

Noah's Ark Safeguarding Policy

Definition of safeguarding

In relation to children and young people, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined in 'Working together to safeguard children' as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Statutory Duty

Noah's Ark has a statutory duty under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts, to safeguard and promote the welfare of every child. We comply with the procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee. It is this group's policy to contact the relevant department i.e. Children, Schools and Families, if there are concerns about a child's welfare. The child's confidentiality will be respected.

The Children Act 1989 promotes the view that all children and their parents should be considered as individuals and that family structures, culture, religion, ethnic origins and other characteristics should be respected. Local authorities should ensure they support and promote fundamental British values, of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 contains a duty on specified authorities in England, Wales and Scotland to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from:

- **neglect**
- **physical abuse**
- **sexual abuse**
- **emotional abuse**
- bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- peer-on-peer abuse, such as sexual violence and harassment
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- child criminal exploitation, including county lines
- serious violent crime

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- risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying; the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, for example 'sexting'
- teenage relationship abuse
- upskirting (a criminal offence; see [dictionary definition](#) for explanation)
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- domestic abuse
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- poor parenting
- homelessness
- so-called honour-based violence
- witchcraft
- breast ironing
- other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, learners and vulnerable adults

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children, learners and vulnerable adults from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- children's and learners' health and safety and well-being, including their mental health
- meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children and learners with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care and emotional well-being
- online safety, including issues associated with technology and a user's access to content, contact with others and behavioural issues
- appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and learners' security, taking into account the local context
- prevent duty

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms-physical, emotional and sexual as well as neglect.
- As well as threats to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial

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threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including: exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking; online abuse; teenage relationship abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Extremist groups make use of the internet to radicalise and recruit and to promote extremist materials. Any potential harmful effects to individuals identified as vulnerable to extremist ideologies or being drawn into terrorism should also be considered.

- 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.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key worker makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the leader who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored securely.
- Anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare should make a referral to local authority children's social care and should do so immediately if there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so. Practitioners who make a referral should always follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the response.
- The team will take great care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.

Staff

All staff must obtain a Disclosure and Barring Services check (DBS) and join the update service. This is completed through the managers of Noah's Ark.

Exclude known abusers

It will be made clear to applicants for posts within Noah's Ark that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

When all applications are in, the managers of Noah's Ark will meet with the applicants individually for informal interviews. Two references will be requested and evidence of their qualifications. The references will also ask for the applicants number of health days off and on how many occasions. The date, time, duration and details of the interview will be recorded. Applicants will be asked to provide a full employment history and questions will be asked about any gaps in employment. Applicants will be asked to bring forms of identity to the interview, such as a passport/driving licence and NI number. The job descriptions and any employment issues will be discussed. Noah's Ark will then appoint the best person for the vacancy. An enhanced DBS check will be carried out on the successful candidate and they will be asked to join the update service if they are not already signed up to it.

For the protection of Noah's Ark staff the following guidelines have been agreed:

- Always tell the Supervisor you are taking a child to the toilet.
- Keep the doors open when supervising a child going to the toilet
- Encourage, but never assist a child to wipe themselves.
- Change a child in the toilet area with the doors open. Changing a child's pants should be done quietly and discreetly where other adults are around

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- Never insist that a child who is wet gets changed or replaces clothes she/he has taken off. To do so will involve you manhandling that child or causing stress/tantrum, this could be misconstrued.
- If a child soils himself or his clothes badly and is willing to be helped and is not unduly upset **tell a colleague that you are changing a child**. Otherwise you must leave them and ring the parent/carer and ask them to come in.
- 2 staff to be present when checking a child's body for injury, therefore having to remove some clothes
- **ONLY STAFF WHO HAVE OBTAINED AN ENHANCED DISCLOSURE CAN TAKE A CHILD TO THE TOILET.**
- Staff must not use their mobile phone in the main room or where children are present. Mobiles should be kept in bags or in the staff members drawer.
- Only kindles may be used to take pictures of the children and these must remain on site.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know about staff or volunteer action within Noah's Ark, our volunteer and student policy is available.
- We follow the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Committee when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Children's, Schools and Families dept – telephone number at the end and LADO
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation: this is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.
- (please refer to our whistleblowing policy)

Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from Noah's Ark or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we will notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in Noah's Ark to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Staff refresh their safeguarding training annually
- Staff regularly review their knowledge/training with regards to FGM, Prevent, British values and online safety etc
- ***When needed please refer to the Epidemic and Pandemic policy for the relevant training needed**

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children. So that they may grow to be 'strong, resilient, and listened to' and so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe including how to say safe online.

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- We create within Noah's Ark a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- Offers reassurance to the child;
- Listens to the child; and
- Gives reassurance that she or he will take action but never give false promises

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures: Staff make a record of:

- The child's name
- The child's address
- The age of the child
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure
- The exact words spoken by the child as far as possible
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time: and
- The names of any other person present at the time.
- Safeguarding lead will then report to children's services

These records are signed and dated and kept in the locked filing cabinet.

All members of the Noah's Ark team know the procedures for recording and reporting.

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 local Area Safeguarding Children Committee does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform the parents.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee
- in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children's Committee.

First Aid

- All staff are to hold a 12 hour Paediatric First Aid Certificate. ***When needed please refer to the DfE or Ofsted if these guidelines temporarily change or training is not possible eg. Covid-19**
- For most situations only gauze pads and water may be used to clean any cuts or grazes. Parents' specific permission is needed when using ointment for bee or nettle stings, the Accident Book must be signed.
- A situation may occur when it may be necessary to administer adrenalin via epi-pen to a child experiencing an anaphylactic attack due to a severe allergic reaction. This injection is only given with prior permission from the parents should such an emergency arise. Staff will have had training in how to use an epi-pen.

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Guidelines for Parent and Volunteer Helpers

- Please do not take any child to the toilet other than your own. If another child enters the toilet area, please alert a member of staff
- Please keep any personal bags/coats in the kitchen.
- Please do not keep your mobile phone with you. If required in the room, please place it in the kitchen . Should you need to make a personal call, please do so in the quiet room when children are not present.

Parent protection

To avoid any misunderstanding or accusations, parents/carers should only play with the children in full view of staff and other adults. If a child is extra friendly or affectionate it would be wise to encourage that child to join in another activity with different children and adults. No parent/carer should take children to the toilet unless the child is their own.

Support to families

- Noah's Ark believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- Noah's Ark makes clear to all parents its role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local social services department.
- Noah's Ark continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Safeguarding plan as set out by Children's, Schools and families in relation to Noah's Ark designated role and tasks in supporting the child and family.
- Should a child come into Noah's Ark with a visible injury, staff will enquire of the incident surrounding it. Both the injury and the explanation will be recorded in the accident book. This ensures the parent is aware the injury did not occur at Noah's Ark during the morning. This is dated, signed by the parent/ carer and a member of staff*. The child will be monitored for further injuries
- ***When needed please refer to the Epidemic and Pandemic policy**
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children's Committee.

Accident Book

This needs to be signed by leaders and parents in ink should an accident occur. "If it's worth mentioning to the parent, then it should be recorded."

The accident book should also be used to record a child who arrives at school with an injury. This ensures that the parent is aware that it was not caused whilst at school.

***When needed please refer to the Epidemic and Pandemic policy**

Incidents

Any significant event or change must be reported to Ofsted on an online reporting form via this link -

- https://ofstedonline.ofsted.gov.uk/ofsted/Ofsted_Early_Years_Notification.ofml

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Reasons for notification include:

- any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children on the premises (3.8 child protection EYFS 2017)
- death of a child (3.51 accident or injury EYFS 2017)
- serious accident, injury or illness of child (including food poisoning – Food and Drink 3.49) (3.51 accident or injury EYFS 2017)
- event likely to affect the suitability of the early years provider or any person who cares for or in regular contact with children on the premises to look after children (3.77 changes that must be notified to Ofsted EYFS2017).

TIME FOR ACTION

As we have a legal obligation to respond to any child abuse, the Supervisor for the session must contact Denise and Claire and together they will discuss an action plan and if to call LADO or Children's services.

If allegation is made against a member of staff, they can contact Claire or Denise or directly contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) 01992 556936 or 01992 556935

Our main person to contact with any issues is Claire Moffatt or Denise Shaw

Contact details – info@noahsarkharpenden.co.uk

Tel – 07984 554536

Our designated person for Child Protection is:- Claire Moffatt or Denise Shaw

Children's services – 0300 123 4043

NSPCC – 0808 800 5000

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board – contact details:

HSCB Office

Room 127

County Hall

Hertford

Hertfordshire

SG13 8DF

Telephone: 01992 588757

Fax: 01992 588201

Email: admin.hscb@hertfordshire.gov.uk

www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk

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