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This policy was updated in November 2026 and will be reviewed annually.

Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

Introduction

Ladybird playgroup Thriplow fully recognises the responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the setting, including agency staff, volunteers, and students, all of whom have a vital role in safeguarding children. Concerned parents may also contact the setting's Designated Safeguarding Leads.

This policy sets out how the setting complies with their statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who attend the setting.

This policy must be read alongside the Safeguarding flowsheet which provides staff, including agency staff, volunteers, students, and parents/carers with details about specific safeguarding concerns that may change on the welfare of children in their care or living locally. As a society we all have a duty to safeguard children, but it is particularly important that those working or volunteering with children remain vigilant to the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Staff, agency staff, volunteers and students should be familiar with the safeguarding procedures within the setting and know how to respond to concerns about children or adults.

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends, and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children. The setting will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are actively listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the setting whom they can approach if they feel worried or in difficulty

Designated Safeguarding Lead in our setting: Sharon McGinty
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead : Georgie Sims

Safeguarding Practice in our Setting

Designated Safeguarding Leads for Child Protection (DSL)

- A trained DSL is always available and on site (wherever possible) when the setting is open to be able to access relevant records and take necessary action. If the DSL is not on site then a suitably trained deputy practitioner will always be available.
- All DSLs will refresh their training every two years. In addition, DSLs knowledge and skills will be refreshed regularly (at least annually) via information sources such as the DSL Knowledge Hub, Child Protection Information Networks, further relevant training and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board.
- The importance of the role of the DSL is acknowledged by ensuring they have the time and training to undertake their duties.
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board procedures, Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023 and What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused, 2015 are adhered to. The DSL has contact details for Cambridgeshire Children's Social Care and the Early Help Hub readily accessible for use when needed. Bordering county Social Care and Early Help contact details are available, as required, for children who live outside of Cambridgeshire.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSPs).

Staff Members, Agency Staff, Volunteers and Students

- Have a robust induction which includes all relevant aspects of safeguarding practice
- Know the name of the DSL and what their role includes.
- Understands that every person looking after children must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.
- Know how to record and pass on concerns about a child or adult.
- Understand emergency evacuation procedures and health and safety issues.
- Understand their individual responsibility to refer child protection concerns to relevant agencies as a matter of urgency if there is no DSL present and/or they feel the child remains at risk of significant harm.
- Staff Members: Attend basic child protection training every two years as a minimum and within 6 weeks of commencing employment. Training will contain details of the local safeguarding procedures within Cambridgeshire and support staff to identify signs of possible abuse, neglect, and exploitation at the earliest opportunity and to respond to these in a timely and appropriate way.
- Settings may consider whether any staff need to undertake annual refresher training during any two-year period to help maintain basic skills and keep up to

date with any changes to safeguarding procedures or as a result of any safeguarding concerns that occur in the setting
- Receive regular and relevant updates on safeguarding practice, usually from their DSL at least annually, or as required.
- Understand the setting policy on babysitting for families who attend the setting.
- Ensure they are fully aware of the Use of Mobile phone, Camera's and Technological Devices Policy and support the setting in safeguarding children online.
- To be included in the ratios, students on long-term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) need a valid paediatric first aid certificate.

Management

The Ladybird playgroup committee fully recognises their responsibilities regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They will:
- Appoint a committee member (where applicable) for safeguarding (a 'Safeguarding Officer') who will monitor the setting's child protection policy and overall practice and champion good practice in relation to child protection and safeguarding.
- Ensure that this policy is annually reviewed in conjunction with the setting's DSL.
- Undertake a safeguarding briefing from the DSL upon taking up the role.
- Individual committee members will comply with Ofsted suitability check requirements including undertaking a DBS check.
- Complete Safer Recruitment training (at least one person who has recruitment responsibility).

Training

The setting recognises the importance of thorough and regular safeguarding training opportunities for all staff and are supported in embedding this into practice.
- The settings safeguarding training is delivered by Cambridge County Council and The Learning Alliance, either online or in person.
- Practitioners are supported to embed this into their day-to-day practice with regular safeguarding updates from the DSL. Important information and changes shared during staff meetings.
- All staff will be trained in line with the criteria set out in Annex C of Early years Foundation Stage statutory framework 2025 and are supported and confident to implement the settings safeguarding policy and procedures on an ongoing basis

Liaison with other agencies

The setting will:

- Work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all children.
- Co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups.
- Inform Ofsted, or the CMA with which a provider of CoDP is registered, of any allegations of harm or abuse by anyone living, working, or looking after children at the premises.
- Notify the relevant Social Care team immediately if there is an unexplained absence or there is any change in circumstances to a child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.
- Notify the relevant Social Care team immediately if there are any further abuse or neglect concerns (such as fresh marks, bruises, or injuries) where a child is already subject to a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan. It will not be assumed that Social Care is already aware of these additional concerns.
- Respond to requests for information about children in the setting's care from the Education Navigator at the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or a Social Worker in a timely manner.
- Link with Designated Safeguarding Leads in other settings and schools where we share families.
- Attend, as required, meetings regarding a child or family's welfare such as Child Protection Conference or Strategy discussion. If the DSL is unable to attend or send an appropriate representative then notification will be sent to the chair and a report will be submitted in the DSLs absence.

Record keeping

The setting will:

Keep clear, detailed written records of concerns about children's welfare using the Log of Concern Form. Records should include:

  - a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
  - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
  - a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
  - Records will be kept in individual child welfare files.
  - Records will be stored securely and confidentially.
- During registration of each new child, ask for information about other settings the child currently or previously attended. The DSL will make contact to request

relevant safeguarding and welfare information is shared. This will be ongoing where children attend more than one setting concurrently.
- Unless it would place the child at risk of significant harm, parents will be informed that a Log of Concern Form has been completed, where it will be stored and what will happen to it when the child leaves the setting.
- Parents do not have an automatic right to access child welfare records and consideration will be given as to what the consequences of information sharing might be (in line with Information Sharing Guidance, 2024).

When a child leaves or moves to another setting

Their individual child welfare file will be transferred to the receiving school or setting using the following protocol:

- The file will be sent as soon as possible after the child has moved setting and marked 'Confidential, Addressee Only' and sent to the DSL, if known, of the receiving setting/school. The file will be delivered by hand if possible; otherwise sent by delivery that can be tracked and signed for.
- The setting will contact the receiving setting/school by telephone to make them aware that there is a child welfare file and, once sent, ask them to confirm they have received the file. The setting will keep a record that the file has been received to be able to identify its location.
- Parents will be made aware that child welfare records will be transferred unless this would place the child at risk of acute harm.
- The setting will not keep a copy of transferred records, unless there are younger siblings for whom there are similar concerns about but will keep a record of the current file location and date the file was transferred.
- If individual child welfare files cannot be transferred for any reason, the setting will archive them for 25 years from the child's date of birth.
- All actions and decisions will be led by what is considered to be in the best interests of the child and rationales are included for all discussions and decisions made.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The DSL will be guided by the the Department for Education (DfE) Guidance **'**Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers' May 2024.

Fears about sharing information will not stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. The UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe:

- 'Information will be shared legally without consent, if the DSL or a member of staff is unable to or cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if to gain consent could place a child at risk.'
- relevant personal information will be shared lawfully if it is to keep a child or individual at risk safe from neglect or physical, emotional, or mental harm, or if it is protecting their physical, mental, or emotional well-being.'

What information will be shared?

When making decisions about what information to share, the DSL will consider how much information they need to release and the impact of disclosing information on the information subject and any third parties. Information should be proportionate to the need and level of risk. Only information that is relevant to the purposes will be shared with those who need it. This allows others to do their job effectively and make informed decisions.

Information sharing decisions must be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share. If the decision is to share, reasons should be cited including what information has been shared and with whom. If the decision is not to share, the DSL will record the reasons for this decision and discuss them with the person requesting the information.

If a child discloses information that may indicate that they are at risk of abuse or neglect, the staff member will be clear that they cannot promise to keep the information a secret. The staff member will be honest with the child and explain that it will be necessary to tell someone else in order to help them and to keep them safe. A note will be made of what information has been shared and with whom.

Communication with Parents

The setting will:

- Undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances may put the child at further risk of harm.
- Contact Children's Social Care first if the setting believes that notifying parents about a safeguarding concern may place the child or another person at immediate risk of harm or prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. Further guidance on this can be found in the 'Cambridgeshire Threshold Document: Continuum of Help and Support'
- Ensure that all parents/carers understand the responsibility placed on the setting and staff for safeguarding and child protection by ensuring that they receive a copy of this policy when registering their child at the setting.
- Record on the log of concern form what discussions have taken place with parents and if a decision was made not to discuss the matter with parents, the reason why not (circumstances may include if the DSL is unable to or cannot be

reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if gaining consent could place a child at risk of harm such as potential physical or sexual abuse).

Supporting Children

We recognise that any child may be subject to abuse or witness abuse and that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Children may also find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and trust those around them. Some children may adopt inappropriate or abusive behaviours and that these children may be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The setting will support children through:

- Activities to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation, and resilience.
- An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive, and secure environment that values people.
- A behaviour policy aimed at supporting all children. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the child's sense of self-worth. The setting will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but she/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies which support the child and family such as Children's Social Care and District Teams and Early Help/ Targeted Support.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents/carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances and making sure that children are only released into the care of individuals of whom the parent and/or carer has explicitly notified us of.
- Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse/violence, mental ill-health or substance misuse may be more vulnerable and in need of additional support and protection.
- Monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and seeking advice or making a referral to other agencies, e.g., Children's Social Care, when necessary.

Privately Fostered Children

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16, (under 18 if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or relative in their own home for 28 days or more. The setting will follow the mandatory duty to inform the Local Authority of any 'Private Fostering' arrangements and refer to the Specialist Fostering Team.

Promoting a protective ethos

The setting will create an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk, and they are listened to.

This will be achieved in the following ways:

- All staff, including the DSLs, are trained regularly to ensure skills and knowledge are up to date.
- Staff know how to respond to child protection concerns.
- Contribution to an inter-agency approach to child protection by working effectively and supportively with other agencies.
- Raising children's awareness and actively promoting self-esteem building, so that children have a range of strategies and contacts to ensure their safety.
- Using personal safety programmes, such as Protective Behaviours and the NSPCC PANTS campaign.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to the welfare of the children.
- Ensuring the relevant policies are in place, i.e., the use of mobile phones and cameras, behaviour management, intimate care, whistleblowing, social networking.
- Being vigilant to the inappropriate behaviour of staff or adults working with children and ensuring that all staff and volunteers know the allegations procedure, and this is actively supported within the setting.
- Staff acting as positive role models to children and young people.
- Ensuring staff are aware of the need to maintain appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with children and parents/carers in line with our setting's staff code of conduct/behaviour policy.
- Ensuring the Designated Safeguarding Leads keep themselves up to date with safeguarding concerns in the local area and disseminates this to the staff as relevant.

Preventing unsuitable people from working with children and young people

The setting has a duty to ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements for their role. The setting will follow safer recruitment practices including verifying qualifications and ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken. The setting will not allow people, whose suitability has not been checked, to have unsupervised contact with children.
The setting follows the statutory requirements found within the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework 2025 with regards to obtaining suitable references prior to recruitment.

Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). This is checked and recorded during supervisions to ensure ongoing suitability.

These members of staff/committee have undertaken Safer Recruitment training:

Sharon McGinity – Lead practitioner

Committee Chairperson

Whistleblowing

The setting has a separate Whistleblowing Policy which aims to help and protect both staff and children by:

- Preventing a problem getting worse;
- Safeguarding children and young people;
- Reducing the potential risks to others.

The earlier a concern is raised, the easier and sooner the setting can take action. The responsibility for expressing concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour rests with all staff, students, and volunteers.

The setting will put appropriate whistleblowing procedures in place for all staff (including students and volunteers) to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in the setting's provision and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they should use the other channels open to them: The NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available, staff can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk. Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH. • Ofsted provides guidance on how to make complaints about a provider: Complaints procedure - Ofsted - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Allegation against a person who works or volunteers with children

An allegation may relate to a person who works or volunteers with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

If an allegation is made against a person who works or volunteers with children, the following action will be taken (refer to: 'Allegation against a person who works or volunteers with children' flowchart and guidance):

- The setting will ensure the immediate safety of the children.
- The setting will **not** start to investigate but will immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01223 727967.
- If the LADO decides the matter is a child protection case, external/internal agencies (e.g., police) will be informed by the LADO and the setting will act upon the advice given to ensure that any investigation is not jeopardised.
- The setting will notify Ofsted of a significant event
- It may be necessary for the employer to suspend the alleged perpetrator. Suspension is a neutral act to allow a thorough and fair investigation.
- If it is agreed that the matter is not a child protection case, the setting will investigate the matter themselves, gaining HR advice as required.

The setting will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the setting and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant agencies, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and included in references where applicable. For further information, refer to the setting's safer recruitment policy.

Bruising in pre-mobile babies

All staff should have a knowledge base and action strategy for the assessment, management and referral of pre-mobile babies who present with bruising or otherwise suspicious marks. Cambridge & Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board have a protocol for use by professionals which can can accessed here:

https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/procedures/bruising-in-pre-mobile-babies-a-protocol-for-assessment-management-and-referral-by-professionals/

Safer Eating:

- Whilst children are eating there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.
- Before a child is admitted to the setting the provider must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has, and any special health requirements. This information must be shared by the provider with all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food. At each mealtime and snack time providers

must be clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets all the requirements for each child.

- The setting will have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers and, where appropriate, health professionals to develop allergy action plans for managing any known allergies and intolerances. This information must be kept up to date by the provider and shared with all staff. Providers should refer to the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) allergy action plan. Providers must ensure that all staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time, especially during the introduction of solid foods which is sometimes called complementary feeding or weaning. Providers should refer to the NHS advice on food allergies: Food allergy - NHS (www.nhs.uk) and treatment of anaphylaxis: Anaphylaxis - NHS (www.nhs.uk).
- The setting must have ongoing discussions with parents and/or carers about the stage their child is at in regard to introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with. Assumptions must not be made based on age. Providers must prepare food in a suitable way for each child's individual developmental needs, working with parents and/or carers to help children move on to the next stage at a pace right for the child. The NHS has some advice providers should refer to: Weaning - Start for Life - NHS (www.nhs.uk).
- The setting must prepare food in a way to prevent choking. This guidance on food safety for young children: Food safety - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK (education.gov.uk) includes advice on food and drink to avoid, how to reduce the risk of choking and links to other useful resources for early years providers.
- Babies and young children should be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair while eating. Where possible there should be a designated eating space where distractions are minimised.
- Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Choking can be completely silent, therefore, it is important for providers to be alert to when a child may be starting to choke. Where possible, providers should sit facing children whilst they eat, so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- When a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, providers should record details of where and how the child choked and ensure parents and/or carers are made aware. The records should be reviewed periodically to identify if there are trends or common features of incidents that could be addressed to reduce the risk of choking. Appropriate action should be taken to address any identified concerns.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Ladybird Playgroup Thriplow CIO	
Held on (date)	
Signed on *behalf* of the Ladybird Playgroup Committee	
Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson etc.)	
Signed by Playgroup Leader/Deputy	
Name of Playgroup Leader/Deputy	

Useful contacts

Children's Social Care:

Contact Centre (for telephone referrals)	0345 045 5203
Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours)	01733 234724
Early Help Hub	01480 376666
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01223 727967
Ofsted	0300 123 1231
Senior Adviser Intervention and Safeguarding (Gemma Hope)	01223 714760
Early Years service	earlyyears.service@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Support Line:	0800 0280285

Safeguarding Flowchart

September 2025

Safeguarding concern or concern about a child's welfare

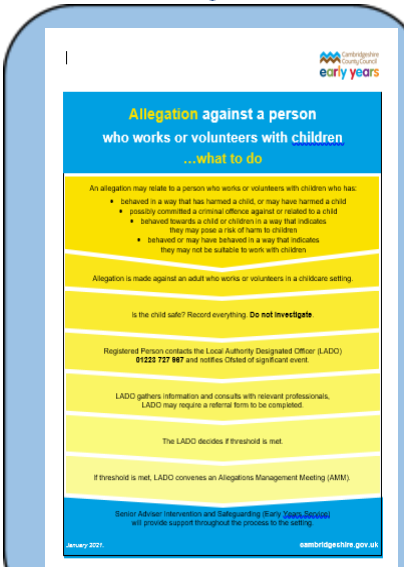
Concern logged and passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection (DSL)

DSL will decide what action to take, which may include a referral to Children's Social Care **0345 045 5203 & Written referral form completed on SGPB page**

If the DSL is unavailable or not contactable, for any reason, and you have immediate concerns about a child's welfare, contact Children's Social Care: **0345 045 5203**

Allegation made against member of staff

Follow the Allegation against a person who works or volunteers with children Flow Chart and Guidance (Jan 2021)



No safeguarding concern, but emerging needs of the child indicate that additional services or support may be required

Discuss with the setting manager or DSL

Manager/SENCO/DSL will consider completing an Early Help Assessment (EHA) after gaining parental consent and contacting the Early Help Hub for further advice: **01480 376666**