

Safeguarding

Access to children p1

Unsupervised access is defined as any activity/ service where a child is not accompanied by their parent / carer.

Children who are not accompanied by their parent/ carer for part or all the session they attend will always be supervised by:

- Staff directly employed by our organisation with relevant qualifications, who have a clear, in date (three years) enhanced DBS check, qualifications and ID or*
- Designated staff under a Service Level Agreement with our organisation, in which case all employees/ staff will have a clear enhanced, in date DBS check and ID or*
- Temporary cover arrangements from Keystage, Veritas and other similar organisations. All employees/ staff will have a clear enhanced, in date DBS check, minimum Level 2 childcare qualification and ID.*
- Support staff from LCC SEN service, Lancashire Teaching Agency, other similar organisations. All employees/ staff will have a clear enhanced, in date DBS check, minimum Level 3 childcare qualification and ID.*

DBS records & qualification information will be kept centrally by the Business Support Manager and onsite at each nursery.

Special note: Temporary cover/ support staff are not usually left without any other supervision. However, provisions are put in place in case of unforeseen circumstances.

Others who do not have unsupervised access to children.

- Board Trustees – visits will be planned. ID will be checked. Visitor's policy adhered to. Accompanied if in a children's area.*
- Volunteers - visits will be planned. ID will be checked. Visitor's policy adhered to. Accompanied if in a children's area.*
- All Service Users – Report to reception. ID will be checked. Visitor's policy adhered to. Accompanied if in a children's area.*
- External Service provider's visits – Report to reception. ID will be checked. Visitor's policy adhered to. No access to any children's areas*
- Contractors – visits will be planned. ID will be checked. Visitor's policy adhered to. Accompanied if in a children's area.*
- Security Services – visits will be planned. ID will be checked. Visitor's policy adhered to. Accompanied if in a children's area.*
- All Other Centre Users - Visitors policy adhered to. No access to children's areas*

A register of authorised persons / organisations etc will be maintained by the Business Support Manager and circulated to Senior Management Team and Receptions.

In the event of any doubt, team members should consult with a member of the Senior Management Team.

Our community is at the heart of all our nurseries. We celebrate parents as the child's first educators, our staff team work from this principle and believe access to quality childcare should be available to all, regardless of race, religion, culture, disability and other differences.

The long term benefit of nursery attendance and engagement will be:

- Improve pre-school play and learning opportunities for all children*
- Significant improvement in children's ability to learn when they enter primary school*
- Less juvenile or anti social behaviour and more involvement in community initiatives*
- Inclusion of children and adults with special needs as appropriate within education, leisure, employment and community activities*
- The community as a whole, regardless of ethnicity, develops a respect and understanding of each others cultures and values, which is reflected through children, parents and carers.*

Places will be applied for via an application form and can be completed by the parent/carer or a person designated by the parent/carer. If the application is completed by a third party a parental/carer signature will be required before an application will be progressed.

Application forms must be completed in full and these will be checked and considered by the Nursery Manager, who has a unique overview of what spaces are available in which age groups

Authorised persons.

Parents that are introduced as 'parents,' at the time of application and agreement, will be assumed to hold legal parental responsibility and will be recorded as such. Parents recorded as holding legal parental responsibility will not be changed on record unless legal documentation is provided.

Persons can be removed from the authorised list on request of either parent holding legal parental responsibility.

Neither parent holding legal parental responsibility can request the removal of the other parent from the authorised list without written consent of both parents.

If a parent is removed from the authorised list through written consent, a request in writing is required to reinstate that parent onto the authorised list.

Signing in and out

Parents should report to the reception or office prior to entering Little Stars Nursery

Staff will check the child's name and their session information with the list provided and once confirmed, they will be allowed access to the nursery.

Parents will be reminded not to use mobile phones as they go through into nursery. These must not be used for calls or messages until they have left the building.

On entering Nursery, the nursery staff in the child's room must sign the arrival/departure sheet. This forms part of the emergency evacuation procedure.

When a parent/carer returns to collect their child, the above procedure must be followed again.

Visitor's policy

All appointments in the nursery and/or Child & Family Centre must be arranged in advance at suitable times for the children/staff involved.

Visitors will not see children alone unless this has been agreed separately with the parent / carer and a member of the senior management team.

ID badges will be checked upon arrival for external contractors, professional's etc. and they will be required to sign in and out.

All visitors to the nursery will be informed of our mobile phone policy and asked to switch theirs off and store it away whilst they are on site.

Visitors, contractors etc. should not be left unaccompanied or with unrestricted access to any areas where children will be.

Potential families wishing to look around the nursery must also follow the signing in and out procedure and always be accompanied.

The building is always secured with limited access to any visitors without an access fob. If the access system fails, staff will take control of the main access points until such a time as they are repaired and secured again.

Non-attendance

Regular attendance is essential for the childrens sense of belonging and to form part of a healthy routine. As stated on the application form, it remains the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the nursery each and every time their child will be absent – long or short term.

Failure to inform the nursery of a planned or last minute absence, will result in a follow up call being made, after a maximum of 2 days of absence or earlier – if there is perceived to be a safeguarding risk.

If we are unable to get hold of anyone, using all the numbers and email addresses provided, and in the event that we have ongoing concerns about a family, social services and the police will be notified

Nursery and any child only activity

Mobile phones may not be used during any activity/ service.

Please ensure that mobile phones are not used when dropping off and collecting children.

Personal mobile phones should under no circumstance be used in the nursery to take images or videos and staff should never remove these from the secured staff area during a working day.

All other Children's Centre activities/ services

Mobile phones may not be used at any activity/ service.

Personal mobile phones must be switched off and placed in lockers or other designated areas outside of activity/ service areas.

Non-Adventure Hyndburn Personnel

All persons using the Children's Centre facilities are advised to switch their mobile phones off or place on silent.

No persons using the Children's Centre facilities are allowed to take photographs without the express consent of the Senior Management Team or the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Any persons working in the nursery areas or other child only services e.g., group sessions or other Children's Centre activities, must adhere to the guidance above.

Smart watches and linked devices

From 1st of November 2021 smart watches are not permitted to be worn when in nursery by any staff members. These instead must be stored centrally along with staff personal mobile phones.

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 details the current regulated activities that require employees and volunteers to undergo Enhanced DBS checks. Children's Centres and nurseries are both specified in this legislation.

Therefore, it is a requirement that all staff and volunteers undergo such a check before they are allowed access to children. These checks reveal a wide range of information, including:

- Convictions, cautions, restraining orders*
- Contact with the police that has been recorded that may or may not have led to an arrest, a charge, or a conviction.*
- Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service that have been made by organisations or employers where someone's behaviour or performance is a concern or that has or could have put a child at risk.*

DBS checks need to be undertaken prior to a volunteer or staff member starting their employment or role and having contact with children. If a DBS is not "Clear" and has a disclosure, the matter needs to be considered by Trustees, and the advice of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) needs to be sought. The nature and circumstance of the concern and the age of the person at the time are crucial factors.

The organisation will pay for the initial enhanced DBS and once it's received, each staff member will be expected to sign up to the update service within the required timeframe of 21 days.

This service ensures that the staffs DBS information is up to date and puts the responsibility of renewing it on the staff member as opposed to the organisation, as the DBS remains the property of the staff member and not the organisation.

From the 1st of September 2024, existing staff will move over onto the update service with the organisation renewing their DBS after three years and then the responsibility passed onto each of them.

The annual cost of registering with the update service of £16.00 will also be the staff members responsibility.

The organisation retains the right to require a DBS re-check at any time during a member of staff's employment or a volunteer's work with the organisation, until they are registered for the update service.

Staff are aware that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting,) And we do not allow anyone whose suitability has not been checked, including through a criminal records check, to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for.

We record information about staff qualifications and the identity checks, vetting processes and references that have been completed (including the criminal records check reference number, the date a check was obtained and details of who at the setting obtained it).

On very rare occasions, it may be necessary to seal off the building so that it cannot be entered from the outside. This will ensure that children, parents, staff, and visitors are safe in situations where there is a hazard in the grounds or outside the grounds in the near vicinity.

A lockdown is implemented when there are serious security risks for the premises due to, for example, nearby chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous dogs, serious weather conditions, a reported incident or civil disturbance in the community or attempted access by unauthorised person's intent in causing harm or damage.

A senior member of staff will contact emergency services and inform them of the risk or threat.

Staff will be notified that lock down procedures are to take place immediately by using internal phone system and/or in person if this is safe to do so.

Procedures:

- Ensure all children and adults are inside.*
- Close and lock all windows and doors, closing blinds or curtains as appropriate.*
- Move to an interior room with a lockable door. If possible to do so, lock the door*
- Take the register and a handsfree phone with the ringtone turned to vibrate only*
- Remain out of sight and minimise movement.*
- Stay as quiet as possible and avoid drawing attention.*
- Calm the children and colleagues and be aware you may be in lock down for some time.*
- Do not move around the building until you have been notified that it is safe to do so.*
- If practicable, staff should notify a senior member of staff by phone that they have entered lock down and identify any children not accounted for.*

DURING LOCKDOWN NO ONE SHOULD MOVE ABOUT THE BUILDING

After staff have been informed of all clear by a senior member of staff:

- They should return to their normal room with their children and check the register to ensure everybody is present.*
- They must immediately contact the senior staff should there be any child, parent, or member of staff unaccounted for.*

Staff Roles:

- Senior manager to call police if necessary.*
- Manager to lock the front door and inner doors.*
- Staff to lock/close room door(s) and windows. Nearest adult to check exit doors.*

Parents of nursery children will be notified as soon as it is practical to do so by phone.

Depending on the type and severity of the incident, parents may be asked NOT to collect their children from nursery as it may put them and their child at risk. Children will not be released to parents during a lockdown.

Parents will be asked not to call the nursery as this may tie up emergency lines. If the end of the day is extended due to the lockdown, parents will be notified and will receive information about the time and place children can be picked up from staff or emergency services.

A letter to parents will be sent home on the nearest possible day following any serious incident to inform them as to the context of the lockdown, and to encourage parents to reinforce with their children the importance of following procedures in these very rare circumstances.

A partial lockdown may be because of a reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and children in the building. It may also be because of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc.

Notification of Partial Lock down

Alert to staff: 'Partial lockdown'

- All outside activity to cease immediately, children and staff return to building.*
- All staff, parents and children remain in the building and external doors and windows locked.*
- Movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances, but this must be supervised by a member of staff. All situations are different; once all adults and children are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an on-going and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the appropriate body e.g., Emergency Services, Local Authority. This can then be communicated to staff parents and children.*
- 'Partial lockdown' is a precautionary measure but puts the building in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality) should the situation escalate.*

Staff to be informed of the lockdown policy. Lockdown practices will take place at least once a year to ensure staff know exactly what to do in such a situation. Monitoring of practices will take place and staff debriefed for positive reinforcement or to identify required improvements.

Drills will not involve children. The probability of a full lockdown event is extremely low and would not justify the distress to young children. This decision and the policy will be kept under review.

Our policy for security should always be followed in order to avoid a child being lost from the Nursery or nursery grounds

Effective staff deployment is essential to ensure that children are monitored at all times and reduce the possibility of a child becoming lost

CCTV in all rooms (in some nurseries) also assist in locating which exit was used, the last time a child was seen etc in the unlikely event that a child leaves the nursery building unattended.

Once you have discovered that a child has gone missing, a staff member must

- *Alert a senior member of staff who will alert all other senior team members*
- *Remember the safety of the other children with regard to supervision and security. Ensure that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and supported. They should not be aware that a child has been lost to reduce their anxiety levels*
- *The immediate vicinity, building and outdoor play areas should be searched by at least two members of staff thoroughly*
- *When the situation has been resolved, a full internal investigation will take place which may result in disciplinary procedures*
- *If the child cannot be found within ten minutes then the police and parents should be informed*
- *Continue to search, keeping in touch with each other using handsfree phones*

Lost children - Outing

In the unlikely event of a child being missing or lost, the following actions will be immediately taken.

- *Alert a senior member of staff who will alert all other team members to the missing child.*
- *Remember the safety of the other children with regard to supervision and security - Team members will gather the rest of the children and proceed with a head count.*
- *Ensure that the remaining children are sufficiently supervised and secure.*
- *All members of staff will conduct an eye scan search of the immediate vicinity without leaving the main group of children (as far as the eye can see from the group position).*
- *If the child cannot be seen, police will be contacted immediately.*
- *AH Manager will be notified of the missing child and of the emergency police call.*
- *The AH Manager will then inform the parent/carer of the child about the situation.*
- *Mobile phone communication should be maintained to keep all parties up to date with the situation.*

If the progress of your outing is delayed for any reason, you should notify a Senior Manager.

- *On arrival back at nursery, a Senior Manager should be notified.*
- *Children should be settled back into nursery and offered food and drink.*
- *Children should be provided with opportunities for discussion about the outing, their experiences, safety aspects etc.*
- *Outing pack should be checked, replenished and returned to its storage place.*
- *Registers etc should be filed away in the Outings File.*
- *An evaluation of the outing should be completed to highlight any aspects which need to be considered next time.*
- *In the short-term following the outing, children should be offered pre-planned extension activities.*

We recognise the importance and value of outings for children of all ages. They must be planned to ensure that they are a safe, positive experience and the staff: child ratios must be followed.

The Nursery Manager/Deputy must walk the planned route of the outing – if the trip is local.

All obstacles/safety issues must be noted in full along the way e.g., identify safe public paths for walking or for use of prams, if they will need to cross roads, busy traffic areas, any dangerous debris or dog fouling.

A full and detailed written risk assessment should be completed with the exact route of the planned outing and if any form of transport is required, including public transport.

The length of time needed should be noted and an alternative route to be used if in the event the first route is not accessible.

Risk Assessments:

Individual risk assessments are not required for an outing/area that already has had one completed, it is required however that the existing risk assessment be reviewed for accuracy and amended if needed. In the event the children are going to a new location, a new risk assessment would be required before an outing can take place. All risk assessments – new or existing should also be reviewed after outings have taken place and amendments made where necessary.

Each risk assessment must include the following:

- *The actual risk / hazard*
- *Who might the risk / hazard affect?*
- *Level of the risk / hazard*
- *Controls in place*
- *Future actions*

Risk assessments should be retained in the outings file, and the staff members take this with them and retain these on site.

Authorisation of outings

Requests to take children on significant outings must be submitted to the Nursery Manager for authorisation at least 2 weeks in advance of the planned trip.

Local outings requested on the day, will also require authorisation by the nursery manager who will need to check staffing, visits, meetings etc to ensure the correct number of staff can be freed up.

Parental Consent

Written consent to take children on local outings will be sought from all parents as part of the initial settling in paperwork. The consents will be retained in the children's file.

Written consent does not need to be obtained for every local outing; however, staff may call and check with families if they have specifically requested to be.

For significant outings, parent's will be issued a letter which outlines the purpose of the outing, the exact route, the departure and return time of the outing, necessary clothing, and footwear needed. A copy of the parent letter should stay onsite in the children's file.

Parent Volunteers

Parents who wish to accompany their child on an outing will be subject to and included in the outing risk assessment.

If parents do not wish their child to participate in an outing, they should state this on the outings consent form.

If they have consented to outings but do not wish their child to participate in a specific outing, they should notify the Manager in writing.

The outing will only proceed if the ratios of children to staff can be maintained on the outing and at the nursery.

Children should be well prepared for outings:

- *There should be conversation/discussion as appropriate to the child's age and stage of development.*
- *Discussion may include aspects of personal safety e.g., holding hands/pram, not running away, and listening for instructions, the importance of staying near you, not talking to people they do not know etc.*
- *If you are taking school-aged children on an outing, point out a place nearby where they can go if they get separated from you.*
- *Other learning activities should be used in the lead up to an outing e.g., books, stories, rhymes, art and craft, role play.*
- *Where possible, children should be fully included in the preparation for an outing.*

Staff/Children Ratios:

Staff/children ratios need to always be maintained when going off site on an outing. There must be one senior member of staff to attend each outing - the Nursery Manager, Area Manager or Deputy Nursery Manager – with the remaining senior team member remaining on site.

If a senior team member is not available for a planned outing, the outing would be cancelled that day and rearranged.

Before leaving the building to participate in the outing, a senior member of staff should inform a manager of the ratios both onsite and offsite.

The potential for outings is dependent on the capacity to maintain ratios both on and off site.

1:2 for under 3's

1:4 for over 3s

However, children's behaviour, special and individual needs, must be taken into consideration when planning an outing.

Team members cannot take children outside the nursery environment alone.

Outdoor Pack:

An outing pack should be taken and should include:

- *Route and risk assessment*
- *Emergency contact details*
- *List of children & staff taking part on the outing*
- *Relevant medical information e.g., allergies*
- *Contact details of team members.*
- *Mobile Phone*
- *First Aid Box*
- *Reflective jackets*
- *Wrist straps*
- *Tissues and wet wipes*
- *Nappies and Nappy Bags*
- *Sun cream (dependent on season)*
- *Sun hats (dependent on season)*
- *Spare clothes*
- *Bottle of water*
- *Plastic cups*
- *Rubbish bag.*
- *Drinking water*
- *Disposable gloves, aprons*
- *Any children's specific medication – inhalers, EpiPens, etc*

Medication

If any child requires medication during the outing, the Key Person should take responsibility to ensure they receive their medicine correctly. The medicine form and any instructions should be always kept with the medicine in the outings bag.

During the outing

All children must always wear fluorescent safety jackets, with harness and wrist straps where appropriate. Babies should be in prams/pushchairs with harness on.

All staff must be wearing the correct uniform.

During the outing, regular head counts should be made against the number of children and adults on the outings register. Before moving to another area, a new head count will be conducted.

Team members will report at intervals to confirm that the group are safe.

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

The safeguarding and welfare requirements, specified in this section, are designed to help us to create high-quality settings which are welcoming, safe, and stimulating, and where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Providers must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well. The requirements in this section explain what early years providers must do to: safeguard children; ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children; promote good health; manage behaviour; and maintain records, policies, and procedures.

Providers must be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. These should be in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP). The safeguarding policy and procedures must include an explanation of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

A practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in every setting. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSP. They must provide support, advice, and guidance to any staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The DSL must attend specific training every two years that enables them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect.

We train & support all staff to understand our safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding legislation and policy.

Online training is made available during staff induction, along with a professional discussion, to ensure staff are able to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- significant changes in children's behaviour.*
- deterioration in children's general well-being.*
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.*
- children's comments which give cause for concern.*
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home*
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.*

This online training is refreshed every 2 years and annually a safeguarding discussion takes place with all staff members and their line manager to share any relevant changes and to ensure staff are still confident with their knowledge and responsibilities. These discussions are recorded and filed. Safeguarding is also discussed at staff supervisions and in staff meetings throughout the year

Staff may also find 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners' helpful.

Staff must have regard to the government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and to the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales.

If providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police.

Registered providers must inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Registered providers must also notify Ofsted, or their childminder agency of the action taken in respect of the allegations. These notifications must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

The organisation believe that a child's welfare, development, and protection are paramount and should be always upheld within our organisation.

Our organisation has a responsibility to help uphold the safety and well-being of all children we are in contact with. You should always bear in mind that it is not your job to investigate an allegation.

The organisation will protect children from harm, and our organisation has adopted the Safeguarding Procedures produced by the Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) which are available electronically at: <https://www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk>. You share a responsibility to ensure you are familiar with this guidance. If you are concerned about a child's safety or welfare you should follow these procedures.

All team members (team members include secondment posts in all aspects of our organisation's safeguarding children policy and procedures), and volunteers who participate in any way with the organisation will be subject to strict vetting procedures. Disclosure and Barring Service checks will be undertaken for any individual having access to children.

Personal and professional employment references will be obtained from present and previous employers for employees and volunteers. They will also have to sign a declaration that they have no criminal convictions, which may disqualify them from working with children and young people.

The Board will ensure that all team members and volunteers are familiar with the procedures, have access to training and support and that policies are regularly reviewed. Safeguarding Children training will be provided before direct work with children is conducted. You must also take responsibility to discuss with your supervisor where you feel you require further support, training and awareness raising helping to identify gaps in your own knowledge and experiences.

External service providers will be subject to service level agreements which will outline the Safeguarding Children responsibilities of our organisation and the service provider together and if appropriate, individually.

The organisation will develop information sharing protocols with partner agencies which will link into our safeguarding children policy and procedures. Information sharing will form part of induction, training, and supervision processes.

Dealing with a child welfare concern.

N.B. These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures found in the Employee Handbook.

If you are concerned about a child's safety or welfare, progress as follows:

- Inform your on-site Designated Safeguarding Lead and discuss your concerns with them. If there is no DSL present in the building you are in, report to any of the NMT who are also DSL's or the Operations Manager. This needs to be done as soon as possible but within 24 hours.*
- Staff complete a diary of events record sheet and share this with their NMT or DSL*
- Following the discussion, you and the DSL will need to consider 'is there still a concern regarding the child's safety or welfare?'*
- If there is still a concern, consider 'is the child in immediate danger or returning to a situation of danger?'*

If YES, immediate action will be taken by a Designated Safeguarding Lead. You will be required to make a written record, with guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead who is involved with this case.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the parents of the action to be taken, unless this would:

- Increase the risk to the child.*
- Impede on any future investigation.*
- Cause undue delay which would not be in the child's best interest*

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the Duty Social Worker of all referrals that may meet the Level 4 threshold.

If identified at level 4, The Duty Social Worker will undertake a statutory assessment of the child's needs, assign a social worker, inform other agencies if required, and work with the DSL to safeguard the child.

The DSL will inform the Operations Manager and the Chair of the Board, that a referral has been made.

The organisation may offer support to the family in partnership with other agencies to address specific issues if required and as guided by the initial assessment. This support would be reviewed in line with Early Help Service Partnership

If not identified at level 4 but you are still concerned about the child's safety or welfare:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to the parent or carer about the concern. (Another appointed person may discuss the concern with the parent if they have a significant working relationship with the family). You will be required to make a written record, with guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead who is involved with this case

The reasons for the concern will be recorded on the Record of Child Welfare Concern. This may be done before, during or after the discussion with the parent / carer as guided by the situation. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take responsibility for the accurate recording of the concern and will ensure the information is filed in line with procedures for filing and storage of information.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact any other professionals who are working with the family, if this is felt appropriate.

Child welfare concerns and any safeguarding issues will be discussed with the Operations Manager each week to ensure effective information sharing and to identify if any additional support for the staff involved is needed.

If level 2 or 3, services and/or support will be reviewed and offered such as parenting support, respite care, mental health service involvement, family group conferences, access to substance misuse services, targeted intervention services etc.

Assessment and review will be ongoing according to need and in line with the lead agency protocols. Child welfare concerns and safeguarding issues will be discussed within supervision sessions with individual team members.

The LADO **must** be contacted when you have received any allegation or concern about any person who works with children who may 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; or
- 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.

These procedures may also be used where concerns arise about:

- The person's behaviour with regard to his/her own children
- The behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member
- A person's behaviour in their personal life, which may impact upon the safety of children to whom they owe a duty of care.

If a concern is raised about a staff member, the DSL will.

- follow the referral procedure.
- The allegation will be recorded by a senior manager.
- The allegation will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Social Care, the police, and Ofsted, for investigation in consultation with the Operations Manager (Chair of the Board of Trustees in the absence of the Operations Manager).
- Subject to the allegation and circumstances, the employee may be suspended from duty pending the investigation outcome.
- We will follow guidance from the LADO as to implementing our disciplinary procedure and as to whether the requirements for a referral to the DBS service are met.
- Our organisation will co-operate with the requirements of any investigation by Social Care or the police.

A referral to LADO can be completed online, which will be sent directly to the Lancashire LADO team using the LADO referral form.

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/practitioners/supporting-children-and-families/safeguarding-children/local-authority-designated-officer/>

Alternatively, if you need to speak to someone, please call 01772 536 694.

Further information can be found on the [LADO information page](#).

The welfare requirements set out clearly the ratios between staff and the number of children depending on the child's age, and those ratios must always be met. We ensure staff are deployed effectively to ensure this is the case. Our ratios are 1:3 under 2's, 1:5 2-3's and 1:8 over 3's.

The principle that Ofsted operates is that there need to be enough staff to ensure that children's wellbeing is promoted and that they are safe. Ofsted appreciate that staff need to go to the toilet, briefly need to leave the room for other reasons and of course have lunch breaks. Our lunchtime policies reflect this need to maintain ratios.

Teams are flexible about ensuring that we maintain safe and quality care. There will be times that staff in a particular room are under pressure and teams help each other out. For example, two rooms may join, to ensure better supervision. Team members who are struggling must immediately contact the manager on duty.

Active Supervision

This concept of active supervision is designed not merely to ensure that children are safeguarded but is preventative and aims to promote children's welfare. There are six elements to active supervision. Staff will do most of these all the time, but they are worth reflecting on:

Set up the environment - so staff can always hear and see children.

Position Staff – Staff need to position themselves apart, so all spaces with children are visible. Therefore, staff must ensure that children are not able to move unobserved from a space with staff to a space without staff, for example, moving to an outside area from inside. In addition, they need to ensure when giving attention to one child they do so wherever possible having sight of other children.

Scan and Count - Scanning to ensure that all children are actively engaged and counting regularly and especially at times of transition from one space to another.

Listen - Staff who are actively listening immediately identify concerns.

Anticipate Children's Behaviour – This enables difficulties / conflict to be predicted and prevented before they develop and enables staff to set appropriate challenges that children can meet.

Engage and Redirect – Staff use what they know about children to appropriately intervene when children are struggling.

Carrying out practical tasks in rooms

There can be occasions when it is possible and appropriate for team members with the agreement of their colleagues to undertake a task in the room when children are present. At no time must the active supervision of children be compromised whilst a team member is undertaking the task. Parents and carers need to know that their child is being cared for and is actively supervised. Therefore:

- *Tasks must be "safe" tasks and not involve use of equipment or substances that could pose a risk to children.*
- *There must always be enough staff to ensure effective supervision to safeguard children's welfare.*
- *All staff in the room must be in agreement and consider it safe for the member of staff to do the task.*
- *No more than one member in a room must be engaged in a task at any time.*

Changes to staff qualifications, supporting requirements and using long term students in ratio were shared by the DfE earlier this year.

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information about the wrongful, unlawful or dishonest activities of your employer or work colleagues to your employer or a third party and which is in the public interest.

We encourage all our staff to raise any concerns they have about the Organisation's actions or operations or the activities of your work colleagues where you reasonably believe them to be inappropriate, unlawful, dishonest or unethical.

Whether or not the disclosure to us gains the protection of whistleblowing legislation, depends on the specific circumstances and nature of the disclosure made. However, to ensure no member of staff is discouraged from raising genuine concerns we confirm that no member of staff will be subject to any detrimental treatment or dismissed because they have come to us to share their concerns, either under this policy or the Grievance Procedure.

If you have genuine concerns about the Organisation's actions, you have a statutory right to disclose such matters without the fear of victimisation or detriment, however, for a disclosure to gain statutory protection it must be made in line with public interest and must relate to one of the following matters: -

- *A criminal offence*
- *Failure to comply with any legal obligation.*
- *A miscarriage of justice*
- *Danger to health and safety of any individual*
- *Danger to the environment*
- *Deliberate concealment of any of the above.*

Ideally, such disclosures should be made in writing to a senior manager or Chair of Trustees, and you should provide as much information and evidence as possible so that we can thoroughly investigate the issue.

In some cases, you may reasonably conclude that there is no one internally to whom you can make a disclosure to. You should however have good reasons to reach this conclusion. Where you have reasonably concluded that a disclosure cannot be made internally then it may be appropriate to make a disclosure to any regulating or statutory body e.g. HSE or VOSA.

Given the sensitive nature of such disclosures, we will do our utmost to ensure confidentiality is maintained however sometimes this is not possible and whilst we encourage staff to make an open disclosure, anonymous disclosures may be made. Please note, it may be impossible to investigate or take further action if you choose to make an anonymous disclosure.

We would ask that you keep details of your disclosures confidential and not share these to anybody outside of the Organisation unless you have provided us with an opportunity to address the problem first.

The full policy is available in your employee handbook, and more guidance can be found below.

NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available. Staff can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.

Ofsted provides guidance on how to make complaints about a provider: Complaints procedure - Ofsted - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: Whistleblowing for employees.