

St Albans Steiner Kindergarten

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

The St Albans Steiner Kindergarten will work with children, parents/carers and the community to ensure the rights and safety of the children and to give them the very best start in life. We are alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home, in Kindergarten or anywhere else. This Policy applies to all staff, including: management, the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, cover staff, students and anyone working on behalf of the kindergarten. We believe the key to delivering comprehensive safeguarding and child protection is to have a child centred approach.

Policy Aims

This Policy and Procedure aims to provide the information staff and parents/carers need to meet our statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the well-being of all children, especially those in our care, and to ensure consistent good practice across the kindergarten.

Acronyms used in this document

DSL - Designated Safeguarding Lead

DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service

LSCB - Local Safeguarding Children Board (our LSCB is HSCB)

HSCB - Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board

LADO - Local Authority Designated Officer

EYFS - Early Years Foundation Stage

Introduction

Our safeguarding policy is based on the requirements set by the Department for Education (DfE) in the statutory framework for the Early Year's Foundation Stage (EYFS 2017). We follow the guidance and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) which for us is the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB). We take due regard to the guidance in "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" (DfE 2015) and statutory guidance "Working together to Safeguard children" (DfE 2018).

As a Steiner Waldorf and Early Years setting we know that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. This document will show that we know how to safeguard children to the best of our ability and in accordance with the above mentioned literature. We are aware that all Early Years Practitioners have a duty of care to any and all children with regards to Safeguarding and Child protection.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents/carers, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents/carers and children appropriately
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues within the kindergarten community including amongst staff, trustees and parents/carers. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our early childhood curriculum, and, through the ethos of the kindergarten, we promote the children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

All Early Years Setting must have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This person takes responsibility for safeguarding all children in the kindergarten. The practitioner is responsible for liaison with and referral to the local statutory child services agencies and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). They are required to keep up to date with child protection issues and relevant legislation by attending regular Child protection and Safeguarding trainings. They also have responsibility for providing support, advice and guidance to other staff on an ongoing basis and on any specific safeguarding issue as required.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is **Zanna Millicheap** and her deputy. We have a designated trustee for safeguarding. Their name is on the board inside kindergarten.

Our Policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Staff

All members of staff are made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities during induction. During an induction all staff are shown all policies and procedures as well as a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (2015). They attend regular safeguarding and child protection training. We ensure that the training made available enables the staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity. The DSL will provide support, advice and guidance to staff on an ongoing basis.

We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and the appropriate criminal record checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We require an Enhanced DBS check for all members of staff and volunteers who have unsupervised access to children. This is in accordance with the requirements under the 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups' Act (2006). Trustees are also required to have DBS checks. DBS checks may be on the update service and may move with the employee from job to job, in this case we will confirm that it is the appropriate type of DBS check and check the update service. We keep all records relating to the vetting and appointment of staff, volunteers and trustees; this includes the DBS certificate number and the date the disclosure was obtained and the name of who did the check. This is to ensure that no disqualified or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children. All applicants are informed that posts within the setting are exempt from the 'Rehabilitation of Offenders Act' (1974).

All members of staff, volunteers and trustees are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may effect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their time working with us).

We understand that under the 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act' 2006 we have a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to their dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern e.g. if they would have been dismissed because they had harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm. For more information see our 'Suitable Person' Policy and Procedure.

We adhere to the staff:child ratios set out in the EYFS framework. For more information see our 'Staffing' Policy and Procedure.

All Staff attend regular supervision and staff evaluation sessions, staff are always asked if they have any safeguarding concerns during these sessions.

Curriculum

Through the curriculum, we promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, not only through the EYFS but also through the kindergarten ethos which influences all we do, so that the children may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to, and, so that they develop an understanding and ability to keep themselves safe. We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their race, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background. We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Working together with parents

We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships between families and the

setting. Where appropriate we will support families with early intervention and help by referring them to services such as the 'Families First' service.

We are aware of our obligations with regard to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR 2018) and hold all required personal information on children and families in a locked cupboard. We are aware and inform parents/carers of the fact that with regard to safeguarding concerns information may be shared without permission. We will endeavour to inform the parents/carers and gain permission to share information where possible but all staff understand that this is not always possible and the needs of the child come before the wishes of the parents/carers. We make clear to parents/carers our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, that we have a duty to report any concerns, promptly share information with the Local Safeguarding Children Board(LSCB) or the police where deemed necessary. For further information please see our 'Data Protection', 'Children's Records', 'Information Sharing' and 'Working in Partnership with other Agencies' Policies and Procedures.

Premises

Our setting is based in a Community Centre, which is open to the public, we therefore can not vet everyone in the Community Centre. We do however have a door to our room with two handles one of which is out of reach of the children with a chain on the inside. We take steps to ensure that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children. We have strict procedures in place to ensure that we confirm and record the ID of any visitors to our room. Please see our 'Safety on the Premises' Policy and Procedure for further information.

Unvetted Personnel

We do not let unvetted personnel have unsupervised access to the children. During the morning ring and festivals we invite parents and carers into kindergarten to join the children. This is an important time for the children and families to get to know staff and one another. We never leave any child unsupervised by a member of staff in these circumstances. There are very rare occasions when unvetted personal who we don't know need access to our rooms usually for maintenance purposes. We try to minimise this as best we can but it is not always possible (e.g. the Fire brigade need access to check and maintain the fire extinguishers and exits). Any unvetting personnel are supervised for the entire time they are in our rooms during Kindergarten hours.

Risk Assessments

We have Risk Assessments in kindergarten so that staff know to be aware of as many dangers as we can anticipate. The risk assessments tell us how we are to manage and minimise these risks appropriately. We have many risk assessments some of which we utilise on a daily basis, like checking that the rooms and garden are safe and secure before the children arrive. Risk assessments are there to protect the children and staff. As soon as we become aware of new risks

we develop new risk assessments. For further information please see our 'Risk Assessment' policy and procedure.

First Aid

As per Ofsted requirements all staff have an up to date 12 hour Ofsted approved Paediatric First Aid certificate. For further information please see our 'First Aid' policy.

Accident/Incident Books

We have an accident book and an incident book in Kindergarten where we record any accidents or incidents that happened in Kindergarten, a member of staff and the parent/carer sign the book. Please see our 'Accident' and 'Recording and Reporting of Accidents and Incidence' policy for further details.

Behaviour and Restraint

We endeavour to promote and model positive behaviour for the children. We only use restraint as a last resort to stop a child from hurting themselves or others. Please see our 'Positive Behaviour' and 'Restraint' Policies for more information.

Food and Drink

We are aware of our responsibilities with regard to food and drink. We provide and prepare our snacks and lunches with the children. All staff involved in food preparation hold the relevant food hygiene certificate. We are trained to handle and are aware of any children who have known allergies in Kindergarten. We work together with parents/carers on how to manage their child's allergies. For further information please see our 'Food and Drink' and 'Food Hygiene' Policies.

Phones and Cameras

We have a no phones and camera policy at Kindergarten for everyone at kindergarten including parents/carers and staff. We do have a dedicated Kindergarten phone and camera, these are only to be used by staff for work purposes e.g. communicating with parents/carers or taking photos to record the children's development. For more information please see our 'use of Mobile Phones and Cameras' policy.

Internet/Social media

We are aware of our responsibility to inform parents/carers of the dangers of the internet and social media. We encourage conversation between staff and parents/carers and have leaflets available on our notice board and in our 'visitors basket'.

The children in our setting have no access to electronics, the internet or social media. Staff only have access to electronics during kindergarten hours for work purposes. We endeavour to find a separate room for this work but occasionally we must do some work (e.g. headcount for funding purposes) in the room. We never leave electronics unattended within reach of the children. Please

see our 'Online Safety Policy for further details.

Personal care

Many children in Kindergarten still need support with personal care be this changing clothes or toileting. We respect each child's right to privacy and body integrity, we encourage the children to do things for themselves but if they are struggling we will offer help in an appropriate way.

We accept children to kindergarten who are still in nappies. We respect the child's right to privacy, but also with safeguarding in mind the door to the room in which we are changing the child is not locked and other members of staff can enter at any time, it is also within hearing distance of any members of staff. Please see our 'Nappy changing' Policy for more information.

Fire/emergency evacuation

During induction all new staff are informed about our 'Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation' Procedure.

Child Collection/Unexpected Absence

We have a strict policy and procedure for children being picked up from our setting to ensure that only people authorised by the parent/carers may collect their child. Please see our 'Safeguarding on the arrival and Departure of Children' Policy for further details.

We have a detailed procedure for what to do if no one comes to collect a child. Please see our 'Uncollected Child' policy.

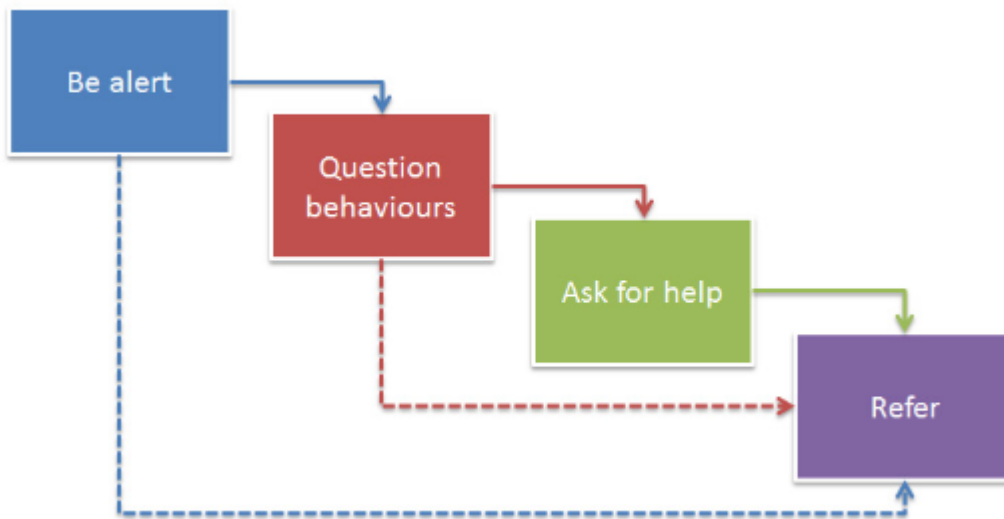
We have have a clear procedure for what to do in the case of a child being unexpectedly absent from kindergarten. For further information please see our 'Absent Child' Policy.

Other Relevant Policies and Procedures

*Child Protection Policy, *Children's Rights And Entitlements, *Looked After Children, *Missing Child, *Student Placement, *Staff Qualification, Trainings, Support And Skills, Supervision Policy, *Staff Personal Safety Including Home Visits, *Administering Medications, *Managing Children Who Are Sick, Infectious Or With Allergies, *Health And Safety General Standards, *Maintaining Children's Safety And Security On Premises, *Supervision Of Children On Outings And Visits, *No Smoking, *Confidentiality And Client Access To Records, *Supporting Children With Special Educational Needs.

Our Procedure for suspected abuse

Below is a diagram which we use to help us respond appropriately to possible signs of abuse/neglect.



We are aware that certain factors which can include, but is not limited to, those mentioned below may make children particularly vulnerable, such as:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND),
- non/pre verbal children,
- looked after children,
- children affected by parental substance misuse,
- living in a known domestic abuse situation,
- asylum seekers,
- living in temporary accommodation,
- young parents
- living transient lifestyles,
- do not have English as a first language,
- having a parent with enduring or untreated mental health problems
- who are vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality.

We endeavour to identify and support the children, young people and families who have additional unmet needs and are considered *just coping* so that we can provide them with early support from resources such as 'Families First' Services

<https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/familiesfirst.page?familiesfirstchannel=0> .

Recognising signs of abuse

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in the DfE document 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (2015).

All staff are aware of the signs that a child is being abused (see in bold below). Abuse can take many forms including physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect.

When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:

- **significant changes in their behaviour,**
- **deterioration in their general well-being,**
- **their comments which may give cause for concern (direct or indirect disclosure),**
- **changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play,**
- **unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect,**
- **a child has an injury, bruise or mark and the explanation given for how it was caused is not consistent with the injury,**
- **signs of significant neglect, including untreated medical conditions.**

We are aware that abuse can take other forms such as: fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, Female Genital Mutilation(FGM) and sexual exploitation of children, often through internet abuse.

We are aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or they may be victims of child trafficking, extremism or radicalisation. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with. Please see our 'Prevent' Policy for further information.

To safeguard the children we will take into account factors affecting parental capacity such as:

- social exclusion,
- domestic violence,
- parent's drug or alcohol abuse,
- mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.

Where we believe that a child in our care or a child that is known to us, may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns.

What to do if you suspect abuse

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff will:

- listen to the child, offer reassurance and give assurance that she or he will take action;

- does not question the child;
- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, and the names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially. The member of staff acting as the DSL is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity. If the DSL feels it is appropriate to inform the parents/carers of these reports a written account of this conversation will also be added to the child's folder.

These concerns can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness and so the response from the DSL will reflect this seriousness. The DSL and the concerned member of staff should discuss what their concern is. We are aware that the signs of child abuse may not always be obvious and a child might not tell anyone what is happening to them. For this reason we are always alert and raise any concerns with our DSL so that any patterns which are not so overt are picked up on as quickly as possible. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to hold a staff meeting to discuss with other members of staff whether they had noticed a concern. The DSL can seek advice from the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB-0300 123 4043) if they are unsure as to the next step. The NSPCC helpline- 0808 800 5000 can also be used to obtain advice.

We are aware of the government statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) and understand that, if providers have serious concerns about a child's safety or welfare they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay; this means the local children Social Services (HSCB on 0300 123 4043) and in emergencies the police on 999.

If the DSL does not feel that this cause for concern requires urgent attention but does feel it needs to be reported they can do so online through the Hertfordshire 'Thriving Families Practitioner' page at <http://www.hertsdirect.org/thriving> and follow the link for 'Reporting Concerns about a Child'.

Staff are aware of their duty to report each instance of suspected abuse to the DSL who will decide how to proceed. We are aware that this is the case no matter how the DSL decided to proceed with any previous concerns. Each report of concern can help to build a clearer picture or pattern of what might be happening.

If the member of staff who has a concern about the safety or welfare of a child and feels that they are not being acted upon by the DSL it is their (the member of staff's) responsibility to take action. All Staff know where to find all policies and procedures and we have the local safeguarding posters pinned clearly on the board outside and inside

kindergarten. This informs everyone how to report suspected child abuse. All staff are aware of the Document 'What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused' (2015) and a copy is available in our 'Safeguarding from Herts' folder. We have a copy of this 'Safeguarding' policy in Kindergarten and on our website at <https://stalbanssteinerkindergarten.com/>.

Protecting young people

We understand that our duty to protect children extends to young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

Informing parents that we have a concern about their child

When abuse is suspected, parents/carers are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents/carers to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child in greater danger for example if a parent/carer is the likely abuser. If we feel able to speak to the parents/carers, they are informed when we make a record of concern in their child's file and are also made aware that we will make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.

If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral is made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger. This will usually be the case where the parent/carer is the likely abuser. In these cases the social workers will inform parents/carers.

We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being carried out in relation to any alleged abuse. We will follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's Social Care Worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.

Confidentiality

The kindergarten ensures all staff understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality. Information about any suspected abuse is passed in to the DSL without delay and the DSL decides whom to inform. This is not only out of respect for the child but also to

ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information shared is only shared where appropriate under the guidance of the the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Allegations against staff

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting or those working on the premises occupied by the setting. Please see our 'Complaints' procedure which is available in Kindergarten and on our website <https://stalbanssteinerkindergarten.com>.

Reports of abuse by a member of staff should be reported to our DSL her Deputy or the designated safeguarding trustee. Where the report is about our DSL please make your report to her deputy who will follow our procedures for reporting it to the local authority and will liaise with out Designated Safeguarding Trustee. If the report is about the Deputy or our Designated Safeguarding Trustee please make your report to the DSL who will follow our procedures in reporting it to the local authority. We have a copy of the Hertfordshire 'Recognise, Respond, Refer' poster predominately displayed on our boards outside and inside kindergarten, so that anyone wanting to report safeguarding issues straight to the HSCB may do so.

All staff are aware of the need to respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by another members of staff, volunteers or any other person working on the premises. For example inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities or inappropriate sharing of images.

We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, volunteer or any other person working on the premises, has abused a child.

We respond to any disclosure by children, staff, parent/carer or concerned member of the public that abuse by a member of staff, volunteer or any other person working on the premises, may have taken, or is taking place, by:

- Recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO 01992 555420) to investigate.
- We will notify Ofsted (0300 123 4666 CIE@ofsted.gov.uk) of any incident or accident where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relates to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

- We will co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by Children’s Social Care in conjunction with the Police.
- Where the management team and children’s social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

At the conclusion of the investigation, one of the following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- Substantiated: there is sufficient identifiable evidence to prove the allegation;
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- Malicious: there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false;
- Unsubstantiated: this is not the same as a false allegation. It means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

We understand that under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) we have a duty to make a referral to the DBS (Phone 03000200190) of any member of staff or volunteer is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to their dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern e.g. if they would have been dismissed because they had harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm. This is so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups. For more information see out 'Suitable Person' Policy and Procedure.

Important Contact Details

Police – 999

Child Abuse Investigation Unit (Police) -101

LADO - 01992 555420

Ofsted - General Enquiries -0300 123 1231 enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Ofsted - Contact about Concerns 0300 123 4666 CIE@ofsted.gov.uk

DBS help line- 03000200190

The NSPCC - 0808 800 5000 E-mail address help@nspcc.org.uk

HSCB on 0300 123 4043

Signed.....

Dated.....

Date to be reviewed.....

Key Legislation

The Children's Act (1989) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

The Children's Act (2004 Every Child Matters)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Protection of Children Act (1999) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/14/contents>

Data Protection Act (2018) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Secondary legislation

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

Equalities Act (2010)

Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance

Further Guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

Working together to safeguard children' (2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Prevent Duty (2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

EYFS (2017) - <https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage>

Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) -

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/hertfordshire-safeguarding-children-board/hertfordshire-safeguarding-children-board.aspx>

Families First Services

<https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/familiesfirst.page?familiesfirstchannel=0> .

Thriving families <http://www.hertsdirect.org/thriving>

Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)

The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)

Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)

Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008) (HMG 2006)