



## Safeguarding and Promoting Children’s Welfare Children – Policy and Procedure

Definition of Safeguarding:

To ensure safety of; protect

EYFS key themes and commitments:

A unique child	Positive relationships	Enabling environments	Learning and developing
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	4.4 personal, social and emotional development

This policy is underpinned by:

Primary Legislation:-

- \* The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)
- \* Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2015)
- \* Children Act 1989, (amendment FGM) act 2019
- \* The Protection of Children Act 2004
- \* Data Protection 2018 (GDPR)
- \* Freedom of Information Act 2000

Secondary Legislation

- \* Equality Act 2010
- \* Human Rights Act 2000
- \* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- \* Sexual Offences Act 2003
  - Law (sexual offences) Act 2017
- \* Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- \* The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- \* Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2014, 2017
- \* Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

#### Further Guidance

- \* “What to Do if You Worried a Child is Being Abused” (HGM 2015)
- \* The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- \* Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HGM 2018)
- \* Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000) \* independent Safeguarding Authority: [www.isa-gov.org.uk](http://www.isa-gov.org.uk)
- \* Working together to Safeguard Children (Revised HGM 2018)
- \* Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (amendment) Act 2012 further guidance
- \* Safeguarding: Ofsted Inspections and Safeguarding (September 2019)

#### Aim

Our setting is committed to creating an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. We recognise that the welfare of all children is paramount and

that all children and young people, regardless of ability or culture, have equal rights of protection.

We have a duty of care when they are in our charge and will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our setting. In order to achieve this we will:

Exclude known abusers. It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the setting that the position

is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All staff employed in the setting, including the Manager, will need to have been vetted by the Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS) and successfully pass an Enhanced Disclosure Application.

When recruiting for staff at The Saplings advertisements for vacancies will state that applicants will require a DBS check. Our application forms will also request information regarding the suitability of the candidate to work with young children.

All applicants for work within the setting, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed and questioned during their interview if they have any criminal records. Successful applicants would then be requested to provide at least two references from their most recent employers. All such references will be followed up. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.

All staff undergo an induction procedure where we emphasise the importance of safeguarding the children in the setting. All new staff will be informed of the high expectations in regard to following our clear procedures and policies. We ensure this is clear to all staff by requiring them to read our hand book, our policies and further by meeting with our safeguarding officer to discuss in detail.

All appointments, whether paid or voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the setting is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

At the start of employment and annually thereafter (at the annual appraisal) a staff declaration form will be required to be completed to ensure continued suitability of all staff.

We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, 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 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 that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.

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 maybe 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.

We actively protect children and teach them to value British Values by recognising and valuing the universal uniqueness of all individuals and we are mindful to instil learning and resilience to protect children against the development of extremist and radicalised thinking and behaviour.

Where we believe a child in our care or known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedure for reporting child protection concerns.

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 Manager of the setting, who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.

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

### Safeguarding Training

Every three years all staff are required to attend a Safeguarding Course run by Suffolk County Council.

In addition we have a designated Safeguarding Officer, Rachel Lockwood, Manager and Lisa Hardwicke, Deputy Manager is the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

We have currently have one member of staff, Rachel Lockwood, who has CAF Levels 1 & 2.

The Saplings is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

### Prevent abuse by means of good practice

Students, Volunteers and Visitors will never be left alone with individual children or with small groups.

On occasions employees may be required to work with a small group of children on their own; in these circumstances they will always be visible by other members of staff.

When carrying out intimate care such as nappy changing, the door of the changing room is kept ajar so that children's modesty is considered but ensuring that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount.

We promote the children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence, and enabling them to have the self-confidence and vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

The layout of the playrooms will permit constant supervision of all children.

## **Security**

Entry to the front door is only allowed by the staff opening the door. And therefore access to the setting is carefully monitored. All other non-authorised personnel can use the door bell and staff will open the door using the chain until they are happy that the visitor is safe to allow entry. All other access to the setting is secure.

All visitors with appointments will be displayed on our staff white board in the office. On arrival visitors will be requested to sign in the visitor's book, hand in their mobile phone, be issued with a security name badge and will be escorted and introduced to the appropriate member of staff. Visitors are never left alone with a child or children.

On arrival parents/carers sign their child/ren into the signing in book. This clearly states who is collecting the child later in the day. If this person is unknown to the setting staff a password system is in place to ensure that the children are only released into the care of individuals named by the parent. We will only release children into the care of a responsible person over the age of 18 years.

On our Registration Form parents are asked to give details of all authorised adults who may collect their child.

## **Use of Personal Electronic Devices**

\* All staff are required to leave their mobile phones in the main office, Pre-School staff, kitchen area, Baby Room staff, at the start of their session.

\* Mobile phones will be returned to the staff for their use during their lunch period.

\* All phones will then be returned to the office and will need to be signed out again at the end of their session.

Staff use The Saplings mobile phone to take with them on outings, this phone does not have a camera facility.

All photographs within The Saplings are taken on The Saplings Tablets only.

We are conscious that parents and friends like to record and make memories of their children's special moments at settings such as Sports Day, Graduation Day and the Christmas Production. On these occasions all parents attending the event will be asked if they have any objection to photographs or video recordings being taken. If there is no objection then we will allow all parents to take photographs but we will ask them to sign in our 'Parents Record of Photography & Video's' file to confirm that they have taken photographs at a specific event, on a particular day and that they understand that under no circumstances are they permitted to display photographs that contain other children from The Saplings on any social networking site and that these photographs are for their own personal use only.

### **Social Networking Sites**

Our Policy at The Saplings does not allow parents and staff to be friends on Social Networking sites (Facebook, Twitter etc.), exceptions to this could be family or pre-existing friendships.

Staff are informed that it is prohibited to discuss any work-related topics on the social networking sites, they must not discuss the children or their families, their job or other members of staff.

### **Baby Sitting**

Staff are permitted to make private arrangements with families to baby sit outside work hours. However, we will require both parties to sign a written disclaimer to confirm that The Saplings is not party to any of the arrangements.

## **Risk Assessments**

In accordance with the Revised Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 The Saplings will judge whether there needs to be a Risk Assessment in writing. Further clarification of this can be found in the Risk Assessment Policy.

Procedures to follow when there is a concern

The training provided to all staff will enable them to recognise the different types and indicators of physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour or their play.

We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, 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 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 that may affect or may have affected children and young people using our provision.

When a child comes into The Saplings with a worrying mark / injury parents/carers will be asked to complete a 'Home Incident' form which asks for details of how the injury was caused and is dated and signed. This form is viewed and counter signed by the designated Safeguarding Officer.



## **Concern from a member of staff:**

If a member of staff has a concern regarding a child at The Saplings

- Stay calm and listen carefully, offer reassurance to the child or young person
- Do not promise child confidentiality

\* a 'Record of Concern' is opened. This 'Record of Concern' will record any worrying changes observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance. This will be quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development.

\* The record will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child any timed and dated observations.

\* It will describe objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation. Where possible, the exact words spoken by the child are recorded and it is then dated and signed by the recorder.

\* We take care not to influence the outcome by the way we speak to children, we use reflective listening, asking open non-judgemental questions; what?who?where?when? Only.

Such records are highly confidential and will be kept in a separate file that will not be accessible to people in the setting other than the Manager, Safeguarding Officer, Deputy Safeguarding Officer, Key Person and other members of staff as appropriate. We take advice from the DSL and MASH team if required.

## **Informing parents:**

\* Parents are normally the first point of contact. We discuss concerns with parents to gain their view of events unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.

\* We inform parents where 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 is 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. In these cases the social workers will inform parents.

The Suffolk Safeguarding Children's Board have provided a 'flow chart for referral' which we would follow in order to safeguard any child giving cause for concern.

We have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff. All staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns. This document is kept in the office.

When a child has an accident at The Saplings, this is documented on an accident form, the time, date, what happened and where, what the injury was, what action was taken to better the injury and what staff member dealt with the accident is all documented and the parent is asked to sign one copy and another copy is given to the Safeguarding Officer to check, these forms are reviewed regularly to ensure a certain child/area of the setting are not having/causing accidents too frequently.

If an incident occurs between two children within the setting an incident form is filled in in the same manner as an accident form. Again, these are reviewed regularly and if a certain child is frequently involved in incidents, this child will be monitored closely to reduce these incidents.

The attendance of children is closely monitored to ensure a regular pattern is kept, if your child does not attend The Saplings and we have not heard from you, we will call you to find out why your child has not

attended that day, we also log absences on our registers and reasons for these.

Liaise with other bodies

The setting operates in accordance with Suffolk Safeguarding Children's Board guidelines.

Parents will be allowed access to all written records about their child (except in exceptional cases where data protection laws stipulate it is against the best

interests of the child to do so) and, where requested, comments from parents are incorporated into children's records.

When a referral to Customer First is made parents will be advised unless this places the child at an increased risk of significant harm. The setting will inform Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practical but at the latest within 14 days of the allegation being made.

- When a referral to Customer First is made verbally, we will follow this referral up in writing within 24 hours.

- Our registration form asks for the details of your child's Health Visitor and if you consent to us contacting them at any time, if you consent, we reserve the right to contact the Health Visitor at any time during your child's time at The Saplings. 68 The group will maintain ongoing contact with the registering authority, including names, addresses and telephone numbers of individual social worker, to ensure that it would be easy, in any emergency, for The Saplings and Social Services Department to work together.

### Support families

The Saplings will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff and volunteers in the group.

Where abuse at home is suspected, the setting will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.

Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child's parents unless this places the child at an increased risk of significant harm.

### **Allegations Against Staff**

Staff should avoid putting themselves in situations that may lead to allegations being made against them. This can be achieved by following some simple rules and procedures when working with children and young people.

Following these rules will help protect children from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will help staff and volunteers maintain the standard of behaviour that is expected of them.

- \* To operate within The Saplings principles and guidance and any specific procedures,
- \* Treat everyone with respect, recognising their right to personal privacy.
- \* Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these.
- \* Recognise that caution is required in all one-to-one situations.
- \* Remember that someone else may misinterpret our actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- \* Avoid showing favouritism to any individual.
- \* Ensure that language used is appropriate, not offensive or discriminatory, never make suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun.
- \* Do not trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues, following The Saplings Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedure at all times.
- \* Do not adopt an attitude of complacency with regard to your own conduct. Do not believe "It could never happen to me."
- \* Do not rely on your good name to protect you.
- \* Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children and young people.

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report breaches of this code to Rachel Lockwood, Whistle-blowing Officer, under the Whistle-Blowing procedure, or if necessary under the safeguarding policy and procedures.

If an allegation of abuse / neglect is made against a member of staff, the following action will be taken:

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be informed of the allegation within 24hrs. We would seek advice from LADO and other appropriate agencies on how to proceed.

A referral will be made for the child(ren) to Customer First.

Ofsted will be informed as soon as is reasonably practical but at the latest within 14 days of the allegation.

The staff member will be suspended on full pay for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of an admission of guilt but is in place to protect the member of staff, volunteer, children and their families throughout the process.

All details regarding the allegation will be kept confidential at all times and only disclosed to the appropriate parties. All records will be kept in the staff's personal file.

If allegations are made to a member of staff implicating a member of the Management Team, that staff member should contact Social Services through Customer First and the Local Area Designated Officer as detailed above.

All details regarding the allegation should be kept confidential.

With the provision that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount,

The Saplings will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

### **Telephone numbers for referral:**

Customer First (24 hrs/7days) 0808 800 4005

Suffolk Police main switchboard 01473 613500

The Local Authority Designated Officer will be contacted if an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer

North (Lowestoft) 01502 405188

West (Bury St Edmunds) 01284 352205

South (Ipswich) 01473 581871

## **Appendix to Safeguarding Policy**

### **The Prevent duty and Promoting British Values**

From the 1st of 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.

Here at The Saplings we ensure that we adhere to and achieve the Prevent Duty and to do this we will:

\* We will provide appropriate training for staff, as soon as possible. Part of this training will enable staff to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation. We will ensure as a minimum that our Designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer will undertake Prevent Awareness Training, so that they are able to offer advise and support to other members of staff.

\* We will build the children's resilience by promoting fundamental British Values and enable them to challenge extremist views. (In early years the Statutory Framework for the EYFS sets standards for Learning, Development and Care for children 0-5, thereby assisting Personal, Social and Emotional development and Understanding of the World.

- \* We will assess the risk by formal Risk Assessment, of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of the terrorism ideology.
- \* We will ensure the staff will understand the risks so they can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way.
- \* We will be aware of the online risk of radicalisation through the use of social media and the internet.
- \* As we are managing our safeguarding risks, our staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which would indicate that they may be in need of help or protection (children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or may seek to hide their views).
- \* The key person approach means that, as a setting, staff build up an effective engagement with the parents/carers and families and so we will notice any changes in behaviour, demeanour or personality quickly.
- \* We will not carry out any unnecessary intrusion into family life but we will take action when we observe behaviour of concern.
- \* We assist and advise families who raise a concern with us. It is important to assist, support and advise families who raise a concern and be able to provide them with appropriate guidance.

The following provides information on how we bring British Values into The Saplings:

Democracy: making decisions together (Personal Social and Emotional Development)

As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- Managers and staff can encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging children to know their views count, value each other's views and values and talk about their feelings, for example when they do or do not need help. When appropriate demonstrate democracy in action, for

example, children sharing views on what the theme of their role play area could be with a show of hands.

- Staff can support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children should be given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

Rule of law: understanding rules matter (Personal Social and Emotional development)

As part of the focus on managing feelings and behaviour:

- Staff can ensure that children understand their own and others' behaviour and its

consequences, and learn to distinguish right from wrong.

- Staff can collaborate with children to create the rules and the codes of behaviour, for example, to agree the rules about tidying up and ensure that all children understand rules apply to everyone.

Individual liberty: freedom for all (Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding of the World)

As part of the focus on self-confidence & self-awareness and people & communities as cited in Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World:

- Children should develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff can provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to take risks on an obstacle course, mixing colours, talking about their experiences and learning.

- Staff should encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example in a small group discuss what they feel about transferring into Reception Class.

Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated (Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding of the World)



As part of the focus on people & communities, managing feelings & behaviour and making relationships as cited in Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World:

- Managers and leaders should create an ethos of inclusiveness and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.

- Children should acquire a tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences.

- Staff should encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other's opinions.

- Staffs should promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example,

sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

A minimum approach, for example having notices on the walls or multi-faith books on the shelves will fall short of 'actively promoting'.

What is not acceptable is:

- actively promoting intolerance of other faiths, cultures and races

- failure to challenge gender stereotypes and routinely segregate girls and boys

- isolating children from their wider community

- failure to challenge behaviours (whether of staff, children or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

What to do if you have a concern:

As explained above, if a member of staff in a school has a concern about a particular pupil they should follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the school's designated safeguarding lead, and where deemed necessary, with children's social care.

In Prevent priority areas, the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support. You can also contact your local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number). They can talk to you in confidence about your concerns and help you gain access to support and advice.

The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly.

Concerns can also be raised by email to [counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

Please note that the helpline is not intended for use in emergency situations, such as a child being at immediate risk of harm or a security incident, in which case the normal emergency procedures should be followed.

This policy was last reviewed on:

Date: 06.02.2019

Signed Manager....Rachel Lockwood.....

Date reviewed: 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021