

## 26. Safeguarding Children Policy

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**Our Pavilion Group Committee believes that children have the right to be safe and completely secure from both the fear and reality of all forms of abuse. We are committed to protecting all the children in our care from harm and operate a child-centred approach to safeguarding in line with KCSiE 2024.**

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The Pavilion Group Committee will appoint a member of staff as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). These officers will have suitable experience, training and expertise, and will be responsible for liaising with Social Services, the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP) and Ofsted in any child protection matter.

The Pavilion Group Committee's child protection procedures comply with all relevant statutory legislation (KCSiE September 2024 and other guidance or advice from the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP)).

The Pavilion Group Committee is committed to reviewing its Safeguarding Children Policy and procedures at regular intervals. The policy and its procedures will be made available to parents/carers during their child's settling in period.

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- recording concerns and information sharing
- Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers (Staff Handbook)
- Pre-School and After School Club Behaviour Management Policy
- Photography and Image Creating/Sharing Policy
- Recruiting, Support Staff and Training Policy
- Bullying (After School Club) Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- induction, training, supervision and support (Staff Handbook)
- adult to child supervision ratios.

### **The Prevent Duty** Dec 2023

All staff are aware and understand the Prevent Duty Departmental advice from DfE regarding the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. If staff suspect radicalisation they will report their concerns immediately to the Pre-school Leader who will determine, in consultation with the Pavilion Group Chair, whether the concern should be reported to the Local Authority Prevent Lead. The local police force can also be contacted on 101. The DfE dedicated helpline is 020 734 07264.

### **Recognising Child Abuse:**

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much

less so. All staff attend child protection training and will be vigilant to signs and evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect.

### **Physical Abuse:**

This involves hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or any other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child's ill health also constitutes physical abuse.

### **Sexual Abuse:**

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse.

### **Emotional Abuse:**

Varying degrees of emotional abuse is present in virtually all child protection incidents, but can also constitute abuse in its own right. Emotional abuse involves persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or torture causing, or likely to cause, severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Such behaviour may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, or making them feel unnecessarily frightened or vulnerable.

### **Neglect:**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, such as is likely to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing for a child, or failing to adequately protect them from physical harm or ill health. Neglect can also manifest itself in a failure to meet the basic emotional needs of a child.

## **Recruitment, Staff Support and Training**

The Group is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children through a rigorous recruitment process, the provision of support and training for staff. Therefore, the Group will ensure that:

- All staff, students and volunteers are carefully recruited, have verified references and have full and up to date Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS).
- At least one member of the recruitment panel has a current certificate in Safer Recruitment.
- All staff and volunteers are given a copy of the HAPG Safeguarding Children Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) Part 1 during their induction, and have the implications of the documents explained to them.
- All staff and volunteers receive regular training and supervision in child protection issues and are provided with any relevant information and guidance.
- All staff are provided with supervision and management support commensurate with their responsibilities in relation to child protection, and their requirement to maintain caring and safe relationships with children.
- All pre-school staff receive termly supervisions; this is an additional opportunity to enable them to raise any safeguarding concerns they may have.

Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at all staff meetings.

- All staff are aware of the main indicators of child abuse
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements in respect of the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All students and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead ( DSL) or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead ( DDSL).
- The Pavilion Group Committee will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any investigation into allegations of abuse, consistent with its duties to protect the safety of children and uphold fair processes for staff, students and volunteers.
- Any member of staff, a student or volunteer under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child, will be subject to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary section of the Staff Handbook.

## **Safe Caring**

All staff understand the Pavilion Group Committee's safeguarding children procedures and have had appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring. To this end:

- Every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when members of staff, students or volunteers are left alone with a child. If staff are alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff should be informed
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, students or volunteer, this will be recorded fully on a 'Cause for Concern Form' and then onto CPOMs.
- Staff will never carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves. Where this is essential, staff will help a child after notifying a colleague. Unless a child has a particular need, staff should not accompany children into the toilet and a volunteer would NEVER accompany a child to the toilet. Staff are aware that this and other similar activities could be misconstrued.
- Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.
- All allegations made by a child against a member of staff will be fully recorded, including any actions taken, on a 'Cause for Concern Form' and then onto CPOMs. In the event of there being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.

## **Dealing with Allegations**

The Pavilion Group Committee is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children by treating any allegation seriously and sensitively. The Pavilion Group Committee will not carry out any investigation itself into a suspected child abuse incident. On discovering an allegation of abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will immediately refer the case to the local statutory child protection agencies (details listed on the information board).

Further to this, the following principles will govern any suspected or reported case of abuse:

- Where actual or suspected abuse comes to the attention of staff, they will report this to the Group Leader, Pavilion Group Committee chair and the Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Deputy Designated Safeguarding at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Staff are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgment and if they suspect abuse has, or is, taking place to report this.
- Full written records of all reported incidents will be produced and maintained. Information recorded will include full details of the alleged incident; details of all the parties involved; any evidence or explanations offered by interested parties; relevant dates, times, locations and any supporting information or evidence from members of staff. The Pavilion Group Committee will demonstrate great care in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents of child abuse
- The Group Leader and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidentially.
- If any allegation of abuse is made against the Group Leader or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Registered Person will be informed as soon as possible. They will then assume responsibility for the situation or delegate this role to a senior member of staff or Management Committee.
- Staff will ensure that all concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality
- Any children involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured
- The Pavilion Group Committee will always consider the safety and welfare of a child when making decisions to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding factor.
- Where possible, the Pavilion Group Committee will always respect the wishes of children and young people who do not consent to share confidential information. However, the lack of consent can be overridden if the facts of the case are in the public interest.

In circumstances where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure, the member of staff concerned will:

1. Listen carefully to all that the child has to say.
2. Make no observable judgment
3. Ask open questions that encourage the child to speak in their own words.
4. Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone.
5. Make no promises that cannot be kept, such as promising not to tell anybody what they are being told.

**If Allegations are made against a member of staff:**

## **1. Gather Relevant Facts**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or chair, ask the parents to attend a confidential meeting with the designated member of staff. This should be done as soon as possible after the allegation has been made and detailed notes kept.

In serious cases the member of staff should be suspended on full pay pending an investigation. The investigation should be carried out as soon as possible and involve written witness statements

## **2. What action is needed?**

Once the investigation has been made and all the facts gathered, a decision needs to be made. This would usually be done by the designated member of staff or chair along with other senior members of staff. If appropriate, a disciplinary interview should be arranged. The member of staff against whom the allegation has been made, and senior staff members or chair already involved in the case, should be present.

Keep both the member of staff and the parents/carers concerned informed at all times. The member of staff should be aware of the nature of the complaint and if the meeting is a disciplinary one, they also have the right to be accompanied to the meeting.

## **3. At the meeting**

At the meeting, state the nature of the complaint and introduce the supporting evidence. The individual concerned should have the opportunity to state his/her case and present any evidence they may have. An adjournment should be called before any decision is made. When making the decision, be clear about the facts.

## **4. What to Do Next**

If the allegation is to be upheld, decide on its seriousness. If it is a minor allegation it may be decided that the person is placed on a 'review period' for a set amount of time. This will involve being supervised at all times, and an official warning being given. Their behaviour should be monitored and after the set time a review meeting held, at which time a decision should be taken as to whether further action is needed.

If the allegation is of a serious nature, the member of staff should be suspended immediately while it is investigated; this may result in a dismissal. It is a legal duty for an organisation to disclose why they have dismissed someone to any other organisation who is seeking references.

If the allegation is serious and there **is** an immediate threat to children the person should be suspended with immediate effect, and the police and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) informed.

A record should be made of the action taken, other than the oral warning. The decision should be given to the member of staff in writing.

## **5. Appeal Hearing**

The member of staff has the right to appeal. The appeal hearing should be conducted by designated members of the Management Committee. The decision of the panel is final

## **Referring Allegations to Child Protection Agencies**

If the Group Leader or the Designated Safeguarding Lead has reasonable grounds for believing that a child has been — or is in grave danger of being — subject to abuse, the following procedure will be activated:

- Contact will be made, at the earliest opportunities, with the local social services department (details on board)
- The Group Leader or Designated Safeguarding Lead will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice given by social services and police.
- At all times, the safety, protection and interests of children concerned will take precedence. The Group Leader and staff will work with and support parents/carers as far as they are legally able.
- The Pavilion Group Committee will assist the social services and the police, as far as it is able, during any investigation of abuse or neglect. This will include disclosing written and verbal information and evidence.
- OFSTED will be informed of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, student or volunteer, or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises or during a visit or outing.
- On all such occasions the Preschool Leader or Chair of the group will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):  
Nigel Hatten - 01452 426994 & Jenny Kadodia 01452 426320
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Preschool Leader the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of the Pavilion Group who will consult Nigel Hatton without notifying the Preschool Leader first.

## **Strategies For Coping With Incidents Of Child Abuse**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead within Pre-school is Gina Prescott and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Kaye Smith and Zoe Avery. The Designated Safeguarding Lead within After School Club is Zoe Avery and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Kaye Smith.

The nominated person will ensure that all members hold the necessary DBS checks and that any new applicants for positions within the Pavilion Group Committee will be checked as necessary.

The following points **must** be adhered to:

1. It is the responsibility of all staff to have read and understood Keeping Children safe in Education (KCSIE) Part 1 Statutory Guidance September 2023 and annex B.

2.All staff are required to attend GSCP approved Safeguarding training and ensure that they are updated as required i.e. every 3 years. DSL training is renewed every 2 years.

3.All staff must listen to the children and be watchful.

4.If abuse is suspected then the flow chart steps must be followed (displayed on notice board, beside Pre-school Leader's desk and attached). All suspicions must be noted on a 'Cause for Concern' Sheet and upload to CPOMS.

5.All visitors must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

6.Parent helpers or students must NOT BE ALLOWED to accompany a child to the toilet or change nappies or wet clothes.

7.All staff must inform another member of staff when taking a child to the toilet.

Contact details Nominated child protection lead

Name: Gina Prescott

Phone/email: [leader@holypostles.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:leader@holypostles.gloucs.sch.uk) 07884 357905

Deputy child protection lead(s)

Name(s): Kaye Smith and Zoe Avery

Phone/email: [holyapostlespg4@icloud.com](mailto:holyapostlespg4@icloud.com) and [holyapostlespg6@icloud.com](mailto:holyapostlespg6@icloud.com)

Pavilion Group Committee Chair/ Trustee for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Name: Alan Lofthouse

Phone/email: [alan.lofthouse+hapg@gmail.com](mailto:alan.lofthouse+hapg@gmail.com) 07702 790406

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

**REMEMBER** IF YOU SUSPECT A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON IS AT RISK OF ABUSE THE ONE THING YOU MUST NOT DO IS **NOTHING!!!!!!**

*Last reviewed: November 2024*

*Due for review: annually*

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