



Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Policy

Setting: Little Ducklings Preschool

Address: Holbein Close, Black Dam, RG21 3EX

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Paula Ryman

Deputy DSL: Tracey Lee

Local Safeguarding Partnership: Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Policy adopted: 01/10/2026

Review date: 01/10/2027

Policy reviewed by: Paula Ryman / Preschool manager

1. Purpose of this policy

Little Ducklings Preschool is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child in our care.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All children have the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm, regardless of their age, sex, disability, race, religion or belief, background or family circumstances. The welfare and best interests of the child will always be our primary consideration.

This policy sets out how we will:

- protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- identify concerns at the earliest opportunity
- respond appropriately to concerns, disclosures and allegations
- provide children with a safe and supportive environment
- work with parents, carers and other professionals
- share information appropriately when necessary to safeguard a child
- recruit and supervise staff safely
- ensure all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- respond appropriately to concerns about adults working in the setting

This policy should be read alongside our other relevant policies.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is informed by the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework and relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance applicable in England.

The setting will have regard to current versions of:

- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**, where applicable to the setting
- relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures
- relevant guidance concerning information sharing, safer recruitment, online safety and preventing radicalisation



The EYFS statutory framework requires early years providers to meet standards designed to ensure that children are kept healthy and safe.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 applies to education providers and childcare settings and establishes the expectations for multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

3. Safeguarding principles

Our safeguarding practice is based on the following principles:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- The child is at the centre of all safeguarding decisions
- Concerns must be acted upon promptly
- Staff should never assume that somebody else will report a concern
- Children should be listened to and taken seriously
- Information should be shared when necessary to protect a child
- Confidentiality must not prevent appropriate safeguarding action
- Staff should remain professionally curious and consider whether there may be concerns that have not yet been identified
- The setting will work openly and appropriately with parents and carers wherever this is safe and appropriate
- Children who may require additional help or early support will be identified and supported

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The setting will appoint a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

DSL: Paula Ryman

Deputy DSL: Tracey Lee

The DSL will:

- provide advice and support to staff regarding safeguarding concerns
- receive and assess safeguarding concerns
- maintain appropriate safeguarding records
- make referrals to children's social care, the police or other agencies when required
- work with parents and carers where appropriate
- liaise with other professionals and safeguarding agencies
- ensure staff receive appropriate safeguarding training
- ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are understood and followed
- ensure the setting participates appropriately in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- monitor safeguarding concerns and identify patterns or emerging risks
- ensure appropriate action is taken when concerns involve a member of staff or volunteer
- promote a culture in which staff feel able to raise concerns



The DSL will have sufficient authority, time, training and resources to undertake the role effectively. Where the DSL is unavailable, the Deputy DSL will undertake the relevant responsibilities.

5. Responsibilities of all staff

Every member of staff, volunteer, student and regular visitor has a responsibility to safeguard children. Staff must:

- remain alert to signs that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect or other harm
- listen carefully to children
- report concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL
- record concerns accurately and factually
- maintain professional boundaries
- follow the setting's safeguarding procedures
- attend required safeguarding training
- never promise a child that information will be kept secret
- challenge unsafe practice appropriately
- report concerns about another adult's conduct through the appropriate procedure

Current safeguarding guidance emphasises that staff should act immediately when they have a concern, report concerns to the DSL or deputy without delay, and make an emergency referral where a child is in immediate danger.

6. Recognising abuse and neglect

Staff will receive training to help them recognise possible indicators of abuse and neglect.

These may include:

- unexplained or repeated injuries
- changes in behaviour or emotional presentation
- unusual fearfulness or anxiety
- regression or significant changes in development
- poor hygiene or inadequate clothing
- persistent hunger or tiredness
- unexplained absences
- sexualised behaviour that is inappropriate for the child's age or development
- disclosures made by a child
- concerning interactions between adults and children
- signs of domestic abuse within the child's home environment
- concerns relating to online activity
- signs of exploitation or other forms of harm.

No single sign necessarily means that abuse is taking place. Staff should consider the child's circumstances, listen to what the child communicates, and report concerns rather than attempting to investigate them themselves.

7. Types of safeguarding concerns



The setting recognises that safeguarding concerns can include, but are not limited to:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect
- domestic abuse
- child sexual exploitation
- criminal or other forms of exploitation
- online abuse and harmful online activity
- bullying and harmful behaviour between children
- radicalisation and extremism
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- honour-based abuse
- fabricated or induced illness
- abuse linked to disability
- safeguarding concerns involving looked-after or previously looked-after children
- any other circumstance that may place a child at risk of harm

Safeguarding concerns may arise within the home, the setting, the wider community or online.

8. Responding to a child's disclosure

If a child makes a disclosure, staff will:

1. Stay calm and listen carefully
2. Allow the child to speak without interruption
3. Take the child's words seriously
4. Avoid leading or investigative questions
5. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking
6. Explain that the information cannot be kept secret because adults may need to help keep them safe
7. Avoid making promises that cannot be kept
8. Report the concern immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL
9. Make a factual written record as soon as possible, using the child's own words where appropriate

Staff must not investigate the allegation themselves or confront an alleged perpetrator.

9. Recording safeguarding concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly and accurately.

Records should include:

- the date and time
- the child's name
- the factual nature of the concern
- what was observed or disclosed



- the child's own words where relevant
- any relevant witnesses
- action taken
- who the concern was reported to
- decisions made and the reasons for those decisions
- any subsequent action or outcome

Records will be stored securely, and access will be restricted to those who need the information for safeguarding purposes.

Current safeguarding guidance specifically emphasises recording the concern, actions taken, decisions, rationale and outcomes.

10. Referral to children's social care or emergency services

Where the DSL believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, significant harm, the setting will make an appropriate referral to children's social care or another relevant safeguarding agency.

If a child is in immediate danger, the police/emergency services will be contacted by calling **999**.

The setting will follow the referral procedures established by the relevant local safeguarding partnership.

Staff must understand that they should not delay action simply because the DSL is unavailable. Where necessary, staff should make an appropriate referral themselves and inform the DSL as soon as possible.

11. Information sharing and confidentiality

Safeguarding information will be shared appropriately and lawfully when this is necessary to protect a child.

Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child, parent or colleague where safeguarding concerns are involved.

Data protection requirements must not be used as a reason to prevent appropriate safeguarding information being shared. Current guidance makes clear that information should be shared and recorded when necessary to protect a child.

Information will only be shared with people who have a legitimate need to receive it.

12. Working with parents and carers

We recognise parents and carers as important partners in safeguarding children.

Where appropriate, we will:

- communicate openly with parents and carers
- discuss concerns and agree appropriate support
- signpost families to relevant services
- work collaboratively with children's social care and other agencies.

However, parents/carers will not automatically be informed of a safeguarding concern if doing so could:

- place the child at greater risk



- compromise a police investigation
- prejudice a child protection enquiry; or
- otherwise, conflict with professional safeguarding advice.

In such circumstances, the DSL will seek advice from the relevant safeguarding professionals.

13. Safer recruitment

The setting is committed to safer recruitment.

Recruitment procedures will include appropriate:

- application and selection processes
- checks of employment history
- references
- identity checks
- right-to-work checks where applicable
- Disclosure and Barring Service checks and other legally required checks
- assessment of suitability to work with children
- recording and monitoring of required checks

Staff will not be permitted to work with children where the required safeguarding and suitability checks have not been completed, unless the relevant legislation specifically permits this and appropriate safeguards are in place. Staff will not commence work until DBS certificate has been received.

14. Staff conduct and professional boundaries

All staff are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children.

Staff must:

- treat children with dignity and respect
- avoid unnecessary physical contact
- use appropriate language
- avoid favouritism
- avoid inappropriate relationships with children or families
- follow the setting's procedures for intimate care
- use electronic devices and social media appropriately
- never communicate privately with children through personal social media accounts
- never take or share inappropriate photographs or recordings of children
- report concerns about unsafe practice.

Staff should understand that safeguarding concerns can arise from behaviour that appears minor or isolated. Concerns should therefore be reported rather than dismissed.

15. Allegations or concerns about staff, volunteers or other adults

The setting will take all concerns about adults working with children seriously.

This includes concerns about:

- employees
- managers



- volunteers
- students
- agency workers
- contractors
- regular visitors

Where an allegation is made that an adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child
- may have harmed a child
- potentially committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm,

the setting will follow the appropriate local authority/safeguarding procedures.

The **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** will be contacted where required.

The setting will not conduct its own investigation

where doing so could interfere with safeguarding or police procedures.

Confidentiality will be maintained and information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

16. Whistleblowing

All staff have a duty to raise concerns about unsafe or inappropriate safeguarding practice.

Staff should normally report concerns to:

1. the DSL;
2. the manager/provider; or
3. another appropriate senior person if the concern relates to the DSL or manager.

Staff who feel unable to raise a safeguarding concern internally should use the appropriate external safeguarding or whistleblowing route.

The setting will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who raises a genuine safeguarding concern.

17. Safer working practices

Staff will follow clear procedures regarding:

- supervision of children
- collection and handover of children
- toileting and nappy changing
- physical contact
- photography and recording
- mobile phones and personal devices
- use of technology
- visitors and contractors
- outings and trips
- medication
- managing children's behaviour
- accidents and injuries
- missing children
- emergency situations



These procedures are designed to protect children while also protecting staff from misunderstandings or allegations.

18. Online safety

The setting recognises that safeguarding risks can occur through digital technology, even for very young children.

Staff will promote age-appropriate online safety and will work with parents and carers to help them understand potential risks.

Concerns may include:

- inappropriate online content
- inappropriate communication
- online grooming
- exposure to harmful or sexualised material
- excessive or unsafe use of devices
- sharing of images
- online bullying or harmful behaviour

Any online safeguarding concern will be reported and managed in the same way as other safeguarding concerns.

19. Preventing radicalisation

The setting recognises that children may be vulnerable to exposure to extremist or harmful ideologies. Staff will remain alert to concerns and follow the relevant safeguarding procedures where they believe a child or family may be at risk.

Any concern will be discussed with the DSL and referred to the appropriate agency where necessary.

20. Attendance and missing children

The setting will monitor children's attendance and unexplained absences in accordance with its attendance procedures.

Where patterns of absence, unexplained absence or a failure to collect a child raise safeguarding concerns, these will be reported to the DSL.

The setting will maintain a separate **Lost Child Procedure** and ensure that all staff know what to do if a child goes missing from the setting or an outing.

21. Children with additional vulnerabilities

The setting recognises that some children may face additional safeguarding risks.

Additional consideration will be given to children who may have:

- disabilities or additional needs
- communication difficulties
- previous safeguarding concerns
- experienced trauma
- a social worker
- care experience



- significant family difficulties
- limited ability to communicate concerns

Staff will make reasonable adjustments to ensure every child can communicate and be heard.

22. Staff training and induction

All staff will receive safeguarding information as part of their induction.

Safeguarding training will cover:

- recognising abuse and neglect
- responding to disclosures
- reporting procedures
- the role of the DSL
- safer working practices
- allegations against staff
- online safety
- information sharing
- local safeguarding procedures
- relevant emerging safeguarding risks

Training will be refreshed in accordance with statutory requirements and the setting's assessment of staff training needs.

The setting will maintain records of safeguarding training.

23. Visitors, volunteers and students

Visitors will be appropriately supervised.

Visitors who have not completed the required safeguarding checks will not have unsupervised access to children.

Volunteers and students will receive appropriate safeguarding information and will be supervised according to their role and level of experience.

24. Safeguarding records

Safeguarding records will be:

- accurate
- factual
- dated
- securely stored
- appropriately retained
- shared only when there is a legitimate safeguarding reason

Records will be handled in accordance with applicable data protection requirements and the setting's retention procedures.

25. Safeguarding culture

The setting is committed to creating a culture in which:

- children feel safe and listened to



- staff feel confident to raise concerns
- safeguarding is discussed openly and appropriately
- poor practice is challenged
- concerns are acted upon promptly
- lessons are learned from incidents and concerns
- safeguarding arrangements are regularly reviewed

Leaders will monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and take action where improvements are required.

26. Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if:

- legislation or statutory guidance changes
- local safeguarding procedures change
- there is a significant safeguarding incident
- an inspection identifies a need for improvement
- changes to the setting's provision create new safeguarding risks

The policy will be communicated to all staff and made available to parents and carers where appropriate.

27. Key contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Name: Paula Ryman

Telephone: 01256 413794

Deputy DSL:

Name: Tracey Lee

Telephone: 01256 413794