

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Ben Rhydding Pre-School

September 2023

Signed by Chairperson(s):



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Designated Safeguarding Leads

Sarah Irwin	Pre-School Manager
Helen Northway	Business Manager
Hannah Lyons	Pre-School Practitioner

Aims and responsibilities

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enable them to fulfil their potential. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS))

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental health and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provisions of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018)

We will ensure all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and work within current legislation so they can act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse, including sharing concerns with agencies and involving parents and children appropriately.

We recognise that all children have equal rights to protection, regardless of age, ability, culture, language, gender, race, religion or sexual identity. We believe that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind.

Signs and symptoms

All staff and volunteers working with children undertake safeguarding training. This will be completed as part of the induction, with a commitment to staff/volunteers undertaking refresher training as appropriate.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse happens when a person harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve neglect.

Children may be abused by:

- family members
- friends
- people working or volunteering in organisational or community settings
- people they know
- strangers.

General signs of abuse

Children experiencing abuse often experience more than one type of abuse over a period of time. Children who experience abuse may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend.

Many of the signs that a child is being abused are the same regardless of the type of abuse. Anyone working with children or young people needs to be able to recognise the signs. These include a child:

- being afraid of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people
- knowing about or being involved in 'adult issues' which are inappropriate for their age or stage of development, for example alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour
- having angry outbursts or behaving aggressively towards others
- becoming withdrawn or appearing anxious, clingy or depressed
- self-harming or having thoughts about suicide
- showing changes in eating habits or developing eating disorders
- regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep problems
- regularly wetting the bed or soiling their clothes
- running away or regularly going missing from home or care
- not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. There may well be other reasons for changes in a child's behaviour such as a bereavement or relationship problems between parents or carers. If you have any concerns about a child's wellbeing, you should report them following your organisation's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Physical abuse

What is physical abuse?

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating.

It's also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don't need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

Spotting the signs of physical abuse

All children have trips, falls and accidents which may cause cuts, bumps and bruises. These injuries tend to affect bony areas of their body such as elbows, knees and shins and are not usually a cause for concern.

Injuries that are more likely to indicate physical abuse include:

Bruising

- bruises on babies who are not yet crawling or walking
- bruises on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet
- bruises on the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs
- multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs
- bruising which looks like it has been caused by fingers, a hand or an object, like a belt or shoe
- large oval-shaped bite marks.

Burns or scalds

- any burns which have a clear shape of an object, for example cigarette burns
- burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals or buttocks.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (such as bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times.

If a child is frequently injured, and if the bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation doesn't match the injury, this should be investigated. It's also concerning if there is a delay in seeking medical help for a child who has been injured.

Neglect

What is neglect?

Neglect is not meeting a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This can result in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer not:

- providing adequate food, clothing or shelter
- supervising a child or keeping them safe from harm or danger (including leaving them with unsuitable carers)
- making sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- making sure the child receives a suitable education
- meeting the child's basic emotional needs – this is known as emotional neglect.

Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse.

Spotting the signs of neglect

Neglect can be difficult to identify. Isolated signs may not mean that a child is suffering neglect, but multiple and persistent signs over time could indicate a serious problem.

Some of these signs include:

- children who appear hungry - they may not have lunch money or even try to steal food
- children who appear dirty or smelly
- children whose clothes are inadequate for the weather conditions
- children who are left alone or unsupervised for long periods or at a young age
- children who have untreated injuries, health or dental problems
- children with poor language, communication or social skills for their stage of development
- children who live in an unsuitable home environment.

Sexual abuse

What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off or touch someone else's genitals.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

- encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- making a child masturbate while others watch
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- showing pornography to a child
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.
- meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

Online sexual abuse includes:

- persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes referred to as sexting
- persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- having sexual conversations with a child by text or online.
- Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.
- Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

Spotting the signs of sexual abuse

There may be physical signs that a child has suffered sexual abuse.

These include:

- anal or vaginal soreness or itching
- bruising or bleeding near the genital area
- discomfort when walking or sitting down

- an unusual discharge
- sexually transmitted infections (STI)
- pregnancy.
- Changes in the child's mood or behaviour may also cause concern. They may want to avoid spending time with specific people. In particular, the child may show sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age. For example:
 - they could use sexual language or know things about sex that you wouldn't expect them to
 - they might become sexually active or pregnant at a young age.

Emotional abuse

What is emotional abuse?

Emotional abuse involves:

- humiliating, putting down or regularly criticising a child
- shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
- mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
- constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
- trying to control a child's life and not recognising their individuality
- not allowing a child to have friends or develop socially
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- manipulating a child
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions
- persistently ignoring a child
- being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- not being positive or encouraging to a child or praising their achievements and successes.

Spotting the signs of emotional abuse

There aren't usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse but you may spot changes in a child's actions or emotions.

Some children are naturally quiet and self-contained whilst others are more open and affectionate. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child or are particularly unusual for their stage of development.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused may:

- be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long
- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, for example when being taken to or collected from nursery
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- be unable to play
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect for their age

- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends
- fear making mistakes
- fear their parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- self-harm.

Domestic abuse

What is domestic abuse?

- Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.
- Exposure to domestic abuse is child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. Children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

Spotting the signs of domestic abuse

- It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because abusers can act very differently when other people are around.
- Children who witness domestic abuse may:
 - become aggressive
 - display anti-social behaviour
 - suffer from depression or anxiety
 - not do as well at school - due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

Female Genital Mutilation

Signs in younger children that they might be at risk

- The family comes from a community that is known to practise FGM
- Family might not be integrated into UK society

Signs in older children that they might be at risk

- Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period
- A child may confide to a member of staff she is to have a 'special procedure' or attend a special occasion.

It is mandatory that professionals report known cases of FGM in under 18s to the police.

What other types of abuse should I be aware of?

- Child sexual exploitation
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child trafficking
- Grooming
- County lines
- Witchcraft

References

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners, 2015

NSPCC "Definitions and signs of child abuse. Guidance for professionals who work with children on how to recognise the signs of child abuse" July 2020

The Prevent Duty and British Values

All staff must have regard to the Prevent Duty June 2015 which came into force under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. All staff complete 'The Prevent awareness' training annually and follow internal guidance from the staff handbook.

Staff are able to identify behavioural traits that could indicate that a child is susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism.

- Staff will discuss any concerns with the DSL, considering an individual's behaviour in the context of wider influencing factors.
- Staff will follow the 'notice, check, share procedure and consider indicators of risk before deciding what response is appropriate and proportionate.
- A written record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions will be kept.
- Any concerns relating to the Prevent Duty we would follow the same procedures as child protection, by contacting the practitioner advice and referral helpline (Bradford Children's Services Integrated Front door).

Bradford Children's Services Integrated Front Door (IFD) dedicated practitioner's advice and referral contact number – **01274 433999**

Bradford MDC Prevent Co-ordinator: danielle.king@bradford.gov.uk

Bradford MDC Prevent Education Officer: assia.hussain@bradford.gov.uk

We use the Fundamental British Values to support our teaching of resilience to radicalisation and to prepare our child for life in modern Britain. (See separate policy on how we implement the Fundamental British Values into our setting).

Referrals

The Pre-School refers to the Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership document 'Continuum of Need and Risk Identification Tool' to assess how to deal with concerns.

If it is not clear which level the concerns fall into Pre-School should contact the Early Help Coordinator or the Integrated Front Door on 01274 433999 for advice.

Recording suspicions of abuse and allegations

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern, the member of staff observes signs or signals that gives 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:

- listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives 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.

Allegations must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.

Responding to a direct disclosure

If a child alleges that a person living or looking after them either at Pre-School or elsewhere to a member of staff this is known as a **direct disclosure**. If a child makes a **direct disclosure** is **must be acted upon** and **referred** to **Bradford's Children's Services Integrated Front Door** and /or the **Police**.

Once a child has made a direct disclosure, the practitioner whom the child has made the disclosure to will need to;

- Find out more information from the child by asking open ended questions
- Record only what the child says
- Consider if speaking to the parent/carer would put the child in more danger (if you do speak to a parent and there is a reasonable explanation or the child changes their story you must still make a referral)
- Make a referral to **Bradford's Children's Services Integrated Front Door**

Pre-school Early Help

- Where we have a concern about a child that is not Level 2 but we feel we need to provide support to parents we complete the 'Pre-school Early Help' form to record the concern, action we have taken, the outcome and any follow-up required.

Early Help Assessment Level 2 (Universal Plus)

- Where we feel a family is in need of additional support Pre-School begin an Early Help Assessment. Advice should be sought from the Early Help Coordinator.
- The Pre-School Manager completes the 'Bradford's Early Help Assessment Tool' form with parents, a copy of this is sent to the Early Help Coordinator for our area.
- Pre-School then become the Lead Practitioner and offer support to the family through help, advice and referrals to outside agencies such as the HENRY programme.
- If the situation doesn't improve Pre-School contact the Early Help Coordinator for further advice.

Making a referral to the local authority social care team Level 3 (Targeted Support/Partnership Plus) & 4 (Statutory Specialist/Child Protection)

If we have concerns about a child that fall into level 3 or 4 outlined in the 'Continuum of Need and Risk Identification Tool'

We follow the guidelines given by the ***Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership***,

Where it is clear that a Child Protection Referral is needed contact the Integrated Front Door without delay **Tel No 01274 433999**

Out of hrs Emergency Duty Team **Tel No 01274 431010**

If a child is in immediate danger call 999

- We follow the guidelines set out in the document: "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022".
- We keep a copy of this document in the small filing cabinet in the office and follow the detailed guidelines given. A flow chart is displayed for staff to view in the office. Another poster is displayed for visitors to view on the noticeboard above the coat pegs inside the playroom.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children. Ofsted – 0300 123 1231
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept. Tel. 0870 336 2940

Always speak to the parents and gain consent unless you feel the child is at risk of immediate significant harm.

References

Information sharing advice

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Children Missing from Education

- Parents are asked and reminded regularly that if their child is unable to attend one of their regular sessions that they inform us as soon as possible, either by email, text or telephone.
- If the reason for a child's absence is unknown a member of staff will call/email or text the family to ask if everything is OK and when they hope their child will be returning to Pre-school.
- Absence is recorded on the daily register and a reason next to it (i.e. sickness, holiday, wedding etc.)
- Children's absence is monitored using a spreadsheet.
- If we feel that the child's absence might be because the family are in need of external support, then we will begin the Early Help Assessment process, explaining the impact of reduced attendance and their child's development.
- As childcare providers we must have regard to the safeguarding of young, vulnerable children and should act appropriately when no reasonable explanation can be obtained from parents/carers about a child's absence. Where we cannot contact parents, we would contact the Integrated Front Door to ask for advice.
- Where possible the Pre-school should keep copies of correspondence and record information including dates and who was contacted and keep these with the individual child's records.

Uncollected Child

- Parents of children starting at the setting are asked to provide the following specific information which is recorded on our Registration Form:
 - Home address and telephone number - if the parents do not have a telephone, an alternative number must be given, perhaps a neighbour or close relative.
 - Place of work, address and telephone number (if applicable).
 - Mobile telephone number (if applicable).
 - Names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting, for example a childminder or grandparent.
 - Who has parental responsibility for the child.
 - Information about any person who does not have legal access to the child.
 - Password for the collection of the child by named adults that staff may not recognise.
- On occasions when parents are aware that they will not be at home or in their usual place of work, they inform us in writing of how they can be contacted.
- On occasions when parents or the persons normally authorised to collect the child are not able to collect the child, they provide us with the name of the person who will be collecting their child and give that person the password.
- Parents are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform us so that we can begin to take back-up measures. We provide parents with our contact telephone number.
- We inform parents that we apply our child protection procedures as set out in our child protection policy in the event that their children are not collected from setting by an authorised adult within one hour after the setting has closed and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises.
- If late collection of a child occurs frequently and is beginning to affect the child's Personal Social & Emotional Development, a member of staff will speak to the parent/carer and support them in ensuring a solution is reached, for example parent to arrange child to be collected by a named person on their form or to 'buddy' up with another current parent to help out in times of need.
- If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we follow the following procedures:
 - The child's file is checked for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
 - If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted at home or at work.
 - If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from the setting - and whose telephone numbers are recorded on their Long Information Form - are contacted.
 - All reasonable attempts are made to contact the parents or nominated carers.
 - The child does not leave the premises with anyone other than those named on the Registration Form or in their file.
 - If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
 - We contact the Integrated Front Door – our local authority children's social care team
 - The child stays at setting in the care of two fully-vetted workers until the child is safely collected either by the parents or by a social care worker.
 - Social Care will aim to find the parent or relative if they are unable to do so, the child will become looked after by the local authority.

- Under no circumstances do staff go to look for the parent, nor do they take the child home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file and Ofsted are informed.
- Depending on circumstances, we reserve the right to charge parents for the additional hours worked by our staff.

Records

Informing parents and Confidentiality

Parents should always be spoken to as a referral cannot be made without parental consent – the only time a referral would be considered without parental consent is if a child is at immediate risk of significant harm

- If a suspicion of physical and/or sexual abuse is recorded, we will make a referral to the **Bradford District Integrated Front Door** without informing parents first. In such a case the investigating officers will inform parents.
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- If we feel that a child is **at immediate risk** of being harmed, we will call 999 as well as contacting **Bradford District Integrated Front Door**.
- If a suspicion of neglect and/or emotional abuse is recorded we will approach parents with our concerns and offer them guidance and support. However, if we feel that a child is still being neglected and/or emotionally abused we will phone **Bradford District Integrated Front Door** for advice.
- If we feel that it is in a child's best interest, we will share our concerns for that child with other settings without parental consent. Other settings may include another Nursery/Pre-School or Childminder setting that the child attends, or the Primary School that the child is moving on to.
- **All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.**

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents via our information pack our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We 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.
- 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 Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the **Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership**.

Confidentiality procedures

- We always check whether parents regard the information they share with us to be regarded as confidential or not.
- Some parents sometimes share information about themselves with other parents as well as staff; the setting cannot be held responsible if information is shared beyond those parents whom the person has 'confided' in.

- Information shared between parents in a discussion or training group is usually bound by a shared agreement that the information is confidential to the group and not discussed outside of it.
- We inform parents when we need to record confidential information beyond the general personal information we keep (see our record keeping procedures) - for example with regard to any injuries, concerns or changes in relation to the child or the family, any discussions with parents on sensitive matters, any records we are obliged to keep regarding action taken in respect of child protection and any contact and correspondence with external agencies in relation to their child.
- We keep all records securely (see our record keeping procedures).
- We are registered with ICO

Client access to records procedures

- Parents may request access to any confidential records held on their child and family following the procedure below:
 - Any request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to the setting leader or manager.
 - The setting leader informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
 - The setting commits to providing access within 14 days, although this may be extended.
 - The setting's leader or manager and chairperson of the management committee prepare the file for viewing.
 - All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. Copies of these letters are retained on file.
 - 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.
 - It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.
 - When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
 - A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
 - The setting leader and chairperson of the management committee go through the file and remove any information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and information they have added to the file.
 - What remains is the information recorded by the setting, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.
 - The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the setting leader, so that it can be explained.
 - Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the setting or another (third party) agency.

Looked after children

Early years settings are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of 'Looked after Children' (LAC): *Children and young people become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).*

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being.

In our setting, we place emphasis on promoting *children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to*. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on these two important concepts, *attachment and resilience*. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives as the basis for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness *to* learning and are the basis in developing positive dispositions *for* learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Principles

- The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- We offer places to two-year-old children who are looked after subject to available space. In such cases, the child should have been with the foster carer for at least two months and show signs of having formed a secure attachment to the carer and where the placement in the setting will last a minimum of three months.
- We offer places for funded three and four-year-olds who are looked after to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and has formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
- We will try to offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is two and a half years to four years old who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.
- Where a child who normally attends our setting becomes looked after and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

Procedures

- The designated person for looked after children is the Pre-School Manager.
- Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child. The Pre-School Manager ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- The Pre-School Manager and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensures appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The setting recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement the Pre-School Manager will discuss the needs of the child with the child's Social Worker, this will determine the objectives of the placement and a care plan will be drawn up that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
- The care plan needs to consider such issues for the child as:
 - the child's emotional needs and how they are to be met;
 - how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
 - the child's sense of self, culture, language/s and identity – how this is to be supported;
 - the child's need for sociability and friendship;
 - the child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
 - how any special needs will be supported.
- In addition, the care plan will also consider:
 - how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
 - what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;
 - what written reporting is required;
 - wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and
 - with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings, fun-days etc alongside the foster carer.
- The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a relationship with his or her key person sufficient to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.

- In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.
- Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning using the 'Key Child's Next Steps' document.
- Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.
- If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker according to the setting's safeguarding children procedure.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.
- Transition to school will be handled sensitively and the designated person and or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

Staff, volunteers and visitors

Staff training

- All staff complete training in basic child protection as part of induction. We seek out further appropriate training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, domestic abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. The Designated Safeguarding Lead Practitioner and Pre-school Manager attends Lead Practitioner training offered through Skills 4 Bradford.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting by giving all staff the policies to read as part of the Staff Handbook and Induction. They are also directed to the Flowchart displayed on the wall in the quiet/ staff room.
- All staff are regularly reminded of the signs and symptoms of abuse.

Staff & volunteers' recruitment

- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed. Any persons aged 17 or over who are not a member of staff, who spends additional time in the setting and comes into contact with the children on a regular basis will also be expected to complete a DBS check
- Staff are made aware that we need to notify Ofsted and that staff member may also be disqualified if they live in the same household as another person who is disqualified from registration, or had any allegations of serious harm or abuse brought against them. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We require 2 references for all candidates and carry out qualification checks.
- We advertise new positions on the 'Ilkley Chat' Facebook page, the 'Ben Rhydding Pre-School' Facebook page and internally at Pre-School.
- New starters have a six-week probation period if not employed on a zero hours contract.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.

Supervisions & Appraisals

- Please refer to the separate policy for supervisions and appraisals.

Safeguarding on-site

- The layout of the room allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.

Visitors

- We use the view panel on the entry system to ascertain who is asking for entry. If we do not recognise the person(s) we go out to the outside door to find out before letting them into the playroom to sign in. Relevant ID is checked where applicable.
- If a visitor accesses the entrance hall during transition times (i.e. if another parent let's them in), our keypad system on our playroom door and on that of the larger room ensures no-one can access the playroom.
- Visitors are asked to sign in in the visitor's book.
- Contractors from School are asked to show ID and ensure they have signed in over at School first. This is checked by telephone if no visitors badge is present.

Allegations Management

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the *Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership* when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer, 01274 435600, to investigate. We may be asked to fill in a referral form, to send to the Safeguarding & Reviewing Unit.
- We **MUST** also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted within 14 days and what measures we have taken and we are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- If a member of staff or volunteer is removed from working with children or we think the person has been cautioned for, or caused harm to a child, we must make a barring referral to the DBS. The agency can then investigate the allegation and decide whether to add the person's name to a barred list, which would then show up on future DBS checks.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management committee and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, 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.

Making a complaint

All settings are required to keep a 'summary log' of all complaints that reach stage two or beyond. This is to be made available to parents as well as to Ofsted inspectors. A full procedure is set out in the *Summary Complaints Record* (purple folder filing cabinet) which acts as the 'summary log' for this purpose.

Stage 1

- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the setting's provision talks over, first of all, his/her concerns with the setting leader.

- Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

Stage 2

- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing to the setting leader and the chair of the management committee.
- For parents who are not comfortable with making written complaints, there is a template form for recording complaints in the above-mentioned publication; the form may be completed with the person in charge and signed by the parent.
- The setting stores written complaints from parents in the child's personal file. However, if the complaint involves a detailed investigation, the setting leader may wish to store all information relating to the investigation in a separate file designated for this complaint.
- When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the setting leader or manager meets with the parent to discuss the outcome.
- Parents must be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.
- When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Summary Complaints Record.

Stage 3

- If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, he or she requests a meeting with the setting leader and the chair(s) of the management committee. The parent should have a friend or partner present if required and the leader should have the support of the chairperson of the management committee.
- An agreed written record of the discussion is made as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it.
- This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the summative points are logged in the Complaints Summary Record.

Stage 4

- If at the stage three meeting the parent and setting cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.
- Staff or volunteers within the Pre-school Learning Alliance are appropriate persons to be invited to act as mediators.
- The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. S/he can hold separate meetings with the setting personnel (setting leader(s) and chair(s) of the management committee) and the parent, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice s/he gives.

Stage 5

- When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the parent, the setting leader and the chair(s) of the management committee is held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The

mediator's advice is used to reach this conclusion. The mediator is present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.

- A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.
- Timescales: The setting will endeavour to investigate the concerns of the parent/carer immediately, and within 7 days where possible. Feedback at *Stage 2*, within 28 days of written complaint and at *Stage 3* a further 28 days. Review at *stage 4* will take place within 28 days of an agreement not being reached during Stage 3. The mediator will investigate and a final meeting between parent/carer and the setting leader will take place within 28 days.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to.
 - The number to call Ofsted with regard to a complaint is:
 - 0300 1231231 (Our Reg no. EY501402)
-
- These details are displayed on our parent notice board.
 - If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in our local authority.
 - In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the setting leader works with Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against our setting and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Summary Complaints Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.

Mobile Phones/Cameras/Tablets

- All adults, including staff and volunteers, on entry to Pre-School are requested to deposit their mobile phones in their handbags in the store cupboard or in a box kept out of reach in the kitchen. Mobile phones are only to be used in the kitchen, quiet room (during lunchtime when children are not in there), office or outside the perimeter of the building, and only in the case of emergency calls or as agreed by the Leader(s), where no children are present.
- Staff are trained to avoid putting themselves in compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations of inappropriate conduct.
- All staff are to be vigilant about phone use by other visitors to our setting, reminding them when signing visitors book.
- Staff will report any concerns promptly, to the Leader(s) who will take appropriate action.
- The Leader(s) ensures the main phone for contacting parents / taking calls on behalf of the Pre-School is in full working order
- Parents are permitted to use cameras at events such as performances and trips, unless a parent has requested on their Information Forms that they do not want their child photographed. This will be supervised by staff at all times.

Child Safety

Children's personal safety

- We ensure all employed staff have been checked for criminal records by an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS).
- Adults do not normally supervise children on their own.
- All children are supervised by adults at all times.
- Whenever children are on the premises at least two adults are present.
- We carry out risk assessment to ensure children are not made vulnerable within any part of our premises, nor by any activity.

Security

- Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children;
- A staff member stands at the sliding door at the beginning of each day (9am) on busier sessions to add an extra security line, another staff member stands at the entrance to the playroom at the start of the session and sees the children in through the door, ensuring the gate closes behind each person as they enter.
- Another staff member greets the children and encourages them to pick up their name cards and ticks their names as they come in. A further whole group 'main' register is taken at carpet time by 9.15 am.
- There is a numerical keypad to stop unsupervised entrance to the playroom. Adults leaving are let out and supervised by a member of staff. There is also a numerical keypad on the door to the big room to ensure there is no unauthorised access into there.
- There are alarms on the external doors to ensure we know if a door is being opened and staff are trained to look up to see who is entering / exiting through those doors. Alarms and the gate locks are checked at the beginning of each session during the setting up time.
- Parents/staff are informed via notices/newsletters/induction about the importance of arrival/exit procedures.
- At the end of each session, a member of staff stays by the exit door, looks out for which parents/carers have arrived to collect their children and asks the 'runner' member of staff to collect those children from the carpet in the book corner. They then highlight the children's 'tick' on the arrivals register to show they have been safely collected. Parents provide the details of people who have permission to pick their child up from Pre-School and a password is provided for those that Pre-School staff members might not recognise.
- The times of the children's arrivals and departures are recorded if not during usual drop off or pick up times.
- The arrival and departure of adults - staff, volunteers and visitors - are also recorded on the register and/or visitors book
- Our systems prevent unauthorised access to our premises. We have a numerical key-pad on the external entrance to the building itself, therefore visitors can be checked before entry to the playroom.
- Our systems prevent children from leaving our premises unnoticed.

Child going missing on the premises

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing the key person/staff alerts the setting leader.
- The register is checked to make sure no other child has also gone astray
- The setting leader will organise a thorough search of the building and garden including the sheds and all areas in the pre-school.

- The session leader will send a member of staff to make an initial search for the child. This will begin with the area outside immediately around the annexe, checking that all doors, gates and fences are secure. Try to identify means and route of escape, and if easily secured e.g. close the gate, then do so.
- The member of staff will then check the grounds around the building, first going up to Bolling Road through the field and then up the path to Manley Road, and checking by parked cars and other visual obstructions in both cases.
- While the initial search is made the Session Leader talks to all adults at the Pre-school to establish the last sighting and time, clothes that the child was wearing, and the mental state of the child (happy, upset).
- Telephone Ben Rhydding Primary School 01943 431133. Ask if they can help by searching the area around the school building.
- If the child is not found, the parent is contacted and the missing child is reported to the police. Police advice should then be followed
- The setting leader contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee, carries out an investigation and may come to the setting immediately.
- The Incident is recorded, Ofsted are informed and the Policy is checked and reviewed.

Child going missing on an outing

This describes what to do when staff have taken a small group on an outing, leaving the setting leader and/or other staff back in the setting. If the setting leader has accompanied children on the outing, the procedures are adjusted accordingly.

What to do when a child goes missing from a whole setting outing may be a little different, as parents sometimes attend and are responsible for their own child.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person and complete the register to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- Adults will be asked when they last saw the child, and what she/he was wearing. One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The setting leader is contacted immediately and the incident is reported.
- In an indoor venue, the staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the police if the child is not found.
- The setting leader contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed with the setting leader.
- The setting leader contacts the police and reports the child as missing.
- The setting leader contacts the chairperson and reports the incident. The chairperson, with the management committee, carries out an investigation and may come to the setting immediately.
- The setting leader, or designated staff member may be advised by the police to stay at the venue until they arrive, whilst staff take the remaining children back to the setting.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The setting leader together with the chairperson or representative from the management committee speaks with the parent(s).

- The chairperson and management committee carry out a full investigation taking written statements from all the staff in the room or who were on the outing.
- The key person/staff member writes an incident report detailing:
 - The date and time of the report.
 - What staff/children were in the group/outing and the name of the staff designated responsible for the missing child.
 - When the child was last seen in the group/outing.
 - What has taken place in the group or outing since the child went missing.
 - The time it is estimated that the child went missing.
 - A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is reported under RIDDOR arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- Ofsted is informed, the insurance provider is informed and the Incident recorded.

Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or the designated carer responsible for the safety of that child for the outing. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Setting leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the setting leader. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the setting leader and the other should be the chairperson of the management committee or representative. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called.
- The other children are also sensitive to what is going on around them. They too may be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. If a child is not found, or is injured, or worse, this will be a very difficult time. The chairperson or proprietor will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

Appendix

Continuum of Need Matrix

Looked after children form

Pre-School Early Help Form

Safeguarding form

Notice, Check, Share Guidance

Prevent National Referral Form