

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

As a registered Childminder I take seriously my responsibility to ensure the safety and promote the welfare of children in my care in line with the procedures laid out by [Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership - Home Page \(safeguardingchildrensunderland.com\)](http://safeguardingchildrensunderland.com)

I have developed a structured procedure to be followed in the case of suspected abuse, which is regularly reviewed and updated.

As the Designated Safeguarding Lead for my Childminding setting I work with other agencies to ensure I have adequate arrangements in place to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm. I can be contacted on: (insert number) during the following hours: (insert times)

I attended Safeguarding Training on (insert date) and I receive regular updates on safeguarding issues via (insert). I am aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse: physical, emotional and sexual, and those of neglect:

Physical Abuse - can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, punching, kicking, scalding, burning, drowning and suffocating. It can also result when a parent or carer deliberately causes the ill health of a child in order to seek attention through fabricated or induced illness. Female genital mutilation is a form of physical abuse.

Emotional Abuse - is where a child's need for love, security, recognition and praise is not met. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of someone else such as in the case of Domestic Abuse. A parent, carer or authority figure is considered emotionally abusive when they are consistently hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining toward a child or other family member. It can also occur when children are prevented from having social contact with others or if inappropriate expectations are placed upon them. Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse may include:

- Excessively clingy or attention seeking.
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism.
- Withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness.
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please.
- Eating disorders or self-harm.

Sexual abuse and exploitation

Sexual abuse - involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical contact both penetrative and non-penetrative, or viewing pornographic material including through the use of the internet.

Indicators of sexual abuse include: allegations or disclosures, genital /anal soreness, sexually transmitted infections, inappropriate sexualized behaviour including words, play or drawing.

Child Sexual Exploitation - involves children receiving something (e.g. food, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) in exchange for sexual activity. This doesn't always include physical contact and can occur via the use of technology.

Indicators (as well as the above) include: unexplained gifts; substance misuse; regular absence from school.

Neglect - is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which can significantly harm their health and development. Neglect can include inadequate supervision (being left alone for long periods of time), lack of stimulation, social contact or education, lack of appropriate food, shelter, suitable clothing for weather conditions and medical attention and treatment when necessary.

I am aware that these abuse descriptors are not definitive list although children's poor behaviour maybe a sign that they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse, some children may present poor behaviour for reasons other than abuse.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities

All children have the right to be safe, yet research shows that disabled children are three times more likely to be abused. A number of factors have been identified as to reasons why these children are more at risk (see bullet points) and as a childminder I am aware of these and endeavour to protect all children.

- a general reluctance of people to believe that disabled children are abused
- limited opportunities to seek help from someone else
- a skills gap between disability and child protection workers
- inadequate teaching about personal safety skills e.g. NSPCC pants campaign
- issues relating to the child's specific disability or special educational need, e.g. difficulties in communicating or an inability to understand what is happening

How I aim to keep the children in my care safe:

I update my safeguarding training as necessary.

I provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. I support the children's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence. I recognise that it is especially important for children who are unable to communicate e.g. babies and very young children, to have strong attachment to their care givers.

I am alert to circumstances when a child and family may need access to early help

I take responsibility for ensuring the acceptable and safe use and storage of all camera technology, images, mobile devices (i.e. smart watches, tablets etc) and phones.

I provide an environment in which children and young people feel valued and respected and are confident to approach me if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.

A copy of [Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) is kept with this policy and an additional copy is available for parents / carers to read if required. This sets out the guidelines for recording any incidents and disclosures and the procedures I must follow.

[Integrated Contact and Referral Team | Together for Children](#) Information is available for parents / carers

I have regard to the Fundamental British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs, which are embedded in the 2017 Early Years Foundation Stage. This is alongside my awareness of the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, and adhere to the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales [Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) [Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

If I have reason to believe that any child in my care needs protection in any way I will:

- Refer a child, if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the Together for Children Integrated Contact and Referral Team (ICRT). Enquiries will either be made by a telephone call or in writing. Telephone enquiries will be followed by written enquiry within one working day of the call. Under these circumstances I will share information relating to your child with ICRT and the Police if requested. If the concern relates to me or another adult in my setting, I will follow my 'Allegations of Abuse' procedure.
- Keep written records of concerns about a child, even if there is no need to make an immediate enquiry. I will ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely, separate from a child's records. Child protection records will be kept until the child reaches the age of 21 years.
- Liaise with other agencies and professionals.
- Attend case conferences, or other multi-agency planning meetings, as necessary.
- Ensure that any child currently with a child protection plan who is absent without explanation is referred to their Social Worker / Social Care Team.
- I will notify my local child protection agency (ICRT and LADO) and Ofsted of any serious accident, illness or injury to or death of, any child whilst in my care. Ofsted must be informed within 14 days.

If a child confides in me I will:

- Show that I have understood what they are saying and that I take their allegations seriously.

- Encourage the child to talk, without asking leading questions or interrupting when a child is recalling a significant event.
- Record the concern and the child's comments in writing, in their own words as far as possible. The record will contain:
 - The child's name.
 - The child's date of birth.
 - The date the record is made.
 - A note of the child's non-verbal behaviour.
 - A body map, if appropriate, to record any visible injuries or marks.
 - My name and signature.
- Inform the child that I cannot promise not to share this information but that everything I do will be in the interest of their safety.
- Seek advice from ICRT and, if necessary, make an enquiry.

Confidentiality

- I recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding are confidential. I will disclose any information about a child on a need to know basis only, referring to 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' and 'Information Sharing Advice Guidance' [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/344222/What_to_do_if_youre_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf) and [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/344222/Information_sharing_advice_for_safeguarding_practitioners_-_GOV.UK.pdf)
- I am aware that I have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- I am aware that I cannot promise a child that I will keep secrets which might compromise their safety and wellbeing.
- I will always undertake to share our concerns with parents and guardians and their consent is sought in accordance with Early help and ICRT procedures unless doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child. If in doubt regarding sharing information with parents and guardians, I will consult with the ICRT or the Early Years and Childcare Team

Visitors to my home

- Children are not left unsupervised with visitors and I have a procedure in place for checking the identity of all visitors to my home whilst I have minded children in my care:
 - I record **all** visitors to my home during Childminding hours with the time and nature of visit. The record is signed by the visitor.
 - If the visitor is unknown to me, I ask for proof of identification and, if appropriate, which organisation they work for. e.g. identity badge; driving licence. If I need further verification, I will contact the phone number of their organisation and ask to be put through to the visitor's manager. I record that ID has been checked.
 - If I know the visitor, they must have a valid reason for visiting during Childminding hours.

Allegations of Abuse

I will take precautions to protect myself from allegations of abuse against myself; my household members and staff (if applicable). I will aim to prevent this from happening by:

- Ensuring all household members aged 16 and over have DBS.
- Ensuring all visitors to the house are recorded as above, and do not have unsupervised access to the children under any circumstances.
- Ensuring, where possible, that no workmen/women are in the house during minded hours, unless it is to repair an emergency service or for health and safety reasons.
- Documenting every accident and incident that occurs whilst children are in my care, informing parents of such events and requesting them to sign my records.
- Noting any noticeable marks on the children when they arrive and asking parents to inform me of any accidents that have occurred whilst outside my care.
- Ensuring the children are within sight and/or hearing at all times according to the child's age & ability.
- Ensuring that any occasion where physical intervention is used to manage a child's behaviour is recorded as an incident and parents are informed about it on the same day.
- Checking the behaviour of adults - for example inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; inappropriate sharing of images. Keeping Children Safe in Education [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) provides advice on this:

However, if an allegation is made, I will then follow the procedure detailed below in order to gain support and professional advice:

Inform:

- The Designated Officer (DO, previously LADO) immediately to discuss the nature of the allegation and the appropriate action to be taken: 0191 561 3901
- Ofsted as soon as possible but within 14 days to advise them of the allegation: 0300 123 1231.

Contact:

- My Insurance Company.
- Relevant Legal Advice Line or Family Solicitor.

I will write a detailed record of all related incidents, including what was said and by whom, with times and dates.

After seeking advice/approval from the LADO I will ask witnesses (if there were any) to also write a statement detailing the incident they witnessed and giving their contact details in case it needs to be followed up by the authorities.

Use of Mobile Devices, Phones and Cameras

I understand that if I am processing personal information electronically for the provision of childcare – including taking photos of children in my care using a digital device I must register with Information Commissioners Office (ICO) [Home | ICO](http://www.ico.org.uk) for General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Mobile devices, phones and cameras

As a registered Childminder I recognise that it is important for me to be able to communicate with parents instantly. I understand that mobile phones are an everyday part of life for parents and childminders. Mobile phone technology has developed significantly to include internet access and wireless connections as well as camera, video and sound recording and sending and receiving messages. They are now an extremely effective method of communication, which can be an advantage regarding Safeguarding children. However, I understand that there is a need to balance the advantages with the potential for misuse, and intend to protect the children in my care with the following procedures:

- I will ensure my mobile phone or other mobile devices are with me at all times in case of emergencies
- I will seek your permission to take photographs on my mobile devices for the purpose of recording your child's progress and sharing activities with you.
- All photographs taken will be deleted after either emailing to you or uploaded for use in your child's learning journey/The photographs will be uploaded to the online system, used for daily diaries and observations, the photographs will then be removed from the devices.
- I will not publish any photographs of your child on any social networking sites or share with any other person without your permission
- If your child has an electrical device that they wish to bring into the setting please let me know, so that we can work together to ensure the safety of all children in my care
- Visitors to my setting are not permitted to use their electronic devices whilst on my premises, except in exceptional circumstances, when the devices must be used away from the children
- I have registered with the Information Commissioners Office as a data controller in line with the GDPR

Or

Mobile devices, phones and cameras

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I use my landline phone when I am at home and my personal mobile phone / a mobile phone designated for my business only if I am out.

- Ensuring that ALL visitors to my home during Childminding hours are asked to leave their mobile phone in a safe storage area / switch off their mobile phone.
- Ensuring that any Assistant working with me will leave their personal phone in a safe storage area.
- Ensuring my phone is kept out of the reach of children.
- Permitting children from the age of XXXX years (agreed with parents) to have their phone about their person. However, it must not be used to take photos or access the internet.

If you have any concerns regarding this policy, I will be happy to meet and discuss them with you.

Childminder's signature: _____ Date: _____

Review date: _____

Phone Numbers

In case of an immediate referral contact Integrated Contact Referral team (ICRT)

Children's Safeguarding on 0191 5617007

(8.30am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 4.45pm Friday)

The Out of Hours Team are contactable on 0191 520 5552

(available Monday-Thursday 5.15-8.30am and from Friday 4.45pm - until Monday 8.30am)

In the case of an Allegation:

Designated Officer (Local Authority Designated Officer) 0191 561 3901

For Advice & Guidance:

ICRT: 0191 561 7007

Early Help Advice and Allocations Team 0191 561 4084

Early Years and Childcare (School Improvement Team)

Nicola Wardropper (Childcare Team Leader) 07435753524

Kay Welsh (Childcare Development Officer) 07867160236

There is no mandatory requirement to change your safeguarding policy due to COVID-19 and you should continue to follow your normal Safeguarding policy. However with on-going restrictions you might want consider adding a COVID -19 annexe to your current safeguarding policy, below is a draft for you adapt to meet your needs.

Safeguarding Policy COVID-19 annex (DRAFT)

(insert name) Safeguarding policy remain in place and should be followed as usual. This annexe has been added to the Safeguarding Policy as an interim measure to cover any changes or additional requirements to the existing *(insert name)* safeguarding policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. *(Childminder's name)* Safeguarding policy is available publicly.

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children attendance is expected, where it is appropriate for them *(insert name)* will support with other partners the relevant families and children to return.

I will continue to follow up with any parent or carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't. For those children with a social worker I will continue to notify the social worker where the child does not attend, or if the child is required to self-isolate for 14 days or needs to stay for 10days due to COVID symptoms.

Childminder and assistants training

(insert name) will have had safeguarding training it will be my responsibility to ensure that assistants are kept up to date with any changes during the COVID -19 period and if necessary support assistants to do e-learning or virtual training during this time.

For the period COVID measures are in place, I will make every effort to refresh my training via on-line training, however if I miss the refresher training will continue to be classed as a trained and will complete the refresher as soon as possible.

New Staff assistants will be provided with a safeguarding induction and an up to date safeguarding policy.

Visitors and Peripatetic Staff

Please consider if you will allow visitors or peripatetic staff- if so, who e.g. nursery plus, speech and language etc)

Visitors or Peripatetic staff will comply with *(insert provider childminder name)* arrangements for managing and minimising risk, including taking care to maintain distance from other adults and children. I expect peripatetic staff/visitors to consider how to minimise the number of visits where possible between different early years providers.

Safer Recruitment

(insert childminder name) will continue to follow all the normal safer recruitment policies and procedures, should I need to employ an assistant.

Online Safety

Where I continue to interact with children that are self-isolating on or not attending online, I will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any concerns will be dealt with as per the safeguarding policy. [Coronavirus briefing: safeguarding guidance for early years professionals \(nspcc.org.uk\)](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/keeping-children-safe-articles/coronavirus-briefing-safeguarding-guidance-for-early-years-professionals/)