

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



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|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
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| Reviewer            | Liam Donovan/Alison Lapihuska/Kirsty Nakabale |

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## 1. Introduction, Principles and Aims.

### Purpose and commitment to safeguarding

At Longwood School & Nursery, we work with children, parents, external agencies, and the community to ensure children's welfare, safety, and the best start in life. Every child has the right to be respected, thrive, and be protected from harm in any form.

We have robust procedures to safeguard children regardless of role, prevent maltreatment, and promote their health and development. Our nursery fosters acceptance and tolerance of diverse beliefs and cultures. Safeguarding extends beyond this policy and should be read alongside other nursery policies and procedures.

All staff (including agency), students, and volunteers receive appropriate training and support through recruitment, induction, and ongoing professional development to ensure they understand and uphold safeguarding responsibilities.

This policy is reviewed annually to align with statutory guidance, with effectiveness monitored through staff reviews, supervision meetings, and feedback.

Every staff member, student, and volunteer must report all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The policy reinforces collective responsibility for safeguarding and outlines procedures for addressing child protection concerns.

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- Ensure all staff are able to identify the signs and indicators of abuse, including the softer signs of abuse, and know what action to take
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.

We do this by:

- Always listening to children
- Role modelling safe and protective behaviors with children

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- Developing children's independence and autonomy as appropriate for their age and stage of development
- Ensuring safe and secure environments for children
- Promoting respect, tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- Implementing the British values
- Providing intervention and help for children and families in need.

We have a duty to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. If in any doubt about what constitutes a safeguarding concern, refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If there is a concern, never do nothing, always do something, including sharing information with any relevant agencies. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.

We recognise that safeguarding includes protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, serious violence, harmful sexual behaviour, online harm, and emerging risks associated with technology and artificial intelligence.

At Longwood School & Nursery we aim to:

Have a child-centred approach - Foster well-being, confidence, and resilience through sensitive interactions; support safety, health, and positive relationships.

- Have awareness of vulnerabilities - Recognise the increased risks for SEND children, isolated families, and those affected by ACEs and the toxic trio.
- Empower staff - Ensure staff feel supported and confident in acting in the child's best interest, maintaining professional curiosity and seeking help early.
- Hold regular safeguarding training - Keep staff updated on child protection procedures and national/local changes through thorough annual updates.
- Complete timely child referrals - Follow local authority procedures for referrals, ensuring relevant information is shared as needed.
- Adhere to confidentiality and information sharing - Share information only with those necessary to protect the child and act in their best interest.
- Complete risk management - Identify, minimize, and manage risks in childcare settings.
- Respond to allegations - Take appropriate action on allegations of serious harm or abuse, reporting to Ofsted and relevant authorities.
- Parental awareness - Ensure parents understand safeguarding policies upon registration and receive updates as needed.
- Policy review and compliance - Regularly update policies with staff and parents, ensuring alignment with legal and local safeguarding requirements.

## Adherence to Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership

Longwood School & Nursery operates in accordance with the procedures and guidance set out by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership for the area in which the school/nursery is located.

We ensure that all safeguarding concerns are managed in line with local inter-agency procedures and statutory guidance. All staff understand their responsibility to follow local safeguarding partnership protocols when responding to any concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing. Specifically, the setting will:

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1. Follow the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership thresholds of need and referral pathways when identifying and responding to concerns.
2. Ensure all safeguarding concerns are reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will take appropriate action in line with Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership safeguarding procedures.
3. Use the relevant local authority Children's Services and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) processes when making referrals or seeking advice.
4. Work in partnership with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Children's Services, health professionals, Early Help / Family Help process services, and other relevant agencies to safeguard and support children and families.
5. Ensure staff access and follow the latest Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership policies, procedures, and guidance, including those relating to Early Help / Family Help process, child protection, contextual safeguarding, and information sharing.
6. Participate fully in multi-agency working, including contributing to assessments, attending meetings, providing reports, and implementing agreed plans.
7. Maintain accurate, secure, and confidential records in line with Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership expectations and data protection requirements.

The setting will use the referral forms, multi-agency processes, and reporting systems required by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership when making safeguarding referrals or requesting support.

Relevant local safeguarding contact details, referral pathways, and escalation procedures are displayed within the school/nursery and are available to all staff.

All staff receive safeguarding training that includes awareness of Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and their role in implementing them effectively. Through adherence to Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership procedures, Longwood School & Nursery ensures a consistent, coordinated, child-centred, and effective approach to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within the local area.

## Legal framework and statutory guidance

We are committed to complying with all relevant legal requirements and statutory guidance to ensure the highest standards of care, education, and safeguarding for children. Our policies and practices align with the [Early Years Foundation Stage](#) (EYFS) Statutory Framework, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE), [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), and all relevant legislation, including the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Equality Act 2010, and the Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR). We regularly review and update our policies to reflect changes in legislation and best practice, ensuring that all staff are trained and fully aware of their responsibilities in providing a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for every child.

## Principles of safeguarding and promoting child welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

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- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2023)

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

|                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Named DSL              | Liam Donovan / Kirsty Nakabale  |
| Deputy DSL             | Susan Howard / Alison Lapihuska |
| MASH                   | 0330 123 4043                   |
| LADO                   | 01992 555420                    |
| Children's Services    | 0330 123 4043                   |
| Ofsted contact details | 0300 123 3155                   |

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL roles.

The DSL has overall responsibility to ensure a robust safeguarding culture within the school/nursery. It is their role to ensure that the policy and procedures are implemented to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. They are responsible for coordinating safeguarding and child protection training for staff across the nurseries.

#### The role of the DSL

- Monitor and promote the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and procedures in line with new legislation and ensure it is effective. This will be done by making sure that everyone understands the correct procedures during their individual annual review
- Ensure updates and new legislation are reflected in our services as soon as they are known
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff, students, volunteers, children and parents who have child protection concerns
- Ensure detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Ensure robust record keeping, which is completed on a timely basis with clarity and accuracy using the provided record keeping templates.
- Assess information provided promptly, carefully and refer as appropriate to external agencies
- Provide signposting to other organisations and acting as the main point of contact for staff, parents, and external agencies regarding concerns about a child's welfare.
- Consult with Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and regulatory bodies where required
- Make formal referrals to Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership agencies or the police, as required.
- Escalating concerns through relevant channels as appropriate.

Designated Safeguarding Team posters can be found throughout the setting which highlight the DSL on Duty that day.

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In addition, the DSL is required to:

- Keep up-to-date with good practice and national requirements for safeguarding and child protection
- Provide information on safeguarding and child protection for the school/nursery
- Raise awareness of any safeguarding and child protection training needs, on a regular basis, through a variety of mediums including staff meetings / INSET days and other.
- Retain up-to-date knowledge of the role of the local safeguarding partnership arrangements and local child protection procedures.

The DSL does not investigate whether or not a child has been abused or investigate an allegation or disclosure. Investigations are for the appropriate authorities, usually the police and social services.

There is always one designated person or more on duty during the opening hours of the setting, In the unlikely event of the DSL or Deputy DSL absence and to ensure immediate action can be taken, contact the Early Years & Operations Director.

## **Responsibilities of staff, volunteers, and management.**

All staff, volunteers, students, apprentices, agency workers, and management play a vital role in ensuring the safety, well-being, and development of children in our care. Every adult working within the nursery has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and must adhere to all Longwood School & Nursery policies, procedures, and codes of conduct. Staff are expected to remain vigilant to signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, and other safeguarding concerns, and to take prompt and appropriate action where concerns arise.

All concerns regarding the welfare or safety of a child must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL in accordance with local safeguarding procedures. Staff must understand their responsibilities regarding information sharing, confidentiality, record keeping, and professional conduct, and must participate in safeguarding training, updates, supervision, and professional development activities to ensure their knowledge remains current. Staff are also required to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice through safeguarding, escalation, or whistleblowing procedures where appropriate.

All staff, volunteers, and individuals working with children are required to maintain their suitability to work with children and must cooperate fully with safer recruitment and ongoing suitability processes, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements where applicable. Any change in circumstances that may affect an individual's suitability to work with children, including criminal investigations, cautions, convictions, disqualifications, or other safeguarding concerns, must be disclosed to management immediately.

Management and leaders are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively, that staff receive appropriate training, supervision, and support, that safer recruitment requirements are met, and that a culture of vigilance, transparency, accountability, and child-centred practice is maintained throughout the setting. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all adults working within the nursery are expected to act in the best interests of the child at all times.

## **Partnership with parents, carers, and external agencies.**

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The school/nursery prioritises open communication with parents as the first point of contact. If abuse is suspected and recorded, parents are informed unless guidance from the local authority children's social care team or police advises otherwise - typically in cases where a parent or family member is the alleged abuser or disclosure may put the child at risk. In such situations, investigating officers take responsibility for informing parents. The school/nursery is committed to fostering trusting and supportive relationships among families, staff, students, and volunteers.

While external investigations take place, the school/nursery continues to welcome the child and their family, ensuring they are treated with respect and without judgment. Confidential records are shared with parents or those with parental responsibility only when appropriate, following local authority guidance, with the child's safety and well-being as the top priority. The school/nursery remains dedicated to supporting and working collaboratively with families in the best interest of the child.

We recognise the importance of working collaboratively with external agencies to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in our care. We actively engage with health professionals, educational specialists, social services, and other relevant organisations to support children's development, well-being, and safeguarding needs. Our nursery fosters open and effective communication with these agencies, sharing relevant information in a professional and confidential manner, always prioritising the best interests of the child. By working in partnership, we ensure early identification of additional needs and access to appropriate support, helping every child reach their full potential.

## **Importance of early intervention and prevention.**

We recognise that early intervention and prevention are crucial in supporting children's development, well-being, and safety. Identifying and addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage helps to prevent challenges from escalating and ensures that children receive the right support when they need it. Our staff are trained to observe, assess, and respond to any emerging needs, whether related to learning, communication, emotional well-being, or safeguarding concerns. We work closely with families and external agencies to provide tailored support, ensuring that every child has the best possible start in life.

## **Creating a safe environment for children.**

The safety and well-being of children is one of our top priorities. We are committed to providing a secure, nurturing, and inclusive environment where children feel protected, valued, and able to thrive. Our setting follows robust safeguarding procedures, including rigorous staff recruitment checks, regular risk assessments, and clear policies on supervision, health, and hygiene. We promote a culture of vigilance, ensuring that all staff are trained to recognise and respond to any safeguarding concerns swiftly and appropriately. By fostering strong relationships with children and families, we create an open and trusting atmosphere where children feel confident to express themselves and seek support when needed.

## **3. Staff training and supervision**

| Training title                          | Certification            | Roles                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Induction training                      | Prior to commencing role | All staff members                                              |
| Child Protection/ Safeguarding training | Every 2 years            | All staff members                                              |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead Training   | Every 2 years            | Any named member of the DSL team, and relevant senior leaders. |

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|                            |                                     |                                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Safer Recruitment training | Renewal best practice every 2 years | At least one member of the interviewing panel |
| Prevent training           | Renewal best practice every 2 years | All staff                                     |

All new staff receive safeguarding training during induction to ensure they can protect and promote children's welfare. Within the first week, they are given a copy of the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, and their manager ensures they understand and follow it.

All required safeguarding training, including Prevent training, must be completed by the end of the probationary period. Staff are expected to keep their knowledge up to date, report any concerns, and records are maintained to track training completion. Once inducted, all staff must complete child protection and Prevent training every two years to ensure ongoing compliance and awareness of best practices.

## Safeguarding Updates and Professional Development

We ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding updates in addition to formal safeguarding training. Safeguarding is a constantly evolving area of practice and all staff must remain informed of local, national, and organisational developments.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for ensuring that staff receive timely information regarding updates to statutory guidance, local safeguarding partnership procedures, emerging safeguarding risks, and changes in legislation.

Updates may be delivered through supervision sessions, staff meetings, safeguarding briefings, newsletters, workshops, online learning, and annual policy reviews.

All staff are expected to engage fully with safeguarding updates and demonstrate how new learning has been implemented into practice. Staff who require additional support will receive appropriate guidance and supervision to ensure they remain confident in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities.

## Learners on placements or in employment

We hold responsibility for ensuring that learners on placement or in employment are familiar with and sign up to this policy and agree to work within this framework. Learners will receive basic child protection training prior to starting their placement.

Learners and students under the age of 18 will be protected as children. Risk assessments will be completed to ensure their safety and well-being are protected and supported during their employment or training period. If situations arise during employment or placement which identifies those aged 18 or under are at risk from abuse or neglect, we will contact the appropriate bodies to ensure the individual is safeguarded.

## Supervision procedures

All staff will receive supervision meetings throughout the year where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any needs for further support as well as an opportunity to reflect on practice.

We use peer-on- peer and management observations in the setting to ensure that the care we provide for children is at the highest level and any areas for staff development are quickly highlighted.

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Peer observations allow us to share constructive feedback, develop practice and build trust so that staff are able to share any concerns they may have. Any concerns are raised with the designated lead and dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner.

The deployment of staff within the nursery allows for constant supervision and support.

## 4. Identifying abuse and neglect

### **Definitions of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect**

Physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children.

**All staff must read Appendix 3 for a full summary of the categories of abuse.**

### **Understanding risk factors and vulnerabilities, including children with SEND.**

We recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to risks due to a range of factors, including special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), family circumstances, or past experiences. Our staff are trained to identify and understand these risk factors, ensuring that appropriate support is in place to safeguard and promote the well-being of every child. We adopt an inclusive approach, working closely with families and external professionals to create tailored strategies that meet individual needs.

### **Additional safeguarding concerns (e.g., domestic abuse, exploitation, radicalisation).**

Children may be at risk from a range of safeguarding concerns beyond immediate harm or neglect. Issues such as domestic abuse, child exploitation (including criminal and sexual exploitation), radicalisation, and online safety threats can have a significant impact on a child's well-being and development. Our staff receive ongoing training to recognise the signs of these risks and respond appropriately, following safeguarding procedures and working with external agencies where necessary. For further details on these types of abuse see 'Appendix 1.

All staff must read Appendix 4 for a full summary of the categories of abuse.

## 5. Responding and reporting concerns

Staff, volunteers, or students may receive a safeguarding disclosure. If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse, it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately.

See the guidance below for responding to and reporting disclosures of abuse:

- Stay calm and listen to the child.
- Ask questions for clarification only using the TED technique: 'Tell', 'Explain' and 'Describe'. Avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Consider how to explain to the child about our policies and procedures so that they know what is going to happen.

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- Tell them who you are going to tell so that they can be made safe - children may fear that what they have said will be passed on to everyone and they need to know that this will not be the case.
- Control expressions of panic or shock.
- Use the child's language or vocabulary.
- Offer comfort bearing in mind the age and needs of the child.
- If the child has disclosed sexual abuse, ask them when it happened but nothing more. Whether a child is asked this question will depend upon the child's age and understanding.
- Tell them that they were right to tell you and it was not their fault and they are not bad.
- Do not be tempted to give false reassurances to the child but tell them that you will do your best to protect or help them.
- As soon as possible take care to record in writing what was said using the child's own words. Record the date, time, setting, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and other people present. Sign and date the record.
- Record any subsequent events and actions.
- It is not your responsibility to decide if a child has been abused. Any disclosure must be raised with the DSL.

We will always act on behalf of the child and will do everything possible to ensure the safety and welfare of any child and so will take all allegations of potential abuse seriously. All concerns reported to staff will be pursued, regardless of the nature of the concern and to whom the allegation relates.

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns and suspicions of abuse. These concerns will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible.

- Staff will report their concerns to the DSL (in the absence of the DSL they will be reported to the Deputy DSL)
- Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded and stored securely
- If appropriate, the incident will be discussed with the parent/carer, such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to these records on request

Relevant contact details are displayed in the nursery on the 'Safeguarding Posters'.

## Record keeping

Forms to be used include: Body map, Child safeguarding concern reporting form, Incident record form, pre-existing injury form as required.

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, on the 'Logging of concern form' supported by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). This record should include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of any incident including any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time

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- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person writing the record and the DSL, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

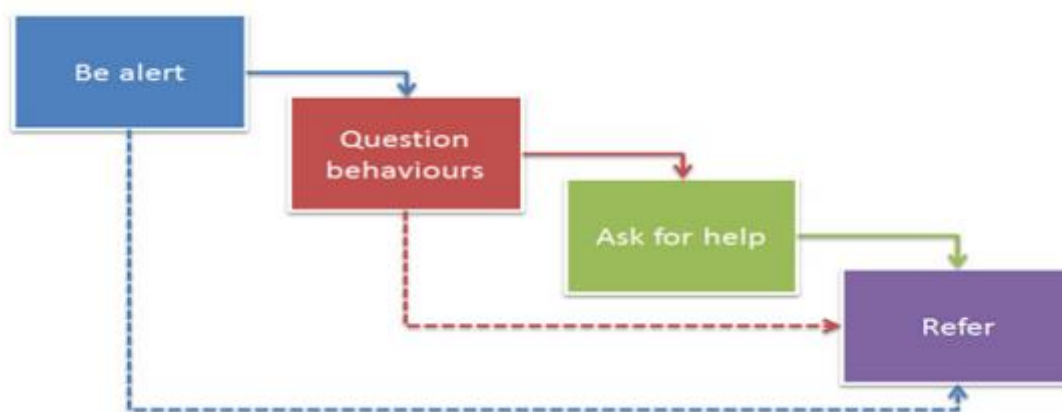
In our school/nursery, staff, parents, and visitors are strictly prohibited from taking or receiving images of children's injuries. All injuries must be recorded using written descriptions on record of concern forms. Staff must not use personal devices to capture images under any circumstances. Additionally, parents and carers must not send images of their child's injuries to staff via email, messaging apps, or any other means. If such images are received, they will not be stored and will be securely deleted immediately.

See Appendix 1 for full recording template summary.

## Referrals

The school/nursery adheres to the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership Procedures (see front page for contact details) who provide guidance for professionals including when to make a referral to Children's Services (often known as MASH - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) and can be found at the front of the policy and on the 'Safeguarding Posters'.

'What to do if you are worried about a child being abused' (DfE 2015) identifies that there are four key steps for professionals to follow to help identify and respond appropriately to possible abuse and/or neglect. All members of staff, volunteers and students are expected to be aware of and follow this approach:



It may not always be appropriate to go through all four stages sequentially and if a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to Children's Service and/or the Police. Note: Referrals must be made to the local authority where a child/family lives.

It is the responsibility of the DSL to receive and collate information regarding individual children, to make immediate and on-going assessments of potential risk and to decide actions necessary (with parents/caregivers / carers in most cases). This includes the need to make referrals to partner agencies and services.

- Advice may also be sought from named director

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- Issues discussed during advice calls may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/caregivers/carers are made aware of these.

All members of staff, volunteers and students are made aware of the Early Help / Family Help process and understand their role within it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an Early Help / Family Help process assessment.

If Early Help / Family Help process is assessed to be appropriate, then the DSL will support staff, volunteers and students involved with the family in liaising with other agencies and submitting an Early Help / Family Help process Notification Form. The DSL will keep all Early Help / Family Help process cases under constant review and will give consideration to making a referral to Children's Social Care if the situation doesn't appear to be improving for the child.

New referrals to services will be made using the agreed process i.e. the request for service form. These requests will be made with reference to the lead professional for children who are already known to services will be passed to the allocated worker / team. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, then they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.

In all but the most exceptional circumstances, parents/caregivers /carers will be made aware of the concerns for their child at the earliest possible stage. In the event of a referral to Children Social Care being necessary, parents/caregivers/carers will be informed. Consent will be sought, unless there is a valid reason not to do so; for example, if to do so would put a child at risk of harm and/or would undermine a criminal investigation.

The role of the nursery in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

On occasion, staff, volunteers and students may pass information about a child to the DSL but remain anxious about action subsequently taken. Staff, volunteers and students should feel able to check the progress of a case with the DSL so that they can reassure themselves the child is safe, and their welfare is being considered. If following this process, the staff, volunteers and students remains concerned that appropriate action is not being taken, they must escalate.

## Escalation procedures

We are committed to ensuring that all safeguarding concerns are addressed promptly and effectively. If a staff member or volunteer feels that a safeguarding concern has not been appropriately responded to, they must follow our escalation procedures. This includes reporting the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, if necessary, escalating further to senior management or the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Staff are encouraged to use professional challenge when needed and must escalate concerns if they believe a child remains at risk. Clear documentation of concerns and actions taken is essential. If urgent action is required to protect a child, immediate contact should be made with children's social care or the police. Staff can also whistle blow to the [NSPCC](#).

## Reporting FGM

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Where a professional, who is subject to the mandatory reporting duty, has either been told by a girl that she has had FGM or has observed a physical sign appearing to show that a girl has had FGM s/he should personally report the matter to the police by calling 101 and asking to speak to the FGM referral unit. In the case of emergency or imminent risk dial 999. Reports under the duty should be made as soon as possible after a case is discovered, and best practice is for reports to be made by the close of the next working day.

In all other cases, professionals should follow normal safeguarding processes and the Referral and Assessment Procedure. This is in line with guidance produced by NHS England and the Metropolitan Police Service.

## Looked after children

As part of our safeguarding practice, we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this, we ask that we are informed of:

- The legal status of the child (e.g. whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order)
- Contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those with parental responsibility)
- The child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her
- The details of the child's social worker and any other support agencies involved
- Any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question. Please refer to the Looked After Children policy for further details.

## Operation Encompass

Our organisation/school is committed to supporting children who may have been affected by domestic abuse. We participate in Operation Encompass, a partnership between the police and education settings that ensures relevant safeguarding information is shared promptly when a child has been exposed to a domestic abuse incident. This information is shared on a need-to-know basis with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or appropriate safeguarding staff to enable timely support and ensure the child's safety, wellbeing, and educational needs are considered. All information received through Operation Encompass is handled confidentially and in accordance with safeguarding, data protection, and information-sharing protocols.

## Confidentiality and information sharing

All safeguarding concerns, enquiries, and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know, following local authority guidance. Confidentiality must not prevent action to protect a child from harm, but every effort is made to maintain discretion during investigations.

If unsure whether sensitive information can be shared, staff should consult the DSL or contact the Information Commissioner's Office for guidance. Staff must not publicly or privately comment on any individual's behaviour. Confidential records are shared with parents only when appropriate, ensuring the child's safety remains the priority.

The school/nursery maintains accurate records to support early identification of children needing help, with regular DSL reviews to assess needs holistically. Data protection policies apply, and only

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those directly involved in an investigation handle sensitive information, though relevant authorities will have full access when required.

When safeguarding information is requested by an external agency, our nursery follows a strict protocol to ensure the security and confidentiality of sensitive information. Before any information is shared, the requesting agency must submit a formal request via email, clearly outlining the specific details required and the purpose of the request. This ensures that all disclosures comply with data protection regulations. The request will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will verify the legitimacy of the request and ensure that only relevant and necessary information is shared. No information will be disclosed without appropriate authorisation, and all records of requests and responses will be securely documented.

## Safeguarding in Practice

### **Procedures for attendance, missing children and non-collection.**

The school/nursery monitors children's attendance to ensure consistency and identify any concerns. Parents should inform the nursery in advance of holidays or planned absences, and sickness must be reported on the same day.

If a child has not arrived within two hours of their usual start time, parents will be contacted. If unreachable, emergency contacts will be called until the child's safety is confirmed. If no contact can be made, relevant authorities, including the police, may be informed.

For children under a child protection plan or in a referral process, any absence is immediately reported to the local authority children's social care team. While parents are encouraged to spend valuable time with their children, attendance tracking ensures each child's well-being and safety.

Staff will actively monitor attendance patterns and identify repeated, prolonged, unexplained, or concerning absences.

Attendance concerns may be considered an indicator of wider safeguarding or welfare concerns and will be reviewed alongside any other information held about the child and family.

Where concerns arise regarding a child's welfare, staff will promptly follow up absences with parents and carers. Where appropriate, advice may be sought from children's social care, health professionals, the police, or other relevant agencies.

All attendance concerns and actions taken will be recorded appropriately and reviewed by the DSL as part of the school/nursery's safeguarding arrangements.

### **Safe use of technology (e.g., social media, mobile phones, photography).**

We recognise that digital technology forms part of children's daily lives and we have regard to the impact of screen use on children's health, development, wellbeing, and learning.

When using screen-based technology within the school/nursery we will:

- Ensure content is age-appropriate and educational
- Maintain active adult supervision

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

- Promote positive and balanced use of technology
- Minimise unnecessary screen exposure
- Prioritise play-based, physical, social, and language-rich learning experiences
- Monitor the impact of screen use on behaviour, sleep, communication, and development
- Encourage healthy digital habits from an early age

Technology will only be used where it enhances children's learning, development, communication, or wellbeing and will never replace high-quality interactions between staff and children.

Staff will act as positive role models and ensure technology is used responsibly, safely, and in accordance with school/nursery policies.

The school/nursery recognises that technology continues to evolve and may present additional safeguarding risks. These include artificial intelligence (AI), AI-generated imagery, deepfakes, image-based abuse, online manipulation, and other forms of technology-facilitated harm. Staff will receive safeguarding updates and training to ensure emerging risks are identified and managed appropriately.

We operate a Mobile phones and Electronic Devices and Social Media policy which states how we will keep children safe from these devices whilst at school/nursery. This also links to our Online Safety policy and Acceptable IT Use Policy.

## Safer Sleep

We recognise our responsibility to promote safer sleep practices and reduce the risk of sudden infant death and sleep-related incidents.

The nursery follows current safer sleep guidance and ensures that:

- Babies are placed on their backs to sleep unless otherwise directed by a medical professional
- Children are checked regularly whilst sleeping
- Sleep environments are clean, well ventilated, and maintained at a safe temperature
- Bedding and sleep equipment are suitable, well maintained, and used appropriately
- Sleeping children remain within sight or hearing of staff at all times
- Staff are trained in safer sleep practices and understand their responsibilities for monitoring sleeping children
- Parents and carers are consulted regarding individual sleep routines whilst ensuring safer sleep guidance is consistently followed

Any concerns regarding a child's sleeping patterns, breathing, comfort, wellbeing, or safety will be immediately reported to the DSL and, where appropriate, discussed with parents and carers.

Where concerns are identified regarding sleep practices, equipment, or a child's welfare, prompt action will be taken to minimise risks and protect the child.

All staff must ensure they have read the Safer Sleep & Rest Policy.

## Managing children's behaviour positively.

We promote a positive approach to managing children's behaviour, focusing on encouragement, clear boundaries, and emotional support. Our staff use consistent, age-appropriate strategies that help children understand expectations, develop self-regulation skills, and build positive relationships. We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and take time to understand the underlying

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



causes, offering additional support where needed, especially for children with SEND or those experiencing challenges at home. Harsh discipline, shaming, or punitive measures are never used. Instead, we model respectful interactions, use praise and positive reinforcement, and help children learn problem-solving skills.

This links to our Supporting Children's Regulation Policy

## **Health and safety, risk assessments, and site security.**

As a staff team we will be fully aware of how to safeguard the whole school/nursery environment and be aware of potential dangers on the school/nursery boundaries such as drones or strangers lingering. We will ensure the children remain safe at all times.

We are committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all children, staff, and visitors. We follow strict health and safety procedures, conducting regular risk assessments to identify and minimise potential hazards both indoors and outdoors. Our site security measures include controlled access, visitor sign-in procedures, and appropriate supervision at all times. Staff are trained in emergency procedures, including fire safety, first aid, and responding to incidents. Equipment, toys, and facilities are routinely checked to ensure they meet safety standards. All staff must ensure they have read the Health & Safety Policy.

## **Procedures on toileting and privacy, ensuring dignity and safeguarding measures.**

We ensure that toileting procedures respect children's dignity, promote independence, and uphold safeguarding standards. Staff provide appropriate support based on each child's needs while encouraging self-care skills in a safe and nurturing manner. Toileting areas are designed to offer privacy while maintaining appropriate supervision to ensure children's safety. All staff follow strict hygiene protocols, including handwashing and sanitisation, to prevent the spread of infection. Safeguarding measures are in place, including clear policies on appropriate staff conduct, recording and reporting any concerns, and ensuring that personal care is always carried out in line with best practice.

All staff must ensure they have read the Intimate Care Policy

## **7. Safer Recruitment and selection**

### **Pre-employment safeguarding checks (DBS, references).**

Longwood School & Nursery are committed to safeguarding children by ensuring thorough pre-employment and visitor checks.

### **Recruitment procedures to ensure safe hiring practices.**

Through the implementation of our Safer Recruitment Policy, we endeavor to prevent unsuitable people from becoming members of staff. Procedures include relevant checks, such as requesting references, establishing the identity of applicants, and conducting criminal records disclosures. Where required, staff have enhanced DBS checks. Clear specification criteria and processes during the recruitment and selection process enable us to determine a candidate's suitability for the role.

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



We have specific responsibilities, as outlined in this policy, for any staff, apprentices, students and learners under the age of 18 whether living with their families, in state care, or living independently.

## Employment References

Employment references form a key part of our safer recruitment procedures.

References will be sought from appropriate professional referees and, wherever possible, obtained prior to employment commencing.

All references will be reviewed carefully for information relating to:

- Suitability to work with children
- Safeguarding concerns
- Disciplinary matters
- Capability concerns
- Employment history
- Professional conduct

Any inconsistencies, anomalies, employment gaps, or concerns identified during the recruitment process will be explored and resolved before any appointment is confirmed.

Records relating to references and safer recruitment decisions will be maintained securely and in accordance with data protection legislation.

Safer recruitment practices help ensure that unsuitable individuals are prevented from working with children and support the school/nursery's commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

## Volunteer Suitability and DBS Checks

The school/nursery will ensure that all volunteer arrangements comply with current safeguarding and EYFS requirements.

Volunteers undertaking regulated activity, including those carrying out activities frequently, on more than three days within a thirty-day period, or overnight, will be subject to the appropriate enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and barred list checks.

No individual will be permitted to commence work or volunteering within the school/nursery until all required suitability and safeguarding checks have been completed and reviewed, except where permitted under statutory guidance for occasional supervised volunteers.

All volunteer arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure ongoing compliance with safeguarding, recruitment, and regulated activity requirements.

## Ongoing suitability assessments.

All staff, volunteers, and individuals working with children remain suitable for their roles through continuous monitoring and assessment. All staff are required to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before starting work, and we strongly encourage enrolment in the DBS Update Service to allow for regular status checks. In addition to DBS checks, we conduct ongoing suitability assessments, including bi-annual self-declarations, supervision meetings, and observations of practice. Any changes in circumstances that may affect a person's suitability, such as criminal convictions or safeguarding concerns, must be disclosed immediately.

All staff are required to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before commencing employment. As a condition of employment, all staff must subscribe to and maintain

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



their membership of the DBS Update Service to enable the school/nursery to carry out regular status checks and support ongoing suitability monitoring.

In addition to DBS checks, the nursery conducts ongoing suitability assessments through supervision meetings, observations of practice, self-declaration processes, and regular discussions regarding safeguarding responsibilities.

All staff are required to disclose any matter that may affect their suitability to work with children, including arrests, charges, cautions, convictions, court orders, investigations, safeguarding concerns, or any other circumstance that may impact their ability to carry out their role safely.

Any concerns regarding suitability or disqualification will be managed in accordance with EYFS requirements, safer recruitment procedures, and Ofsted guidance.

All visitors, including contractors and external professionals, must provide identification upon arrival and sign in and out of the premises. Visitors without a DBS check will be supervised at all times while on-site.

**See Safer Recruitment Policy for further information**

## **Staff conduct**

The Staff code of conduct Policy sits alongside this policy to enable identification of changes in behaviours that may cause concern. All staff sign up to this policy to ensure any changes are reported to management, so we are able to support the individual staff member and ensure the safety and care of the children is not compromised

## **Expectations for behaviour and interactions with children.**

All staff have access to and comply with the whistleblowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner

Signs of inappropriate staff behaviour may include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images. This is not an exhaustive list, any changes in behaviour must be reported and acted upon immediately

## **Safeguarding considerations for social media and technology use.**

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children, staff, and families when using social media and technology. Staff must adhere to strict guidelines regarding the appropriate use of personal devices, online communication, and social media to protect confidentiality and maintain professional boundaries. The use of mobile phones and personal devices is restricted in areas where children are present, and any photos or videos taken for educational purposes must be stored securely and used in line with parental consent. We educate staff, children (where age-appropriate), and families on online safety, including the risks of cyberbullying, data protection, and exposure to inappropriate content.

**All staff must ensure they have read the Safeguarding Code of Conduct / Whistleblowing Policy / Acceptable IT use policy.**

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



## Whistleblowing

**Longwood School & Nursery** encourages an open and transparent culture where people can openly voice concerns and challenge professional judgments, however if staff, volunteers and students feel the need to raise concerns about children or staff, volunteers and students anonymously or without fear of repercussion.

We would ask all staff, volunteers and students to do so through whistle blowing. All staff, volunteers and students must have a clear understanding of the company's whistleblowing policy and who to contact. This information should also be displayed in all staff rooms and offices. All staff, volunteers and students must have a clear understanding of their responsibility to whistle blow when required.

## Raising Concerns and Speaking Up

We are committed to promoting an open, honest, and transparent culture where safeguarding concerns can be raised without fear of adverse consequences.

All staff, volunteers, students, apprentices, agency workers, and contractors have a responsibility to report concerns about:

- Poor or unsafe practice
- Safeguarding failures
- Professional misconduct
- Breaches of policy
- Conduct that may place children at risk

Individuals raising genuine concerns in good faith will be supported and protected from victimisation, discrimination, or detrimental treatment.

Where a concern cannot be resolved internally, or where an individual feels unable to report concerns through normal management arrangements, referrals may be made to relevant external bodies including Ofsted, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line, or other appropriate agencies.

The safety and welfare of children will always be the primary consideration when concerns are raised.

**All staff must ensure they have read the Whistleblowing Policy.**

## Managing Allegations against staff and low- level concerns

At Longwood School & Nursery, we expect all colleagues, both internal and external, to maintain professionalism at all times and prioritise the welfare and safety of every child. Upholding the Safeguarding Code of Conduct is essential in all circumstances.

We understand that there may be occasions when this standard is not met. Therefore, we have established a procedure for staff, volunteers, and students to disclose any information suggesting that a child's welfare and safety may be at risk. We encourage all team members to discuss any concerns with their Nursery Manager/Head Teacher as soon as possible to resolve issues promptly.

All staff, volunteers, and students have access to policies that enable them to share concerns about their colleagues appropriately. Allegations or concerns about a staff member, volunteer, or student may arise from various sources, such as a child's report, another adult's concern, or a parent's complaint. These concerns may also relate to the individual's behaviour outside of work.

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When addressing allegations against staff, volunteers, and students, refer to the following documents:

- Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

## Allegation threshold of harm

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) should review the available information to determine if the case meets the threshold of harm/risk of harm:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may harm a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offense against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm;
- Behaved in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children.

If you suspect that a member of staff, volunteer, or person in a position of trust has harmed, may harm, or failed to protect a child:

- If it meets the LADO threshold, notify the LADO immediately or within one working day. In emergencies, contact the police immediately.
- If outside normal working hours and there is an immediate risk to a child, notify the local authority emergency duty team for children's social care.
- If the incident does not meet the threshold of harm/risk of harm and is a concern only, address conduct or behaviour issues through normal employment practices.
- If the DSL is unclear whether the incident meets the threshold, they must seek advice from the LADO.

Failure to report an allegation in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

The Nursery Manager/ Head Teacher must ensure the child's safety and protection from further harm. If the disclosure involves an adult, the Nursery Manager/ Head Teacher is responsible for protecting the child and other children, which may require removing the adult involved.

The Nursery Manager / Head Teacher will complete required documentation but will **not**:

- Investigate the allegation;
- Ask leading questions;
- Promise confidentiality;
- Discuss the allegation with the accused person, even if suspension is necessary.

When informed of a concern or allegation, the DSL should gather factual information and preserve evidence without investigating the matter.

They should:

- Obtain written details of the concern/allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving it;
- Approve and date the written details;
- Record information about times, dates, locations, and potential witnesses;
- Record discussions about the child and/or staff member, decisions made, and reasons for those decisions.

## Role of the LADO

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



Every Local Authority has a LADO whose role is to:

- Receive reports about allegations and manage individual cases;
- Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organizations;
- Liaise with the police and other agencies;
- Monitor case progress to ensure a thorough and fair process;
- Advise employers on making referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and regulatory bodies.

LADOs do not investigate allegations; the responsibility remains with the employer or the police. If it is unclear which organisation should lead an investigation, the LADO will advise on the best course of action.

## Record Keeping:

Allegation Record Form: Completed by all staff when recording an allegation against a staff member.

Record of Concerns Information Shared by Others External to the Setting: Completed by the Nursery Manager / Head Teacher.

## Outcome of investigations

If the LADO has requested the school/nursery complete its own investigation, then the following definitions of allegation outcomes should be used once the investigation is completed:

- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** this is not the same as a false allegation. It means there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation; therefore, the term does not imply guilt or innocence

## Referral to Disclosure and Barring Service

The EYFS requires us to meet our responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which includes a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been, had the person not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.

## Managing low-level concerns

The nursery is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for children, staff, and families. We recognise that low-level concerns, which may not meet the threshold for formal safeguarding action, can still have an impact on the well-being of children and staff. These concerns, including but not limited to inappropriate behaviour or attitudes, will be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

Any low-level concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). These concerns will be carefully considered, and appropriate action will be taken to support the individual involved, ensure the safety of children, and maintain professional standards. Where needed, training or additional supervision may be provided.

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

We strive to maintain a culture of openness, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that staff feel confident in raising concerns without fear of reprisal. All concerns will be handled confidentially and with respect for all parties involved.

## 11. Legal and Statutory Framework

We adhere to all current legislation, as below:

[Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)

[Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000](#)

[Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#) (as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015)

[Freedom of Information Act 2012](#)

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)

[The Childcare Act 2006](#)

[The Children Act 2004](#)

[The Children Act \(England and Wales\) 1989](#)

[The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)

[The Data Protection Acts 1984, 1998 and 2018](#)

[The Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

[The Human Rights Act 1998](#)

[The Police Act 1997](#)

[The Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)

Statutory guidance

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers (effective from 1 September 2026) [Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

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

[Working together to safeguard children](#) March 2026

Relevant non-statutory guidance:

[Child sexual exploitation](#), DfE 2017

[Information sharing](#), DfE May 2024

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#), DfE 2015

### Other related policies

All staff, students and volunteers have a responsibility for safeguarding children, being vigilant and identifying and reporting any safeguarding concerns. This policy and supporting policies, specifically relating to safeguarding and child protection include:

|                                         |                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Mobile Phone & Electronic Device Policy | Online Safety Policy                                     |
| CCTV Policy (if applicable)             | Supporting Children's Regulation Policy                  |
| Confidentiality Policy                  | Safer Recruitment Policy                                 |
| Emergency Lockdown Policy               | Intimate Care Policy                                     |
| Inclusion & Equality Policy             | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy |
| Late & Non-Collection Policy            | Visitors Policy                                          |

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|                              |                                     |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Lone Working Policy          | Safeguarding Code of Conduct Policy |
| Looked After Children Policy | Staffing Policy                     |
| Data Protection Policy       | Safer Sleep & Rest Policy           |
| Lost Child Policy            | Whistleblowing Policy               |
| Attendance Policy            |                                     |

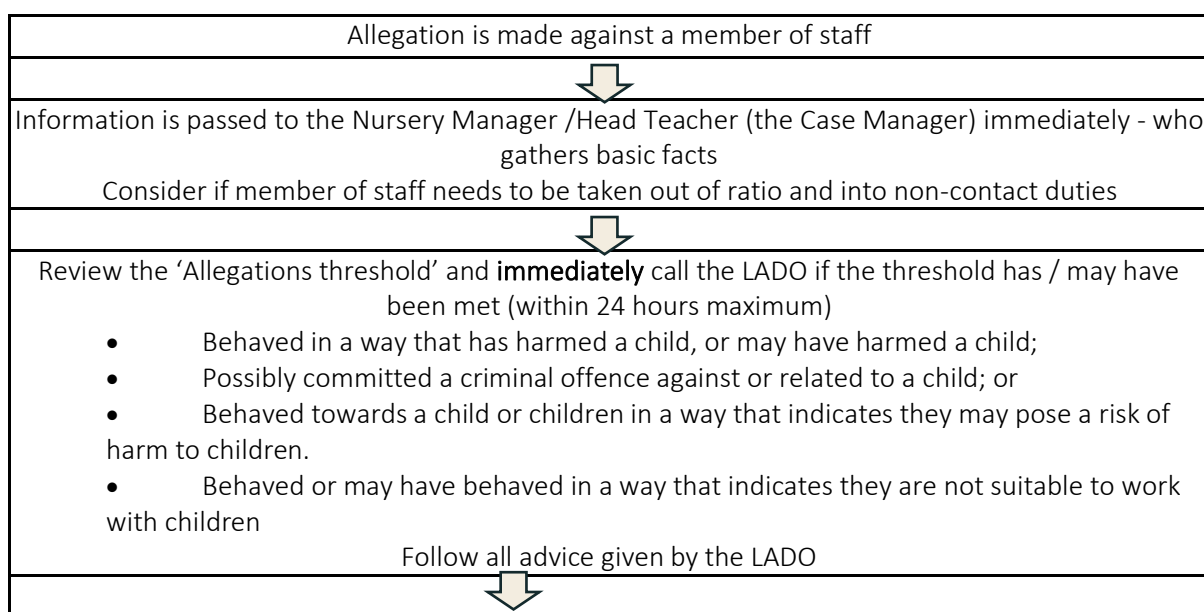
## APPENDIX 1

### Record-keeping templates summary:

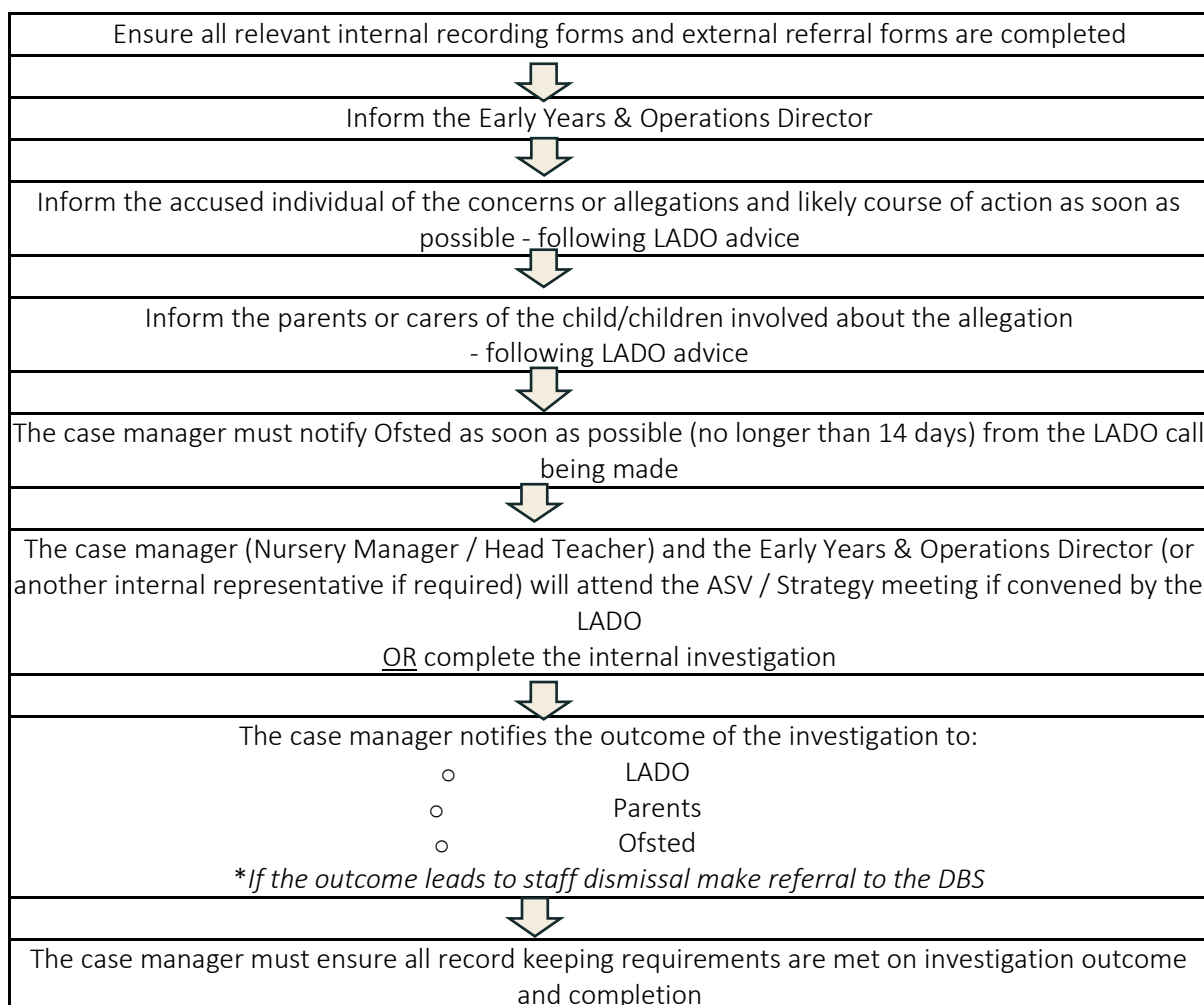
1. Information Front Sheet Template - to be completed and placed at the front of the child's Child Protection File when file is first created and then stored in a confidential area.
2. Logging a Concern Form - to be completed by ALL staff, volunteers and students, when logging concerns of Early Help / Family Help process / welfare / disclosure. Staff, volunteers and students must always use this reporting form when passing information onto a member of the DSL team.
3. DSL Response to Logging a Concern Form to be used by the DSL who receives and responds to the Logging a Concern form. This is filed in the Safeguarding and Child Protection File.
4. Record of Concerns Information Shared by Others External to the Setting to be completed by the DSL to refer to an external agency OR the child's Key Person who is supported by the DSL to engage with an external agency. Record on the form the details of the information sharing and the DSL to place the form in the child's Child Protection file.
5. Chronology Form - Complete for all incidents of concern including where a 'Logging a Concern' form has not been completed. If one has been completed, then add a note to this Chronology Form to cross reference (significant information may also be added).
6. Body Map - to record all physical injuries.

## APPENDIX 2

### Flowchart of managing an allegation against a member of staff



# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



## APPENDIX 3

### Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

Longwood School & Nursery are dedicated to the support, development and promotion of high-quality care and education for the benefit of our children, families, and community. We are committed to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

#### Definition of significant harm

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as 'the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children'. It gives LAs a duty to make enquires to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Whilst there are no absolute criteria to rely on when judging what constitutes significant harm, consideration should be given to:

- The severity of the ill-treatment, including the degree of harm
- The extent and frequency of abuse and/or neglect
- The impact this is likely to have, or is having, on the child involved.

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



This may be a single traumatic event, such as a violent assault, suffocation, or poisoning, or it can be a combination of events (both acute and long-standing) that impairs the physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development of the child.

## Definitions of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, a stranger.

Perpetrators of abuse can be an adult, or adults, another child or children.

([What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#): Advice for practitioners, 2015 and [Working together to safeguard children](#))

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused but can help to indicate that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree.

## Indicators of child abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

**Emotional states:** Fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem.

**Behaviour:** Aggressive, habitual body rocking.

## Interpersonal behaviours:

- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness to strangers including healthcare professionals
- Excessive clinginess, persistently resorting to gaining attention
- Demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent parent disapproval
- Failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed
- Coercive controlling behaviour towards parents
- Lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions
- Very young children showing excessive comforting behaviours when witnessing parental or carer distress.

The following definitions outline key types of abuse as recognised by child protection legislation and guidance.

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

## Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves the deliberate infliction of harm on a child. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, poisoning, drowning, or any other action that causes physical harm. In an early years setting, signs of physical abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruises, burns, fractures, or marks
- Fearfulness or flinching when approached
- Inconsistent explanations from parents or carers about injuries

## Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when a child's emotional development and well-being are repeatedly undermined. This can include verbal abuse, rejection, isolation, or exposure to inappropriate interactions. Indicators in early years settings may include:

- Developmental delays, particularly in communication or social skills
- Low self-esteem or extreme withdrawal
- Fearful or anxious behaviour, especially around certain individuals
- Lack of attachment to a parent or caregiver

## Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can include physical contact as well as non-contact abuse such as exposure to inappropriate materials. Signs may include:

- Inappropriate sexualized behaviour or language beyond their developmental stage
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Fear of being alone with certain individuals
- Regression in behaviour, such as bedwetting or sudden mood changes

## Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, including food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and emotional support. This can severely impact a child's physical and emotional development.

Possible indicators include:

- Poor hygiene, persistent hunger, or inadequate clothing
- Frequent illness or untreated medical conditions
- Being left alone or unsupervised for long periods
- Delayed development or frequent absences from the setting

## APPENDIX 4:

Additional Safeguarding Concerns

### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Although more commonly identified in older children, early signs of child sexual exploitation may still be present in young children. CSE occurs when a child is manipulated or coerced into sexual activities in exchange for gifts, affection, or status. Indicators may include:

- Sudden possession of unexplained gifts or toys
- Changes in behaviour, including fearfulness or withdrawal
- Relationships with older individuals that seem inappropriate

### Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), County Lines, and Cuckooing

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Child criminal exploitation involves coercing or manipulating children into engaging in criminal activities, often through deception or intimidation. This includes county lines, where children are used to transport drugs across regions, and cuckooing, where criminals take over a vulnerable person's home. Indicators may include:

- Sudden aggressive or secretive behaviour
- Talking about new friends who encourage risky behaviours
- Fearfulness or reluctance to discuss certain topics
- Unexplained absences or possession of multiple mobile phones

## Contextual safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding recognises that as young people grow and develop, they are influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their family and that children may encounter risk in any of these environments. Sometimes the different contexts are inter-related and can mean that children and young people may encounter multiple risks. Contextual safeguarding looks at how these risks can be understood to keep children safe. It's an approach that's often been used to apply to adolescents, though the lessons can equally be applied to younger children.

## Domestic Abuse and the Impact on Children

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can also happen between adults who are related to one another and can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse. Children who witness domestic abuse are also considered victims of abuse. Exposure to domestic abuse can have a severe impact on a child's emotional well-being and development. Signs in early years settings may include:

- Increased anxiety or fearfulness
- Aggressive or withdrawn behaviour
- Regressive behaviours such as thumb-sucking or bedwetting

## Honour-Based Abuse and Forced Marriage

Honour-based abuse (HBA) refers to crimes committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community. Forced marriage involves pressuring someone into a marriage against their will. Indicators may include:

- Sudden withdrawal or anxiety about travel abroad
- Expressions of fear related to family expectations
- Increased restrictions on personal freedom

## Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to female genital organs for non-medical reasons. While it is usually performed on older children, early years staff should be aware of indicators such as:

- Talk of a 'special ceremony' or holiday abroad
- Increased anxiety or distress
- Difficulty sitting or walking

For further information please refer to the recently published Home Office statutory guidance '[Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation](#)' and note 'Annex A - FGM mandatory reporting process map'.

Note the flow chart published by DH / NHSE '[FGM Mandatory reporting duty](#)'.

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

## **Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)**

FII involves a caregiver exaggerating or inducing illness in a child, often to gain attention or medical intervention. Signs may include:

- Frequent medical visits with inconsistent symptoms
- Unexplained medical issues or failure to respond to treatment
- Symptoms that only appear in the presence of the caregiver

## **Child Trafficking and Modern Slavery**

Child trafficking involves the movement of children for exploitation, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, or domestic servitude. Signs may include:

- Lack of personal documents or knowledge of their surroundings
- Signs of malnourishment, exhaustion, or fear
- Limited access to education or social interaction

## **Child-on-Child Abuse**

Children can also be perpetrators of abuse. Child-on-child abuse includes bullying, physical violence, sexual harassment, and coercion. Indicators include:

- Aggressive or dominating behaviour towards other children
- Sexualised behaviour that is inappropriate for their age
- Reluctance to be around specific peers

## **Online Safety and Abuse**

The digital world presents increasing risks for young children, including exposure to inappropriate content, grooming, cyberbullying, and exploitation. Early years settings should be alert to:

- Children discussing online interactions that seem inappropriate
- Increased secrecy around device usage
- Sudden changes in behaviour after using digital devices

## **Radicalisation and Extremism**

Radicalisation involves grooming a child into extremist ideologies. Although rare in early years settings, signs to be aware of include:

- Repeated use of extremist language or narratives beyond their understanding
- Strong, irrational views on certain topics
- Isolation from peers or sudden behaviour changes

All staff in our school/nursery must remain vigilant and report any concerns about a child's welfare immediately, following the safeguarding procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

Understanding these definitions of abuse is crucial to ensuring that early intervention can take place, ultimately keeping children safe from harm.