

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: **Child Protection** Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

This document is based on guidance from the [2024 Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) documents. (Updated by the DoE – February 2024)

Whilst Early Years Settings do not have a statutory duty to follow the guidance in KCSIE the local authority has adopted the guidance within that document for the purpose of updating this policy. If the Government re-issues this guidance during the 2024/25 period, we will ensure that our policy is compliant with any changes.

Date agreed and ratified by: 26th September 2024

Jen Walker (Director) & Katarina Turbe (Manager)

The policy will be reviewed and updated at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedure



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Key Personnel	Name (s)	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)	Katarina Turbe	Manager@sparklingminds.co.uk 01869 351118
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's)	Jen Walker Anna Cranidge Sam Eilertsen	Jenwalker@sparklingminds.co.uk Office@sparklingminds.co.uk Seniorlead@sparklingminds.co.uk 01869 351118
Sparkling Minds 'Neglect' Awareness Lead	Paige Fleming	Office@sparklingminds.co.uk
Education Safeguarding Advisory Team / Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs)	LADO Jo Lloyd Team Donna Crozier Sandra Barratt Lorna Berry Becky Langstone (ESAT)	01865 810603 Lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Linked Locality Community Support Service (LCSS) worker	Clive Wedlock Simon Mathers	07741607832 Clive.wedlock@oxfordshire.gov.uk 07827947313 Simon.mathers@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)		0345 050 7666 (office hours (8.30am – 5pm, Monday to Thursday, 8.30am – 4pm, Friday))
Out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT)		0800 833 408
Police		101 or in emergencies 999

INTRODUCTION

It is essential that everybody working in this Early Years Setting understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in ensuring children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect exploitation and harm.

Our setting is committed to safeguarding children and aims to create a culture of vigilance. All staff should make sure that any decisions made are in the best interests of the child.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989, and in line with the following:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) 2024 (KCSIE)
- [The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#)
- [Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board safeguarding Policies and Procedures Contents \(https://oscb.trixonline.co.uk/\)](#)
- [What to do if you think a child is at risk of abuse or neglect – Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](#)

This policy should be read in conjunction with these national and local policies and procedures.

At **Sparkling Minds Pre-School & Day Nursery** our Director & Management Team takes seriously its responsibility under Section 11 of the Children Act and duties under “Working Together to safeguard Children 2023”, the Human Rights Act 1998 21, and the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements exist within our setting to identify and support those children who are suffering harm or are likely to suffer harm.

All our staff have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm, Children's welfare is our paramount concern.

Our setting should provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child free from discrimination or bullying where children can learn and develop happily.

This policy applies to all our staff, management team and volunteers working in our setting.

All staff will sign to confirm they have read and understood this policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment

underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and management with the framework they need to keep children safe and secure in our setting and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

In our setting we recognise the importance of sharing information and reporting concerns to help ensure children are protected.

Our setting acknowledges the need to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity, and respect. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. We also have a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents.

For a list of definitions used throughout this policy, please see Annex A and for categories of abuse see Annex E.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.

All children have a right to be protected from harm.

All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, either in the setting or in the community, taking into account contextual safeguarding, in accordance with the guidance.

We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.

Whilst the setting will work openly with parents as far as possible, it reserves the right to contact the Local Authority Children's Social Care (via MASH) or the police, without notifying parents if this is believed to be in the child's best interests.

We will always act in the best interests of the child and ensure that the decisions around safeguarding we take are child centred and coordinated in approach.

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

The management and leadership team recognise that staff anxiety around child protection can compromise good practice and so have established clear lines of accountability, training, and advice to support the process and individual staff within that process.

In this setting any individual can contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) **Katarina Turbe**, or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) **Jen Walker, Paige Fleming (after training is completed at the end of October 2024)** or **Sam Eilertsen**, if they have concerns about a child.

The named DSO **Katarina Turbe** will take leadership responsibility for safeguarding. The Director **Jen Walker** will receive reports of allegations against the manager (DSO) and act accordingly.

As an employer we follow safer recruitment guidance as set out in KCSIE 2024.

Managers will ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. These will be in the form of regular one - to - one meetings. Effective supervision meetings provide support, coaching and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

DEALING WITH CONCERNS, DISCLOSURES AND RECORD KEEPING

If a member of staff has a concern about a child or if a child tells them they are being, or at risk of being abused, exploited or neglected, staff will appropriately respond by listening and offering reassurance. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

All staff are aware that very young children including those with disabilities, special needs or with language delay may be more likely to communicate concerns with behaviours rather than words. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and /or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Additionally, staff will question the cause of knocks and bumps in children who have limited mobility which will include children visiting the site as well as those who are children on roll.

If a member of staff suspects abuse, spots signs or indicators of abuse, mental health concerns or they have a disclosure of abuse made to them they must:

1. Make an initial record of the information as soon as it is practical
2. Report it to the **DSO/DSL** immediately
3. The **DSO** will consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention. However, urgent medical attention should not be delayed if the **DSO** or **DSL's** are not immediately available

If there are grounds to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm the **DSO (or DSL's)** must contact the **Local Authority Children's Social Care** via **MASH**, sharing:

1. the known facts
2. any suspicions or allegations
3. whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family.

The **MASH** can be contacted by phone on **0345 050 7666** during office hours (Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5pm, Friday 8.30am – 4pm)

Outside office hours call the **Emergency Duty Team** on **0800 833 408**

In the absence of the **DSO or DSL's**, staff will refer directly to **MASH** or the child's social worker (if applicable) and the police (if appropriate) if there is a significant concern.

If there is not considered to be a risk of significant harm, the **DSO** will either actively monitor the situation, consider the **Early Help** process through the completion of the Strengths and Needs for within the family.

***Concern forms are kept in the staff room and on our electronic system. (To avoid staff interrupting a child in the sharing/trusting moment, staff are encouraged to record immediately on any piece of paper to avoid having to leave a child to locate a specific form. The information and details can be transferred to the formal record at a later point – date, time, staff name and accurate details without emotion or opinion are key to the initial recording).**

Staff should make an accurate factual record as soon as possible including details of:

- Dates and times of their observations
- Dates and times of any discussions in which they were involved
- Any injuries
- Explanations given by the child / adult
- What action was taken
- Any actual words or phrases used by the child
- Any questions the staff member asked (remembering not to ask any leading questions)

The records must be signed and dated by the author (or equivalent on electronic based records).

Safeguarding records are kept for individual children, including chronologies, and are maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the setting. Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with our GDPR/Data Protection policy, which place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Our prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict of interest between the child and an adult, the interests of the child must be paramount.

We recognise that whilst all matters relating to safeguarding are confidential, we have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.

All staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

We will ensure that staff are confident about what they can and should do under the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent.

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

Directors should ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR.

- DfE Guidance on Information Sharing (July 2018) provides further detail.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
- OSCB provides advice on the Seven Golden Rules of Information Sharing
<https://www.oscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/The-Seven-Golden-Rules-for-Info-Sharing.pdf>
- Gov.uk [Guidance to support schools with Data protection activity, including compliance with GDPR](#)

All safeguarding records will be transferred to the child's receiving school/setting. These will be given to the receiving setting/school and a receipt of delivery will be obtained. We will ensure that when a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection (CP) Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new setting/school within 5 school days and that the child's Social Worker is informed that the child has moved.

If we do not know where the child is moving to, we will endeavour to find out. We will retain the records and speak to **LCSS** or **MASH** if we have concerns.

The Manager (as DSO) will be kept informed of any significant concerns shared with the DSL's in her absence, and all other staff are informed on a need-to-know basis.

TRAINING

All staff in our setting are expected to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must be able to respond appropriately. FGM, PREVENT and NEGLECT training are completed annually by all staff.

Our DSO undergoes training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Our DSO and our DSL team undergo their DSL training every 2 years through the OSCB to enable them to fulfil their role.

Training is provided for all staff to a generalist level every 3 years and regular updates around safeguarding are shared with staff regularly (examples are via the notice board, email, social media and staff meetings.)

Separate training is provided to all new staff on appointment as part of their induction process.

Staff are also provided with other training to support the ongoing welfare of children (Include training such as Oral Health Training, Restorative Practice, Attachment Theory, Key Person Training, Early Help Strengths and Needs, SEND).

Any update in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in briefings/meetings and then captured in the next whole setting training. **This policy will be updated by the DSO during the year to reflect any changes brought about by new guidance.**

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES

At **Sparkling Minds Pre-School & Day Nursery** we acknowledge that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges as they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. We recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect of children of SEND.

We will ensure that children with SEN and disabilities, specifically those with communication difficulties will be supported to ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.

Staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns such as bullying. All staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability and be aware that children with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse.

MULTI AGENCY WORKING

We recognise and are committed to working with other professionals and agencies in line with statutory guidance.

Settings are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns. We will however contribute to the investigation and assessment processes as required. We recognise the importance of multi-agency working and will support attendance at relevant

safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings.

The Management & Leadership Team (DSO and DSL's) will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

We will participate in Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's), other reviews and file audits as and when required to do so by the Oxfordshire Children's Safeguarding Board. We will ensure that we have a clear process for gathering the evidence required for reviews and audits and embed recommendations into practice and compile required actions within agreed timescales.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

We are committed to ensuring a safe culture where all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our children and staff.

The Director & Management and Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the setting follows safe recruitment processes.

The Manager is responsible for ensuring that the setting maintains an accurate Central Record.

The Director and Management & Leadership team will ensure that there is at least one of the persons involved in the whole recruitment process, has completed safer recruitment training.

The Director & Manager are committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in settings.

All staff should disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children that could be a transferable risk to their role.

Any contractors, commissioned services or others working on site will be made aware of our Safeguarding policy and procedures.

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS ABOUT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) must be told of allegations against adults working with children and young people within 24 hours.

The Director should refer to this guidance if there is an allegation against the manager.

Referral to LADO includes all cases that meet the harms threshold where a person is alleged to have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This includes behaviour that may have happened outside of the setting, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children and is known as transferable risk. Where appropriate, an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works should be undertaken. If in doubt, seek advice from the LADO.

There are two levels of allegation/concern:

- allegations that may meet the harms threshold (see paragraph above)
- allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to in 2024 KCSIE guidance as ‘low level concerns’. These will be recorded and reviewed so that potential patterns of concern, inappropriate, problematic, or concerning behaviour can be identified.

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult, staff must:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the manager as soon as possible.
- If an allegation is made against the manager, the concerns need to be raised with the Director as soon as possible. If the Director is not contactable, then the LADO should be contacted directly.
- If there are concerns that the owner/proprietor has acted in a way that meets the threshold for contacting the LADO, the person raising the concern should contact the LADO directly. If the threshold has not been met, then the setting’s Whistleblowing Policy should be followed.
- Where settings are not the employer of supply staff, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should a setting decide to cease to use a supply staff due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Further information can be found in KCSiE 2024.
- There may be situations when the Manager or Director will want to involve the police immediately, if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence.
- **Once an allegation has been received by the Manager or Director they will contact the LADO on 01865 810603 or lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk as soon as possible and before carrying out any investigation into the allegation other than preliminary enquiries.**

In liaison with the LADO, the setting will determine how to proceed and if necessary, a referral will be made to the MASH and/or the police. The LADO team will assess the information provided and advise on next steps, in line with KCSIE 2024 part 4, and Oxfordshire County Council’s LADO local procedures. **The setting will inform Ofsted.**

The setting will also contact the LADO team for advice where they have concerns about an adult working or volunteering with children which does not meet the harms threshold as stated above.

WHISTLEBLOWING IN A SAFEGUARDING CONTEXT

While the setting has a separate whistleblowing policy, this is a summary that outlines the process when there is a concern that safeguarding issues have not been reported or followed correctly. This does not replace the whistleblowing policy and should be read in conjunction with the setting policy.

Whistleblowing is a term that is used when staff want to report a concern within their organisation that involves their manager or a person senior to them in the organisation which may prevent them from following the normal reporting systems.

There are a limited number of areas that can be called Whistleblowing, and the policy protects staff from being punished for raising concerns.

Within this setting **Katarina Turbe** is the manager and is responsible for all other staff. If you are concerned that any member of staff within the setting is not following safeguarding processes or behaving in a way that is placing children at risk, you should, in the first place, make the manager aware.

If your concern is about the manager, you should raise this with **Jen Walker** (Director).

If you would prefer to raise your concerns outside of the setting, then you are able to contact the **NSPCC whistleblowing line on 0800 028 0285** or email help@nspcc.org.uk for national organisations, **OFSTED** or contact **Oxfordshire County Council**.

If you believe that a member of the setting staff is harming a child (an allegation) and this has been reported to the manager and no / insufficient action has been taken, or the member of staff you have concerns about is the manager, then you are able to contact the LADO on 01865 810603 or email lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

If you believe that a child is being abused by individuals outside the setting, you can make a referral to The Local Authority Children's Social Care by calling the **MASH** on **0345 050 7666** (office hours) or **0800 833 408** (outside of office hours).

PREVENTING RADICALISATION

All our staff will undergo online Prevent Awareness training to support staff in identifying radicalisation and understanding what steps they need to take to protect the children and families in our setting.

This provides the Prevent duty and explains how it aims to safeguard vulnerable people from being radicalised to supporting terrorism or becoming terrorists themselves.

All staff should complete this training. <http://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk>
Sharing information on Prevent should be treated in the same way as wider safeguarding which introduces securely transferring concerns when a child moves to another school or setting.

SITE SECURITY

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are safe, this includes ensuring the safety of any visitors into setting.

Our linked policies are stored in the reception area within the policy files.

The setting will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens setting security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the setting site.

Regular and thorough risk assessments are carried out. Hazards are made safe and/or removed.

SAFEGUARDING AND THE CURRICULUM

In this setting we ensure the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning. We use all opportunities to teach children about how they can keep themselves and others well and safe from harm, in an age-appropriate way.

RELATED SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies as listed below:

- Promoting Positive Behaviour (Bullying & Physical intervention)
- Online Safety (including mobile phones & cameras)
- Privacy Notice (Data Protection and Information Sharing)
- Intimate Care & Nappy or pull-up changing
- Health and Safety General Standards
- Working in partnership with other agencies
- Recording and reporting accidents (Risk assessments)
- First Aid
- Administering Medicines
- Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs
- Looked After Children
- Children's rights and entitlements
- Maintaining children's safety & security on outings or visits
- Staffing
- Code of conduct for staff
- Employment - Safer Recruitment
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints
- Food and Drink
- Emergency Evacuation and fire-safety
- Missing child
- Uncollected child

POLICY REVIEW

Systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.

The Management & Leadership team will ensure that action is taken to remedy any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements without delay.

As a setting, we review this policy at least annually in line with DfE, OSCB and OCC requirements and other relevant statutory guidance.

Date approved by Director & Manager: 26th September 2024

Date to be reviewed by Director & Manager (if not before): 26th September 2025

