# Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

The health, development, welfare, wellbeing, protection and safety of the children at Town Street Playgroup are of paramount importance to its staff.

As a care provider for your child, we are required to follow the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures. As a carer for your child, we have a duty to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that comes to our attention. We will always try to share with you any concerns we might have about your child. However, there may be times when we must talk to Social Care before we talk to you.

On registering their child, all parents will be made aware of our policy of reporting any concerns regarding safeguarding to the statutory agencies.

The designated person with responsibility for Safeguarding will have regard to the government's statutory guidance, be familiar with the legislation governing safeguarding, and the guidance in:

* + - “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2018)
    - *“*[What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners “(2015)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2)
    - “Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings” Ofsted Updated 2022
    - “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Statutory guidance for schools and colleges”
    - “[Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice)”  (2015)
    - “Doing the Simple Things Better” (2012)
    - the “Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015”.Updated 2021
    - The role of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership, and how to deal with suspected child abuse or neglect.

The designated persons will receive safeguarding training every two years and refresher training at least annually. A designated person for Safeguarding will be available in the setting whenever it is open.

All other staff will access regular training and updates for Safeguarding Children at least annually and this will be part of the Staff Induction Procedure.

We will work within the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidelines and have a copy of them available to staff and parents.

Staff will be familiar with the children in their care and be aware of any changes in their behaviour, marks, bruises, disclosures giving cause for concern, as well as having more general concerns built up over time. Staff know that they have a responsibility to voice any concerns to the designated person for Safeguarding.

Where there are safeguarding concerns about a child or in any cases of suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect or a child making a disclosure to them, staff will discuss their concerns with the designated person with responsibility for Safeguarding. Careful and full notes will be made. These concerns will be raised with parent (where appropriate). Staff will not do anything to jeopardise an investigation such as asking the child leading questions or attempting to investigate themselves.

If they consider there is still cause for concern, the designated person will seek advice and make a referral to:

Duty and Advice at the Front Door Tel: 0113 3760336;

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team: 0113 5350600

Police: 999

If the report is made by telephone, a Record of Contact form will be completed and sent by secure email.

Once a referral has been made, a social worker should respond within one working day detailing what further action they have decided to take.

Ofsted will also be notified if a referral is made:

by telephone 0300 123 1231

and followed up in writing (marked Private and Confidential) to:

Ofsted

The National Business Unit,

Piccadilly Gate,

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Any signs of injury to a child visible on arrival at Playgroup will be noted and signed by the parent; this is to protect staff from any false allegations. These will be recorded in the Accidents at Home book.

The Incident Log will be used to record any concerns a member of staff might have, discussions with parents and will be kept in a child’s records.

Staff Recruitment and Vetting Procedures

All staff appointments will be made subject to an Enhanced DBS check, references, identity and health checks. Students on work experience or volunteer parent helpers will not be left alone with children and will be supervised by staff at all times.

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

This is covered by the Mobile Phone and Camera Policy.

Allegations made Against Staff

Staff must take care not to put themselves in situations that might lead to allegations of abuse being made against them. Following the Staff Code of Conduct, staff training in Health and Safety issues and the correct use of the Accident Book will protect the children in the setting and the staff working with them.

Staff are aware of their responsibility to be vigilant of, and to respond appropriately to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff. This could include inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one to one attention, or inappropriate sharing of images.

If such allegations are made, however, it is the duty of the leader to immediately inform:

The Local Authority Designated Officers in Leeds who can be contacted Monday to Friday on:

0113 3789687

LADO@leeds.gcsx.gov.uk  
Between them they operate a duty system for LADO Notifications.

They will also inform OFSTED. The member of staff will be suspended on full pay while a full investigation is carried out. Confidentiality must be maintained throughout and parents will be fully informed.

If an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) is removed from work (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person posed a risk of harm to children, the Safeguarding Lead Person will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Allegations made against Playgroup Leader

Staff are aware of their responsibility to report any allegations of abuse against the Playgroup Leader to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Peer on Peer Abuse

All staff will be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse.

Children with SEN/disabilities

All staff will be aware of the additional barriers that exist when recognising the signs of abuse and neglect of children who have special educational needs or disabilities.

Female Genital Mutilation

All staff will be aware of their mandatory duty to report concerns that a girl may

have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation.

Early Help

Staff are aware of the ‘hidden harm’ agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent’s learning disability.

All staff will be 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)
  + are living in a home with a young carer
  + is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
  + 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 for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
  + is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
  + has returned home to their family from care
  + is a privately fostered child
  + is a refugee
  + is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless

We will actively seek support to provide such children with the necessary support.

Monitoring Attendance

The setting will monitor attendance by requiring parents and carers to inform them of reason for absence. The setting will make reasonable efforts to contact parents of children who go missing from the setting and will refer to relevant agencies if there are concerns that the child might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

E Safety

Children will only access technology on the setting devices (Ipads) when closely supervised by an adult who will ensure that any films or material shown to them are age appropriate.

Use of phones, cameras and other electronic devices is covered in relevant policies.

We will ensure that parents:

* Are given opportunities to develop their knowledge of online safety issues for early years children.
* Are offered support to help them talk about online safety with their children in an age-appropriate way.
* Are signposted to appropriate sources of support regarding online safety at home.
* Are supported by the setting if they experience an online safety concern.

We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our curriculum to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.

We recognise the important role of the parent.

 We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.

 We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Staff are aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour-based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may meet.

Prevent Duty

Town Street Playgroup has a duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to help prevent the radicalisation of children and/or children being exposed to extreme views.

The Prevent Duty guidance defines radicalisation as being the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.

The designated safeguarding named person will undertake Prevent awareness training and provide advice and support to other members of staff.

Staff will be alert to changes in children’s behaviour, including even very young children, which could indicate they may be in need of help or protection and will act on any concerns that a child may be vulnerable to being drawn into and exploited by violent and extreme ideologies. They will follow Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, by discussing with designated person for Safeguarding and, where necessary, with Children’s Social Care.

As part of our Prevent duty, Town Street Playgroup will uphold and promote the fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

These values are already implicitly embedded in the 2023 Early Years Foundation Stage in the Areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World - People and Communities

Democracy: making decisions together

* We encourage children to know their views count, value each other’s views and values and talk about their feelings, for example when they do or do not need help. We demonstrate democracy in action, for example, consulting with children and responding to their views. Staff support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve• turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

Rule of law

* As part of the focus on managing feelings and behaviour, staff can ensure that children understand their own and others’ behaviour and its consequences and learn to distinguish right from wrong. Staff collaborate with children to create the rules and the codes of behaviour, for example, to agree the rules about tidying up and ensure that all children understand rules apply to everyone.

Individual liberty: freedom for all

* Children develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to take risks on an obstacle course, mixing colours, talking about their experiences and learning. Staff encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example in a small group discuss favourite things.

Mutual respect and tolerance

* We create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued, and children are engaged with the wider community. Children acquire a tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences. Staff will encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other’s opinions. Staffs will promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children’s experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

The designated person for Safeguarding Children is Debbie Calvert

September 2023