



# **SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**Version History:**

**Revised: February 2025**

**Ratified by Directors: February 2025**

# SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Hatchlings Childcare has a clear commitment to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. We recognize that children learn best when they are healthy, happy, safe and feeling secure. Therefore, all children have the right to be treated with respect, develop positive relationships with the adults caring for them and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

The purpose of this policy is to provide Hatchlings Childcare, students on workplace placement and parents with clear information and guidelines on keeping children safe. The policy works in conjunction with the Wyvern College Child Protection/Safeguarding Children Policy (Policy no.34).

We aim to carry out the policy through the following good practice:

- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children.
- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Creating an environment where children's voices can be heard and truly listened to.
- Helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- Creating an environment that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.

All staff will work as part of a multi-agency team where needed in the best interests of the child. Hatchlings Childcare recognizes that by bringing professionals together around the needs of children, young people, their families and carers we are building strong foundations which will bring greater consistency, rigor and impact the way early intervention is organized and delivered.

The Manager is the designated Safeguarding lead, who co-ordinates child protection and safeguarding issues within Hatchlings Childcare.

There are also appointed Designated Safeguarding Leads at Wyvern College to ensure that there is always a contact regarding a safeguarding or child protection issue in the absence of the Manager. Everyone within Hatchlings Childcare has a list of the DSL's and their Wyvern extension number or email. Mobile numbers are provided outside of school hours/during school holidays.

## Currently the DSL's are:

Mark Westlake - ext: 214  
Emma Emeny - ext: 293  
Will Emeny - ext: 208  
Keeley Fitzgerald - ext: 216  
Emily Goss - ext: 227  
Jane Munday - ext: 268  
Laura Stedman – ext: 286

Jo Kennedy - ext: 294  
Ben Rule - ext: 201  
Jo Parker – ext: 204  
Emily Gilbert - ext: 267  
Nicky Strand - ext:286  
Tom Merriman – ext: 272

The out of hours' number is: 0300 5551373

## Important numbers/contacts

- [Safeguarding children and young people | Children and Families | Hampshire County Council](#)
- Ofsted: 0300 123 1231
- Hampshire (LADO) local authority designated officer 0300 5551384
- (MASH) Multi agency safeguarding hub 0300 5551384 (Hampshire)
- Social Care/Children's Services out of hours 0300 555 1373
- Hampshire Children's Services: 0845 6035620 (24 hours)

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The legal framework for this policy is based on:

- This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2020. We comply with the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) protocols and guidance and their procedures. In addition, Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils; the Children Act 2004 & 1989 and the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act 2003 Mandatory Reporting Guidance (2020)
- The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017)
- Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty; July 2015
- Counter-terrorism and Security Act, 2015

## Guidance:

- What to Do If You Are Worried a Child Is Being Abused (2009)
- The Common Assessment Framework (2005)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Prevent Duty guidance (2016)

The Hatchlings Childcare aims to:

- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of Hatchlings Childcare staff.
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- Ensure that all staff are alert to the signs of abuse, understand what is meant by safeguarding and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed including by other children i.e. bullying, discriminatory behavior and have zero tolerance for this.
- Ensure staff training is updated regularly in the accordance with the EYFS statutory framework
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with safeguarding issues and procedures.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of safeguarding policies and procedures when they register with Hatchlings Childcare and kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate.

Staff will be further supported in their safeguarding knowledge with an open-door policy to a DSL for advice and support, visual aids on display in the setting to support their knowledge. Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

## Safer Recruitment Procedures

Applicants for posts are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Disclosure Baring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed.

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We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person works at the setting or has access to the children.

Volunteers and students do not work unsupervised.

We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.

We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

All prospective staff are interviewed by senior staff and are also required to undertake a safer recruitment interview by a suitable qualified person.

## Responding to Suspicions of Abuse

We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms – physical, emotional, sexual and signs of neglect. We acknowledge that when children are suffering abuse this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.

Where such evidence is apparent, the staff member completes an expression of concern form a dated record of the details of concern and brings it to the attention of the Childcare Operations Manager who is the Designated Person.

## Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

Staff should make an objective record supported by the settings Designated Person or the Designated Officer of any observation or disclosure using a blue expression of concerns form.

Details should include:

- Child's name.
- Age of the child and date of birth.
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure.
- Exact words spoken by the child.
- Exact position and type of injuries or marks seen, (use a skin map).
- Exact observation of an incident including any other witnesses.
- Name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- Any discussion held with parent/carer (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the DSL dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse, it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly; you must **not** force the disclosure or put words into the child's mouth. After the disclosure it is vital details are logged down accurately. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information they have gathered regarding the child. Hatchlings Childcare expects all members of staff to co-operate with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff **must not** make comment either publicly or in private about a parent's supposed or actual behavior.

**If a member of staff or student under the age of 19 years makes a disclosure, then the above procedure also applies and must be followed.**

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Parents are normally the first point of contact if a suspicion of abuse is recorded, except where the guidance of the LSCB does not allow this. If a parent is considered to be the abuser, the investigation officers will inform parents.

## Allegations Against Staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' when responding to any complaint that a member of staff has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by a child or staff member that abuse may have taken place by first recording the details of an alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint to the LADO and inform Ofsted.
- We cooperate with any investigation carried out by the police.
- We inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Wyvern College.
- We suspend the staff member on full pay for the duration of the investigation, to protect the staff, families and children involved.

## Types of Abuse:

### Physical Abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning; where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face. Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries - these should also be logged and discussed with the Management Team or room leader. Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the Management Team.

### Fabricated Illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

### Sexual Abuse

Action needs to be taken under this heading if the staff member has witnessed occasions where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls / toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes. The symptoms may also include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

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## **Emotional Abuse**

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations being placed upon them.

Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them. The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse also: this may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

## **Neglect**

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation and failure to seek medical treatment when required on behalf of the child) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at Hatchlings Childcare unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at Hatchlings Childcare in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at Hatchlings Childcare. They may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

## **Indicators of Child Abuse**

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones.
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies.
- Aggressive behaviour.
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents / carers.
- Repeated injuries.
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries.

## **Planning**

The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with volunteers or students in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

When using the campus facilities for learning opportunities (eg library visit) a staff member must be accompanying more than one child. Where possible two adults should accompany the children.

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## Informing Parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the LSCB does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser, or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

## Support to Families

Hatchlings Childcare believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.

Hatchlings Childcare makes it clear to parents its role and responsibilities in relation to child protection.

The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate

## Prevent Duty and Promoting British Values

**What is Prevent?** - Prevent is the name given to a national strategy which aims to stop people becoming violent extremists or supporting terrorism. Prevent aims to deal with all forms of extremism, including far right racist extremism, animal rights extremism and religious extremism.

Under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police (in Prevent priority areas the Local Authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support).

This may be a cause for concern relating to the change of behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team (or other persons in the setting) or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child in their care. We would also adopt procedure if concerns are raised around a member of staff, students and volunteers accessing the setting.

### Signs of possible radicalisation may include:

- Notable changes in behaviour or mood.
- May begin to express extreme political or radical views.
- Appear increasingly sympathetic to terrorist acts.
- Appearance may change.
- Friends may change and may spend excess time on their own or on the internet.

### What are the British Values?

**Democracy:** making decisions together, for example giving opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

**Rule of law:** understanding rules matter as cited in personal social and emotional development for example collaborating with children to create rules and codes of behaviour.

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**Individual liberty:** freedom for all, for example reflecting on their differences and understanding we are free to have different opinions.

**Mutual respect and tolerance:** treat others as you want to be treated, for example sharing and respecting other's opinions.

Within our setting we respect and promote the British values through our daily delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

An information pack has been provided for all staff outlining the Prevent Duty, the promotion of the British values and the importance of its delivery and recognition throughout the EYFS.

Further training will be accessed and undertaken surrounding this matter as required.

## Confidentiality

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the LSCB.

## Use of Mobile Phones, Smartwatches etc.

**Please note that the following policy statements mainly refer to personal mobile phones, but also include Smartwatches and other devices with functions to take photos, read messages and receive notifications.**

- Personal mobile phones, Smartwatches and other devices with functions to take photos, send messages and receive notifications are permitted for use within designated staff break areas or outside away from childcare premises only. At the beginning of each individual's shift, personal mobile phones etc. must be stored in employees' bags or the box provided.
- In the event of an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in the privacy of the office, with permission from the Manager.
- Members of staff must ensure that the telephone number of the setting is known to immediate family and other people who need to contact them in an emergency.
- If members of staff take their own mobile phones on outings, for use in the case of an emergency, they must not make or receive personal calls as this will distract them.
- Members of staff will not use their personal mobile phones for taking photographs of children on outings.
- Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones whilst on the premises. There is an exception if a visitor's company or organisation operates a lone working policy that requires contact with their office periodically throughout the day. Visitors will be advised of a quiet space where they can use their mobile phone, where there are no children present.

## Photographs

Photographs of the children are taken on Hatchlings Childcare cameras or tablets only; the Management Team will be the person responsible for checking and printing the photos.

The parents give their permission on the admissions form for photos to be used within the setting, for displays and in the child's learning journey.

Additional permission is obtained from the parents if we wish to use photos for internal and external publications and for use on the website and Hatchlings Childcare social media.

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## Whistleblowing Policy

Our policy for whistleblowing falls in line with Wyvern College. A red folder containing relevant forms/envelopes for reporting confidentially can be found in the Manager's office.

A separate Whistleblowing Policy for the Hatchlings Childcare is also in place.

Should you not feel comfortable initiating a whistleblowing incident to your senior staff member then you can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 5000 / [help@NSPCC.org.uk](mailto:help@NSPCC.org.uk)

There is a poster displayed in the Hatchlings Childcare staffroom area.

Please refer to the Whistleblowing Policy for further details.