



Old Court Community Pre-School

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Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Old Court Community Pre-School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection.

Policy agreed (date):	16/6/2022
Policy published (including on website) (date):	16/06/2022
Next review (date):	Within one year or sooner if required

Key Safeguarding Personnel

Role	Name	Tel.	Email
Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Debbie Lownds	01793 849783	oldcourt@talktalk.net
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Michelle Miller	01793 849783	Deputy.occp@gmail.com
Nominated Committee member	Jennifer Heavens	Info in the office.	
Chair of Committee	Susanne Matthews	Info in the office.	

The key safeguarding responsibilities within each of the roles above are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)

Children's Social Care referrals:	
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):	0300 456 0108
Out of hours:	0300 456 0100

If you believe a child is **at immediate risk** of significant harm or injury, you **must** call the police on 999.

Introduction

Old Court Community Pre-School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We will fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following key documents:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)
- The procedures of the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (formerly WSCB)
- Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)
- Statutory framework for the Early Years foundation stage (2021).

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- all our pupils are safe and protected from harm.
- safeguarding procedures are in place to help pupils to feel safe and learn to stay safe.
- adults in the pre-school community are aware of the expected behaviours and the pre-school's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

Scope

Safeguarding children is defined as:

- ensuring that children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- acting to enable all children to have the best life chances
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development and
- protecting children from maltreatment.

The term 'safeguarding children' covers a range of measures including child protection procedures.

It

encompasses a whole setting preventative approach to keeping children safe, including on-line, that incorporates child health and safety; pre-school behaviour management and preventing peer on peer abuse; supporting children with medical conditions; positive personal, social and emotional development; providing first aid and site security.

Consequently, this policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the committee and should be

read alongside the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of our pupils:

- Behaviour policy
- E- safety policy
- Children's rights and entitlements
- Staff code of conduct
- Whistleblowing policy
- SEND policy
- Administration of medicines
- Valuing diversity and promoting inclusion.

- Health and safety policy

This policy applies to all staff in our preschool. For the purposes of this policy:

- **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in a paid or regular voluntary capacity.
- **A volunteer** is a person who performs an activity that involves spending time, unpaid in pre-school.
- **Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.
- **Child** refers to all children on our pre-school roll and any child under the age of 18 who comes into contact with our preschool. This includes unborn babies.

Any safeguarding concerns or disclosures of abuse relating to a child at pre-school, outside of pre-school and online are within the scope of this policy.

Expectations

All staff are:

- familiar with this safeguarding policy and have an opportunity to contribute to its review.
- alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse and wider safeguarding issues.
- able to record and report concerns as set out in this policy.
- able to deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child.
- involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and interagency child protection plans as required.

In addition all staff have read and understand Part 1 or Annex A of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2021)

Committee

As key strategic decision makers and vision setters for the pre-school, the Committee will make sure that our policies and procedures are in line with national and local safeguarding requirements. The Committee will work with the senior leaders to make sure the following safeguarding essentials are in place:

Training/Teaching	Policy/Procedures	Staffing
Whole pre-school approach to broad and balanced curriculum embedding safeguarding teaching. D/DSL training KCSiE Part 1 or Annex A (and Annex B and Part 5 for staff working directly with children) Staff training, including regular safeguarding updates Children taught about keeping safe online	Children's rights and entitlements E- safety Whistleblowing. Early help Multi-agency working Children with SEND and a physical health issue Reporting abuse, incl. dealing with a child at immediate risk / SVPP procedures Honour based abuse (HBA)	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is a senior member of the leadership team. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

<p>Online safety training for staff</p> <p>Preventing radicalisation</p> <p>Teaching staff confidence to deliver PSHE to all pupils</p> <p>Annual review of online safety arrangements</p>	<p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</p> <p>Behaviour policy</p> <p>Staff contribution to policy</p> <p>Safeguarding policy review</p>	
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Concerns and allegations management

Our Designated committee member for safeguarding is responsible for liaising with the local authority Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA) and other partner agencies in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Manager.

See also 'Managing concerns and allegations against staff'.

Audit

The nominated Committee member for safeguarding collaborates with the Manager and the DDSL to complete an annual safeguarding audit return to the local authority.

Safer Recruitment

Our Committee monitor the school's safer recruitment practice, including the Single Central Record.

Monitoring and review

The Committee ensure that safeguarding is an agenda item for every meeting.

The Manager ensures that safeguarding is an agenda item for every staff meeting.

This policy is reviewed annually or earlier as required by changes to legislation or statutory guidance.

The nominated Committee member meets the DSL every term (three times a year) to monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

Mandatory procedures – Staff and adults at pre-school

Safer recruitment

All staff are subject to safer recruitment processes and checks.

At Old Court Community Pre-School, we scrutinise all applications for paid or voluntary posts. We undertake interviews and make appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We maintain a single central record (SCR) of the essential checks as set out in KCSiE, that have been carried out and certificates obtained. The SCR applies to:

- all staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school.
- Volunteers.

See also Training.

Employee Handbook (for safer working practice)

Old Court Community Pre-School is committed to positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for all children underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff, who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour.

The Employee handbook sets out staff behaviours that should be avoided as well as those that constitute safe practice and supports our commitment to safeguarding children.

Identifying the signs

All staff know how to recognise, and are alert to the signs of, neglect and abuse and wider safeguarding issues, including, but not limited to, child on child sexual violence and harassment, peer on peer abuse and exploitation. Definitions of abuse, set out in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners' (2015), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2021) along with notes from safeguarding training, are important reference documents for all staff. Every member of staff is provided with a copy of Part 1 or Annex A of KCSiE which they are required to read, and which also includes supporting guidance about several specific safeguarding issues.

Responding to concerns/disclosures of abuse

Flowcharts provided by the SVPP that set out the required procedure for staff to follow when they have a safeguarding concern about a child are displayed in the corridor for easy reference.

Staff adhere to the organisation's safeguarding training requirements when concerned about abuse or when responding to a disclosure of abuse. Staff understand that they must NOT:

- take photographs of any injuries.
- postpone or delay the opportunity for the child to talk.
- take notes while the child is speaking.
- try to investigate the allegation.
- promise confidentiality eg say they will keep 'the secret'.
- approach or inform the alleged abuser.

All staff record any concern about or disclosure by a pupil of abuse or neglect and report this to the D/DSL using the standard form. It is the responsibility of each early years practitioner to ensure that the D/DSL receives the record of concern without delay. In the absence of the D/DSL, staff members know to speak directly to the **MASH**. In some circumstances, the D/DSL or member of staff seeks advice by ringing the **MASH** for advice.

The D/DSL will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.

During term time, the DSL and/or a DDSL is always available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The voice of the child is central to our safeguarding practice and pupils are encouraged to express and have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them.

Managing concerns and allegations against staff (including bank staff and volunteers)

Old Court Community follows the procedure set out by the SVPP 'Allegations against adults' flowchart which is displayed in the corridor for easy reference.

Where anyone in the school has a concern about the behaviour of an adult who works or volunteers at the preschool, including bank staff, they must immediately consult the Manager who will refer to the local authority Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA).

Any concern or allegation against the Manager will be reported to the Chair of the Committee or Designated Committee member for Safeguarding without informing the Manager.

All staff must remember that the welfare of a child is paramount and must not delay raising concerns for fear a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. Old Court Community Pre-School promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the pre-school (including bank staff and volunteers) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

In addition to the concern/allegation management process, the DSL/ DDSL will also refer suspected abuse to the MASH as described in 'responding to a concern.'

All members of staff and volunteers have read and signed to confirm they have understood the preschool's Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice), all bank staff and volunteers are made aware of expectations of their behaviour.

Old Court Community Pre-School will appoint a 'case manager' to lead any investigation where the reported allegation does not meet the allegations threshold to consider a referral to the DOFA. This is the Manager or where the Manager is the subject of an allegation, the chair of the Committee.

Ofsted must be notified if a referral to DOFA has been made.

Managing low-level concerns about adults

Old Court Community Pre-School operates a 'low-level' concerns policy in accordance with KCSIE. 'Low-level' refers to behaviour that is: inconsistent with expectations set out in the Staff Behaviour Policy, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and/or does not meet the allegations threshold, or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the DOFA.

All low-level concerns will be reported to the Manager; low-level concerns about the Manager will be reported to the chair of the Committee.

Old Court Community Pre-School will:

- ensure all staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is (as set out in the Staff Behaviour Policy), and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others;
- empower staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns;
- provide a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised, for both the child/ren and the adult; and,
- respond to reports of low-level concerns in accordance with our code of conduct procedures by addressing unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage. If the concern has been raised via a third party, the Manager will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:
 - directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
 - to the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reporting low-level concerns helps to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the pre-school's values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing, retained and reviewed to help recognise any weakness in the pre-school safeguarding system so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Whistleblowing

All staff and pupils can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the pre-school safeguarding regime. Our whistleblowing procedures, which are reflected in staff training and our Staff Behaviour Policy are in place for such concerns to be raised with the DSL/DDSL in school.

If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the DSL/DDSL as above or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline
Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 from 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday, or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- A member of the Committee: Jennifer Heavens.

Escalation of concerns

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between colleagues and between agencies.

Staff must be confident and able to professionally disagree and challenge decision-making as an entirely legitimate activity; a part of our professional responsibility to promote the best safeguarding practice. Staff are encouraged to press for re-consideration if they believe a decision to act/not act in response to a concern raised about a child is wrong. In such cases the SVPP Case Resolution Protocol is used if necessary.

If we are on the receiving end of a professional challenge, we see this as an opportunity to reflect on our decision making.

Record keeping and information sharing

Old Court Community Pre-School:

- liaises with partner organisations (alternative provisions, Wiltshire Council, local Primary Schools) to ensure any safeguarding records for learners are shared on transition:
 - by the setting/school/organisation previously attended by the child.
 - by our DSL when the child leaves our school.

For any child dual-registered with another school/setting/organisation, the pre-school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of the placed child thus the DSL will regularly liaise with the DSL at that setting to ensure information is shared in the child's best interests.

Keeps clear and comprehensive written records of all child safeguarding and child protection concerns using a standard recording form, with a body map, including how the concern was followed up and resolved as well as a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

- ensures all pupil safeguarding and child protection records are kept securely in a locked location.

The D/DSL acts in accordance with Information Sharing – Department for Education (DfE) (2018) and in line with the Wiltshire Council Record Keeping Guidance which includes details about file retention. Information about pupils at risk of harm is shared with members of staff in keeping with the seven golden rules to sharing information in the DfE guidance.

We are committed to work in partnership with parents and carers. In most situations, we will discuss initial concerns with them. However, the D/DSL will not share information where there are concerns that if so doing would:

- place a child at increased risk of significant harm
- place an adult at increased risk of serious harm
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

When we become aware that a child is being privately fostered, we remind the carer/parent of their legal duty to notify Wiltshire Children's Social Care. We follow this up by contacting Children's Social Care directly.

Visitors

All visitors complete a signing in/out process.

Scheduled visitors in a professional role (eg fire officer, police, NSPCC staff) are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at pre-school. Careful consideration is given to the suitability of any external organisations.

If the visit is unscheduled and the visitor is unknown to the school, we will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity, if necessary.

Off site visits.

We carry out a risk assessment prior to any off-site visit and designate the specific roles and responsibilities of each adult, whether employed or volunteers.

Where there are safeguarding concerns or allegations that happen offsite, staff will follow the procedures described above and in the SVPP flowcharts as appropriate.

Mandatory procedures – Supporting children

A culture of listening to children

We have a whole pre-school approach to listening to children and have systems in place which create an environment where children feel safe to share their concerns and worries and know they will be taken seriously. These systems operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Children can safely express their views.

Curriculum – teaching about safeguarding

Our children access a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life relevant to their developmental stage.

We provide opportunities for children to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety, and well-being. The EYFS curriculum, specifically includes the following objectives:

- Developing pupil self-esteem and communication skills
- Developing strategies for self-protection including online safety
- Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and within peer relationships (positive relationships)

Remote learning

If the preschool is required to change the way provision to children is offered due to exceptional circumstances eg during a pandemic lockdown, self-isolation, staff responsibilities to remain alert to the signs and risks of abuse to children will continue to apply. In such circumstances:

The DSL will:

- work closely with social care and partner agencies to support children in these circumstances and to identify children who may be at risk for the first time and/or benefit from additional support
- use specific local and national guidance about safeguarding in such circumstances to inform practice and will ensure staff, children, and families are provided with written:
 - amended DSL arrangements as required (names, location and contact details)
 - temporary changes to procedures for working with families eg online.
 - amended procedures for reporting concerns
 - safeguarding training arrangements
 - timescales for such changes so that all children, families and staff understand when such arrangements will end, and arrangements revert to those in place prior to the events leading to the need for the temporary changes.

We will ensure the curriculum we offer during such circumstances, continues to promote learners' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development.

Early help

At Old Court Community Pre-School, all our staff can identify children who may benefit from early help as a problem emerges and discuss this with the D/DSL.

The D/DSL uses:

- The Digital Assessment and Referral Tool (DART), as appropriate, as part of a holistic assessment of the child's needs.
- The Multi-Agency Thresholds guidance for Safeguarding Children on the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP) website about suitable action to take when a pupil has been identified as making inadequate progress or having an unmet need.
- Liaises with Wiltshire SEND service
- Various resources to identify and respond to harmful behaviour

Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or physical health issues

Pupils with additional needs or certain health conditions face an increased risk of abuse and neglect. Staff take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. We never assume that behaviour, mood or injury relates to the pupil's additional needs without further exploration. Staff understand that additional challenges can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in pupils with SEND, including communication barriers. Staff recognise that children with SEND are also at a higher risk of peer group isolation and can be disproportionately affected by bullying (including prejudiced-based bullying).

To address those additional challenges, extra pastoral support is considered for children with SEND or physical health issues and they are also encouraged to discuss their concerns and those of their families. The D/DSL works with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) to identify pupils with additional communication needs and whenever possible, these pupils are given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills.

Mandatory procedures – Specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues

Peer on peer abuse

All children have a right to attend pre-school and learn in a safe environment. All peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously as a safeguarding concern.

We minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by providing:

- a relevant curriculum, that helps children to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe. The curriculum is updated to reflect changes in legislation, and the mandatory teaching of Personal, social and emotional skills.
- established/publicised systems for pupils to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously
- a clear procedure for all staff to report all incidents as a safeguarding concern to the D/DSL.

Missing children and children missing

Please see missing child policy.

Children's non-attendance can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. Early intervention will be taken to identify the risk of any underlying safeguarding concerns. The setting will have two emergency contacts for a child.

Mental health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff understand that:

- abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Staff are aware of how these experiences can impact on children's mental health, behaviour and education.
- they have a duty to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will report this concern using the agreed reporting mechanisms.

Domestic abuse

Staff understand that domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional harm.

The DSL liaises with partner agencies as part of 'Encompass' in Wiltshire. When police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the DSL ensures the organisation receives up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and will ensure key staff provide emotional and practical support to the child according to their needs.

Staff recognize that all children who witness domestic abuse are being emotionally abused and this can cause 'significant harm'. Domestic abuse will always be referred to MASH.

Preventing radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the preschools wider safeguarding duties.

Staff use their judgement in identifying pupils who might be at risk of radicalisation and speak to the D/DSL if they are concerned about a child. The D/DSL will always act proportionately and this may include making a Prevent referral to the Channel support programme or to the MASH.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Staff will inform the D/DSL immediately if they suspect a girl is at risk of FGM. We will report to the police any 'known' cases of FGM to the police as required by law.

Staff training

Induction

The welfare of all our pupils is of paramount importance. All staff including Committee members and regular volunteers are informed of our safeguarding policy and procedures including online safety, at induction.

Our induction for staff also includes:

- Plan of support for individuals appropriate to the role for which they have been hired
- Confirmation of the conduct expected of staff within the school – our Staff code of practice.
- Opportunities for a new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities
- Confirmation of the line management/mentor process whereby any general concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability will be addressed.

Safeguarding training

This training is for all staff and is updated every 3 years as a minimum to ensure staff understand their role in safeguarding.

In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates at least annually. All staff also receive training in online safety.

Advanced training

The D/DSL has additional multi agency training which is updated every two years as a minimum. The D/DSL also attend multi-agency courses relevant to pre-school needs. Their knowledge and skills are refreshed at least annually eg via e-bulletins or safeguarding networking events with other D/DSLs.

Safer Recruitment

At least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training. This training is updated every 3 years as a minimum.

Preventing Radicalisation

All staff undertake Prevent awareness training.

Staff support

Due to the demanding, often distressing nature of child protection work, we support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through the challenges of this aspect of their role with the manager and to seek further support as appropriate.

Committee

As well as the school's safeguarding induction programme, a committee member is encouraged to complete safeguarding and child protection training.

Related legislation and key documents

Children Act 1989 (and 2004 update): The Children Act 1989 gives every child the right to protection from abuse and exploitation and the right to have enquires made to safeguard his or her welfare. The Act place duties on several agencies, including schools, to assist Social Services departments acting on behalf of children and young people in need (s17) or enquiring into allegations of child abuse (s47).

Education Act 2002 - This requires schools to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education.

Sexual Offences Act 2003 - This act sets out an offence of 'abuse of trust' - a sexual or otherwise inappropriate relationship between an adult who is responsible for young people and a young person in his/her care.

Information Sharing – Department for Education (DfE) Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018 This advice is for all frontline practitioners and senior managers working with children, young people, parents and carers who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case by case basis.

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), section 26 requires all schools, 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.

Mental health and behaviour in schools (2018) advice to help schools to support pupils whose mental health problems manifest themselves in behaviour. It is also intended to be helpful to staff in alternative provision settings, although some of the legislation mentioned will only apply to those alternative provision settings that are legally classified as schools.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) Section 53(3) and (4) of this applies to schools if they broker student accommodation with host families for which the host family receives a payment from a third party, such as a language school. At a future date, the regulated activity provider will have a duty to carry out a barred list check on any new carer – section 34ZA Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Children Missing Education (2016) Statutory guidance for local authorities and advice for other groups on helping children who are missing education get back into it.

