Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection
Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

Little Acorns Pre-school
Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Policy statement

Little Acorns Pre-school wants to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children young people and vulnerable adults and to give them the very best start in life. We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Our aims are to:

- Create an environment in our pre-school which encourages children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
- Help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults;
- Encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- Enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches; and
- Work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.

Key commitment 1

We are committed to building a ‘culture of safety’ in which children young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

- Our Staff designated officer (a member of the management team) who oversees this work is: Anna Woodcock and our Committee designated safeguarding officer is the chairperson Joanne Wilson.
- In the event of the Designated Officer Anna Woodcock being away from the setting, the responsibility will then fall to the Deputy Karen Setchfield, who be become the designated person, in her absence.
- The designated person and officer ensure they have links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding concerns are reported to the local authority children’s social work team or the NSPCC.

All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.

Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.

Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.

Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.

Volunteers do not work unsupervised

Visitors and Volunteers are also not allowed unsupervised in the toilet area, unless they have been DBS checked by the setting.

Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
- the criminal records disclosure reference number;
- the update service number
- the date the disclosure was obtained;
- the date these DBS’s are checked on a yearly basis.

All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).

All staff and volunteers are required to notify us if anyone in their household (including family members, lodgers, partners etc.) has any relevant convictions, court orders, reprimands and warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision (see above questions), or have had orders made in relation to care of their children.

We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.

Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.

Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO.

The designated person in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate e-safety policy in place.

We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.

We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.

The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.

The designated person will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to the children’s social worker services, the LADO, Ofsted or Riddor.

We make reasonable checks to monitor the suitability of visitors to the Pre-school. For example obtaining copies of their own up-to-date DBS certificates.

We have procedures to ensure the use of mobile phones is not abused. Little Acorns Pre-school has a landline telephone (01702 470310), and the pre-school has a mobile phone 07587 157595. Staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile phones during session time (see employee handbook). Any visitors, including parents/carers are not permitted to use mobile phones or cameras either in the hall or the garden. If visitors need to make or receive a call on their personal phones, they should go outside the front of the building to do so.

The Prevent Duty & Promoting British Values

From 1st July 2015 all schools, registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. At Little Acorns Pre-school we take Safeguarding very seriously, therefore to ensure that we adhere to and achieve the Prevent duty we;

- Provide appropriate training for staff. Part of this training enables staff to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation
- Build children’s resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views (for early years providers the statutory framework for the EYFS sets standards for learning, development and care for children from 0-5, thereby assisting their personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world)
- Ensure that our staff understand the risks so that they can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way
- Are aware of the online risk of radicalisation through the use of social media and the internet
- Make sure as with managing other safeguarding risks, our staff are alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection (children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views). The Key Person approach means we already know our key children well and so we will notice any changes in behaviour, demeanour or personality quickly
Do not carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but we will take action when we observe behaviour of concern. The key person approach means that we already have a rapport with our families so we will notice any changes in behaviour, demeanour or personality quickly.

Work in partnership with our LSCB for guidance and support.

Build up an effective engagement with parents/carers and families. (This is important as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation).

Will assist and advise families who raise concerns with us. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms.

Make sure our Designated Safeguarding Officer has undertaken Prevent awareness training so that she can offer advice and support to other members of staff.

Ensure that any resources used in the Pre-school are age appropriate for the children in our care and that our staff have the knowledge and confidence to use the resources effectively.

Our Channel Prevent Children’s Lead Locally is: Laurence Doe (Tel: 01702 534610)

Our Channel Prevent Adult's Lead Locally is: Sarah Payne (Tel: 01702 534539)

**Key commitment 2**

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ (HMG 2015) and ‘No Secrets’ (DoH 2015).

A copy of the ‘What to do if you think a child is being abused’ flow chart can be found on our inside and outside notice board.

**Responding to suspicions of abuse**

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
  - significant changes in their behaviour;
  - deterioration in their general well-being;
  - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
  - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
  - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
  - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We consider factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, parent’s drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent’s learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children’s vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision, such as, abuse of disabled children; fabricated or induced
illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; and Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation or extremism.

- We also make ourselves 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 come into contact with.

- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and follow the LSCB procedures.

- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.

- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.

- We refer concerns to the local authority children’s social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

- Whistle blowing procedures are also set out in the staff handbook. All staff receive a copy and these procedures state:

  Whistle Blowing

  It is important to Little Acorns that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or people engaged in the organisation’s business, is reported and properly dealt with. Little Acorns therefore encourages all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the early years setting or the way in which the early years setting is run.

  The pre-school recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with and the organisation’s success ensured.

  Whistle blowing relates to all those who work with or within the early years setting who may from time to time think that they need to raise with someone in confidence certain issues relating to the organisation.
Whistle blowing is separate from the grievance procedure. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances you should use the normal grievance procedure. If you have a concern about malpractice within the organisation then you should use the procedure outlined below.

- Report any concerns to the Supervisor. If this is not possible (because the supervisor is under suspicion), then report your concerns to the chairman of the committee. All employees and those involved with the early years setting should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing within the organisation. You should be watchful for illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that you become aware of.
- Any matter you raise under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to you.
- You will not be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that your continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because you have raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the little Acorns pre-school disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- If you make a maliciously, vexatious or a false allegation then this will be considered to be a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken against you.

An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If you are told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. In this event you should report the matter to the committee.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
  - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
  - does not question the child;
  - Staff make a record of:
    - The child’s name;
    - The child’s address;
    - The age of the child;
    - The date and time of the observation or disclosure;
    - An objective record of the observation or disclosure;
    - The exact words spoken by the child;
    - The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and
    - The names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.
The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity, and action is taken within 1 working day.

Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication Safeguarding Children contains procedures for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral.

Local Safeguarding Children Board
P.O. Box 6
Civic Centre
Southend on Sea
Essex
SS2 6ER
www.southend.gov.uk/lscb

First Contact Team – 01702 215007 Option 1
Or send an Early Help Support Assessment (EHFSA) to
fct@southend.gov.uk or fcr@southend.gcsx.gov.uk
Emergency duty team/out of hours – 08456 061212

To speak to the Practice Manager for advice – 01702 212442

Essex safeguarding information

Family Operations Hub – 0345 -603-7627
FOH@essex.gcsx.gov.uk
Essex social care (Out of hours) -0845 -606-1212

We keep a copy of this document alongside the procedures for recording and reporting set down by our Local Safeguarding Children Board, which we follow where local procedures differ from those of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The Early Health Assessment (EHA) should be used to support a child protection referral.

Escalation process

If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCB escalation process.

We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child in greater danger.

Parents are informed when we make a record of concerns in their child’s file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.

This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser.

If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk the designated person should seek advice from children’s social work services, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

**Liaison with other agencies**

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- The current version of 'What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and children's social care to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, and any specific procedures such as responding to concerns about radicalisation or extremism (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 7 days of the allegations being made.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

The local NSPCC telephone number is 0808 800 5000

**Allegations against staff**

- Where the management team and children’s social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate:

  **The Southend LADO is Alison Francis and she can be contacted on 01702 534539.**

  **Essex LADOs are:**
  - Carole Fuller (Mid)
  - Jacque Wilkes (North)
  - Mechelle De Kock (South)
  - Rebecca Scott (West)

  03330 139 797
  Childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk

- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.

Their address is:
We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.

We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person living or working on the premises, which includes:

- inappropriate sexual comments;
- excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.

We ensure that all staff or volunteer know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.

If a member of staff suspects that another member of staff or volunteer has abused a child they should report to the supervisor or deputy supervisor. If a member of staff suspects that the supervisor has abused a child they should report to the chairman of the committee and the SET procedures should be followed.

We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children’s social care in conjunction with the police. Our Local Police Station can be contacted by phoning 101.

**Disciplinary action**

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

**Support to staff**

Responding to instances of child abuse can be a stressful and upsetting time for all concerned. The safeguarding officer provides support for all staff involved in disclosures. The Development Officers (01702 534255) at Southend Children & Learning are there to provide support for the Safeguarding officer and the whole team.
**Key commitment 3**
We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

**Training**
- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

**Social Media**
- Staff, leaders and managers oversee the safe use of electronic and social media by staff and learners and take action immediately if they are concerned about bullying or risky behaviours.

**Planning**
- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision.

**Curriculum**
- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme 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 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.

**Confidentiality**
- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

**Support to families**
- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Legal framework

Primary legislation
- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004 s11)
- Childcare Act 2006

Secondary legislation
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015

Further guidance
- No Secrets (DoH 2015)
- What to do if you’re Worried a Child is Being Abused (DfE 2015))
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2015)
Disclosure and Barring Service: [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)

We follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014) safeguarding and welfare requirements when safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare.

Prevent Duty (2015)


*A ‘young person’ is defined as 16 to 19 years old – in our setting they may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent. A ‘vulnerable adult’ is defined as a person ‘who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation’ (No Secrets DoH 2015).

**In addition the following policies and documentation in relation to safeguarding children are in place:**

- Little Acorns Staff Handbook
- Disqualification Disclaimer
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Voice of the child Policy
- Non collection of children policy
- Health & Safety policy
- Risk assessment
- Record of visitors
- Fire safety procedures
- Intruder policy
- Looked after children policy
- Code of conduct
- E-safety policy
- Staffing and Safer Recruitment Policy

This policy was reviewed and updated by Anna Woodcock on 20th January 2017 and adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns Pre-School.

Signed on behalf of the pre-school

Chairperson……………………………………………………………………………………………..

Date…………………………