

# Safeguarding Policy



## Muddy Bugs Forest School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

### Purpose and Aims:

The purpose of Muddy Bugs Forest Schools 'safeguarding and child protection policy is to provide a secure framework for the workforce in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those children/young people who attend our setting. The policy aims to ensure that:

- All our children are safe and protected from harm.
- Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children to feel safe and adopt safe practices;
- Staff, children, proprietors, visitors, volunteers and parents are aware of the expected behaviours' and the settings legal responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our children.

### Ethos

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.' Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Safeguarding in Muddy Bugs Forest School is considered everyone's responsibility and our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Muddy Bugs Forest School recognises the contribution it can make in ensuring that all children registered or who use our setting feel that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken. We will do this by working in partnership with other agencies and seeking to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities that will help to equip our children with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours.

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 2015" <sup>1</sup>
- "What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused" 2015 <sup>2</sup>
- "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2016 <sup>3</sup>
- "The Prevent Duty" 2015 <sup>4</sup>
- "Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers" 2015 <sup>5</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/592101/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children\\_20170213.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/592101/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_20170213.pdf) 1

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2> 3

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf) 4

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419628/Information\\_sharing\\_advice\\_safeguarding\\_practitioners.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf) 5

### Responsibilities and expectations

The Directors takes seriously their responsibility under section 11 of the Children Act and duties under "working together" 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 significant harm. We recognise that all staff and management have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.

Muddy Bugs Forest School should also ensure the following:-

- that the safeguarding and child protection policy is made available to parents and carers.
- that all staff and volunteers are properly checked to make sure they are safe to work with the children who attend our setting.
- that the setting has procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against members of staff or volunteers.
- the safe and appropriate use of cameras, mobile phones, technology and online equipment within the setting.
- the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which places a duty on early years and childcare providers "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (The Prevent Duty) is implemented, taking into account the Local Safeguarding Children's Board 'Prevent' policies, protocols and procedures and ensuring the Fundamental British Values are implemented as stated in the EYFS.
- a Safeguarding Designated Officer (SDO) is appointed who has lead responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues in our setting.
  - The **Safeguarding Designated Officer** is **Ann Bowyer**. If they are not available, then contact
  - The **Deputy Safeguarding Designated Officer Kirsten McGuire**. (*This person can also be contacted with any safeguarding concerns*).
- Our procedures will be annually reviewed and updated.

The responsibilities for the Safeguarding Designated Officer (SDO) are:-

- to ensure that all safeguarding issues raised in setting are effectively responded to, recorded, and referred to the appropriate agency.
- All adults, (including volunteers) new to our setting will be made aware of this policy and the procedures for child protection, the name and contact details of the Safeguarding Designated Person and have these explained, as part of their induction into the setting.
- Be responsible for arranging the settings safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with the children and young people. The SDO must ensure that the safeguarding training takes place at least every three years for all; which they can deliver in-house provided they are linked in to the support and quality assurance process offered by the Local Authority and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- to attend or ensure that a senior member of staff who has the relevant training and access to appropriate supervision, attends where appropriate, all child protection case conferences, reviews, core groups or meetings where it concerns a child in our care and to contribute to multi-agency discussions to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.
- for ensuring the acceptable, safe use and storage of all camera technology, images, and mobile phones through the implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the appropriate policies and procedures. This includes the on-line Safety Policy which includes Camera & Image Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Acceptable Use Policy.
- Interrupting and implementing the Fundamental British Values.

All Child Protection concerns need to be acted on **immediately**. If you are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you must tell the Safeguarding Designated Officer.

**All Adults, including the SDO, have a duty to refer all known or suspected cases of abuse to the relevant agency including MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), Children and Young Peoples Service (CYPS) – Social Care, or the Police.** Where a disclosure is made to a visiting staff member from a different agency, e.g. Early Years Consultants, Health Visitors, it is the responsibility of that agency staff to formally report the referral to the Setting's Safeguarding Designated Officer in the first instance and to follow their organisations procedures. Any records made should be kept securely on the Child's Protection file.

## Recognising concerns, signs, and indicators of abuse

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. For our setting it includes such things as child safety, bullying, racist abuse and harassment, visits, intimate care and internet safety etc. However, it must be acknowledged that technology itself will not present the greatest risk, but the behaviours of individuals using such equipment will. The witnessing of abuse can have a damaging effect on those who are party to it, as well as the child/adult subjected to the actual abuse, and in itself will have a significant impact on the health and emotional well-being of the child.

The table below outlines the four main categories of abuse as defined by the Department of Health 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' document 2010. Staff should be aware that the possible indicators are not definitive and that some children may present these behaviours for reasons other than abuse. However, it is important to know the indicators of abuse and to be alert to the need to consult further.

Type of Abuse	Possible Indicators
<p><b>Neglect</b> The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairments of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide food, clothing and shelter; protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision; ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.</p>	<p>Obvious signs of lack of care including: Problems with personal hygiene; Constant hunger; Inadequate clothing; Emaciation; Lateness or non-attendance at the setting; Poor relationship with peers; Untreated medical problems; Compulsive stealing and scavenging; Rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking; Running away; Low self-esteem.</p>
<p><b>Physical Abuse</b> May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child</p>	<p>Physical signs that do not tally with the given account of occurrence conflicting or unrealistic explanations of cause repeated injuries delay in reporting or seeking medical advice.</p>
<p><b>Sexual Abuse</b> Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, penetrative or non-penetrative acts and also includes involving children in watching pornographic material or watching sexual acts.</p>	<p>Sudden changes in behaviour Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance Tendency to cry easily Regression to younger behaviour – e.g. thumb sucking, acting like a baby Unexplained gifts or money Depression and withdrawal Wetting/soiling day or night Fear of undressing for PE</p>
<p><b>Emotional Abuse</b> The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.</p>	<p>Rejection Isolation Child being blamed for actions of adults Child being used as carer for younger siblings Affection and basic emotional care giving/warmth, persistently absent or withheld.</p>

## Prevent

### The Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015

The Act places a Prevent duty on settings to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Settings subject to the Prevent Duty will be expected to demonstrate activity in the following areas:

- Assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism
- Demonstrate that they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies.
- Ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism.
- Expected to ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in the setting.

### What to do if you are concerned

If a child makes a disclosure or allegation of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else.
- Do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret.
- Inform your Safeguarding Designated Officer as soon as possible.
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which you must sign, date and record your position using the setting safeguarding record log forms.

If you are concerned that a member of staff or adult in a position of trust poses a danger to a child or young person or that they might be abusing a child or young person you should report your concerns to the Safeguarding Designated Officer. Where those concerns relate to the Safeguarding Designated Officer however, this should be reported to the Proprietor using the setting's 'Whistle blowing' policy.

### Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought from the LADO or Safeguarding Team where necessary.

### Managing Allegations

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers that are working or may come into contact with children and young people whilst in our setting. Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. This could include inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or other persons working with the children such as inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements their role and responsibilities, inappropriate sharing, or images. They can be made by children and young people or other concerned adults. Allegations are made for a variety of reasons:

- Abuse has actually taken place.
- Something has happened to the child that reminds them of a past event – the child is unable to recognize that the situation and people are different; Children can misinterpret your language or your actions.

- Some children recognise that allegations can be powerful and if they are angry with you about something they can make an allegation as a way of hitting out.
- An allegation can be a way of seeking attention.

If an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust whether they be members of staff or volunteers this should be brought to the immediate attention of the SDO who will advise the Director. In the case of the allegation being made against the SDO this will be brought to the immediate attention of the other Director/s. The SDO/Director will need to discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the nature of the allegations made against the adult, in order for the appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion depending on the allegation being made. Directors will need to:

- Refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately and follow up in writing within 48 hours. Consider safeguarding arrangements of the child or young person to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser.
- Contact the parents or carers of the child/young person if advised to do so by the LADO.
- Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation.
- Advise Ofsted of allegation within 14 days of the allegation
- Ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed including whether suspending a member of staff from work until the outcome of any investigation if this is deemed necessary.
- Act on any decision made in any strategy meeting.
- Advise the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations being founded.

### **Confidentiality**

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- The SDO will disclose personal information about a child or young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the Safeguarding Team or Social Care on this point.
- We will take no names consultations with our MASH team to discuss concerns we may have, but we understand that if they then ask for a name we will disclose those details and it will become an enquiry.

### **Training**

All members of staff and volunteers will have access to safeguarding training at least every three years in line with Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB). We will also, as part of our induction, issue information in relation to our Safeguarding policy and any policy related to safeguarding and promoting our children/young people's welfare to all newly appointed staff and volunteers.

Our **Safeguarding Designated Officer** will undertake further safeguarding training, Group 3 SSCB Multi-agency Safeguarding course or Group 3 Refresher Courses. This will be undertaken at least every three years which updates their awareness and understanding of the impact of the wide agenda of safeguarding issues. This will support both the SDO to be able to better undertake their role and support the setting in ensuring our safeguarding arrangements are robust and achieving better outcomes for the children in our setting. This includes taking part in multi-agency training in addition to safeguarding training.

Our **Directors** will have access to safeguarding training and our **Named designated Officer** for Safeguarding will also undertake additional awareness training at least every three years. They will also be advised to undertake additional training to support their employers' role in Handling Allegations against adults who work with children and young people, including our staff and volunteers.

Our safeguarding arrangements are reported on an annual basis to the **Directors** and our Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation. We will include our Safeguarding Policy in our settings prospectus/website and will post copies of our policy throughout the setting. We are also able to arrange for our policy to be made available to parents whose first language is not English, on request.

### **Mobile Phones and Cameras**

Muddy Bugs Forest Schools has policies and procedures in place with regard to the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting and on visits etc .

### **Related Setting Policies**

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as child health and safety, bullying and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children, providing first aid, setting security, drugs, and substance misuse, etc.

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### **Useful Contacts:**

Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board <https://www.surreyscp.org.uk/>

Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/childcare-professionals>

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency [www.ceop.org.uk](http://www.ceop.org.uk)

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/>

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0300 470 9100

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/concerned-for-someones-safety>

Early Help co-ordination centre 0300 470 9100 (ask for Early Help) [cspa@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:cspa@surreycc.gov.uk)

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/.../earlyhelp>

Out of hours for Children's Single Point of Access):

5pm -9am and at weekends and public holidays, please contact:

Emergency Duty Service 01483 517898 [edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk)

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*Directors: Ann Bower and Kirsten McGuire*

