



Policy - Safeguarding Children Prevent Duty Guidance and Allegations

Safeguarding Children

Review Date: 2nd April 2025

Rationale

My first responsibility and priority is towards the children in my care and their welfare and well-being is paramount under Section 27 of the Children Act 1989, Section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006 and the government document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated version December 2023)

Child abuse happens to children and young people of both sexes, of any gender (not excluding gender questioning children or those who are socially transitioning); at all ages and in all cultures, religions and social classes and both to children and young people with and without disabilities. Abuse includes the risk of peer on peer abuse (bullying) which may happen in person or online. If I have any cause for concern, I will report it, following the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures or my local Safeguarding Partners procedures. **Dorset Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB), Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership.**

As the registered childminder, I Ms Helen Palumbo take the lead responsibility as the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for safeguarding children within the setting and ensure that policies and procedures are fit for purpose and regularly reviewed and updated.

Other adults who do not have a DBS Check or equivalent will never have unsupervised access to minded children. The only exception to this would be in an extreme emergency when parents have given their express permission.

Procedure

I am familiar with the relevant local procedures and am aware of where to find the most updated information. The procedures can be found by viewing the LSCB or Safeguarding partners website Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership.

West Team

County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

www.pdscp.co.uk

Email pan-dorsetscp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Telephone 01305 221196

As an early years setting, I have regard to the government's statutory guidance documents: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and the 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales'. I also have access to other helpful documents such as 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'; and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. These documents would be referred to if a relevant situation arose.

I am aware of the indicators of **physical**, **sexual** and **emotional** abuse and **neglect**, or a mixture of these types of abuse; and of specific situations that may indicate that the main categories are involved, such as domestic abuse, forced marriage, peer on peer abuse, substance misuse, gang activity, female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation, breast ironing, radicalisation and extremism. I am aware that inappropriate adult behaviour may constitute the grooming or conditioning of children for an abusive interaction.

Children who have **special educational needs or disabilities** are more vulnerable to abuse due to factors such as lack of communication skills, reliance on others for intimate care and limited social experiences. I recognise the need to consider changes of behaviour and not attribute them to their disability but consider abuse as for any other child.

Prevent Duty

As part of my role as a childcare professional, I have a duty to keep myself up to date with legislation involved with safeguarding the children in my setting. Most recent documentation includes the new Prevent Duty Guidance which I must comply with. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on Early Years settings to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The documentation will be used and referred to alongside other safeguarding documents such as Working Together to Safeguard Children and information referring to British Values.

Within the EYFS I must promote British Values in many ways, teaching children from right and wrong at an early age. We teach about decision making (PSED) and democracy - and about respecting each other's views and values, talking about feelings and learning to share ideas and take turns during play.

I must also promote the importance of having rules and boundaries in place (PSED). PSED and UW also teach children to have a positive sense of themselves, believe in their own abilities and to challenge themselves. As part of UW and PSED we celebrate diversity, embracing different culture and introducing children wherever possible to different ways of life. We use resources and creative activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

I will make sure children have access to the wider community and resources promoting this. I will encourage children to not stereotype and to be considerate and accepting of others, despite their differences and to respect each other. Any unwanted or behaviour showing otherwise will be monitored and with parent involvement procedures will be put in place.

Older children will be monitored on ICT equipment with the use of parental controls to limit what they do on the internet.

If I have concerns that a child or young person is at risk of radicalisation, extremism or being drawn into terrorism, I can seek advice from the Department for Education's dedicated helpline on 020 7340 7264 or email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk.

If I identify **patterns of behaviour** that lead me to believe a child or young person is engaged in an ideology, is intent in causing harm or is capable of committing violent acts, the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) and Early Help Hub Team, ChAD (Children's Advice and Duty Service) will be contacted on 01305 228558 for Professionals in Childcare (or 01305 228866 for Family or Members of the Public).

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a practice that takes place worldwide in at least 28 African countries and in parts of the Middle and Far East. It also takes place within parts of Western Europe and other developed countries, primarily among

immigrant and refugee communities. Women and girls from UK communities that are at risk of FGM include those whose families originate from these countries. Early years practitioners are required by law to report to the police known cases of (FGM) involving a girl under the age of 18 as it is illegal in the UK.

Breast Ironing or flattening affects 3.8 million women around the world. It is carried out mainly in Cameroon and other African countries and in Britain in families who originate from these areas. Breast Ironing was made illegal in the UK in July 2019. When girls reach puberty, their breasts are pounded using hard instruments such as spoons or stones which are sometimes heated in the fire before hand, in order to slow down or prevent the breasts developing. Breast Ironing can cause extreme physical and mental side effects that can last a lifetime.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) affects girls and boys up to age 18 and involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person receives something (eg food, money, drink, drugs etc) as a result of them performing, on another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Grooming for CSE can happen online or in person.

Gang Activity It is estimated that 27,000 children in the UK are involved in **Gang Activity**. Children in gangs are often linked to drugs and violence and may be linked to radicalisation. Much of the grooming to recruit new gang members is through schools, where they target children who are not known to the Police.

If I am concerned that a child in my care is a victim of **FGM, Breast Ironing, CSE or gang activity** I will refer report this immediately to the local MASH/Children's Social Care ChAD team.

I aim to provide **an environment where all children feel safe and can talk to me** when they are worried about anything, enabling me to provide or seek any additional support that may be required. Any instances of discriminatory or derogatory language or behaviour (including language that is about disabled people or is homophobic or racist) will be challenged and an explanation given as to why it is unacceptable.

Training

As the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), I accessed initial Child Protection training as part of my course to become a registered childminder. I keep up to date

with my knowledge of Child Protection issues and relevant legislation by completing frequent refresher training courses every 2 - 3 years. I attended a foundation level training session on 2/10/2021 and also a PAN-DORSET SCP MULTI-AGENCY TRAINING (previously know as level 3 safeguarding) on 7/10/2021 and an update of this course was also completed on 20/3/2024 these certificates are available upon request and can also be found as a document on my digital system Baby's Days.

I regularly check that I have the latest version of the relevant procedures by accessing them online. I am registered with the LSCB/Safeguarding Partners to receive e-mails alerts and/or e-newsletters informing me of any changes, I have an account with Dorset Nexus, Dorset Council and utilise this on a regular basis. This helps me to ensure that I am kept up to date, stay aware of the signs of abuse or neglect and what to do if I have a concern.

Absence

I understand that children from time to time will be absent from the setting for varying reasons. For some children, repeated unexplained periods of absence; or leaving unexpectedly can mean that they are subject to, or at risk of, abuse or exploitation. I use attendance records to monitor children's attendance and absences and will report any concerning periods of absence to the local team. If a child fails to attend (FTA) any contracted hours without the prior notification or authorisation from a parent then I will make all reasonable means necessary to contact a parent to verify reason of their absence. If I am unable to reach either parent then I will attempt to contact the authorised persons and or emergency contacts provided in the child records. If still no contact has been made and I have reasonable concern to the child welfare and or safety then I may contact the social worker or seek further assistance from the local safeguarding teams.

Electronic Devices with imaging and sharing capabilities and IT Equipment

With the increase in usage of **information technology** (IT) within today's society, it is vital to safeguard children against potentially harmful exploitation. Any IT equipment used within my setting has appropriate filters in place to protect children from harmful online material. It is politely requested that children please do not bring in any personal IT equipment or any other electrical devices that have imaging and sharing capabilities such as; mobile phones, smart watches, iPads, Laptops, Cameras or Video Recording Devices from home. Children may sometimes be able to access IT equipment provided here, where I can safely supervise their activity and will only have access to computer games or use social media sites that are listed as suitable for their age or their development stage. I understand the risks involved with games that can be played online with users from outside the setting. I will help

children to understand that they should not give any personal information to people they do not know because sometimes people pretend to be someone else when online. I will tell children that I understand that the internet is a great tool for fun and learning but that they should speak up and not keep secrets if something is worrying them. I will help them to know how to identify and use the report abuse buttons that appear on websites and games if they experience something that upsets them online. I use the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) 'Share Aware' information to help me to understand the apps, games and networks that are commonly used by children of different ages and the potential dangers with these. If I become aware of a situation that is potentially abusive, I will report it to the local MASH/Early Help Hub ChAD team.

Consent for taking photographs

and the use of these images if applicable, will be given by parents/carers in my consent agreements. I use photographic equipment including my personal mobile phone to take images of a child's development. These images will only be stored and used in line with parental written consent. The setting is registered with the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** as a data controller, which means that I abide by strict guidelines for the storage and use of photographic images. All photographic devices used in my setting will be protected with a password known only to me. I aim to ensure that any photographic equipment including any mobile phones, smart watches, iPads, Laptops and or any other electrical device that has imaging and sharing capabilities are not accessible to anyone else without permission.

When my personal mobile phone is used as a phone, it is only used for essential calls enabling me to always meet the needs of the children.

I ensure that all minded children are protected against exploitation from others by never leaving a child out of my sight with an individual who is in possession of a camera, mobile phone, smart watch or any other photographic device which may be used inappropriately (children will not have access to any photographic device including mobile phones, smart watch etc whilst in my care, without permission).

Parents/carers must notify me of any concerns they have about their child and any pre-existing accidents, incidents or injuries affecting the child, which will be recorded and signed by the parent/carers(s) on the day of entry.

If I am concerned about a child's welfare and wish to discuss my concerns, I may contact the NSPCC or other relevant local support services for advice including the local MASH/Early Help Hub ChAD (Children's Advice and Duty Service) team.

Confidentially will be assured **only** when there is **no risk of harm to a child**. **In the case of an emergency, the police will be contacted directly.**

If I notice:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- unexpected bruising or marks or signs of possible abuse
- any comments made which give me cause for concern
- deterioration in general wellbeing which causes concern
- signs of neglect or abuse outside the setting
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by any other child/young person encountering the child

I will keep a factual record of the concern and will ask the parents/carers for an explanation, and signature, on the same day, providing it would not put the child at risk. I will implement the local procedures without delay to minimise any risk to the child. Unless I believe it may place the child at risk, I will advise the parent/carers that I intend to make a referral. If a child tells me that they or another child is being abused, I will:

- acknowledge their allegation and reassure them that it will be taken seriously
- encourage the child to talk, without prompting or asking them leading questions. The child will not be interrupted when they are recalling significant events or made to repeat their account. I may use questioning techniques which involve using non-leading, open-ended questions that start with **Tell**, **Explain** or **Describe** known as the TED questioning techniques.
- explain what actions must be taken, in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child
- record what has been disclosed using exact words where possible
- make a note of the date, time, place and people who were present at the discussion

I would then report the concerns immediately to the local MASH/Early Help Hub ChAD team who have the experience and responsibility to assess the situation.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely in accordance with my confidentiality policy.

In all instances, a record will be made of:

- the child's full name and address
- the date and time of the record
- factual details of the concern, for example bruising, what the child said, who was present
- details of any previous concerns
- details of any explanations from the parents/carers
- any action taken such as speaking to parents/carers

Allegations

Should there be any allegations of serious harm or abuse about me, or about any person living, working or looking after children alongside me, I must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 1 day, and also inform Ofsted as soon as practicable, but at least within 14 days and the Early Years & Childcare Services. I will also contact LADO and the Early Years Childcare Services if I witness inappropriate behaviour displayed by any other person caring for or working with children.

<https://www.dorsetscb.co.uk/working-with-children/allegations-against-staff/>

My insurance company will be contacted, together with any local support that is available.

If I, as the safeguarding lead, am observed displaying inappropriate behaviour then the observer must report the incident directly to Ofsted and the Designated Officer (DO) following the procedure stated above.

It is not my responsibility to attempt to investigate a situation myself.

Disqualification

I am aware that I must inform Ofsted within 14 days if ever I became disqualified from providing childcare as a result of a serious conviction, or disqualified by association because a member of my household had been convicted of a serious offence, such as those that are listed in the statutory guidance document 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'

Visitors

While I am childminding, I may have visitors, such as prospective parents wishing to register their child at the setting, or visits from my Local Authority Early Years Advice Team, or Ofsted, or other tradespersons or cleaners to carry out cleaning & maintenance jobs at the property etc during childminding hours. All visitors to the setting will be identity checked and are required to sign in and out in my visitors book. Children will never be left unsupervised around any visitor at any time and where possible planned visits will already be prior discussed with parents of children

attending on those dates and verbal consent given for visitors to attend the property while their child is in attendance.

Childminder's Signature:

Date:

<i>H. Palumbo</i>	6th November 2021	Version 1
-------------------	-------------------	-----------

<u>Review Date:</u>	<u>Reviewed by:</u>	<u>Notes:</u>	<u>Version</u>
6/7/22	Helen Palumbo	Amended and revised some areas such as Training, Allegations, Disqualifications and Visitors.	2
21/1/24	Helen Palumbo	Amended and revised some areas such as Logo, Heading, Training, Non Authorised Absence, Electronic Devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, Visitors. Uploaded file onto my digital system Baby's Days	3
2/4/24	Helen Palumbo	Some areas of the policy have been revised such as Heading, Prevent Duty, Training and Rational section to include Gender Questioning Children and Social Transitioning as per Working Together In Safeguarding Document updated version Dec 2023	4