

Safeguarding and Childcare Protection Policy & Procedure

Clowns Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We are aware that the terminology in Keeping Children Safe in Education refers to ‘pupils or students’ throughout, but we have determined that keeping the term children, in our case, is more accurately reflective of our setting.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior staff managers, paid staff, volunteers, agency staff, students or anyone working with or on behalf of Clowns Nursery. All adults who will be joining the setting, including volunteers and students, will receive this policy prior to starting at the Nursery, and cannot work directly with the children until they have had their safeguarding and behaviour management induction session, which will be held no later than the morning of their first day.

Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding is:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development.
- making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

10 Principles of good Practice

1. Keep clear and detailed records
2. Never make assumptions
3. Always share information
4. Don’t be afraid to challenge decisions
5. Consider convening a multi-agency meeting
6. Clear, concise and consistent communication
7. All need training to work with challenging and evasive parents
8. Support your staff
9. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility
10. Keep listening to the voice of the child

Everybody’s Responsibility: The 5 R’s

- **R**ecognise – be vigilant, know the children you work with and be familiar with types and indicators of abuse
- **R**espond – never ignore concerns, signs or reports related to children’s wellbeing and safety; do not delay your response
- **R**ecord – always make a record of what happened, your observations, any conversations you had with the child/parent/carer/colleague
- **R**eport – always report your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy
- **R**efer – all cases where there is a concern about significant harm or risk thereof must be referred to Children’s Services via the MASH Team. This is usually done by the DSL, but everyone should be familiar

with the process

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse or exploitation online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse or exploitation will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Protect the children who use our services.
2. Provide staff members, volunteers, students and visitors with information and guidance to safeguard children.

Clowns Nursery believes that a child should never experience abuse or exploitation of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

1. The welfare of the child is paramount.
2. All children, parents and carers regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity have a right to equal protection from **all** types of harm or abuse.
3. Some children are additionally susceptible because of their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues (this links in with our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy **13.4.1**). We recognise that some “looked after” children may have suffered abuse or exploitation in the past or may be more susceptible to abuse or exploitation (see **6.1.3**).
4. Working in partnership with children, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children’s welfare.
5. It is of vital importance that we hold a minimum of 2 contact details for each child in our care, for use in case of emergency.
6. that children may occasionally be absent due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances, and we aim to manage all absences promptly, sensitively and in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) safeguarding requirements and KCSIE 2025 guidance, in order to monitor the safety and well-being of all children in our care.

We will seek to keep children safe by:

1. Valuing them, listening to them and respecting them.
2. Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
3. Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training. All Clowns Staff have annual safeguarding in order to keep up with any changes in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) or [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)).
4. Providing annual training for our directors in line with our staff training. Our training seeks to provide them with the knowledge to ensure the safeguarding policies and procedures are effective.
5. Sharing information about child protection, good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
6. Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.

It is a condition of registration with Ofsted that Clowns Nursery reports any case of suspected abuse or exploitation of children to the **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub** within the borough the child resides, along with notification to OFSTED. To contact a duty social worker out of hours Tracy Landy or her deputy would call 020 8359 2000.

All staff are responsible for reporting any concerns that they may have directly to the Nursery Head or her deputy head, who are the Designated Safeguarding Leads. The situation will be discussed, and an agreed plan of action taken. **STAFF MUST NEVER DISCUSS WITH THE PARENT/CARER ANY CONCERNS IN**

RELATION TO CHILD PROTECTION.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Responsibilities

1. Acts as first point of contact for staff to raise any safeguarding or child protection concerns, or alert to any signs or indicators of abuse. In exceptional circumstances the DSL should be available to meet virtually. For example, via platforms such as Zoom or Teams.
Once the information has been given reported to the DSL, the DSL will need to make an informed decision regarding the appropriate subsequent action and consider the order or CAP e.g. PCA. CPA etc. Every case will be different based on the scenario. We must consider these 3 options in any order depending on the concern:
 - Child:** get more information from the child and NOT asking direct questions or ask TED (tell, explain, or describe)
 - Agency:** seek advice contact and share information with relevant outside agencies, such as MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub). MASH - children social services relating to children; LADO - allegations against staff or low level concerns only.
 - Parent:** when to make contact with parent - knowing when to inform them and don't if it puts the child at greater risk. Contact may, for example, be a phone call to arrange for them to attend an in person meeting on the same day, or having the conversation on the phone. This will depend on the situation at the time.
2. Offers support to staff who work with children who are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are aware that they are able to ask for support from the DSL or DSO's if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable when dealing with a safeguarding concern or immediate situation. Support will include the DSL or DSO checking in on any staff member who has had to deal with a disclosure and/or has made a disclosure. Further support can be arranged as required or requested.
3. Ensures relevant members of staff are informed about children who are susceptible
4. Manages allegations, including notifying all the governing bodies (Ofsted, LADO)
5. Staff training through induction, supervisions and appraisal
6. Involvement and attendance at child protection meetings
7. Overall responsibility for Online Safety, although we have also appointed an additional Online Safety Officer. The Online Safety Officer meets with all new staff as part of induction.
8. Review Safeguarding and Childcare Protection Policy and Online Safety Policy annually. This includes reflecting child on child abuse and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
9. Ensure they are able to identify signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation and recognise when it is appropriate to make a referral
10. Have a working knowledge of London Safeguarding Partnerships. This includes knowing how the Partnerships operate, asking for the correct individual before disclosing information, and the format of a child protection conference so that they can attend and contribute when required to do so.
11. Ensure all staff can recognise and report any concerns or allegations about adults' behaviour.
12. Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of concerns, discussions, decisions and / or referrals. This is to include their rationale for those decisions.

Referrals of Child Abuse

If a child arrives with injuries, staff should:

- Ensure immediate medical attention is given if necessary.
- If possible, ask the parent / carer how the injuries on the child occurred.
- Use the Clowns Nursery **Record of Pre-existing Injuries form (6.3.2)** and **Body Chart (6.2.3)** to record the injuries, including diagrams, and discussions and explanations given. Staff should have a witness wherever possible.
- Recording of information is vital to ensure we are able to make an appropriate referral to the **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub – Children's Social Care Services**. Information should be detailed and clear.
- If the staff member suspects the injuries have been caused by assault or by a failure to protect the child, the staff member must tell the Head or Deputy who will (without delay) contact the **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub** within the borough the child resides, along with notification to Ofsted.

Suspicion of Child Abuse

If through conversation or interaction with the child a staff member has cause to suspect physical, sexual or emotional abuse, exploitation or neglect of a child in their care, the procedure below must be followed. It is of the utmost importance when speaking with a child that you use child friendly language, focusing on what the child is saying (e.g. injury or disclosure) by simply asking “What happened to you?” or “What happened here? etc. and give the child TIME to speak freely. If possible, do not interrupt or question the child when they are speaking and under no circumstances, should you ask leading question. For clarification, leading questions are those that require a require a specific response, such as a simple yes/no answer.

- Listen to what the child says. The staff member should be comforting and sympathetic and ensure that the child feels as little responsibility as possible.
- It is vital that the staff member does not make any suggestions to the child regarding how the incident may have happened; therefore, the child must not be questioned except to clarify what he or she has said.
- The staff member should write down exactly what the child says (in their own words) and record which actions are of concern and what the staff member has said in response. The staff member must then sign and date the statement.
- Through observations of the child the practitioner may observe changes in the child’s appearance, demeanour, or clothing, which may suggest a parent’s attempt to change the child’s gender identity.
- The staff member must not make assumptions about whom the allegations may concern. If another member of staff may be involved, then the following procedure would also need to be followed to ensure the safety of the child and other children.
- Inform the member of staff in charge about your suspicion. They will contact the **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub** within the borough the child resides, along with notification to Ofsted, who will offer advice and support whenever possible, however, they will not be responsible for conducting enquiries into the allegation / suspicion.
- Once a child is referred to Children’s Social Care Services, they will make an assessment of the child’s needs.
- Staff members will consider any additional needs the child may have, such as issues with language or SEND.
- The nursery recognises that children can abuse their peers (child on child abuse). Our nursery ethos and the support and behaviour of our staff help to minimise this possibility, but should a child make an allegation of abuse of this nature it will be investigated thoroughly. It is expected that both parties, victim and perpetrator, are to be considered ‘at risk’ and will be supported equally whilst investigations are carried out, and the situation dealt with. If serious, the case will be referred to the MASH team.

Subsequent Action

Following a referral, enquiries will be undertaken by Children’s Social Care Services and possibly the police. Staff may be required to provide statements and attend an initial protection conference.

Confidentiality

Need to know basis – all staff need to be aware that child protection monitoring may be in place without their knowledge and must always raise any concerns with The Head or Deputy Head separately.

If it is considered necessary to report the concerns, the Duty Social Worker and/or police child protection officer will discuss the concerns with the family if necessary. This way the nursery can continue to work with the child.

Allegations Made Against a Staff Member, including supply or bank staff, volunteers, and contractors

In the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, including supply or bank staff, volunteers and contractors, the procedure to be followed is listed below:

- The allegations procedure (appendix 6) should be followed, and all concerns must be made in writing

and addressed to The Head or Deputy Head. Where the concern relates to the Head, staff should report directly to the Deputy Head. If the concern relates to the Deputy Head, it should be reported to the Head. In instances where concerns involve both the Head and Deputy Head, the matter should be escalated to LADO.

- We have an obligation to contact the **Local Authority Designated Officer** within one working day, who will offer advice, guidance, and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of procedures. This must be done before any investigation is started within the nursery.
- The LADO helps co-ordinate information, sharing with the right people, and will also monitor and track an investigation with the aim of resolving it as quickly as possible.
- The allegations will then be discussed with the member of staff and Clowns Nursery procedure discussed in detail. The member of staff against whom the complaint was made will be suspended from duty until the investigation has been carried out satisfactorily. Depending on the allegation a non-contact position may be found within the nursery, with the staff member being supervised.
- The authorities will then notify us of their findings, and a decision would be made by management as to whether the staff member is to be re-instated.

It is important to remember that in the nursery the details of child protection issues are not discussed generally with the staff team. The information is shared on a need-to-know basis. This ensures that the child is not isolated and that the care parent is confident that the crisis is being dealt with without the staff team discussing their personal business.

As part of Safer Recruitment staff must:

- Have two references which we consider satisfactory (one of which must have been from their most recent / current employer) and
- complete a health self-declaration form confirming that they are fit, both physically and mentally, to work with children, and
- have a full, clear status enhanced DBS check before starting work at the nursery. We do also require that the DBS is on the Update Service.
- sign an annual declaration, within which they are to disclose whether they are under any restrictions regarding working with children.

All staff have access to a list of the Regulations and what constitutes a disqualification to enable them to declare honestly and with full knowledge. If something is disclosed, they would then need to apply to Ofsted for a waiver, in order to continue working with children. Whilst awaiting Ofsted's decision the staff member would be placed on supervised duties. If the waiver was not granted, the staff member would be dismissed.

Reporting concerns

If any staff member, student or trainee has concerns about any child with regards to child protection, they must bring their concerns to the attention of the Head or Deputy Head. At this stage the Head or Deputy Head, with the child's key person, will decide on the seriousness of the situation.

A decision will be made to either observe using our observational sheets or make a referral. If observations are being carried out, they should last no longer than four weeks.

The Head will assess the situation and work with local agencies in Barnet such as:

- Local Prevent Co-ordinators
- The Police
- Channel Police
- Ofsted

It is important to note that it is the London Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) that sets out the procedures, but it will be the local agencies that the head would be working with.

Where possible parents will be informed but there may be exceptions. For example, if a child might be put at further risk, or in concerns of possible sexual abuse or exploitation. This is always a matter that is discussed as part of the referral, and the social worker will advise.

Need to know basis: All staff need to be aware that a Child Protection monitoring may be in place without their knowledge and must always raise any concerns with the Head or Deputy Head separately.

Low Level Concerns

Please refer to the ***Low-Level Concerns Policy (5.4)*** for the full policy and procedure regarding low level concerns.

Contact Points

The Department of Education has a dedicated telephone helpline (020 7340 7264). Concerns can also be raised by email to: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Depending on the seriousness of the concern OFSTED should be informed in writing at 'Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD'.

LSP – London Safeguarding Partnership

Contact details for all London boroughs - <https://www.londonscb.gov.uk/london-scb-contacts/>

Barnet

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub – Barnet

020 8359 4066

Out of Hours

020 8359 2000

MASH operates Monday to Thursday 9.00am – 5.15pm and Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub Team

2 Bristol Avenue

Colindale, NW9 4EW

Email: mash@barnet.gov.uk

Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership

Safeguarding Division

Colindale Office

2 Bristol Avenue

Colindale, NW9 4EW

Email: bscp@barnet.gov.uk

Website: <https://thebarnetscp.org.uk>

0-19 Service webpages: www.barnet.gov.uk/0-19

If a crime has been committed or there is an immediate harm, the police will need to be contacted.

Emergency Police

999/112

National Police non-Emergency Number

101

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub – Camden

020 7974 3317

Out of Hours

020 7974 4444

Operation Encompass Domestic Abuse Helpline for staff in educational settings (Monday to Friday, 8am – 1pm)

0204 513 9990

website:

<https://www.operationencompass.org/>

Ofsted

0300 123 1231

Whistleblowing Hotline (8am – 6pm)

0300 123 3155

Email

whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

LADO – Contact Barnet MASH and ask for the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

LADO@barnet.gov.uk

If it involves a member of staff, you need to call the LADO team of the borough in which the member of staff lives. This is in addition to calling the Barnet team.

NSPCC helpline

0800 800 5000

Email

help@nspcc.org.uk

Report online : <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/report/>

Contact the NSPCC helpline or information service for people who work with children to help find the latest policy, practise, research and news on Child Protection and related subjects.

NSPCC FGM Helpline

0800 028 3550

Email

fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

In the event of a serious infringement around online safety, the local police would be contacted

101

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 2000 247

Police Prevent Advice Line

0800 011 3764

Police Prevent Team (referral line: Mon – Fri 8am – 4pm)

0207 601 2442

prevent@cityoflondon.police.uk

NB: Where appropriate we will incorporate children’s awareness of their own safety within our curriculum.

This policy should be viewed in line with: This policy should be viewed in line with: Whistleblowing Policy (5.3), Low Level Concerns Policy and Procedure (5.4), Safeguarding and Childcare Protection Policy and Procedure (6.1.1) and Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidance Information (6.1.2) Online Safety Policy (7.1), Communications and Software Policy (7.1.1), Acceptable Use Agreement (7.2), Computer Access Policy (7.1.3), Mobile Phone, Electronic Device and Wearable Technology Policy (7.2), Photography, Video and Imaging Policy (7.3), Confidentiality and Sharing of Information Policy (7.4)

Any allegations of ICT abuse or other unlawful activity should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Head, who will ensure procedures outlined in this Safeguarding and Childcare Protection Policy are followed with immediate effect.

Updated and reviewed 3 February 2026