



16. Safeguarding Children

Applies to: *All Staff, volunteers, committee members*

The protection of the children in our care is our first priority. Consequently, if any member of staff suspects that a child is suffering from one or more of the forms of abuse from our safeguarding policy, whatever the possible source of that abuse, then they must act quickly and responsibly on that suspicion. In particular they must report their suspicions to the pre-school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or in that person's absence the Deputy DSL. To avoid unnecessary distress to the child or their Carers the staff member should not discuss their concerns with anybody else, including other pre-school staff.

If there is a concern about a child, whether it is an incident or an emerging pattern of concerns we have a duty to contact **Children's advice and duty service (ChAD)**. Staff must be prepared to have that professional discussion when calling children's advice and duty service where all required information will be recorded by the person taking the call. All information must be recorded for our own records.

Disclosure by a child

Procedure

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully to what is said
- The child will be comforted and reassured that the person they are telling believes them.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace
- Ask open questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible - note date, time, place, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given witnesses to the conversation and any questions asked will be noted together with the responses given by the child. Ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- The DSL will be informed immediately. It is then their responsibility to pass on the information shared to ChAD

Remember

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T – tell me • E – explain • D – describe | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive information 2. Respond to the child 3. Report to DSL 4. Refer to CHAD 5. Record accurately (same day) |
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All written referrals must include:

- full details of the child and all other family members
- provide information about the family's circumstances, composition and history
- indicate which other agencies are involved with the family
- state whether, if known, there have been previous referrals to Social Services
- explain the reason for the child being referred, the exact nature of the concerns, why and how they have arisen

- discuss what assessment, support or services are considered to be needed
- clarify whether the Carers have been made aware of the concerns and whether they have given their consent for the referral.
- communicate any risk of violence or aggression towards the Social Services staff who will respond to the referral

To establish the basis and nature of any concern the DSL will conduct an investigation. The purpose of this investigation is not to determine whether abuse has occurred, but merely whether there is sufficiently strong evidence of concern that it might have to warrant a referral to Social Services. The investigation will normally involve discussing the concerns with the child's Key Person, and the staff member who raised the concern and, provided it would not cause undue distress to the child, any physical signs. If the DSO believes that there are legitimate grounds for suspicion, she will normally seek a meeting with the child's Carers as well as seeking advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If she is concerned that informing the child's Carers of the suspicion may place the child at greater risk or compromise Police evidence, advice will instead be sought from the **Children's advice and duty service** or the Police. If the meeting with the child's Carers fails to dispel the suspicion of abuse then, in accordance with Dorset Council's referral policy, permission will normally be sought to make a referral to Dorset ChAD. If the DSL decides not to make a referral, she must inform the staff member or members who have expressed concerns and explain her reasons for deciding not to proceed. These staff members have the right to make referrals directly to ChAD if they disagree with the outcome of the DSL's deliberations, though they are advised to seek guidance from LADO before doing so.

Confidentiality

St John's Pre-School promotes an environment of respect with reference to confidential information (see our Confidentiality Policy).

Children must be dropped off and collected from Pre-School by an adult listed on their collection form that is over the age of 18 years old.

Procedure for non-mobile children

All non-mobile children (children that are not yet crawling or pulling to stand) with a bruise or burn must be referred to ChAD and a paediatrician. All non-mobile children with bleeding to the nose, mouth, swelling of the head, reduced movement in a limb must be referred to ChAD and a paediatrician.

Procedure

1. The observed instances will be recorded.
2. The matter will be referred to Children's Advice and duty service who will notify the police if there is any concern that the child is in danger of significant harm, and discuss the case with a paediatrician.

All Pre-school staff must be aware of the procedures to follow if they suspect or have confirmation of wider forms of abuse:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting harmful consequences. Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. We have a duty to report to the police if we discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Pre-school staff must take appropriate safeguarding action in relation to any identified or suspected case of FGM, in line with the procedures of their Local Safeguarding Children Board (LCSB).

In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCB procedures on responding to radicalisation. The designated person completes online Prevent training to ensure they are familiar with the local protocol and procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation.

All pre-school Staff must co-operate fully with any subsequent investigation, whilst also recognising the sensitivity of the issue and the importance of avoiding further distress to the child and his family by maintaining strict confidentiality.

An allegation of child abuse or neglect could lead to a criminal investigation so staff will not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, for example, ask a child leading questions or attempt to investigate the allegations of abuse.

CSC takes the lead role in enquiring about Safeguarding Children issues related to the child whilst the Pre-School retains the responsibility for disciplinary actions related to their staff member, volunteer or parent/Carer.

Allegations against members of staff or volunteers

If an accusation of abuse is made against a member of staff, the same procedure will be followed, but in addition, OFSTED will be informed. If the accusation is made against the Head of Pre-School or the DSL, then the chairperson of the Preschool committee and St John's Safeguarding Lead must be informed, and the chairperson will execute this procedure in place of the DSL.

Procedure

- All members of staff regardless of their position within the Pre-School will be treated fairly and equally.
- Any allegation will be taken seriously.
- The DSL will inform the ChAD team of the allegation, they will also inform the Chairperson of the committee. Their advice will be followed.
- This could, if deemed necessary, result in immediately removing the member of staff from the Pre-School whilst the allegation is investigated.
- The Pre-School Chairperson will confirm in writing to the member of staff concerned the details of the accusation and the action the Pre-School is taking.
- If the allegation is made against a volunteer or student, their college, school or agency will be informed immediately.
- The matter will be reported to Ofsted within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by anyone connected to the setting.
- The matter will also be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Whistleblowing

All staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues and recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

Procedure

- Any such concerns should be raised with the DSL.
- The concern will be recorded by the person who raised the concern and DSL, or by the person who raised the concern if it involves the DSL.
- The matter will be referred to the ChAD and their advice will be followed. .
- If the concern is about the DSL, the person raising the concern is responsible to report it to the Pre School Committee Chairperson who will refer it to the ChAD or they should go directly and report it to the ChAD, or in an emergency the police.
- If the concern is about a member of the Pre-School Committee, the person raising the concern is responsible to report it to the churches Safeguarding Officers, Andrew Morris or Pat Loveless who will refer it to the ChAD or they should go directly and report it to the ChAD
- If no action is taken by the DSL and an individual member of staff is still concerned, it is

their responsibility to contact the ChAD directly, or in an emergency the police.

- The matter will be reported to the Pre-School Manager, Ofsted (within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by anyone connected to the setting), the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and St. John's Church Safeguarding Lead.

Electronic devices (including laptops, mobile phones, smart watches)

(Please refer to procedure 27. E-Safety for more details)

- Personal mobile phones must not be used in the setting and are to be stored in the clear telephone box on the administration trolley.
- No photos are to be taken on mobile phones and under no circumstances may any phone be taken into the toilet area.
- Staff are permitted to wear smart watches on the basis that they do not have a built-in camera, they must be disconnected from staff phones using flight mode and not used for phone notifications.
- Permission must be sought by parents to take photographs of children (registration pack) photos will only be taken for educational purposes to show development or for children name tags. (These will be removed and stored in the locked pre-school cupboard when closed).
- Photographs of children will only be taken on Pre-School tablets, these will be stored for 6 weeks giving time for staff to upload them onto Evidence for learning which is the Pre-school online learning journey system (procedure 33) and then deleted. Only staff and parents with permission have access to this. Tablets will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and in the pre-school cupboard when closed.
- Group photographs or photos taken during special events will be stored in a file on the Pre-School laptop for the end of year graduation service. These will then be deleted along with the slide show.
- The pre-school laptop will store name tag photographs and photos saved for the slide show for the academic year, they will then be deleted. This laptop remains in the setting locked in the cupboard when it is closed.
- No photos of children are to appear on the Pre-School closed facebook page, this is only to be used to share information with parents whose children currently attend Pre-School. Members will be deleted when children leave.

Working with Parents and Carers

Parents/Carers will be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Children Policy at the point of registration before their child starts Pre-School. Parents/Carers will be reassured that allegations against staff, students or volunteers, of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported to the CSC to investigate. The concern should be made to the DSL or if this person is the subject of the allegation, directly to the MASH (Multi agency safeguarding hub).

At all times the child's well-being comes first. St John's Pre School has the right to seek advice, regarding a concern they may have about a child, before discussing this with the child's parent/carer. If the child is thought to be at risk of significant harm, or the concern is regarding physical or sexual abuse a referral may be made to ChAD (Children's Advice and Duty Service) without having first discussed it with the parent/carer.

The Legal Framework

St John's Pre-School Safeguarding Children policy complies with its statutory duties under the following legislation:

