



## Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

---

At Little Tinkers, we have a strong commitment to keeping children safe. We will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of our children. Our safeguarding policy is based on guidance from East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board and the three key commitments of the Pre-School Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

These are:

1. We are committed to building a ‘culture of safety’ in which our children are protected from abuse and harm.
2. We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in the ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ (HMG 2015) and the Care Act 2014.
3. We are committed to empowering children through the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage (Prevent Duty) promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

This policy sets out the procedures we follow if we suspect that:

- A child is at risk of being harmed
- A child is being harmed

Or

- An allegation is made against a member of staff/ volunteer/ director.

This policy also details steps we take to safeguard children in our care.

Our policy is to be used in conjunction with the **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection** through the Pre-School Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy and the '**Safeguarding Children Manual**' (**2014**) which has been provided by the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board. The safeguarding manual is a fully comprehensive guide for early year's practitioners working with children 0 to 5 years, published in 2014 and **The Prevent Duty (2015)**.

### **Our main point of contact:**

SPOA – 01323 464222  
SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk

**EYFS Key Themes and Commitments:**

<i>A Unique Child</i>	<i>Positive Relationships</i>	<i>Enabling Environments</i>	<i>Learning and Development</i>
1.3 Keeping Safe	2.1 Respecting Each Other 2.4 Key Person	3.4 The Wider Context	4.4

**Safeguarding Lead:**

Our designated safeguarding leads, who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection are:

Lou Newson and Stacy Schulmeyer. They attend advanced safeguarding training every two years. They have read and have a copy of the most up to date guidance from Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) for Child Protection "Safeguarding Children", and ensure that all members of staff are familiar with this updated version.

**Training:**

All staff/ volunteers/ directors are required to undertake child protection and safeguarding training and understand the principles of early help, the LSCB thresholds of significant harm and how to access services for families. Training can be provided in the form of online training via PLA or ESCC, external courses delivered by ESCC and/or in-house training delivered by the Safeguarding Lead. All staff/volunteers/directors are aware that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect and how to spot the signs.

All staff/directors/volunteers are aware that certain factors can pose high risks to children and use the Continuum of Need tool to identify when assessment and support for a child and their family needs 'stepping up' to a referral to SPOA (Single Point of Advice Team). As part of training, all staff/directors/volunteers know how to record suspicions of abuse and disclosures, using the documents provided in Keeping Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns guide.

**Recruitment:**

To ensure that children in our care are looked after by suitable people, we have robust, safe recruitment procedures in place. To this aim, we ensure that:

- Our adverts state that DBS checks will be required for the role.
- Our adverts state clearly that positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974.
- We always use \*application forms not CV's.
- A minimum of two people check application forms carefully with special note to gaps between employments to be further investigated at interview.
- We always take up references by telephone.
- We check ID – passport, proof of address, driving license, etc.
- Early Years Qualifications are checked and a copy is kept on file.
- We carry out enhanced DBS checks via CAPITA before the applicant starts.
- Interviews are face to face.
- All staff are required to complete a "Suitability to Work with Children" form which is checked by the Manager and is completed annually.
- All staff are required to undergo an induction period of three months.

- All directors are required to register with Ofsted – Charity Commission and Companies House and have an enhanced DBS check carried out by Ofsted.
- Students over the age of 16 on placement from a college/university that are with us for more than two weeks, will be DBS checked as we deem this to be a long term placement. Students on work experience aged 16 or over from local schools/colleges, who are with us for less than two weeks, will not have a DBS check, however their school/college must vouch for their suitability to be with young children and will be supervised by a member of staff at all times. All students will be given an induction.

**Visitors:**

All visitors must sign in, have identity checked and be accompanied in the setting at all times.

Our external door is locked with a fingerprint access system so that we have control over who comes into the setting, no unauthorised person will have access to the children either inside or outside.

**Digital Images:**

We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development for their Learning Journal. Parents sign consent on our registration form for digital images to be taken of their children. Occasionally we use images on our website but the children are not named. We also occasionally hold events that parents attend, such as the Christmas Nativity and also occasionally have articles in local media. Parents have the option of not allowing their child to be photographed and/or filmed for any purpose within the remit of the nursery and we keep a list of these children so that all staff members are aware.

Digital images are taken on the nursery cameras and are transferred each week onto the nursery computer (which is password protected) by a senior member of staff, so that key persons can put them into children's Learning Journals. The images are then deleted from the computer. The cameras do not leave the building unless they are being used to capture images by a member of staff on an outing.

**Mobile Phones:**

As most mobile telephones have internet access and cameras (which could potentially be used to take indecent images of children), all staff are required to keep their mobile phones in the staff cloakroom (which is locked at all times) and must be switched off at all times whilst on the nursery premises. No member of staff is permitted to take any photographs of children on their mobile phone. All of the nursery buildings and farm are a mobile free zone for staff, parents and visitors.

We have a separate e-safety policy which goes into more detail. The Supervisor takes the lead on e-safety and ensures that all staff are aware of e-safety.

**Environment:**

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

### **Education:**

We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our daily routines and use the curriculum to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children. It is key that children develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe and what to do if they feel unsafe. We are fully aware of British Values and create within the setting, a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background. We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing:**

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This includes information that is transferred to another setting if the child leaves us or moves onto school. Information sharing with another setting that the child also attends is done so under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Responding to Suspicions of Abuse:**

- All children are assigned a key person to build a relationship with and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age appropriate way.
- All staff/volunteers/directors understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression to other children.
- All staff/volunteers/directors understand what is expected of them in terms of their required behavior, conduct and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including the use of mobile phones), whistle-blowing and dignity at work.
- All staff/volunteers/directors understand the principles of early year help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event they feel either the local authority and/ or we have not acted adequately to safeguard.

We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parents learning disability.

In relation to radicalisation and extremism we follow the *Prevent Duty* guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCB procedures on responding to radicalisation. We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police.

### **Allegations against staff:**

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting. Our Complaints Policy is available on our website and we display Ofsted contact details on our notice board in the lobby.

Staff are aware of our Whistleblowing Policy (which includes a telephone helpline for early years practitioners) and that they can speak to the Safeguarding Lead with their concern or contact the Single Point of Advice (SPOA) Team who will inform our LADO directly. All staff have full contact details of the Single Point of Advice SPOA Team.

In the staff toilets, the ‘Safeguarding is Everybody’s Business’ poster, summarises the flowchart for managing allegations/concerns (2015). We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board’s manual (2014) when responding to any complaint/concern or allegation against a member of staff/ director/ volunteer within the setting.

The safeguarding lead will be guided by the Single Point of Advice SPOA Team from the initial phase of the allegation to the conclusion of the case. The member of staff/ director/volunteer will be treated fairly and honestly and will be suspended while the investigation is ongoing to protect all parties.

Examples of inappropriate behaviour by adults within the setting can include; inappropriate sexual comments, excessive 1:1 attention beyond the requirements of their usual role/ responsibilities or inappropriate sharing of images – this list is not exhaustive. We recognise that reporting a concern can be stressful so for this reason all staff are asked if they have any concerns about an adult’s behaviour at their supervision meetings, to help open a conversation.

Where a member of staff/ volunteer/ director has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and can be identified and barred from working with children.

#### **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures:**

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure) or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give 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 he or she will take action
- Does not question the child, although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification
- 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 it was reported, with date and time and the names of any other persons present at the time.

We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children. These records are signed and dated and kept in the child’s

personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially. Our Safeguarding Lead is informed at the earliest opportunity and within one working day.

Where the LSCB stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the LSCB.

If we feel that a referral has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCB escalation process and will ensure all members of staff/ volunteers/ directors are aware of how to escalate concerns.

#### **Informing parents:**

Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child at risk or interfere with the course of a police investigation. Advice will be sought from Social Care if necessary. Parents are informed when we make a record of concerns in their child's file, and any conversations with the parents are also recorded.

If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to Social Care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the LSCB does not allow this.

As well as working with the SPOA Team/LADO, we will report any alleged incident and action taken to Ofsted within 14 days. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this. We also inform Ofsted (within 14 days) of any known allegations of serious harm or abuse that have happened away from the setting, by any person working or looking after children at our setting.

Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, we will advise the Disclosure and Barring Service if a member of staff/volunteer is dismissed (or would have been, had the person not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.

#### **Concerns about a child's welfare:**

##### *Child at risk of significant harm: Level 3 or 4 Continuum of Need*

If a member of staff/volunteer/director is concerned about a child's welfare they should discuss their concerns with the safeguard lead. If the safeguard lead is concerned that the child is at significant harm (level 3 or 4 on Continuum of Need), they will contact the SPOA Team immediately. Once the referral is made, the safeguard lead will agree with the SPOA Team what the child should be told, by whom and when. If the child is in immediate danger or if there is suspicion that a crime has been committed, they may also contact the police. The safeguard lead will use documents for making a referral as supplied in the Keeping Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns.

The safeguard lead (or person contacting SPOA must be prepared with the information they have discussed with the person raising the concern and be ready to email this immediately, using the ESCC SOR form.

*Child not at risk of significant harm: Level 1 or 2 Continuum of Need*

If it is decided that the child is not at risk of significant harm or the safeguard lead requires advice, they will contact either the child's Health Visitor or SPOA Team to discuss their concerns and for advice and guidance. Following this conversation with one of these professionals it will be decided what support the family may need and steps will be taken to offer appropriate support. The child will continue to be observed. We use an incident book to record such conversations and observations so that we can build up a clear picture and spot trends and patterns. If a child is receiving additional support, they will have their own incident book.

Although the safeguard lead will always take the lead, all staff/ volunteers/ directors are aware that they can contact the Single Point of Advice (SPOA) Team if they feel that the Safeguarding lead does not take their concerns seriously. Contact details for this purpose are printed on the reverse of all ID badges and in the main room on the Safeguarding poster.

In addition to the above safeguarding procedures, we have a responsibility to ensure that we do not hand over any child to a parent, legal guardian or authorised person if we suspect that they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs which may affect their ability to care for the child. In this instance, the manager/deputy or room leader will speak with the adult in question and request that they arrange for someone else to collect the child. Two members of staff will stay with the child and adult. We realise that this may be a sensitive issue and hope that the adult will co-operate.

If, however, the adult is in any way inappropriate or abusive, the manager, deputy or room leader will telephone the police. In the instance that the adult in question is employed by the parent to care for their child i.e. a child minder, the parents will be telephoned immediately to advise them and to request that they arrange for someone else to collect their child.

**Support to Families:**

We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with our families. In our registration form we make clear to parents 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. Where possible, the child's key person will attend case reviews and will share information as requested.

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 Local Safeguarding Children Board.

We will always discuss our concerns with a child's parent unless advised by the SPOA team not to. However some of our parents are working parents and therefore relatives or carers

often collect children on their behalf. In this instance we will make every effort to contact the parent by telephone (a total of three times), to request that they come to pre-school that day, to discuss an incident.

If however we are unable to contact the parent and we are not happy to send the child home, without discussion, we will have no option other than to speak to the person who has been authorised by the parent, to collect the child that day. We will request that the authorised adult collecting the child, informs the parent that we have tried to contact them and that we will make contact the following working day.

This Policy was reviewed by:	Ellie Hanna
Adapted by:	Stacy Schulmeyer
Read and agreed by:	Little Tinkers Nursery School Staff
Date:	April 2018
Review Date:	April 2020 (Or sooner if legislation dictates.)