

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

This policy contains reference to Working Together, and the importance of ensuring all staff are aware of, and understand how to keep children safe, both within their organisation and with other safeguarding partners. The policy meets the requirements of the organisation and to ensure that it is consistent with current legislation and good practice guidance. It should be read alongside other policies and procedures.

Safeguarding policies are kept under review as the needs of the nursery might change, or the law might change, either of which might mean you need to adopt new policies or to update existing ones.

Safeguarding Children Policy for Fun Start Childcare

Fun Start Childcare abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

- We recognise the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's welfare

Purpose:

Fun Start Childcare will:

- Protect children and young people who receive Fun Start Childcare's services from harm.
- Provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of nursery, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Definition

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and helping them live free from harm, abuse and neglect. It includes actions to protect children at risk from abuse and to promote their welfare.

Child protection specifically focuses on responding to children who are already experiencing or at risk of significant harm. This concern is reactive and requires a practitioner addressing immediate concerns about a child's safety.

The Children Act 1989 definition of a child is: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or are in hospital.

Child Abuse: Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse within their family or harm outside of the family. There are four main categories of abuse, which are: sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect. It is important to be aware of more specific types of abuse that fall within these categories; they are:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child criminal exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Neglect
- Non-recent abuse
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

Safeguarding children: Safeguarding children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/>.

Right Help, Right Time Framework

Fun Start Childcare refer to and seek guidance from the Right Help, Right Time Framework held by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The Right Help, Right Time Framework is the overarching document for the whole of the children's workforce. This multi-agency Right Help, Right Time framework is a guidance tool that all agencies, professionals and volunteers can use to consider how best to meet the needs of individual children and young people. The Framework is available on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website [Right Help, Right Time – Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#).

Fun Start Childcare promotes a culture where safeguarding is embedded in everyday practice and forms part of all learner interactions.

Learners are supported to understand how to stay safe and how to access help when needed.

Safeguarding is reinforced through:

- commitment from senior leadership and Governors
- staff training and safeguarding awareness
- safer recruitment practices
- learner induction and onboarding
- learner progress reviews and welfare checks
- clear safeguarding reporting procedures
- collaboration with employers and external safeguarding agencies
- continuous monitoring and improvement

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all young people feel safe, especially those at risk of, or suffering abuse.

We will therefore ensure that:

- ALL staff, volunteers and governors adopt a trauma-informed approach and contribute to an ethos where young people feel secure and safe;
- ALL learners have opportunities to communicate safeguarding concerns, know that they will be listened to, their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon;
- ALL learners wishes, feelings and views will be taken into account when decisions are being made about how to keep them safe;
- ALL staff will contribute to providing a curriculum which will equip young people with the skills they need to stay safe and be able to communicate when they do not feel safe. Safeguarding is considered alongside learner attendance, progress, wellbeing, and inclusion, with staff encouraged to actively seek and understand changes in behaviour or engagement that may indicate safeguarding concerns

The Prevent Duty

Some organisations in England, Scotland and Wales have a duty, as a specified authority under section 26 of the Counter terrorism and Security Act 2015, to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty. These organisations include:

- Schools
- Registered childcare providers
- Local authorities
- Police
- Prisons and probation services
- NHS trusts and foundations
- Other organisations may also have Prevent duties if they perform delegated local authority functions

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. More information available on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website <https://www.staffsscp.org.uk>.

Safeguarding training & awareness:

Fun Start Childcare will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its trustees, employees, volunteers and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it (e.g. contractors). Training must be renewed every two years.

The DSL must attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Early years foundation stage statutory framework Annex C.

Providers must ensure that all practitioners/ assistants are trained in line with the criteria set out in the Early years foundation stage statutory framework Annex C.

The Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) must provide, support, advice and guidance to all practitioners/assistants on an ongoing basis.

Providers may consider whether any practitioners /assistant need to undertake annual refresher training during the two-year period to help maintain basic skill and keep up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures

For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to

- Understand what meant by the term safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children
- Understand the difference between safeguarding children and child protection
- How to identify the signs of abuse and neglect and what are the main categories of abuse and factors that could lead to abuse, harm or neglect
- How to respond to the indicators of abuse, neglect and keep children safe
- How to spot signs of significant changes in children's behaviour
- How to identify unexplained bruising, marks or possible signs of abuse or neglect
- Inappropriate behaviour from practitioners, or any other person working with the children.
- Any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a child may experience emotional abuse or physical abuse, witness domestic abuse or coercive control.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children
- Have knowledge of the Staffordshire safeguarding children partnership procedures and guidance section

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board provide safeguarding children training for Early Years sectors Learning Zone – Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (staffsscp.org.uk)

Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

Fun Start Childcare expects all employees, volunteers and trustees to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.

However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a child is deemed to be at risk of significant harm* or contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding see the Confidentiality and Information Sharing policies].

Please see SSCP [Right Help, Right Time Framework](#)

Consent:

Whilst professionals should in general discuss any concerns with the child, their parents / carers and where possible seek their agreement to making referrals to Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (SFIFD), this should only be done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child or others at increased risk of suffering significant harm. For more information see the Right Help, Right Time Framework on the

Partnerships website [Right Help, Right Time – Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#).

Consent / agreement is not required for child protection referrals; however, you, as the referring professional, would need to where possible discuss with and inform parents or carers that you are making a referral as stated above, unless by alerting them you could be putting that child or others at risk.

Recording & Record Keeping:

A written record must be kept about any safeguarding concerns. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decision made and why they were made.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Safe Recruitment & Selection:

There is a duty under Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 for Fun Start Childcare to be committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to children from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

Fun Start Childcare has policies and procedures that that cover the recruitment of all trustees, employees and volunteers.

Fun Start Childcare reflects in the safeguarding policy, the procedure they follow to check the suitability of new recruits including how they obtain references.

Social Media:

All employees and volunteers should be aware of Fun Start Childcare's social media policy and procedures and the code of conduct for safeguarding children on digital platforms.

Use of Mobile Phones & Other Digital Technology:

All employees, trustees and volunteers should be aware of Fun Start Childcare's policy and procedures regarding the use of mobile phones and any digital technology and understand that it is unlawful to share images and content on any digital platform without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities.

Escalation:

Professionals providing services to children and their families should work co-operatively across all agencies, using their confidence, skills and experience to make a robust contribution to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings, conferences, and case management.

On occasions situations may arise where there is professional disagreement in relation to safeguarding a child. Resolution is an integral part of professional joint working to safeguard children and this policy seeks to identify how such resolution can be achieved where there are professional differences of opinion.

All professionals have a responsibility to work together and to help to prevent disagreements from escalating where possible. This policy identifies a non-exhaustive list of potential areas of disagreement, guidance on resolving disputes and procedures to be followed when disputes cannot be resolved through discussion and negotiation between professionals at front line level.

Whistleblowing:

It is important that people within Fun Start Childcare have the confidence and support to come forward to speak or act if they have concerns that have not been addressed by the escalation process. Additional knowledge, advice and guidance must be always sought from designated safeguarding leads.

Whistleblowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong- doing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by nursery to protect whistle-blowers.

Our whistle blowing procedure is in place for all staff (including students and volunteers) to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and provide ways for practitioners / assistant to know they can use other channel if they feel their concern are not being addressed

Important Contacts

Designated safeguarding Lead for Safeguarding

Name: Katy Winchester

Email Address:

Telephone Number: 07896064446

Deputy designated safeguarding Lead

Name: Tina Jackson

Email Address: tina@funstart.co.uk

Telephone Number: 07896064446

Trustee for Safeguarding

Name: Emily Humphries

Email Address: emilymayhumphries1@gmail.com

Telephone Number: 07891454591

Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (SFIFD)

0300 111 8033

Emergency Duty Service (out of hours) Tel No. 0345 604 2886

Or email: eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk

Police

Emergency – 999

Non-emergency – 101

Appendix A: Definitions and Safeguarding Risk Indicators

Abuse: Abuse may be emotional, physical, sexual, neglectful, or linked to exploitation. It can occur in any setting and be carried out by adults, peers, or other young people.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse: Ongoing emotional maltreatment causing severe and adverse effects on emotional development, including humiliation, intimidation, controlling behaviour, or isolation.

Potential Signs:

Low self-esteem, sudden withdrawal, or clinginess
Developmental delays (speech, learning, social skills)
Fearfulness, excessive compliance, or passivity
Self-harm, eating disorders, or extreme behaviours

Physical Abuse: Actions causing physical harm such as hitting, slapping, drowning, suffocating, shaking, scalding, poisoning, kicking, burning, or using objects to inflict injury. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or a deliberate failure to prevent injury. Can also include using online platforms to use physical abuse

Potential Signs:

Unexplained injuries, bruises, burns, or fractures
Injuries in unusual places (e.g., inner arms or thighs)
Reluctance to explain injuries or seek medical help
Fear of adults or flinching when approached
Aggressive, withdrawn, or overly compliant behaviour

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse is when someone is forced, pressured or tricked into taking part in any kind of sexual activity with another person. It could be online or in person, and it can happen to anyone.

Sexual abuse can include:

being pressured or forced to do something sexual or have sex
someone flashing or exposing themselves to you in person or online
being pressured or told to share sexual images or videos of yourself
being sent, shown or given sexual pictures and videos, including porn
being given things or made to feel like you owe someone something sexual
doing anything sexual without your consent

Potential Signs:

Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour
Sudden fear of specific people or places
STIs, pregnancy, or physical discomfort
Secrecy or refusal to talk about certain topics

Neglect: Failure to meet basic needs such as food, hygiene, supervision, or medical care.

Potential Signs:

Constant hunger, tiredness, or poor hygiene
Untreated medical issues
Inadequate clothing or appearance
Lack of supervision or care
General warning signs (Any abuse type):
Becoming unusually quiet or aggressive
Sudden changes in behaviour or character
Fear of being alone with certain people
Repeated unexplained injuries
Overreaction to normal events or questions
Saying “everything’s fine” but showing distress

Other Definitions:

Child on Child Abuse: When children abuse other children, and the abuse is most likely to include but not limited to:

Bullying including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (teenage relationship abuse)

- **Sexual Violence**, such as rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault, can also include using online platforms to encourage sexual violence

- **Sexual harassment**, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment, can be standalone or part of a pattern. Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, this could be forcing someone to undress, touch themselves or engage in sex. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos
- **Upskirting** – when pictures are taken under a person's clothing without their permission with the intention of viewing genital or buttocks to cause harm.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE): a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Child Trafficking: is child abuse; children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. They are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation.

County lines: a form of criminal exploitation where criminals befriend children/vulnerable adults either online or offline and manipulate them into drug dealing. The 'lines' refer to mobile phones that are used to control a young person who is delivering drugs, often to towns outside their home county.

Cuckooing: a practice where people take over a person's home and use the property to facilitate exploitation.

Discriminatory Abuse: Unequal treatment based on race, gender, disability, age, sexuality, or religion.

Disguised compliance is a term used to describe the behaviour of parents or carers who appear to co-operate with professionals in order to allay concerns and stop professional engagement

Domestic Abuse: Violence, coercive control, or sexual abuse within close or 'personally connected' relationships (including teenage relationships, intimate partners, ex-partners, family members and older adults). There is no requirement for the victim and perpetrator to live in the same household.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons, also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting', but has many other names. FGM is a form of abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence in the UK. Types of FGM are:

Clitoridectomy: partial or total removal of the external part of the clitoris

Excision: when the external part of the clitoris and labia minora are partially or totally removed. **Infibulation:** This consists of narrowing the vaginal orifice with creation of a covering seal by cutting and appositioning the labia minora.

Hymenoplasty: surgical operation to reconstruct the hymen in order to give the appearance of virginity

Other procedures completed for no purpose such as piercing or tattooing.

Financial Abuse: May include being overcharged for services, pressure to give money or assets, being tricked into receiving goods or services they do not want or need, inappropriate use, exploitation, or misappropriation of property and/or utilities, theft, deception, fraud or exertion of pressure in connection with wills.

Forced Marriage: where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into the marriage. It is also when anything is done to make someone marry before turning 18, even with no pressure or abuse. Forced marriage is illegal in the UK. It is a form of domestic abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

Gangs: Being in a gang can make a person feel part of something or that they belong, but being part of a gang like this can be dangerous. Sometimes a person can be forced to commit a crime or do things that are unsafe. If a gang carries knives or other weapons, they might get them out to show off or intimidate people. This can be very scary for other people, especially if they think the gang will use them. It's not illegal to be in a gang. There are different types of 'gangs' and not every 'gang' is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing, and violent crime.

Grooming: when someone builds an emotional connection to gain trust of someone for the purpose of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know, for example, a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be any sex or age.

'Honour-Based' Abuse: So called Honour-based abuse (HBA) is an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse), which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour.

Human Trafficking: the movement of a person for the purposes of being exploited. There is no minimum distance and exploitation can also include:

Sexual exploitation (regardless of age of the individual being exploited)

Removal of organs

Securing services by force, threats or deception (in particular, if the individual being exploited is a child or an adult at risk).

LGBTQIA+: stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and more. This term covers a broad range of people who have different lived experiences and may

be at different stages in exploring their identity. It includes people who are asexual or have differences in sex development (sometimes known as being intersex).

Individuals of the LGBTQIA+ community face the same risks as others, but they are at greater risk of some types of abuse. For example, they might experience homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or hate crime. They might also be more vulnerable to or at greater risk of sexual abuse, online abuse or sexual exploitation.

Mate Crime: when people with learning difficulties are befriended by someone who uses the relationship to exploit or abuse them.

Mental health: how we speak about what's going on in our heads, and how it makes us feel.

Mental health conditions: where thinking, emotions and behaviours affect a person's ability to go about day to day activities such as work and home life. Examples of mental health conditions include agoraphobia, eating disorders (anorexia, binge eating, bulimia), bipolar disorder, body dysmorphic disorder, borderline personality disorder, claustrophobia, cyclothymia, depression, dissociative disorders, fabricated or induced illness, generalised anxiety disorder (GAD), health anxiety, hoarding disorder, munchausen syndrome, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, personality disorder, phobias, postnatal depression, postpartum psychosis, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), psychosis, psychotic depression, schizophrenia, seasonal affective disorder (SAD), selective mutism, skin picking disorder, social anxiety, stress and trichotillomania (hair pulling disorder).

Metaverse: a digital term that covers technology such as virtual reality, augmented reality and gaming. Within this environment, the potential risks are blurred lines between virtual reality and reality, Harassment and abuse in the virtual reality

Disassociation due to inadequate off boarding and the person may not perceive the physical world as not real which can induce anxiety

Desensitisation: where someone becomes desensitised to experiences that previously shocked and no longer has an effect.

Modern Slavery: examples include forced labour, debt bondage, sexual or criminal exploitation, domestic servitude and human trafficking.

Non-Contact Abuse: Where abuse takes place without being touched by an abuser. This can be in person or online and includes; but not limited to exposing or flashing, showing pornography to someone who cannot consent, exposing someone to sexual acts or forcing an individual to self-pleasure.

Organisational/Institutional Abuse: Neglect or harm within a care or institutional setting due to poor practice, routines, or culture.

Psychological Abuse: Threats, humiliation, intimidation, isolation, or verbal abuse.

Self-Neglect: A person not looking after their own basic needs, leading to risk or harm.

Self-neglect can raise concerns linked to exploitation, radicalisation, and abuse.

Serious violent crime: There are a number of indicators which may signal children and vulnerable adults are at risk from, or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from education
a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
a significant decline in performance

signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries

unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children and vulnerable adults have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:
being male

having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school

having experienced child maltreatment

been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Sexting: sending sexually explicit messages and/or suggestive images, such as nudes.

While the name suggests that this is only done via text message, these types of messages can be via any messaging service, including emails and social media. This also means that sexts can be sent or received via a number of electronic devices, such as smart phones, computers and tablets. If a child is under the age of 18, it is illegal for them to take a nude photo of themselves or a friend, as well as distributing them. Even though the age of sexual content is 16, it is against the law for a child to share a sexual image, even with someone who is also under the age of 18.

This list is not exhaustive.

This policy was wrote by Tina Jackson DDSL and manager and adopted by Fun Start Childcare in September 2026 and will updated at least yearly.