

Safeguarding Policy

At Worlebury Willows Preschool we work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best possible start in life.

Aim of the policy

Our overall aim is to ensure children in our care are kept safe from harm through implementing this policy and promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by:

- Creating an environment that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- Encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- Enabling children to have the self-confidence and the age appropriate vocabulary to keep themselves safe, particularly when they have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- Working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the Principles of safeguarding all our children.
- Being alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.

This Policy and 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, 2015, are displayed on our Information Board.

Liaison with other bodies/ Safeguarding documents

- We work within the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015' is displayed on our Information Board and so is accessible to parents and staff. We have regard to the Government's statutory guidance 'Working together to Safeguard Children 2023'.
- If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we refer to the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership's *Effective Support Document* and use the *Early Help Continuum of Need Tool*. If the child or family's needs cannot be met by universal services we will contact the 'Front Door' and ask for support. If a referral is made we use local guidance to decide whether we must inform the parents at the same time.
- We notify Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children on our premises. This is done within 14 days of these allegations.

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Next review: August 2026 or sooner if required

Staffing and volunteering

- Our Designated Safeguarding Officer takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the setting. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Sophy Booker. Deputy is Louise Hughes.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for liaison with North Somerset's Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Team and the Police.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide support, advice and guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue within the setting as required.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake the appropriate level of child protection training (as detailed in the North Somerset Child Protection Training Pathway) to equip them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect and take the lead in responding to safeguarding concerns.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- All staff are required to sign up to the DBS update service to allow regular checks to be made at the time of their termly supervisions/appraisals.
- We do not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, including a criminal records check through the Disclosure Barring Service to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for.
- We inform staff, volunteers, students and others of their requirement to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). A reminder of this requirement is within their regular Supervision/Appraisal cycle.
- If we become aware of relevant information which may lead to disqualification of an employee we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the children.
- We will not employ or continue to employ a person who has a disqualification.
- We will meet our disqualification requirements within the Early Years Foundation Stage, Statutory Framework 2025.
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern. This includes making a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

- We will notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the premises. The disqualification of an employee could be an instance of a significant event.
- We will give Ofsted the details regarding any order, determination or other grounds for disqualification from registration as specified by the Childcare Act 2006.
- Ofsted will be informed within 14 days of the date that as a provider we are aware of the information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references, Criminal records checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service and other suitability checks for staff, volunteers, students and others to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children. This includes recording information about staff qualifications, checks and vetting processes and the carrying out of staff identity checks
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- All staff will be required to read this policy and North Somerset's *Effective Support for Children, Young People, and Families in North Somerset* during their induction. They will be required to read and confirm their understanding of the contents of the above documents annually, and when any amendments are issued.

Training

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy will attend child protection training that equips them to carry out their role and is in line with North Somerset's Child Protection Training Pathway for staff working in childcare settings i.e. Child Protection, Basic Awareness; Advanced Inter-agency Child Protection; Safer Recruitment, Prevent Training, GM Training.
- North Somerset Safeguarding Training meets the criteria detailed in Annex C of 'The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, 2025.'
- In line with North Somerset's Child Protection Training Pathway for staff working in childcare settings, all staff (other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead) are trained to understand and implement our safeguarding policy and procedures i.e. at least to Basic Awareness level. The training will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. This will also include 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.
- Child Protection training is updated every 2 years.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will attend North Somerset's Early Years Safeguarding Clusters, Safeguarding Workshops and Early Years Providers Briefing every term. Any relevant safeguarding information will be shared immediately with the Deputy Safeguarding Officer and other members of staff.
- Termly supervisions/appraisals include a discussion of any safeguarding concerns, although these will also be discussed as they arise. Staff will be given

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the opportunity to ask any questions around safeguarding and will complete a short safeguarding quiz as a refresher of their knowledge. If it is identified that the member of staff needs additional training, this will be put in place through the North Somerset CPD offer which also provides local information.

Early Years Foundation Stage/Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme at a developmentally appropriate level for our children.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted so that they feel emotionally safe in our setting and grow to be strong, resilient, and listened to and develop an understanding of why and how to keep themselves safe.
- Children are provided with opportunities and experiences which foster a culture of mutual value and respect through having positive regard for each other's heritage arising from their colour, gender, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.

Procedure for checking the identity of visitors

- If the visitor or prospective parent is unknown to the setting we check their credentials and reason for visit before allowing them to enter the setting
- We ask for at least 1 form of identification to verify who they are and, if appropriate, which organisation they work for (e.g. official identity badge, driving licence, bankcard which shows signature)
- If we require further verification we will contact the main landline telephone number of their organisation and ask to be put through to the visitor's manager
- We ensure that the visitor or prospective parent is supervised whilst we are carrying out these checks, and throughout their visit
- We record that ID has been checked, together with the visitor's name, reason for visit, time and date in our Visitor's Log. The Visitor or prospective parent is required to sign the Visitor's Log and their signature is then checked against their identification

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or maybe experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child
- listens to the child
- if appropriate, gives reassurance that she or he will take action
- The member of staff does not question the child

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Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- the child's name
- the child's address
- the age of the child
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time
- the names of any other person present at the time
- action taken and by whom
- records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file.

Making a referral to the Local Authority Referral and Assessment Team

- We follow North Somerset's *Effective Support for Children, Young People, and Families* when contacting North Somerset Children's Social Care with any concerns.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact.
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

- 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 North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to Families

- The setting believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The setting makes clear to parents its 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 social services department.
- The setting continues 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 social care department in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure

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and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteers within the setting, including allegations of abuse.
- All staff and volunteers are made aware of the role of North Somerset LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- We follow the guidance of the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken place, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Early Years Team Safeguarding lead to investigate.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by the Designated Officer for Allegations in conjunction with the police and Ofsted.
- Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.
- We notify Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children on our premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). This will be done as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the very latest within 14 days of these allegations.
- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at least within 14 days of the incident.

Mobile Phones/Cameras/Smart Watches

- Smart watches are not permitted to be worn
- Personal mobiles are locked in a box while staff are working
- Photos are stored on password-protected preschool mobile phones and will be deleted as soon as they are no longer required.
- Preschool mobiles are locked away at preschool out of hours

For more details see Mobile Phone/Tablet/Smart Watch Policy

The legal Framework for this Policy

Primary legislation

Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)

The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 2006 (Every Child Matters)

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised 2023)

What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused (revised 2015)

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025

North Somerset's Effective Support for Children, Young People, and Families in North Somerset

Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales, 2023

Secondary Legislation

Sexual Offences Act, 2003

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act, 2000

Human Rights Act, 1998

Equality Act, 2010

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974

LOCAL CONTACT NO.S

Professional Consultation and Advice T. 01275 888690

General Enquiries & Updates T. 01275 888808

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