

Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Policy

At Peapods Nursery, we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. In our setting we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation, and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures (please refer to our inclusion and equality policy for further information). Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the nursery's other policies and procedures. Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. At PEAPODS all staff, students, supply staff and visitors are made aware of and adhere to the policy.

This policy works alongside these other specific policies to cover all aspects of child protection:

- Online safety
- Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery
- Prevent Duty and Radicalisation
- Domestic Abuse, Honour Based Abuse (HBA) and Forced Marriage
- Looked After Children
- Monitoring staff behaviour
- Social networking
- Mobile phone and electronic device use
- Safe recruitment of staff
- Disciplinary
- Grievance
- Promoting positive behaviour

Legal framework and definition of safeguarding

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Data Protection Act 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early years, Education and Skills settings 2019
- Prevent Duty 2015

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 are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2015).

Policy intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- Children are taught about keeping safe, recognise when they are at risk and how to get help
- Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- Support staff to notice the softer signs of abuse and know what action to take
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- Help children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion and role modelling
- Always listen to children
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.

The nursery is aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff may often be the first people to identify that there may be a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care, health professionals or the police. All staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed.

The nursery aims to:

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do
- Ensure staff are trained right from induction to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable or isolated families and children
- Ensure staff understand how to recognise early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child, share information and seek the help that the child may need
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures, including thorough annual safeguarding newsletters and updates
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the Safeguarding Children Partners
- Make any referrals relating to extremism to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know to protect the child and act in their best interest
- Keep the setting safe online using appropriate filters, checks and safeguards, monitoring access always
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff
- Identify changes in staff behaviour and act on these as per the Staff Behaviour Policy
- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children or living or working on the nursery premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities
- Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Safeguarding Children Partners.

We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. We will devise activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group and support them to learn how to keep themselves safe.

Contact telephone numbers

Nursery Designated Safeguarding Lead: Nursery Manager

Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS): 0208 8258000

ECIRS Consultation Line: 0208 8255236

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Emmanuel Adofo 0208 825 8930

Ofsted **0300 123 1231**

Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) 0800731 1696

Non-emergency police **101**

Government helpline for extremism concerns **020 8 825 5000**

Interim Operational Designated Officers: **James Jose and Noah Tucker 0208 8258930**

Types of abuse and procedures followed

Abuse, neglect and exploitation 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.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (advice for practitioners) 2015.

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise 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:

- Low self-esteem
- Wetting and soiling
- Recurrent nightmares
- Aggressive behaviour
- Withdrawing communication
- Habitual body rocking
- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness towards strangers
- Excessive clinginess
- Persistently seeking attention.

Peer on Peer abuse

We are aware that peer on peer abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way as we do for adults abusing children, and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area.

Peapods recognises that it is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way.

The setting recognises that peer on peer abuse can and will occur even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. In which case it is important that staff continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting children/young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.

At Peapods the following strategies are in place to prevent peer on peer abuse.

- We ensure that our setting has an open environment where the children feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting them or worrying them.
- We ensure that the children are adequately supervised (in line with ratio guidance) during snack/lunch, in the outdoor area, moving through the setting and off-site, i.e. local outings, trips, etc.
- Our setting has a strong and positive curriculum that promotes diversity, positive behaviour, feelings.
- Promotes golden rules.
- Positive books and images around the nursery about friendship, kind behaviour, feelings, diversity, positive behaviour, different religion books, multi culture clothes.
- Peapods promotes British Values throughout the curriculum.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the nursery manager or 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
- Any discussion held with the parents

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 can 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.

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the local authority children's social care team and Ofsted, and/or an Early Help Assessment Plan (EHAP) (or form/process specific to Local Authority area) needs to be initiated. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have about a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with the local authority children's social care, police, and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent or member of staff.

Physical abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries. These should also be logged and discussed with the nursery manager or room leader.

Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the nursery manager.

Female Genital Mutilation- FGM

This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups and there is now more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in England including its effect on the child and any other siblings involved. This procedure may be carried out shortly after birth and during childhood as well as adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy and varies widely according to the community. Symptoms may include bleeding, painful areas, acute urinary retention, urinary infection, wound infection, septicaemia, and incontinence, vaginal and pelvic infections with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder as well as physiological concerns. If you have concerns about a child relating to this area, you should contact children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse. There is a mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, we will ensure this is followed in our setting.

Breast Ironing/flattening

Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. Although this is unlikely to happen to children in the nursery due to their age, we will ensure any signs of this in young adults or older children are followed up using the usual safeguarding referral process.

Fabricated illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms,

complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness, e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

Procedure:

- All signs of marks/injuries to a child, when they come into nursery or occur during time at the nursery, will be recorded as soon as noticed by a staff member
- The incident will be discussed with the parent at the earliest opportunity, where felt appropriate
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- If there are queries regarding the injury, the local authority children's social care team will be notified in line with procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP).

Sexual abuse

Action needs be taken if the staff member has witnessed an occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes.

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from an adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed.

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing the procedure below will be followed:

Procedure:

- The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report
- The observed instances will be reported to the nursery manager or DSL
- The matter will be referred to the local authority children's social care team.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (2017 updated version) defines CSE as "...a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may

have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology.”

We will be aware of the possibility of CSE and the signs and symptoms this may manifest as. If we have concerns, we will follow the same procedures as for other concerns and we will record and refer as appropriate.

Emotional abuse

Action should be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive, or clingy to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Procedure:

- The concern should be discussed with the nursery manager registered person
- The concern will be discussed with the parent
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- An Assessment Framework form may need to be completed
- If there are queries regarding the circumstances and/or the concerns relate to the parents the matter will be referred to the local authority children’s social care team.

Neglect

Action should be taken if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold, starvation or failure to seek medical treatment, when required, on behalf of the child), which results in serious impairment of the child’s health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child’s growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child’s needs.

Procedure:

- The concern will be discussed with the parent
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- An assessment form may need to be completed
- If there are queries regarding the circumstances the local authority children’s social care team will be notified.

Domestic Abuse / Honour Based Violence / Forced Marriages

The definition of forced marriage to be used will be in line with the offence under section 121 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

An arranged marriage is very different from a forced marriage. An arranged marriage is entered into freely by both people, although their families take a leading role in the choice of partner.

For Peapods we are seeking to record and report:

- specific forced marriage offences under section 121 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014;
- a breach of a Forced Marriage Protection Order under section 120 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, and
- any criminal offence of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) that has been carried out in the context of a forced marriage either:
 - to coerce a party/parties into marrying without their consent, which would be prosecuted for the specific offence committed, e.g. harassment, kidnap, threats to kill; or
 - After a forced marriage without the consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor, which again would be prosecuted for the specific offence e.g. rape, sexual assault.

If these crimes are committed in forcing or having forced someone to marry, they should be identified as "forced marriage" and will be a offense.

Forced marriage situations could also involve, for example, the specific offences of:

- Harassment;
- Kidnap;
- Blackmail;
- False imprisonment;
- Common assault, actual/grievous bodily harm;
- Threats to kill;
- Child abduction;
- Rape or other sexual offences
- Immigration offences;
- Fraud;
- Marriage offences;
- People trafficking; and
- Controlling, causing or inciting prostitution.

We look at these areas as a child protection concern and will take relevant measures to support the child and keep them safe.

Honour Based Violence:

The **definition** of honour-based violence to be used is the definition adopted by the Forced Marriage Unit at the Home Office:

"So-called honour based violence' is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community"- see the [Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage Legal Guidance](#) for a more detailed definition.

We are seeking to record and report any **criminal offence** of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) **committed as so-called honour crime**.

Additionally, honour-based crimes could include:

- Attempted murder;
- Manslaughter;
- Procuring an abortion;
- Encouraging or assisting suicide;
- Conspiracy to murder;
- Conspiracy to commit a variety of assaults.

Domestic Violence

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 include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

Domestic abuse can include:

- sexual abuse and rape (including within a relationship)
- punching, kicking, cutting, hitting with an object
- withholding money or preventing someone from earning money
- taking control over aspects of someone's everyday life, which can include where they go and what they wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill or harm them, a partner, another family member or pet.

Witnessing domestic abuse

Exposure to domestic abuse or violence in childhood is child abuse.

Children may witness domestic abuse directly, but they can also witness it indirectly by:

- hearing the abuse from another room
- seeing a parent's injuries or distress afterwards
- finding disarray like broken furniture
- being hurt from being nearby or trying to stop the abuse

The approach of the UK Government is to address so-called “honour”-based violence and forced marriage in the context of its domestic violence framework, although it recognises that these kinds of violence raise specific issues. The provisions of the recent Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 take the form of a new part 4A of the Family Law Act, thereby also placing this legislation in the wider context of domestic violence and family proceedings.

County Lines and Child exploitation.

Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism¹² should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing, and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.

Some potential indicators of county lines involvement and exploitation are listed below, with those at the top of particular concern:

- persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;

- unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- excessive receipt of texts / phone calls and/or having multiple handsets
- relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups
- leaving home / care without explanation
- suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries
- parental concerns
- carrying weapons
- significant change in behaviour/ performance
- gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

Reporting Procedures

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
- If there are queries/concerns regarding the injury/information given, then the following procedures will take place.

Monitoring children's attendance

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and are not deliberately missing education.

Parents should please inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be called into the nursery on the day, so the nursery management are able to account for a child's absence.

This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children but enables children's attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe.

Looked after children

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

- 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.

Private Fostering.

Private fostering is an arrangement whereby a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if the child has a disability) (**S.66 Children Act 1989**) is placed for 28 days or more in the care of someone who is not the child's parent(s) or a 'connected person'.

A connected person is defined as a 'relative, friend or other person connected with a child'. The latter is likely to include person(s) who have a pre-existing relationship with the child, for example, a teacher who knows the child in a professional capacity.

Private foster carers can be from the extended family, e.g. a cousin or a great aunt, **but cannot be a relative** as defined under the **Children Act 1989, section 105**:

'A relative under the Children Act 1989 is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent'.

It is imperative that the local authority is notified if a child is living with someone who is not their parent or a 'connected person' for longer than 28 days. The local authority needs to be satisfied that the placement is suitable and the child is safe. To be defined as 'private fostering', the child must be living with that person for longer than 28 days and this should be continuous but can include occasional short breaks.

Notification process

A person who proposes to foster a child must notify the appropriate Local Authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is to begin. The Local Authority must be notified immediately if the arrangement is to begin within six weeks. If the parent or other person with Parental Responsibility is arranging for the child to be privately fostered, or is aware of the situation, they are under an obligation to notify the Local Authority as soon as possible.

If a private carer was not aware of the need to inform the Local Authority, they should do so as soon as they become aware of the situation. In order to understand the child and to care for him or her it is advisable for the foster carer to be given as much information as possible about the child and this information should be passed on to the Local Authority when giving notification. This information should include:

- The child's history which can include the child's name, sex, date and place of birth
- Information regarding the child's health
- Eating preferences

- Education
- Religious, cultural or ethnic background
- Hobbies

The person notifying the Local Authority should give them as much information as possible. This information including what has been outlined above should also include:

- The name and current address of the person giving notice, the parent or anyone else with and that of the proposed or current private carer and his/her addresses within the previous five years
- The date on which the intended private fostering arrangement will start or when it started
- Any conviction, disqualification or prohibition imposed on the private foster carer or any other person living or employed at his/her household
- Any court orders relating to the child.

The private foster must also notify the appropriate Local Authority of any change of their circumstances regarding the above. The Local Authority should also be notified if the child has a new private foster carer.

Staffing and volunteering

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We only allow an adult who is employed by the nursery to care for children and who has an enhanced clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to be left alone with children. We require enhanced criminal records checks (DBS) for all volunteers and do not allow any volunteers to be unsupervised with children.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery. During induction staff will be given contact details for the LADO (local authority designated officer), the local authority children's services team, the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

We have named persons within the nursery who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinate child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding leads, there is always at least one designated person on duty during all opening hours of the setting.

The designated safeguarding leads will receive safeguarding updates every year and will liaise with the early years consultant to ensure the safeguarding policy is updated. All other staff will renew their safeguarding training every two years and every three years to conduct the safeguarding course.

The nursery designated safeguarding lead liaise with the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) and the local authority children's social care team, undertakes specific training, including a child protection training course, and receives regular updates to developments within this field. They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge update of all staff on the team.

Although, under the EYFS, we are only required to have one designated Lead Co-ordinator for safeguarding, for best practice and to ensure cover always, we have two/three designated leads in place. This enables safeguarding to stay high on our priorities always. There will

always be at least one designated Co-ordinator on duty always our provision is open. This will ensure that prompt action can be taken if concerns are raised.

Safeguarding

Following the safeguarding training, leaders/managers will continuously assess staff understanding of the safeguarding policy in staff meetings, through quizzes or one to one/supervision. The Safeguarding training is designed for staff caring for children from 0-5 years old and is appropriate to the age of children being cared for

The training will cover the below areas:

- What is meant by the term safeguarding
- The main categories of abuse, harm and neglect
- The factors, situation and actions that could lead or contribute to abuse, harm or neglect
- How to work in ways that safeguard children from abuse, harm and neglect
- How to identify signs of possible abuse, harm and neglect at the earliest opportunity. These may include:
 - Significant changes in children's behaviour
 - A decline in children's general well-being
 - Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
 - Concerning comments or behaviour from children
 - Inappropriate behaviour from [practitioners/childminders and assistants or household members], or any other person working with the children. This could include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond what is required through their role; or inappropriate sharing of images
 - Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a child may experience emotional abuse or physical abuse because of witnessing domestic abuse or coercive control or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation.
- How to respond, record and effectively refer concerns or allegations related to safeguarding in a timely and appropriate way
- The setting's safeguarding policy and procedures
- Legislation, national policies, codes of conduct and professional practice in relation to safeguarding
- Roles and responsibilities of [practitioners/childminders and assistants] and other relevant professionals involved in safeguarding

Training for the DSL will take account of any advice from the local safeguarding partners or local authority on appropriate training courses. In addition to the above, the training for the DSL must cover the elements listed below:

- How to build a safe organisational culture
- How to ensure safe recruitment
- How to develop and implement safeguarding policies and procedures
- If applicable, how to support and work with [other practitioners/assistants] to safeguard children

- Local child protection procedures and how to liaise with local statutory children's services agencies and with the local safeguarding partners to safeguard children
- How to refer and escalate concerns (including as described at paragraph [3.8/3.9] of the EYFS)
- How to manage and monitor allegations of abuse against other staff
- How to ensure internet safety

The Designated Safeguarding leads at the nursery are: **Nursery Manager. If the Nursery Manager is not reachable, Pouja and Aash Magdani are the next point of contact.**

Safer recruitment

- Applicants for posts within the nursery are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information
- We give staff members, volunteers and students regular opportunities to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life such as whether anyone they live with in a household has committed an offence or been involved in an incident that means they are disqualified from working with children
- This information is also stated within every member of staff's contract
- We request DBS checks on a 6-week basis.
- We abide by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and suitability checks for staff, students and volunteers, to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers working in the setting are suitable to do so
- We ensure we receive at least two written references BEFORE a new member of staff commences employment with us
- All students will have enhanced DBS checks conducted on them before their placement starts
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006 in respect of any person who is disqualified from providing childcare, is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the nursery and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the nursery so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children

Staff behaviour

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all children
- All visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
- As a staff team, we will be fully aware of how to safeguard the whole nursery environment and be aware of potential dangers on the nursery boundaries such as

drones, Pokémon hotspots, strangers lingering. We will ensure the children remain safe always

- The Staff Behaviour Policy sits alongside this policy to enable us to monitor changes in behaviours that may cause concern. All staff sign up to this policy too to ensure any changes are reported to management, so we can support the individual staff member and ensure the safety and care of the children is not compromised
- 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
- All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any needs for further support
- We use peer on peer and manager 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. 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. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the LSCP/ local authority children's social care team/police does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the LSCP.

The Designated Person will disclose personal information about a child or young person to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.

However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

This policy is in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 (Updated August 2018), Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2018,

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.

- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the Local Safeguarding Board or Social Care on this point.

- We will take no names consultations with LSCP team to discuss concerns we may have, but we understand that if they then ask for a name we will disclose those details and it will become a referral.

Data Protection GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) is a regulation of the European Parliament; the Council of the European Union and the European Commission intended to strengthen and unify data protection for all individuals within the European Union (EU) and became law in the UK on 25th May 2018.

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we are required to publish information about what data we collect, why we need to store it, and your rights under the GDPR legislation.

Our Data protection policy elaborates further on how we at Peapods endeavour to the regulations. At Peapods all sensitive information in regards to safeguarding and child protection is stored in a safe place and will be kept for two years.

In these matters we are subject to the rulings of the Information Commissioner' Office (ICO), the UK's independent authority set up to uphold information rights and data privacy for individuals.

Support to families

The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, students, and volunteers within the nursery.

The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child.

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate in line with guidance of the LSCP with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

Employees, students or volunteers of the nursery or any other person living or working on the nursery premises

We have a Staff Behaviour Policy in place that supports us to monitor staff and changes in their character. Staff are aware of the need to disclose changes to circumstance and use the whistle blowing policy where required.

Allegations against adults working or volunteering with children

Allegations against staff and volunteers (ASV)

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who lives or works on the nursery premises regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below.

The allegation should be reported to the senior manager on duty. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to the Owner instead.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Ofsted and the LSCP will then be informed immediately for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

- The LADO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
- If as an individual you feel this will not be taken seriously or are worried about the allegation getting back to the person in question then it is your duty to inform the LADO yourself directly
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LADO, Ofsted, LSCP) to determine how this will be handled
- The nursery will follow all instructions from the LADO, Ofsted, LSCP and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police, and will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. The nursery will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated
- All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
- The nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff about founded allegations following an inquiry
- Counselling will be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the nursery and the parents.

Extremism – the Prevent Duty

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police (In Prevent priority areas the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support).

This may be a cause for concern relating to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child in their care.

Alongside this we will be alert to any early signs in children and families who may be at risk of radicalisation, on which we will act and document all concerns when reporting further.

The Curriculum

Safeguarding issues will be for example will be addressed through activities that promote self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power and healthy relationships. Relevant issues will be addressed through all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage where appropriate.

E-Safety

Our nursery is aware of the growth of internet use and the advantages this can bring. However, it is also aware of the dangers and strives to support children, staff and families in using the internet safely.

Within the nursery we do this by:

- Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software on all devices and updating them regularly
- Ensuring content blockers and filters are on our computers, laptops and any mobile devices
- Ensure management monitor all internet activities in the setting
- Using approved devices to record/photograph in the setting
- Never emailing personal or financial information
- Reporting emails with inappropriate content to the internet watch foundation (IWF www.iwf.org.uk)
- Ensuring children are supervised when using internet devices
- Using tracking software to monitor suitability of internet usage (for older children)
- Integrating e-safety into nursery daily practice by discussing computer usage 'rules' deciding together what is safe and what is not safe to do online
- Talking to children about 'stranger danger' and deciding who is a stranger and who is not, comparing people in real life situations to online 'friends'
- When using Skype and FaceTime (where applicable) discussing with the children what they would do if someone they did not know tried to contact them
- We encourage staff and families to complete a free online e-safety briefing which can be found at <https://moodle.ndna.org.uk>
- We abide by an acceptable use policy, ensuring staff only use the work IT equipment for matters relating to the children and their education and care. No personal use will be tolerated
- Children's screen time is monitored to ensure they remain safe online and have access to material that promotes their development. We will ensure that their screen time is within an acceptable level and is integrated within their programme of learning.

Our nursery has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the nursery manager at the earliest opportunity.

Covid-19

The nursery identifies that Covid-19 has had an impact on safeguarding. The nursery will be supporting children as they return to the nursery during Covid-19. There may be changes in the child's behaviour and routine when returning to the nursery. Children may face anxiety, stress, low mood, unsettled to return and social interaction reduced particularly for vulnerable children.

The nursery will identify any safeguarding signs that will be indicators to child abuse or any softer signs that can be of concern (please see list of signs above)

There will be an Education, health and care (EHC) plan risk assessment where needed. All staff members will be made aware of this and all the risks that could occur. Staff will be monitoring children's attendance and receiving regular updates from parents. The nursery will also be in regular contact with parents by providing updates on the procedures at the nursery and supporting parents as much as possible.

The nursery will be liaising with social workers where relevant to be up to date with any changes or important information and to see how the child and parent have been coping. If the nursery feels that a child is in need or suffering or likely to suffer, this will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The designated safeguarding lead arrangements will remain the same; Nursery Manager and Pouja Magdani

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
April 2025	Pouja Magdani	April 2026