

EXPLORERS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Name	Safeguarding Children and Staff Behaviour
No. of pages	6 + 1

Child protection

Statement of Intent:

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Explorers Pre-school.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect and ensure the welfare and wellbeing of all children in our care
- Provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Explorers pre-school intends to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. We are committed to practice in a way that protects all children in our care.

Legal Framework:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- The Children's Acts 1989 and 2004 (Every Child Matters)
- Care Standards Act 2010
- Protection of Children's Act 1999
- Human Rights Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offenders Act 2003
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 2018)
- Prevent Duty 2015

Other key documents:

- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (August 2016)
- Effective Support for Children and Families in Somerset V2 Feb 2017
- Early Years guidance to inform policies in response to the Prevent Duty June 2016
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021
- Keeping children safe in education 2020 (updated 2021)

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Anna Swinburn

Committee Safeguarding Officer is Kelly Groves

1 Safer Recruitment

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

All applicants for posts within Explorers, whether voluntary or paid will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide at least two references. All such references will be followed up before a decision is made.

In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.

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

In accordance with Somerset County Council regulations, all appointed staff will undergo a (DBS) to verify their suitability to work with children, and all members of the committee will have a DBS check to ensure that no unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.

All staff will complete a staff disqualification declaration form.

2 Staff Training

We seek out training opportunities for all staff members in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs of possible physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. All staff are aware of the local authority's guidance for making referrals.

All staff are told the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

We ensure that all staff, volunteers and students are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.

Training is undertaken to keep all staff and committee members updated of important information / procedures and to ensure that we are able to recognise the signs of possible abuse.

The designated safeguarding leads have access to the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Board Effective Support for Children and Families in Somerset threshold document to read to ensure that they are familiar and know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns within the Pre-School. All staff are aware of the Child Protection Record File.

We are aware of the advice on the Department for Education “The Prevent Duty” documentation issued in June 2016.

3 Supervision

Staff have supervision meetings every term with our preschool supervisor, more frequently if needed. The preschool supervisor has a supervision meeting with the committee members at least annually but on request more frequently. These meetings offer the opportunity for discussion, particularly concerning children’s development, safeguarding and well-being.

4 Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

Explorers will ensure that all parents/carers/guardians are aware of how to complain about staff or volunteers within Explorers, which may include allegations of abuse.

We follow guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting has abused a child.

We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting may have taken place or are taking place by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

The committee has a duty to contact Children’s Social care for guidance and follow their advice. To contact the Somerset Direct and Somerset Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to get advice on next steps. We understand we must make contact with the LADO within 1 working day following the allegation being reported. We contact Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224. Ofsted will also be informed detailing what measures have taken place.

Explorers will co-operate fully with any investigation carried out by Social services and the Police.

Any member of staff accused of abuse will be suspended on full pay for the duration of the investigation. This policy is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident took place, but to protect the member of staff, children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, Explorers will notify the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), so that their name may be included on the list for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

5 Mobile Phones, Cameras and Digital Devices

Mobile Parents/carers/guardians will be asked for written permission for staff to take photographs in the pre-school setting or on outings etc.

Photographs will only be used within the setting (children's records, wall pictures etc.) and will be printed and then deleted from camera memory/disc.

Parents/carers/guardians may be able to take photographs on outings etc., if they acquire permission from other parents/carers/guardians of any other children included in the shot.

Photographs should not be posted on social networking sites.

All staff, volunteers, parents & carers will have their mobile phones locked away for every session and are not permitted to use them on the premises. The pre-school phone may be used in emergencies.

Please also see [Confidentiality Policy](#)

6 Child Protection

Explorers are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse.

We understand that abuse of children can happen in different forms, physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.

When children are suffering from the above forms of abuse, this may be demonstrated by the things children say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through a change in their appearance, behaviour or in their play.

Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person will make a dated record in our concerns record and will discuss this with the designated person. We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care and cooperate fully in any investigation they make. Staff will make sure they do not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, ie ask a child a leading question.

7 Reporting Concerns

When a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), or observes signs that gives cause for concern (eg a change in behaviour, unexplained bruising, marks or signs or possible abuse or neglect), that member of staff will:

- Listen to the child and offer reassurance
- Not question the child
- Make a written record of the observation or disclosure, including
 - The date and time of disclosure or observation
 - Exact words used by child as far as possible
 - The name(s) of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time
 - The name(s) of any other person present at the time
- These records are signed and dated and will be separate from the usual on-going records of a child's progress and development. The record will be kept securely and confidentially.

Making a Referral to Local Authority Social Care team

Explorers aim to liaise with the Registering Authority and Social Care Departments in order to work together swiftly and efficiently in the event of an emergency.

The Children's Social Care team number to report to is 0300 123 2224 (out of office hours 0300 123 2327).

All investigations/suspicions will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.

The committee chairperson may be informed.

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 Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In this case, the investigating officers will inform the parents.

Explorers operates in accordance with Local Authority guidelines. Confidential records/reports may be forwarded on to Children's Social Care Department if staff have suspicions of abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – IS ILLEGAL

If the Young person is at immediate risk – 999 Police (Emergency)

If the young person is NOT at immediate risk – 101 Police (Non-Emergency) FGM Helpline 0800 0283550

Extremism and Radicalisation

We take 'Prevent' duty seriously and recognise that safeguarding against extremism and radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability, it is about protecting children and young people from being groomed and exploited by others. See flow chart of referral.

County Lines, Cross Borders, Gangs, Trafficking and Cuckooing

Any activity that deems to be suspicious or involve drug dealing/crime/exploitation should be passed to the police 101.

A request for involvement to the Children's Social Care/Police is needed if the child is at immediate risk.

Child Sexual Exploitation

This involves young people being involved in exploitation situations, context and relationships where they receive something e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money as a result of them performing and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Contextual Safeguarding

This is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experience & significant harm beyond their families. It recognises the different relationships that young people form in their community, schools and online. Referral to Police or Children's Social Care.

8 Supporting Families

Explorers will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families, staff and volunteers.

Where abuse is suspected, Explorers will continue to welcome the child and family whilst investigations proceed.

Confidential records relating to a child will be shared with the child's parents/carers/guardians, with the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount.

9 Early Help

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children and their families than reacting later. The referral process for Early Help can be started here

<https://www.somersetchoices.org.uk/family/information-and-advice/help-for-the-family/help-for-parents/early-help/early-help-assessment/>

10 Accidents and Incidents

Please see [Safety Policy and Emergency Policy](#).

11 Staff Behaviour

Confidentiality – all staff and committee members are made aware how imperative confidentiality is. [See confidentiality policy](#).

Power and positions of trust – staff are aware of their position of trust. Explorers uses all security checks available to ensure this position is not exploited. DBS checks are completed every 3 years even for long serving members of staff and committee members.

Giving / Receiving of gifts and favouritism – staff are advised that giving or accepting gifts (with the exception of customary tokens) could be interpreted as a gesture to bribe and groom.

Dress and Appearance – staff are provided with a suitable uniform for the setting.

Social Networking – staff should not be social networking with parents of children attending Explorers. No children who attend Explorers should be discussed at all by staff over social networking sites.

All staff received a code of conduct.

Intimate Care - Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. Adults who have not been registered as 'fit persons' will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet. Only staff or volunteers with full DBS clearance are permitted to accompany children to the toilet. Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

Physical contact - Volunteers, work experience students and parent helpers do not work unsupervised. The layout of Explorers will permit constant supervision of all children.

Behaviour Management – [See Behaviour Management Policy](#)

12 Linked Policies:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Confidentiality Policy
- Emergency Procedures
- Employment and Staff
- Missing Child Procedure
- Recruitment Policy
- Safety Policy and Practice
- Visitors Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health & Hygiene Policy
- Medication Policy

This policy will be reviewed at least annually.

This policy was adopted at an Explorers committee meeting held on

Date: 15/07/2022

Approved by:

Kelly Groves – Chair Person

Anna Swinburn - Supervisor