Key processes

- staff training includes discussions and briefings on local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's) accessed from Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangement (LMASA) [Luton Serious Case Reviews](#)
- our early years setting provides an appropriate safeguarding response in accordance with the Luton relevant Local Safeguarding Partners effective support in order to safeguard children [effective support](#)
- our early years setting follows local procedures for sharing intelligence in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation with Bedfordshire Police via the use of the [Multi Agency Submission form](#)
- Luton (*Note – The Luton MASH currently require the Multi Agency Form's to CONTINUE to be copied to them when sharing with the POLICE. Please [continue](#) to send the Form to Central Intelligence Bureau& LUTON MASH.)
 - [Luton Local Safeguarding Children Board](#)
 - The MA form is **NOT** a substitute for any safeguarding referral and should **NOT** be used as such.
- our early years setting initiates appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing while in the care of the setting in line with our Lost Child Policy

Child absences and attendance

The setting has an attendance policy which is shared with parents and carers. We will follow up absences in a timely manner. Where a child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period, we will attempt to contact parents/carers and alternative emergency contacts, consider patterns and trends and the child's and family's vulnerabilities, and use professional judgement to decide whether safeguarding procedures should be initiated. Any safeguarding concerns will be referred to local children's social care and/or a police welfare check requested where appropriate.

- our early years setting has a staff behaviour policy (sometimes called the Code of Conduct) which should include staff/child relationships and communications plus the use of social media and other online platforms
- our early years setting has procedures for managing allegations and concerns about adults that work or volunteer with children and that these include the procedures for making referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service
- people looking after children must be suitable, appropriately qualified and trained, and have completed all checks required for their role. Enhanced DBS and barred-list checks will be obtained for every person aged 16 or over who falls within the EYFS requirements, including volunteers carrying out regulated activity. New employees and volunteers who require these checks will not commence relevant work before the check is received, and unchecked persons will not have unsupervised contact with children.
- our early years setting operates safer recruitment procedures and ensures that appropriate checks and vetting is carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteer records must be easily accessible and available
- confidential information and records about staff and children is held securely and only accessible and available to those who have a right or professional need to see them
- our setting is aware of their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Act (GDPA) 2018 and where relevant the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- all staff understand the need to protect the privacy of the children in their care and promote confidentiality at all times
- records relating to individual children are retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the provision
- we record the following information for each child in their care: full name, date of birth, name and address of every parent and/or carer who is known to the provider (and information about any other person who has parental responsibility for the child), which parent(s) and/or carer(s) the child normally lives with and emergency contact details for parents and/or carers. Where possible, our setting will hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child.
- all staff training is renewed every two years. We will consider whether any staff need to undertake annual refresher training during any two-year period to help maintain basic skills and keep up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures or as a result of any safeguarding concerns that occur in the setting

A safer culture

A safer culture of working practice supports safeguarding in practice across all aspects of the setting this is implemented throughout our practice by ensuring the following:

- clear risk assessments are in place and respond consistently to protect children which enable them to take age appropriate and reasonable risks – see daily/annual risk assessment
- staff respond with clear boundaries about what is safe and acceptable, and they seek to understand the triggers for children's behaviour
- in the event where physical restraint is used that the parents are informed on the same day– See Early Years Settings 'managing children's behaviour' policy

- the culture of this early year's setting is one that is safe for children and unsafe for adults that may pose a risk to children
- there is a belief that safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults working or volunteering within the early years setting and that all concerns will be reported to the Designated safeguarding officer or manager/pre-school leader when concerns relate to an adult
- the early years setting has a culture of listening to, and hearing the voice of the child

Inspection

[Early Years Inspection Handbook 2024](#) Early years inspection: toolkit, operating guide and information (September 2026)

Ofsted's renewed early years inspection framework replaced the Early Years Inspection Handbook in November 2025. The setting will have regard to the current early years inspection toolkit, operating guide and information, including the September 2026 updates on practitioners' responsibilities to protect children from harm and on safer sleeping, eating and weaning arrangements.

Safeguarding in specific circumstances

Our early years setting pays due regard to the need to safeguard children in specific circumstances, training will incorporate Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), vulnerability to radicalisation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child on Child abuse which can include Gang Initiation or hazing type related violence, Cyberbullying, Sexually Harmful Behaviours or Youth Produced Sexual Imagery. See appendix 5, 6, 7 and 8, 9

Sexualised behaviours

Where children display sexualised behaviours, the behaviours will be considered in accordance with the children's developmental understanding, age and impact on the alleged victim. Tools such as [Brook Traffic Light Tool](#) will be used to assist in determining whether the behaviour is developmental or a cause for concern. This will assist in ensuring the child/ren receive the right support at the right time either via Family Partnership services or a referral to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

In all cases of child on child abuse the early years setting will consider the vulnerability of all children including those alleged to have caused the harm and those alleged to be victims and provide a safeguarding response consistent with the Luton Effective Support document.

Further guidance around harmful sexual behaviours can be on the Government's [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges page](#)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. This abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it

should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. More information including definitions and indicators is in Appendix 9.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. [Child sexual exploitation](#) does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability

- the early years setting recognises that both boys and girls can be vulnerable to child sexual exploitation and as such ensure staff are alert to signs and indicators
- the setting recognises that there are various 'models' of CSE which include but not limited to:
 - gangs and groups
 - boyfriend/girlfriend model
 - child on child
 - familial
 - online
 - abuse of authority
- where concerns are identified in relation to child sexual exploitation the [effective support](#) will be consulted in order to ensure the child receives support at the earliest possible opportunity
- a multi-agency response via the Family Partnership Service/MASH may be initiated through a referral. Where parental consent cannot be obtained, advice will be sought from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
- if a child is thought to be at risk of significant harm through child sexual exploitation a referral will be made to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub within Luton children's social care
- in all cases intelligence will be shared with Bedfordshire Police using [Multi Agency Submission form](#)
- form which will also be copied to the Single Point Of Contact for CSE within Luton Council

County Lines

The 2018 Home Office Serious Crime Strategy states the NPCC definition of a County Line is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move [and store] the drugs and money and

they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

A common feature in county lines drug supply is the exploitation of young and vulnerable people. The dealers will frequently target children and adults - often with mental health or addiction problems - to act as drug runners or move cash so they can stay under the radar of law enforcement.

In some cases, the dealers will take over a local property, normally belonging to a vulnerable person, and use it to operate their criminal activity from. This is known as cuckooing.

People exploited in this way will quite often be exposed to physical, mental and sexual abuse, and in some instances will be trafficked to areas a long way from home as part of the network's drug dealing business.

As we have seen in child sexual exploitation, children often don't see themselves as victims or realise they have been groomed to get involved in criminality. So, it's important that we all play our part to understand county lines and speak out if we have concerns.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It can be known as female circumcision or female genital cutting. It is often carried out for cultural, religious and social reasons within families and communities. FGM is illegal in the UK and it's also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad for FGM or help someone trying to do this. If the early years setting is concerned that a child/young person has experienced or is at risk of FGM a Child Protection referral will be made to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub in accordance with interagency procedures produced by the LSCP. Further information regarding FGM can be found in Appendix 5.

Forced marriage

A [forced-marriage](#) is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used, to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic or child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will may be:

- physical: for example, threats, physical violence or sexual violence
- emotional and psychological: for example, making someone feel like they are bringing 'shame' on their family
- Financial abuse, for example taking someone's wages, may also be a factor.

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. This includes:

- taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
- marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured to or not)
- breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order

Modern slavery

Modern Slavery is the term used within the UK and is defined within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act categorises offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour and Human Trafficking (the definition of which comes from the Palermo Protocol).

These crimes include holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude forced or compulsory labour or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them soon after.

Although human trafficking often involves an international cross-border element, it is also possible to be a victim of modern slavery within your own country.

Types of human trafficking

There are several broad categories of exploitation linked to human trafficking, including:

- sexual exploitation
- forced labour
- domestic servitude
- organ harvesting
- child related crimes such as child sexual exploitation, forced begging, illegal drug cultivation, organised theft, related benefit frauds
- forced marriage and illegal adoption (if other constituent elements are present)

Children vulnerable to extremism

Our early years setting is aware that a website providing support and advice to combat radicalisation has been launched in our region.

The Let's Talk About it provides information enabling people to learn more about the Government's Prevent strategy, with an aim to safeguard those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Factors may include peer pressure, influence from other people or the internet, bullying, crime and anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity and personal or political grievances.

Do not send Prevent referrals to MASH. If there are additional safeguarding concerns, then report these separately into MASH.

If the early years setting are concerned that a child may be at risk of significant harm in relation to radicalisation or involvement in violent extremism a child, complete the attached [Prevent Referral Form](#) and send it directly to Police as per email address on the form.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on early years providers "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" – The Prevent Duty

- in accordance with the Prevent Duty Zile Humma is the Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism

- the statutory guidance on the [Prevent duty](#) summarises the requirements on schools and childcare providers in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies
- a prevent risk assessment is in place to demonstrate how the setting is fulfilling the prevent duty, please see Appendix 12 for further information
- further definitions of radicalisation and extremism and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in Appendix 4

Our early years setting will provide opportunities for children to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being. Together with preparing them for life in modern Britain and embedding the four Fundamental British Values of Democracy, Rule of Law, Equality of Opportunity and Freedom of Speech. The rights of all Women and Men to live free from persecution of any kind are already implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework 2026, these values are reinforced in our everyday routine. [Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

In the rare event of a firearms or weapons attack staff are trained in and have watched the [government publications stay-safe-film](#) The National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) are advising that providers have a [lock down procedures](#) Stay Safe: - steps to take to keep safe in the rare event of a firearms or weapons attack:

Procedures will be implemented in the event of an unauthorised person/persons entering the setting:

- staff will be alerted by a recognised signal
- children will be taken from outside into the setting as quickly as possible
- all external doors and windows will be locked as necessary
- parents/carers will be notified

Our setting has emergency plans in place, that explain how we would respond if needed to take any temporary actions in the event of an emergency. The emergency could happen at the setting or on an educational visit or outing. Our emergency plans cover a range of potential incidents in accordance with the Government's [emergency planning and response for childcare settings](#).

Children Missing in Education (CME)

The early years setting apply appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from education, which includes holding more than one emergency contact number for the child/family as part of an emergency plan.

Domestic abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The forms can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual

- financial
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

[NSPCC- UK](#) domestic-abuse

[refuge](#) what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children

[safe lives](#): young people and domestic abuse

If domestic abuse is disclosed, the Risk Indicator checklist or Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) is the assessment tool used to determine whether cases meet the threshold for a [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference](#) (MARAC) intervention. It should be completed with the client and if it meets the referral criteria it should be referred to the Early Years MARAC Representative. Referrals into the MARAC are only made by professional agencies; there is no self-referral.

The DASH Risk Indicator Checklist can also be used to help identify individuals who may benefit from the services of an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA). Clients who disclose abuse but who do not meet the criteria for IDVA support should be referred to other appropriate support, such as Luton Women's Aid. The [Signpost](#) Hub will accept referrals for any client over the age of 16, regardless of gender or background and will provide support whether or not the incidents have been reported to the Police.

[Operation Encompass](#) helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. This is not yet happening in early years settings however available to be accessed by siblings attending schools.

Online safety

There are appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems within our early years setting which safeguards children from accessing inappropriate or harmful online material. The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework is delivered in such a way to include educating children about how to stay safe, online safety and broader safeguarding messages are taught through play within the Learning and Development requirements.

Safeguarding in specific circumstances list

Further guidance in relation to safeguarding children in specific circumstances can be located in the Luton Safeguarding Children Board / Luton Borough Council procedures as listed below, further information is also referenced in appendices to this policy.

- abuse linked to spiritual belief
- child sexual exploitation
- safeguarding children vulnerable to gang activity
- supporting individuals vulnerable to violent extremism
- private fostering

- children missing from home or care
- children missing education
- children of parents who misuse substances
- children of parents with learning difficulties
- working with parents/carers with mental health problems
- working with parents/carers with disabilities
- disabled children
- domestic violence
- protocol for dealing with domestic violence when children are involved
- online – children exposed to abuse through the digital media
- fabricated or induced illness
- female genital mutilate
- honour based violence and [forced-marriage](#)
- practice guidance & procedures to distinguish between healthy and abusive sexual behaviours in children and young people
- safeguarding children who may have been trafficked
- protocol & guidance; Working with sexually active young people
- working with hostile, non-compliant clients and those who use disguised compliance
- Upskirting is an illegal offence which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
 - Contextual safeguarding/extra familial risk as referenced in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) KCSIE highlights that *'assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process'*.
 - Contextual safeguarding can also be known as 'risk outside the home' [Working Together](#).

Children with additional needs

We recognise that while all children have a right to be safe, some children may be more vulnerable to being abused, for example those with a disability or special educational need, those living with domestic violence or drug / alcohol abusing parents.

Mental health

All staff should be 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.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make diagnosis of a mental health problem.

Staff, however, 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.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern, about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking with the designated safeguarding officer.

[Public health has produced a range of resources](#) to support children's well-being and resilience. We will access a range of advice to help them identify children and families in need of extra mental health support and this includes working with external agencies.

What we do when we are concerned about a child

All concerns will be viewed alongside Luton's Effective Support document in order to ensure the appropriate support or intervention is provided at the earliest opportunity in the least intrusive way. We will place due regard to the guidance contained in DFE guidance '[What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#)', 2015

- if a child discloses concerns of abuse all staff and visitors will be expected to follow the disclosure guidance in appendix 2
- if, in consultation with [effective support](#) the level of concern sits at Level 2, support will be provided by the early years setting
- the [Luton Directory](#) will be used to identify appropriate agencies and wider support for the family.
- if, in consultation with [effective support](#) the level of concern sits at Level 3, a referral will be made into the Family Partnership Services via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub MASH, with the consent of the parent / carer, in the event that consent cannot be obtained additional advice may be sought by making a 'What if' call into MASH
- in the event that provision of early help from the Family Partnership Services has not led to improvements for the child/family, or if concerns for the child/family escalate, our early years setting will follow the [LSCP escalation procedures](#)
- we will review each case to ensure that any support or intervention provided has impacted positively on the welfare/safety of the child or young person and that improvement is sustained
- in consultation with the [effective support](#) if the concerns about the child or young person indicate that they may be at risk of, or suffering significant harm, a referral will be made to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, MASH
- In the event of a professional disagreement in relation to a specific concern, our early years setting will follow the [Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures for resolution of professional disagreements](#), also known as escalation procedures

Involving parents and carers

Unless a child is deemed to be at risk of significant harm there may be occasions when our early years setting will contact another agency to seek advice on safeguarding and child protection concerns **before**

informing parents/carers because it considers that contacting them may increase the risk of significant harm to the child.

In the first instance, we will discuss any safeguarding and child protection concerns with parents / carers before approaching other agencies and will seek their consent to making a referral to another agency.

Parents / carers will be informed about our safeguarding policy through **Mehria Wonderland Nursery prospectus, website, newsletter, Safeguarding notice board.**

Multi agency working

We understand our role in the three safeguarding partner arrangements. Committees and owners will make themselves aware of, and follow, local arrangements. Our early years setting will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as team around the family meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, together with core group meetings. If our representative is unable to attend a written report will be sent. We will co-operate with any child protection enquiries conducted by children's social care: we will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as team around the family meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, together with core group meetings.

- we will provide reports as required for these meetings in accordance with the LSCP interagency procedures
- if we are unable to attend, a written report will be sent. The report will, wherever possible, be shared with parents / carers at least 24 hours prior to the meeting
- we will co-operate with any child protection enquiries conducted by children's social care
- we will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as team around the family meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, together with core group meetings
- where a child is subject to an inter-agency child protection plan, child in need plan or early help assessment, we will contribute to the preparation, implementation and review of the plan as appropriate
- if a child is subject to a referral to a multi-agency safeguarding panel such as MARAC, MULTI-AGENCY GANG PANEL MAGPAN OR CHANNEL we will contribute to such arrangements

Responding to an allegation about a member of staff, student or volunteer

We will comply with the relevant Local Safeguarding Partners procedures for managing allegations and concerns about adults that work or volunteer with children in all circumstances.

This procedure should be used when it is alleged that an Owner, Committee member, Nursery Manager, Pre School Leader, member of staff, visiting professional or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to children

Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the potential for an adult in an early years setting to abuse or mistreat children.

All staff working within our early years setting must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards children immediately. Allegations or concerns about colleagues and visitors must be reported direct to the Manager/Pre School Leader. Unless the concern relates to the Manager/Pre School Leader then it must be reported immediately to the committee/owner. Alternatively, concerns can be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in children's social care.

If staff feel they cannot raise a concern that the early years setting is placing children at risk or not responding to concerns about a professional, contact to the NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline 0800 028 0285 can be made, the line is available from 8.00am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday or email help@nspcc.org.uk

The LADO should be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity and within 1 working day. Registered providers must notify Ofsted of any allegation of harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children at the premises, whether the alleged incident occurred on the premises or elsewhere, and must notify Ofsted of the action taken. Notification must be made as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event within 14 days of the allegation being made, in accordance with the current EYFS statutory framework.

Luton Local Authority Designated Officer LADO can be contacted on 01582 548069 – OFSTED must also be contacted on 0300 123 1231

The LADO may request a written referral. If this is requested the written referral will be completed and submitted within 1 working day.

Our early years setting will engage with the LADO at all stages of the management of the allegation / concern and comply with the local procedures published by the LSCP. In this regard, our early years setting will consider whether it is necessary to suspend the member of staff/volunteer while the allegation or concern is investigated, however all reasonable alternatives to manage the risk will be considered. Due consideration will be given to the view of the LADO in relation to suspension or how safeguards are in place to ensure the member of staff is always supervised while a matter is investigated. We will dismiss a member of staff/volunteer as a result of a substantiated allegation or should a member of staff/volunteer resign before an investigation has been completed, in accordance with Statutory Duty, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made.

Mobile phones and Multimedia

Visitors and staff/volunteers' personal mobile phones and photographic devices will not be allowed in the early years setting. They will be securely stored in the office.

This information will be communicated through our policies, newsletters, signage, notices, etc. All staff/volunteers will be asked to sign to state they are aware and abide by this rule. It will be considered a breach of our rules if staff do not comply and will be subject to disciplinary actions. In the event of an emergency the staff may use our early years setting phone or in such circumstances where they may need to make or take a call using their own personal mobile, they may wish to use the staff room/office. Other staff must be notified to ensure suitable supervision levels are applied whilst the call is made.

Written permission will be requested from parents to be able to take and use photographs of their children.

All parents will be requested to provide written permission to allow their child to be photographed during an event/play by other parents.

All photographs of the children will be taken on the setting camera for the purpose of children's learning

and development and will be stored securely on the computer.

We are registered with the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) (ICO) every year. Failure to notify the ICO is a criminal offence. Notification is necessary if early years settings are processing personal information. This includes taking photographs of the children using a digital camera. Further information on data protection as well as details on how to notify can be found in section.

Please note that although notification is mandatory in most cases, the data protection guidance within this document is 'recommended guidance' and settings must take individual responsibility for their own data protection issues in accordance with the General Data Protection Act 2018.

Safer sleeping

Babies and children will be placed down to sleep safely. For children under two, the setting will follow the EYFS safer-sleep requirements: children will be placed on their backs in their own separate sleep space on a firm, flat surface; babies aged 12 months and under will sleep in a cot; sleep spaces will contain only a firm, flat, waterproof mattress and suitable lightweight bedding or a correctly fitted sleep bag; cots will be free from toys, pillows, bumpers, wedges, straps and extra blankets; children's heads will remain uncovered; babies under six months will have an adult in the same room for every sleep; all sleeping children will be checked frequently and will remain within sight and hearing of staff. Practitioners will follow current NHS safer-sleep/SIDS advice.

Banned dog breeds

In accordance with the EYFS statutory framework effective 1 September 2026, banned dog breeds to which section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 applies, including the XL Bully type, must not be kept or present on the premises at any time, including where the owner holds a certificate of exemption.

Children's screen use

The setting will have regard to the Department for Education's current guidance on children's screen use in early years settings. Screen use will be purposeful, age-appropriate, supervised and balanced with play, movement, social interaction, communication and hands-on learning. Online safety, privacy and safeguarding considerations apply to all devices and digital content used in the setting.

Safer eating

Whilst children are eating there will always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.

Allergy action plans will be developed for managing any known allergies and intolerances.

Babies and young children will be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating.

Children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Choking can be completely silent; therefore, it is important for providers to be alert to when a child may be starting to choke. Where possible, providers should sit facing children whilst they eat, so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions

When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, practitioners will record details of where and how the child choked and ensure parents and/or carers are made aware. The records will be reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be

addressed to reduce the risk of choking. Appropriate action will be taken to address any identified concerns

Appendix 1 – Definitions and indicators of abuse

Neglect

Neglect is 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 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 caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- constant hunger
- stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- frequent tiredness or listlessness
- frequently dirty or unkempt
- often poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather
- poor school attendance or often late for school
- poor concentration
- affection or attention seeking behaviour
- illnesses or injuries that are left untreated
- failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight
- failure to develop intellectually or socially
- responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings
- the child is regularly not collected or received from school
- the child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers

Physical abuse

Physical abuse 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.

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape

- bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt
- bite marks
- round burn marks
- multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks
- an injury that is not consistent with the account given
- changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred
- bald patches
- symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather
- fear of going home or parents being contacted
- fear of medical help
- fear of changing for PE
- inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- violence or aggression towards others including bullying
- isolation from peers

Sexual abuse

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 act of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- reluctance to go home
- inability to concentrate, tiredness
- refusal to communicate
- thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
- eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia

- attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse
- aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- unusual compliance
- regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling
- frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately
- depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group
- reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
- bruises or scratches in the genital area

Sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation occurs when a child or young person, or another person, receives “something” (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of the child/young person performing sexual activities, or another person performing sexual activities on the child/young person.

The presence of any significant indicator for sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to children’s social care. The significant indicators are:

- having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity)
- entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adult
- possessing unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items
- frequenting areas known for risky activities
- being groomed or abused via the Internet and mobile technology
- having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast-food outlets

The intelligence reporting form on the LSCP website will be used to share information with Police and children’s social care that raises a concern around CSE.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children 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 the 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 also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- the child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly
- over-reaction to mistakes
- delayed physical, mental or emotional development
- sudden speech or sensory disorders
- inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
- behaviours such as rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches
- self-harming, drug or solvent abuse
- fear of parents being contacted
- running away
- compulsive stealing
- appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia
- soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

N.B.: Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as “traumatic mutism”) can indicate maltreatment.

Responses from parents

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed
- unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development
- reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries
- frequent presentation of minor injuries
- a persistently negative attitude towards the child
- unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child
- alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse
- parents request removal of the child from home
- violence between adults in the household

Children with Special Education Needs and disabilities

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware those additional vulnerabilities to abuse and neglect such as:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- a bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child
- not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment
- poor toileting
- lack of stimulation
- unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint
- rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries
- unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication
- ill-fitting equipment. for example, callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting
- misappropriation of a child's finance
- inappropriate invasive procedures

Appendix 2 – Dealing with a disclosure of abuse

When a child tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I remember?

- stay calm
- do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment
- reassure the child
- tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you
- never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child
- assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why
- tell her/him that you believe them
- children very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed
- tell the child that it is not her/his fault
- encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information
- listen and remember
- check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you
- praise the child for telling you
- communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected
- do not tell the child that what s/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad
- it is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender
- be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard
- at the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know
- as soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language – include any questions you may have asked
- do not add any opinions or interpretations

NB It is not staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

Immediately afterwards

You must not deal with this yourself. Clear indications or disclosure of abuse must be reported to children's social care without delay, by the Manager / Pre-School Leader or the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Children making a disclosure may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Designated Safeguarding lead or Manager or Pre-school Leader.

Appendix 3 – Allegations about a member of staff, student or volunteer

Inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers could take the following forms:

Physical

For example, the intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects or inappropriate physical handling.

Emotional

For example, intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, and attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality. Excessive or aggressive shouting.

Sexual

For example, sexualised behaviour towards peers, sexual harassment, sexual communication including via social networking, email, text, grooming behaviour, sexual assault and rape.

Neglect

For example, failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to meet a child's basic needs.

Behaviours that may take place outside of the workplace that present a transferable risk in their professional role with children. For example, alleged perpetrator of domestic abuse, offences demonstrating a sexual interest in children, abuse or neglect of their own children or behaviours that are incompatible with a professional role working with children.

If a child makes an allegation or raises a concern about a member of staff, committee member, visitor or volunteer the Manager / Pre-School Leader should be informed immediately. If the allegation or concern falls within the following criteria the LADO will be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity and within 1 working day.

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to children

The Manager / Pre-school Leader will not carry out the investigation him/herself or interview children.

If a child makes an allegation of physical abuse against an adult that works with children and there are visible bruises, marks or injuries or if a child makes an allegation of sexual abuse against an adult that works with children, Child Protection procedures will be followed and a referral made to the multi-Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH). The LADO will also be informed.

The Manager /Pre-school Leader must exercise, and be accountable for, their professional judgement on the action to be taken, as follows –

If the actions of the member of staff, are felt likely to fall within the scope of the interagency allegation management procedures the Manager/Pre -school Leader will notify the Local Authority Designated

Officer (LADO) (Tel: 01582 548069). The LADO will liaise with the Manager/Pre-school Leader and advise about action to be taken which will be in accordance with the interagency procedures for managing allegations.

If the Manager/Pre-school Leader is uncertain whether the concern or allegation falls within the scope of the allegation management procedures a consultation with the LADO will take place and the advice provided will be acted upon. This consultation and the advice offered will be recorded and held on file.

Where an allegation has been made against the Manager / Pre-school Leader, then the Committee/owner takes on the role of liaising with the LADO team in determining the appropriate way forward.

Appendix 4 – Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

- Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas

Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs
- seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
- encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts
- foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity

Children may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- identity crisis – the child is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- personal crisis – the child may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- personal circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the child's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- unmet aspirations – the child may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- experiences of criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration
- special educational need – children may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at

risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism. More critical risk factors could include:

- being in contact with extremist recruiters
- accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour
- experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis

Appendix 5 – Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there is no medical reason for this to be done.

It's also known as "female circumcision" or "cutting", and by other terms such as sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan, among others.

FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts. It is illegal in the UK and is child abuse.

It's very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth and mental health.

Effects of FGM

There are no health benefits to FGM, and it can cause serious harm, including:

- constant pain
- pain and/or difficulty having sex
- repeated infections, which can lead to infertility
- bleeding, cysts and abscesses
- problems passing urine or incontinence
- depression, flashbacks and self-harm
- problems during labour and childbirth, which can be life-threatening for mother and baby
- some girls die from blood loss or infection as a direct result of the procedure

Why FGM is carried out

FGM is carried out for various cultural, religious and social reasons within families and communities in the mistaken belief that it will benefit the girl in some way (for example, as a preparation for marriage or to preserve her virginity).

However, there are no acceptable reasons that justify FGM. It's a harmful practice that isn't required by any religion and there are no religious texts that say it should be done. There are no health benefits of FGM.

FGM usually happens to girls whose mothers, grandmothers or extended female family members have had FGM themselves or if their father comes from a community where it's carried out.

Where FGM is carried out

Girls are sometimes taken abroad for FGM, but they may not be aware that this is the reason for their travel. Girls are more at risk of FGM being carried out during the summer holidays, as this allows more time for them to "heal" before they return to school

Communities that perform FGM are found in many parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Girls who were born in the UK or are resident here but whose families originate from an FGM practising community are at greater risk of FGM happening to them.

Communities at particular risk of FGM in the UK originate from:

- Egypt
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Gambia
- Guinea
- Indonesia
- Ivory Coast
- Kenya
- Liberia
- Malaysia
- Mali
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Yemen

The law and FGM

FGM is illegal in the UK, it is an offence to:

- perform FGM (including taking a child abroad for FGM)
- help a girl perform FGM on herself in or outside the UK
- help anyone perform FGM in the UK
- help anyone perform FGM outside the UK on a UK national or resident
- fail to protect a girl for whom you are responsible from FGM

Anyone who performs FGM can face up to 14 years in prison. Anyone found guilty of failing to protect a girl from FGM can face up to seven years in prison.

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers (along with social workers and healthcare professionals) to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Possible signs and indicators of FGM

A girl or woman who's had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Below are some warning signs that MAY indicate a girl is at risk of FGM:

- parents requesting additional periods of leave around school holiday times
- if the girl comes from a country with a high prevalence of FGM
- mother and siblings have undergone FGM
- child may indicate that they are going for a special event

Further reading can be obtained in [FGM guidance](#)

Appendix 6 – Youth produced sexual imagery

Youth produced sexual imagery is the sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobile devices or the internet by under 18s.

It does include:

- person under 18 creating a sexual image of themselves and sharing it with another person under 18
- a person under 18 sharing an image of another under 18 with another person under 18 or an adult
- a person under 18 in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under 18

It does not include:

- a person under 18 sharing adult pornography
- a person under 18 sharing sexual texts without sexual imagery
- adults sharing sexual imagery of under 18s. (This is child sexual abuse and must always be reported to police)

The law

Making, possessing, and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is indecent is illegal. This includes imagery of yourself if you're under 18. Indecent is not definitively defined in law, but images are likely to be considered indecent if they depict:

- a naked young person
- a topless girl
- an image which displays genitals
- sex acts including masturbation
- indecent images may also include overtly sexual images of young people in their underwear

These laws were not created to criminalise young people but to protect them. Although sharing sexual images of themselves is illegal and risky, it is often the result of curiosity and exploration. We believe young people need education, support, and safeguarding not criminalisation.

The National Police Chiefs Council has made clear that incidents of youth produced sexual imagery should be treated primarily as a safeguarding issue. However, the Police may need to be involved in cases to ensure thorough investigation including collection of evidence.

If a young person has shared imagery consensually, such as when in a romantic relationship, or as a joke, and there is no intended malice, it is usually appropriate for the setting to manage the incident directly. In contrast any incidents with aggravating factors, for example, a young person sharing someone else's imagery without consent and with malicious intent, should generally be referred to police and/or children's social care.

If you have any doubts about whether to involve other agencies, you should make a referral to the police.

Assessing the risks

The circumstances of incidents can vary widely. If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSO Lead should conduct a further review (including an interview with the young people involved) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

When assessing the risks the following should be considered:

- why was the imagery shared? Was the young person coerced or put under pressure to produce the imagery?
- who has shared the imagery? Where has the imagery been shared? Was it shared and received with the knowledge of the pupil in the imagery?
- are there any adults involved in the sharing of the imagery?
- what is the impact on the young people involved?
- do the young people involved have additional vulnerabilities?
- does the young person understand consent?
- has the young person taken part in this kind of activity before?

Informing parents and/or carers

Parents (or carers) should be informed and involved in the process at an early stage unless informing the parent will put the young person at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform the parents would generally be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when the parents should be informed.

The DSL may work with the young people involved to decide on the best approach for informing parents. In some cases, DSL Lead may work to support the young people to inform their parents themselves.

Viewing the imagery

Adults should not view youth produced sexual imagery unless there is good and clear reason to do so. Wherever possible, responses to incidents should be based on what the DSL has been told about the content of the imagery.

If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL would need to be satisfied that viewing:

- is the only way to decide whether to involve other agencies (i.e. it is not possible to establish the facts from the young people involved)
- is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the young person or parent in making a report
- is unavoidable because a young person has presented an image directly to a staff member or the imagery has been found on an early year's setting device or network

If it is necessary to view the imagery, then the DSL should:

- never copy, print or share the imagery; this is illegal

- discuss the decision with the Nursery Manager/Pre School Leader
- ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the Nursery Manager/Pre School Leader
- ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally Nursery Manager/Pre School Leader or a member of the senior leadership team. This staff member does not need to view the images
- ensure wherever possible that images are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the young person in the imagery
- record the viewing of the imagery in the setting safeguarding records including who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions and ensure the safeguarding recording procedures for the setting are followed

If during a search material that is concerning has been or could be used to cause harm or commit an offence, the material may be retained as evidence of a criminal offence or a breach of setting discipline and using professional judgement, the police may need to be involved.

Appendix 7 – safeguarding children in specific circumstances

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the early years setting and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of exploitation or abuse outside of their families. Contextual safeguarding/Extra-familial risks take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.

Child on child abuse

The early years setting recognises that children can abuse other children and such behaviours are never viewed simply as 'banter' or as part of growing up. We recognise that Child on Child abuse can take many different forms such as:

- cyber-bullying
- sending or posting sexually suggestive images including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobiles or over the internet by persons aged under 18 (referred to as youth Produced Sexual Imagery)
- sexual assault
- sexual violence or harassment
- up-skirting
- sexually harmful or problematic behaviour
- gang initiation or hazing type violence

The early years setting will follow the local interagency procedures and the Harmful Sexual Behaviours strategy. This includes responding to any reports in a child centred manner and undertaking an immediate risk and needs assessment in relation to the victim, the alleged perpetrator and other children.

Up skirting is an illegal offence which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

The [UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS\)](#) Education Group has recently published [sexting advice for schools and colleges](#).

Owners/committee/managers/preschool leaders should ensure the child protection policy reflects the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with Child-on-Child abuse. This could, for example, include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Appendix 8 – Gang involvement

There are particular risk factors and triggers that young people experience in their lives that can lead to them becoming involved in gangs. Many of these risk factors are similar to involvement in other harmful activities such as youth offending or violent extremism.

Risk indicators may include:

- becoming withdrawn from family
- sudden loss of interest - decline in attendance or academic achievement
- starting to use new or unknown slang words
- holding unexplained money or possessions
- staying out unusually late without reason
- sudden change in appearance - dressing in a particular style or 'uniform'
- dropping out of positive activities
- new nickname
- unexplained physical injuries
- graffiti style tags on possessions, schoolbooks, walls
- constantly talking about another young person who seems to have a lot of influence over them
- broken off with old friends and hanging around with a new group
- increased use of social networking sites
- starting to adopt codes of group behaviour e.g. ways of talking and hand signs
- expressing aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people some of whom may have been friends in the past
- being scared when entering certain areas
- being concerned by the presence of unknown youths in their neighbourhood

This is not an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide, amended as appropriate in light of local knowledge of the risk factors in a particular area.

Appendix 9 – Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

The key indicators of child sexual exploitation include:

Health

- physical symptoms (bruising suggestive of either physical or sexual assault)
- chronic fatigue
- recurring or multiple sexually transmitted infections
- pregnancy and/or seeking an abortion
- evidence of drug, alcohol or other substance misuse
- sexually risky behaviour

Education

- truancy/disengagement with education or considerable change in performance at school

Emotional and behavioural Issues

- volatile behaviour exhibiting extreme array of mood swings or use of abusive language
- involvement in petty crime such as shoplifting, stealing
- secretive behaviour
- entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- reports of being seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation, including public toilets known for cottaging or adult venues (pubs and clubs)

Identity

- low self-image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour, e.g. cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity

Relationships

- hostility in relationships with staff, family members as appropriate and significant others
- physical aggression
- placement breakdown
- reports from reliable sources (e.g. family, friends or other professionals) suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation
- detachment from age-appropriate activities
- associating with other young people who are known to be sexually exploited

- known to be sexually active
- sexual relationship with a significantly older person, or younger person who is suspected of being abusive
- unexplained relationships with older adults
- possible inappropriate use of the Internet and forming relationships, particularly with adults, via the Internet
- phone calls, text messages or letters from unknown adults
- adults or older youths loitering outside the home
- persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation
- returning after having been missing, looking well cared for in spite of having no known home base
- missing for long periods, with no known home base
- going missing and being found in areas where they have no known links

Please note: Whilst the focus is often on older men as perpetrators, younger men and women may also be involved, and staff should be aware of this possibility.

Social presentation

- change in appearance
- going out dressed in clothing unusual for them (inappropriate for age, borrowing clothing from older young people)

Family and environmental factors

- history of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse; neglect; domestic violence; parental difficulties

Housing

- pattern of previous street homelessness
- having keys to premises other than those known about

Income

- possession of large amounts of money with no plausible explanation
- acquisition of expensive clothes, mobile phones or other possessions without plausible explanation
- accounts of social activities with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding

This list is not exhaustive.

Early years practitioners should be aware that many children and young people who are sexually exploited do not see themselves as victims.

Appendix 10 – Information sharing to safeguard children and young people (statutory guidance, September 2026)

[This HM Government advice](#) The Department for Education's updated information-sharing guidance is statutory guidance for safeguarding organisations and practitioners. The Information Sharing Duty under section 16LA of the Children Act 2004 comes into force on 30 September 2026. The setting will follow the current statutory guidance and read it alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

Effective safeguarding information sharing should support timely dialogue between relevant agencies. Staff must share relevant and accurate information where necessary and proportionate to safeguard or promote a child's welfare, and should record the information shared, the reason for sharing, who received it, and any acknowledgement or outcome.

The setting recognises that data protection law does not prevent appropriate safeguarding information sharing. Staff will apply the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 alongside safeguarding duties, and will seek advice from the DSL where they are unsure, without delaying urgent action needed to protect a child.

Appendix 11 – What to do if you are concerned about a child

A concern becomes apparent about a child

Record the concern whether this be electronically or on paper

Refer to effective support documentation where does the concern sit?

Do parents/carers need to be spoken to?

Could this put the child in further risk of harm?

Does this concern meet level 4 – significant harm?

Yes – Referral into MASH

No

Further support

