

## 3.1 Safeguarding – policy and procedures

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. We follow statutory legislation as follows:

- The Children Act 1989
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Children Act 2004
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 – Prevent Duty
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)

We also take guidance from:

West Sussex Safeguarding Children’s Partnership <https://www.westsussexscp.org.uk/>

- Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures  
<http://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/page/contents>
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>  
Keeping Children safe in Education  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>  
Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

## Contact Information

**Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Anita Simmons

**Deputy DSL:** Debbie Simmonds

**Prevent Duty Lead:** Anita Simmons

**Heather Playgroup Chairperson:** Katie Jones

## West Sussex Contacts

<b>Children's Social Care</b>
Integrated Front Door (IFD)

Anyone who has concerns about the welfare of a child can contact a single countywide phone number, known as the Integrated Front door (IFD). Monday to Friday between 9am-5pm: 01403 229900

At all other times, including nights, weekends and bank holidays, contact the 'out of hours' emergency team: 0330 222 6664

Email: [WSchildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:WSchildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk)

### **Designated Professionals West Sussex**

Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children: Jo Tomlinson - Email: [sxccg.safeguarding@nhs.net](mailto:sxccg.safeguarding@nhs.net)

### **Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO)**

<https://socialcareportal.westsussex.gov.uk/s4s/FormDetails/FillForm?formId=445>

### **Police**

Safeguarding Investigations Unit: Telephone 101 and ask for the Safeguarding Investigations Unit or in an emergency dial 999

**Community Safety Lead Officer** (Beverley Knight) 0330 222 4223

**OFSTED:** 0300 123 1231 [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**West Sussex SCP (Safeguarding Children Partnership)** <http://www.westsussexscp.org.uk>

**Prevent Contacts:** [Beverly.knight@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Beverly.knight@westsussex.gov.uk)  
[channel@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:channel@sussex.pnn.police.uk) (For Referrals to Channel)

Our safeguarding policy is based on three key commitments:

- To build a culture of safety in which children are protected from harm.
- To respond promptly to all incidents and concerns of abuse and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with procedures set down in “*What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused*” (HM Gov 2015) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>)
- To promote awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training programs for adults and to empower young children through our curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

In order to achieve this we will:

### **Exclude known abusers**

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

All applicants for work within the Playgroup, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide two references. 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 applicants, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the Playgroup is confident that the applicant can be entrusted with children.

### **Seek and supply training**

- We will seek training opportunities for all adults involved in the Group to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse. All staff are trained in line with the Criteria set out in Annex C of the EYFS (November 2025). Our training provider is.....West Sussex County Council and Noodlenow Safeguarding training is refreshed annually as needed and renewed every two years. The designated safeguarding lead ensures support, advice and guidance for all staff to meet their safeguarding responsibilities by:
  - Regular supervision and 1:1 Team briefings, bulletins, group supervision, reviewing safeguarding procedures together, (please add or delete as appropriate)

All practitioners hold a valid pediatric first aid certificate.

- We have a 'designated safeguarding lead person', who is responsible for carrying out child, young person, or adult protection procedures. *(It is recommended that this person is the setting manager.)*
- The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for overseeing all child, young person or adult protection matters.
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures they have links with statutory and voluntary organisations regarding safeguarding children.
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures they have received appropriate training on child protection matters and that all staff are adequately informed and/or trained to recognise child abuse in the categories of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and neglect.
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures all staff are aware of the additional vulnerabilities

that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture and that these receive full consideration in child, young person, or adult protection related matters.

- The 'designated safeguarding lead ensures that staff are aware and receive training in social factors affecting children's vulnerability including, but not limited to:
  - social exclusion
  - domestic violence and controlling or coercive behaviour
  - mental illness
  - drug and alcohol abuse (substance misuse)
  - parental/carer learning disability
  - radicalisation
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures that staff are aware and receive training in other ways that children may suffer significant harm and stay up to date with relevant contextual safeguarding matters:
  - abuse of disabled children
  - fabricated or induced illness
  - child abuse linked to spirit possession
  - sexually exploited children
  - children who are trafficked and/or exploited
  - female genital mutilation
  - extra-familial abuse and threats
  - children involved in violent offending, with gangs and county lines.

The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures they are adequately informed in vulnerable adult protection matters.

### **Prevent abuse by means of good practice**

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside - for example, for time out after behaviour which needs improvement - will leave the door ajar.

All adults who work regularly with the children will be checked via the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service). Any visiting parent or temporary voluntary helper will not take children to the toilet or be left unsupervised.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of personal freedom 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.

### **Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse**

Changes in children's behaviour / appearance will be recorded and investigated. Parents will normally be the first point of reference, though suspicions will be referred as appropriate to West Sussex Children's Social Care.

All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the practitioner and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), so maintaining confidentiality.

### **Keep records**

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, 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, timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour / appearance, without comment or interpretation; where possible, the exact words spoken by the child; the dated name and signature of the recorder.

Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people in the Playgroup other than the DSL and Designated Deputies.

### **Photographing injuries**

We do not take photographs of children's injuries. Reasons include, but are not limited to :

- parents/carers must be fully aware and in agreement with the specific use of any photographs of their child,
- recording injuries on a body map is sufficient,
- it is the role of police and/or forensic or medical photographers to photograph injuries as evidence, and
- taking photographs of a child's body could lead to staff in a setting being accused of inappropriate behaviour, particularly if the injury is an area of the body that would normally be covered by clothing.

If a parent requests a photograph of any injury to their child, while they are at the setting, express permission must be obtained from the parent in writing before any photographs are taken.

### **Liaise with other bodies**

The Playgroup operates in accordance with Local Authority guidelines. Confidential records kept on children about whom the Playgroup is anxious will be shared with the Social Services Department if the Playgroup feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided. We will work in partnership with other agencies involved for the best interests of the child.

### **Making Referrals**

If a referral on the child to **West Sussex Integrated Front Door (IFD)** is considered necessary, permission from the child's parent/carer will be sought first, provided that this does not place the child in greater danger. If the parent or carer does not grant permission, staff will seek advice from IFD as to the best course of action. Concerns about children will be referred to West Sussex County Council Children's Social Care, via IFD. Contact details on page 1. A referral will initially be made via a telephone call, this will be followed up in writing within 24 hours of the referral being made. The Group will maintain on-going contact with Children's Social Care, and other agencies involved in the child's care. (See also our Policies on Integrated Working and Information Sharing)

All staff understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations and the circumstances under which they may share information about you and your child with other agencies.

### **Support families**

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

Where abuse at home is suspected the Playgroup will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed. With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount, the Playgroup will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

*All staff members regularly attend child protection awareness courses.*

### **Procedure for allegations being made against Playgroup staff:**

All allegations made against staff are taken seriously and will be investigated in line with our Whistleblowing Policy. It may be necessary to suspend the staff member during the investigation. All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with children.

Heather Playgroup takes guidance from the West Sussex County Council's **Local Safeguarding Children Partnership's** procedures. A copy of this available online (hyperlink on page 1.)

All staff are urged to consider how they can safeguard their own position in light of the advice without giving up important personal principles of care and trust.

Allegations against members of staff or volunteers should be referred to West Sussex LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) see name and phone number on page 1. The Playgroup Chairperson should also be informed.

## **Prevent Duty**

The Government has produced statutory guidance to make clear the need for schools to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools.

([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf))

The Designated Safeguarding lead will undertake Prevent awareness training in order to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation, and to enable early identification of anyone at risk of radicalisation.

Playgroup will encourage pupils to develop positive character traits through PSED, such as resilience, determination, self-esteem, and confidence. We will teach children to recognise and manage risk, make safer choices, and recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing.

Playgroup will not host events or speakers supportive of or conducive to terrorism.

Staff will be encouraged to share any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremist views, behaviour or material within the Playgroup.

Monitoring of our online presence will ensure that any references to the Playgroup online are referred for action if they have links to terrorist or extremist material.

For emergency situations, the normal safeguarding procedure will be used. Referrals can be made via West Sussex IFD or by direct referral to Channel (see page 1). A referral form is available in the Safeguarding File,

## **FGM**

On 31 October 2015 a new duty was introduced that requires health and social care professionals

and teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in girls aged under 18 to the police. If staff are concerned that a child has had or is at risk of FGM they will follow the normal safeguarding procedures, making a referral to IFD and if appropriate contact the police using 101. Staff can access information and support via the West Sussex SCP website, including a helpline for FGM provided by the NSPCC.

***Policy reviewed December 2025***

***Policy review Date December 2026***