

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Effective from September 2026

Setting	Hemingbrough Pre-School
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Summer Andrews, Manager
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jane Dodsworth, Deputy Manager
Committee safeguarding lead	Gemma Howard
Ofsted registration number	EY400250

1 Purpose and commitment

Hemingbrough Pre-School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, students, volunteers and committee members must remain vigilant, listen to children, act promptly on concerns and follow this policy. The child's welfare and best interests are always the primary consideration.

Safeguarding includes providing help when needs first emerge; protecting children from maltreatment inside or outside the home, including online; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring safe and effective care; working with parents and family networks where this is safe and in the child's best interests; and taking action so that children achieve the best possible outcomes.

2 Scope and statutory framework

This policy applies to all staff, students, volunteers, committee members and anyone working on behalf of the Pre-School. It should be read alongside the setting's related policies and procedures.

- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and threshold guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, used as relevant safeguarding good practice for the setting
- Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the Prevent duty, the Equality Act 2010, UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018

3 Safeguarding principles

- Children are listened to, taken seriously and supported to express their wishes and feelings in ways appropriate to their age and communication needs.
- Safeguarding practice is inclusive, anti-discriminatory and alert to the effects of race, culture, language, faith, disability, SEND, health needs, family circumstances, poverty and other inequalities.
- Concerns are considered in context. Staff remain professionally curious and do not rely on a single incident, explanation or source of information.
- Information is shared lawfully and proportionately when this is necessary to protect a child. Fear of sharing information must not delay safeguarding action.
- Parents and carers are involved openly wherever it is safe to do so. They will not be informed before a referral where doing so could place a child or another person at greater risk, prejudice an investigation or lead to evidence being lost.

4 Roles and responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL leads safeguarding practice and provides ongoing support, advice and guidance to practitioners. The DSL will:

- ensure concerns are responded to, recorded, referred and escalated appropriately
- maintain secure safeguarding records and chronologies
- liaise with North Yorkshire Children's Social Care, the LADO, Ofsted, police and other agencies
- support staff and ensure safeguarding induction, training and supervision are effective
- promote a safe organisational culture and keep policies and local procedures under review
- ensure the voice and lived experience of the child inform decisions

The Deputy DSL carries out these responsibilities when the DSL is unavailable. All staff remain responsible for taking immediate action if a child may be at risk; they must not wait for the DSL if delay could place a child in danger.

Committee

The committee ensures that statutory safeguarding duties are met, policies are reviewed and staff are appropriately checked, trained and supported. The Chair is the point of contact where a concern or allegation relates to the DSL or Manager.

5 Recognising abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns

Staff are trained to recognise physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. They must also remain alert to concerns including:

- domestic abuse and coercive control; child-on-child abuse; sexual harassment or harmful sexual behaviour
- child sexual or criminal exploitation, county lines, trafficking and modern slavery
- online abuse, grooming, harmful content and the sharing or creation of nude or semi-nude images
- female genital mutilation, honour-based abuse, forced marriage and abuse linked to faith or belief
- radicalisation and extremism; fabricated or induced illness; young caring responsibilities
- mental ill health, parental substance misuse, parental mental ill health, homelessness and other family pressures
- children with SEND, disabilities or medical conditions whose signs of harm may be missed, misunderstood or attributed to their needs
- persistent or unexplained absence and any pattern suggesting a child or family may need support or protection

A child may communicate harm through words, play, behaviour, appearance or changes in presentation. Staff must never promise confidentiality, ask leading questions or investigate. They should use open prompts such as Tell, Explain and Describe, record the child's exact words and report the concern immediately.

6 Responding to and recording concerns

- Listen calmly, reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling and avoid expressing shock or disbelief.
- Make an accurate, factual, timed and dated record as soon as possible. Record observations, injuries, actions, decisions and the child's exact words. Do not include assumptions as facts.
- Report the concern to the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately. Where neither is available, or immediate action is required, contact Children's Social Care or the police directly.
- The DSL records the decision, action taken and reason for referral, non-referral or escalation. A chronology is maintained so patterns are not missed.
- If concerns remain after advice or referral, the DSL will follow up and escalate in line with North Yorkshire procedures. Professional disagreement must not leave a child without protection.

7 Family Help and multi-agency working

When needs first emerge, the setting will work with the child, parents, family network and relevant professionals to offer or coordinate Family Help or early support. Consent will normally be sought for Family Help. Consent is not required to share information where a child may be at risk of harm or where another lawful safeguarding basis applies.

The setting will contribute to assessments, Team Around the Family meetings, child in need or child protection processes and other multi-agency work. Plans will identify what is working well, what staff are worried about, the child's views, agreed actions, responsible people and review dates.

8 Child attendance and unexplained absence

Attendance is monitored as part of safeguarding. Parents must notify the setting of absence and give a reason. If a child is absent without notification, the setting will begin contact attempts by 9:30am on the first day, using parents and alternative emergency contacts.

Staff will consider the child's vulnerability, family circumstances and any patterns or trends. Where contact cannot be made, absence is prolonged or concern increases, the DSL will seek advice or refer to Children's Social Care and may request a police welfare check. Actions and reasons are recorded. The full procedure is set out in the Attendance Policy.

9 Allegations and concerns about adults

Any concern or allegation about a staff member, student, volunteer, committee member or other person working with children must be reported immediately to the DSL or Manager. If the concern relates to the DSL or Manager, it must be reported to the Chair. The recipient must contact the North Yorkshire LADO without delay and submit a notification within one working day where the threshold may be met.

The LADO threshold includes an adult who may have harmed a child, may have committed a relevant criminal offence, may pose a risk of harm, or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may be unsuitable to work with children. Staff must not investigate before taking LADO advice, but immediate steps may be taken to secure children's safety.

Ofsted will be notified of any allegation of harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children at the premises, together with the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 14 days after the allegation is made. The threshold is harm, not only serious harm.

Concerns that do not appear to meet the harm threshold will still be recorded, reviewed and addressed under the staff conduct or low-level concerns procedure. Patterns and transferable risks outside work will be considered.

10 Whistleblowing

All staff, students and volunteers must raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice. Concerns may be reported to the DSL, Manager or Chair. The person receiving the concern will acknowledge it, make a written record, protect the child, decide whether external referral is required and tell the person raising it how the concern will be handled, subject to confidentiality.

Where the concern relates to the conduct of an adult working or volunteering with children and the LADO threshold may be met, the Manager or Chair must contact the North Yorkshire LADO without delay. The Duty LADO can be contacted for advice on 01609 798005; notification forms must be submitted securely within one working day to lado@northyorks.gov.uk.

No person will suffer detrimental treatment for raising a genuine concern in good faith. If someone feels unable to raise a concern internally, or believes it has not been addressed, they may contact Ofsted or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk.

11 Safer recruitment, DBS and suitability

- Recruitment includes identity and qualification checks, employment history, interview and at least one written reference obtained and verified directly by the setting.

- No new employee or regular volunteer will begin work until the required enhanced DBS and barred-list check has been received. No unchecked person will have unsupervised contact with children.
- The setting records qualifications, identity checks, vetting, references, the DBS reference number, the date obtained and who completed the check.
- Staff and prospective staff must disclose information that may affect their suitability, including arrests, charges, convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings, whether arising before or during employment.
- Relevant overseas checks will be considered for anyone who has lived or worked abroad. Suitability is kept under review through supervision, conduct expectations and required disclosures.
- Where the legal criteria are met, the setting will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

12 Online safety, devices and screen use

Children are supervised when using technology. Any screen use must be purposeful, age appropriate, limited, accessible and balanced with play, conversation, movement, creativity and outdoor learning. The setting has regard to the Department for Education's screen-use guidance for early years settings.

Staff use only approved setting devices and accounts for photographs, videos, learning records and communication. Personal devices must not be used to photograph or record children. Any online safeguarding concern is reported to the DSL and managed in line with this policy, the Mobile Phones, Cameras and Electronic Devices Policy and the Screen Use Policy.

13 Information sharing, confidentiality and records

Safeguarding records are separate from general learning records, accurate, secure and accessible only to authorised people. Records include concerns, disclosures, injuries, decisions, consultations, referrals, actions, outcomes and reasons. Records are transferred securely when a child moves setting or school.

Information is shared on a need-to-know basis in line with safeguarding duties and data protection law. Safeguarding information may be shared without consent where necessary and proportionate to protect a child or another person. Confidentiality must never be used as a reason not to act.

14 Training, induction and supervision

All practitioners receive safeguarding training appropriate to children aged 0 to 5 and consistent with Annex C of the EYFS. Training is renewed at least every two years. The setting provides updates and considers annual refresher training within that period so staff remain confident about changes, local procedures and concerns arising in practice.

Induction covers safeguarding and child protection, reporting and recording, whistleblowing, staff conduct, allegations, online safety, emergency evacuation and health and safety. Supervision gives staff a confidential opportunity to discuss children's welfare, professional practice, training needs and any concerns.

15 Key safeguarding contacts

Service	Current route
Immediate danger	Police 999
North Yorkshire professional safeguarding advice	MAST consultation line 01609 535070, 10am to 4pm weekdays
Professional referral	North Yorkshire Council professional online referral form
Emergency Duty Team	0300 131 2 131 outside office hours
North Yorkshire LADO	01609 798005 lado@northyorks.gov.uk
Police non-emergency	101

Ofsted	0300 123 1231 and current online notification route
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk

16 Monitoring, review and adoption

The DSL and committee will review this policy annually and sooner following statutory or local procedural change, a safeguarding incident, an allegation, learning from review or a change in the setting's circumstances. Staff will be briefed on changes and sign to confirm that they have read and understood the current policy.

Manager	Summer Andrews
Chairperson	Gemma Howard
Adopted at committee meeting	
Review date	September 2027