



DEAN CLOSE
LITTLE TREES
NURSERIES

DEAN CLOSE NURSERIES LIMITED

Independent Day Nursery

**Safeguarding & Prevent Policy
(NL001)**

Little Trees, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd is wholly owned by The Dean Close Foundation, registered Charity No: 1086829

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

LITTLE TREES DAY NURSERIES

1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy is in accordance with locally agreed Inter-Agency procedures.

A range of documents, circulars and guidance for good practice govern Safeguarding and Child Protection work at Dean Close Nurseries. Key documents, which inform this policy include:

- a. *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, last updated July 2022*
- b. *Local Safeguarding Children Board documentation*
- c. *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused guidance (2015)*
- d. *Every Child Matters agenda*
- e. *The Children's Act 1989, last updated July 2021*
- f. *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings. March 2015*
- g. *Wales-Safeguarding-Procedures*
http://www.myguideapps.com/projects/wales_safeguarding_procedures/default/index.html
- h. *Welsh Government Respect and Resilience Guidance*
- i. *Prevent Duty Guidance Section 26 of Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015*
- j. *The Prevent Duty. Department for Education July 2015*
- k. *Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation, July 2020*
- l. *National Society for the prevention of cruelty to children (NSPCC)*
- m. *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*
- n. *Ofsted EYFS regulations, last updated September 2023*
- o. *CIW Welsh National Minimum Standards and Regulations 2016, last updated May 2023*
- p. *DCF Safer Recruitment Policy W030*
- q. *Childcare (disqualification) Regulations 2009 – Disqualification by association*
- r. *The Dean Close Foundation Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (W044)*
- s. *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023*
- t. *DCNL Whistleblowing Policy NL028*

2. CONTACT DETAILS FOR REFERRING A CONCERN

Each nursery has its own Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy DSL; these are listed with **Appendix C**.

In the absence of the DSL, the matter should be referred to the Deputy DSL or the DSL in another Nursery. Alternatively, the matter can be referred to the Group Operations Manager or Regional Managers, who's contact details are in Appendix C for Dean Close Nurseries Ltd, or by email to safeguarding@deanclosenurseries.co.uk

Trustees: The Dean Close Foundation has designated members of the Board of Trustees with responsibility for Child Protection matters; they are currently Mrs Helen Daltry. Trustees may be contacted through the Bursary 01242 258086 bursary@deanclose.org.uk

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Little Trees Day Nurseries fully recognises its responsibilities for Safeguarding and Child Protection and its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare, health and safety of all children. Little Trees Day Nurseries is concerned to promote a positive, supportive, and secure environment. Consequently, the overall aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in the care of Little Trees and recognise that all children are entitled to protection from abuse and neglect. It also recognises that all staff and children are entitled to a fair hearing in case of any allegation of abuse. Little Trees Day Nurseries is committed to providing appropriate training and support to all staff in matters of safeguarding including:

- a. Training every two years for the DSL and Deputy DSL
- b. Training every three years for all other members of staff
- c. Compliance with all safer recruitment legislation and good practice
- d. Ensuring that all staff have read this policy and a signed record is maintained.
- e. Ensure that all staff are aware of the Prevent duty.
- f. Continuing to develop awareness among all staff of the need for Safeguarding and Child Protection and of their responsibility in identifying children who may be suffering abuse, and in identifying abuse, including signs of abuse and what to look for.
- g. Ensuring that all staff are aware of referral procedures within Little Trees, feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their Safeguarding role.
- h. Monitoring children who have been identified as 'at risk' or 'in need.'
- i. Ensuring that Little Trees recognises the importance of Inter-Agency work by maintaining contact with relevant local agencies.
- j. Ensuring that the concepts of the 'Common Assessment Framework' and 'the Team around the Child' are embedded in all Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.
- k. Ensuring that key concepts of Safeguarding and Child Protection are integrated into the curriculum across Little Trees Day Nurseries at an age-appropriate level.
- l. Creating an environment where children feel secure, have their viewpoints valued, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- m. Ensuring that all children know of at least one adult that they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- n. Ensuring that outside agencies are involved where appropriate.
- o. Ensuring that all staff are aware of how to refer to the Children's Duty Team
- p. Keeping an open mind about the possibility of a Safeguarding or Child Protection issue arising
- q. Ensuring that staff always act in the interests of the child.
- r. Ensuring all staff participate fully in the provision of Early Help

4. THE POLICY

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

This policy applies to all staff, trustees and volunteers working within Little Trees Day Nurseries and all children. Little Trees Day Nurseries is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act 2010.

This policy will be made available on the website of each nursery and copies will be provided to parents on request. In addition, it will also be made available to all staff within Little Trees Day Nurseries.

This policy is renewed annually by the Group Operations Manager with the Regional Managers and Designated Safeguarding Lead's to ensure that it reflects current legislation and local Safeguarding board procedures.

This policy sits in conjunction with our other Safeguarding policies, namely our Safer Recruitment policy and our Safety of the Children Policy

Little Trees Day Nurseries uses age-appropriate filters on all IT systems within the nurseries to restrict access to illegal and inappropriate sites as well as monitor internet usage and sites accessed. Any attempt to access extremist or terrorist sites, extreme or violent pornography or illegal sites would be blocked and reported.

Children will only be collected from the nursery by an authorised adult known to the staff.

Children will be accompanied at all times by authorised adults when taking part in the nursery's external activities, e.g., walks, visits, trips etc.

The Nursery Manager will notify the relevant inspectorate and the Local Authority of any incident or accident that meets the threshold for notification, and any changes in arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.

All visitors will sign in and out, wear a visitor's badge and state the purpose for the visit. Children will not be left alone with any visitors.

5. SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

There will be occasions when a member of staff suspects that a child may have a significant welfare issue but there is no real evidence of a Safeguarding or Child Protection concern. It may be relevant to complete a Nursery Concern Form (see appendix B). Signs to be aware of include:

- a. Behavioural changes
- b. Signs of confusion or distress in written or practical work
- c. Physical changes
- d. Bullying or suspicion of bullying

Any member of staff may make a referral to external agencies at any time. However, it is normal practice to pass information to the DSL in the first instance.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

If the child begins to reveal information of a Safeguarding or Child Protection nature, the procedures below should be followed. It is better to raise concerns which may not need action than to do nothing or delay reporting. Always act in the interests of the child and maintain an 'it can happen here' attitude.

DSLs operate an 'open door' policy for the reporting of safeguarding issues and child protection concerns when it is deemed appropriate.

Staff need to be aware that child relationships can be abusive and may need to be investigated as a Safeguarding or Child Protection issue. A child may make an allegation of abuse against another child, in which case, the procedure below should be followed. (*See Positive Behaviour Management Policy*)

6. RESPONSIBILITY OF A DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL) – See Appendix D

- a) To ensure that the Board of Trustees' ratified Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is understood and followed by all staff within their nursery.
- b) To appoint and support a deputy DSL/ DSLs within their nursery.
- c) Contact the local authority children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice, within 24 hours (if it is believed a child is in immediate danger, we will contact the police), (contact details can be found in Appendix C of this policy).
- d) It is important to remember that concerns need to be raised, not only with the local authority in which the nursery resides, but also that of the child's residency.
- e) Inform the relevant inspectorate.
- f) Record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised.
- g) Speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by LA children's social care team)
- h) Follow up any action taken by the LA social children's care team if they have not contacted the setting within the statutory timeframe.
- i) When children leave the nursery, ensure any relevant personal child protection file is copied to be transferred to their new setting as soon as possible. The original documents must be kept at our nursery. A telephone call to the new setting will also be made alerting them of incoming information. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure delivery and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

The Role of the Group Operations Manager and Regional Managers

- a. To ensure the Nursery Safeguarding Policy is kept up to date/ reviewed annually with any changes in legislation across the various local authorities and counties relevant to our nurseries.
- b. To ensure that the Board of Trustees' ratified Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is understood and followed by all staff.
- c. To appoint and support a DSL and Deputy DSL in each nursery and ensure their training is renewed every two years.
- d. To complete an Annual Audit of all Safeguarding procedures, including training across the nurseries
- e. To inform and liaise with relevant external agencies if there is an allegation against a member of staff.
- f. Safeguarding and Child Protection is included as an agenda item at every Monthly Managers meeting. Minutes of Management meetings are kept.
- g. To keep your own training up to date every 2 years.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

- h. To meet regularly to discuss safeguarding practices across the nurseries and continually look for ways of improving safeguarding knowledge.

The Role of the Warden

- a) To ensure that the Nursery Manager in each nursery monitors the DSL and deputy. DSL and that the correct safeguarding procedures are known and understood.
- b. To ensure that the Safer Recruitment processes are carried out with appropriate checks on all staff and that a single central record of identity, qualification and DBS checks is kept.
- c. To keep the Board of Trustees informed of changing safeguarding requirements. This duty will normally be designated to the relevant DSL.
- d. To monitor the progress of any major safeguarding concerns or investigation of Foundation procedures by an outside agency
- e. To meet regularly with the Group Operations Manager DSL with reference to strategy and Foundation issues.

The Role of the Trustees

The Board of Trustees will ensure that:

- a) The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is reviewed and approved annually in July and ratified by the Chair of Trustees
- b) Other Safeguarding policies (such as the Foundation Safer Recruitment, Staff Code of Conduct and Positive Behaviour Management) are in place and reviewed regularly.
- c. Safeguarding and Child Protection is included as an agenda item at every Board of Trustees meeting. Minutes of Trustee meetings are kept.
- d. There are effective Safeguarding, Staff Code of Conduct and Safer Recruitment policies and procedures in place
- e. A Trustee with specific responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection is appointed for the nurseries.
- f. Ensure that an annual safeguarding review is presented to the trustee body.
- g. A DSL is appointed at each nursery and that there is Deputy DSL, and that they all receive training every two years.
- h. The Trustees with responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection meet with the appropriate Group Operations Manager DSL/ Regional Managers DSL at least termly and will report to the Trustee Board and raise any Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns or issues. The designated Trustees will receive training every three years.
- i. All other staff are trained regularly in accordance with advice from their Local Authority, at least every three years.
- j. Children have opportunities to learn about safeguarding as part of the curriculum at an age appropriate level
- k. The 'voice of the child' is heard, and that the Foundation has an 'it can happen here' attitude.
- l. All Trustees comply with their duties under legislation.
- m. Procedures are in place to handle allegations against members of staff and any such allegations are referred to the LADO and DBS as necessary.
- n. The appropriate authority, time, funding, training, resources, and support is given to the DSLs. to take part in Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures including strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings

The role of the Chair of Trustees

- a. To inform and liaise with relevant external agencies if there is an allegation against a Headmaster or Headmistress or Warden

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

- b. To ensure that the designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Trustees are appointed and meet with the appropriate DSL.
- c. To read and ratify the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy annually and following any significant revisions.

7. PROCEDURE FOR WHEN A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE OR CONCERN

- a. Allow the child to speak freely and lead the discussion.
- b. Recognise the courage the child is showing by making the disclosure.
- c. Recognise that there is a relationship of trust between the child and yourself.
- d. Make it clear at an early stage that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- e. Remain calm and do not overreact.
- f. Listen, be supportive and offer reassurance.
- g. Accept what the child is saying without challenge.
- h. Do not offer any admonishment or criticism of the child's actions or lack of action.
- i. Allow silences.
- j. Do not ask leading or investigative questions.
- k. Be cautious about any physical contact.
- l. Do not apportion blame or criticise others mentioned in the disclosure.
- m. If the information that has been disclosed needs to be passed on, explain to the child what will happen next.
- n. If the child appears to be 'at risk' or 'in need' the information must be passed on to the DSL (or Deputy DSL) as soon as practicably possible
- o. If the child is found to be 'in need' the case will be referred to Social Care
- p. If the child is found to be 'at risk' Social Care will be contacted as soon as practicably possible
- q. If the disclosure is of a safeguarding nature, it should be discussed with the DSL without delay.
- r. Write an account of the conversation so soon as possible, using the Nursery Concern Form. Sign and date the form. If the body map is used it must be completed with the child fully clothed. Under no circumstances should a member of staff ask a child to remove or adjust clothing. Only parts of the body normally visible should be viewed and recorded.
- s. If the child is in danger of immediate harm, the Police should be contacted first.
- t. It is not the responsibility of the nursery to investigate suspected cases of abuse prior to informing Social Care and/or the LADO.
- u. Legal action against the perpetrator of abuse can be compromised by inappropriate actions by individuals or the nursery and by not following this guidance.
- v. Parents are normally notified (by the DSL) as soon as practicably possible of any concern, suspicion or disclosure of a Safeguarding or Child Protection nature. However, if it is believed that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the situation, advice will first be sought from Social Care.

8. PROCEDURE FOR WHEN AN ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE IS MADE AGAINST ANOTHER CHILD (to be carried out in conjunction with the Anti-bullying section in the Positive Behaviour Management Policy)

- a. The disclosure should be listened to and recorded following the steps outlined above.
- b. The Anti-bullying policy should be considered when a child makes a disclosure involving another child.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

- c. Behaviour of a bullying nature should be managed following the Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- d. Behaviour which raises Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns should be referred to the DSL as soon as practicably possible.
- e. If a disclosure or allegation of abuse is made by a child against another child, it will be referred to Social Care without delay.
- f. Children who abuse others may well have been abused themselves, so Child Protection procedures need to be followed for both victim and perpetrator.
- g. Child on child bullying where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm' is likely to be reported to social care and all pupils involved considered to be 'at risk'.
- h. Children who make malicious allegations against another child or a member of staff will be dealt with in line with the Behaviour Policy
- i. If it is suspected that a crime has been committed, the police will be informed.

**9. PROCEDURE FOR WHEN AN ALLEGATION IS MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF
(including volunteers, agency staff and contractors)**

- a. Allegations against staff, must be reported straight away to the Nursery Manager, or in their absence, the Group Operations Manager/ Regional Managers/ Responsible Person who will refer to the guidance and make a decision with regards to appropriate next steps to safeguard.
- b. Allegations that may meet the 'harm threshold' On receipt of an allegation, we will consider if the following criteria has been met, referred to as the 'harm threshold'. Has the adult, for whom the allegation has been shared.
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child and/or.
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or.
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
 - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- c. The LADO will advise on subsequent actions.
- d. (In borderline cases) informal discussions may be held with the LADO without names or personal details being disclosed.
- e. The LADO is pivotal in providing advice when an allegation is made.
- f. The LADO presides over any abuse allegation or suspicion of abuse directed against anyone working for Dean Close Nurseries Ltd
- g. Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child must remember to act in the interests of the child despite any issues this may cause for the colleague or Little Trees Day Nurseries.
- h. The Whistleblowing policy enables all staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and without prejudice.
- i. Little Trees Day Nurseries will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity.
- j. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretation of events can and do happen.
- k. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. All unnecessary delays should be eradicated where possible. In the instances where LADO's decision is for the matter to be investigated internally, we will make every effort to do so in a timely manner. In instances where LADO/ and or Police decide

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

it may be a criminal investigation, the Nursery are not able to investigate the matter, and instead will support those individuals involved with the process.

- l. Little Trees Day Nurseries will not undertake their own investigations without prior consultation with the LADO, or, in the most serious cases, the Police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations.
- m. All discussions should be reported in writing.
- n. Communication with both the individual and the parents of the child should be timely and accurate.
- o. Suspension of a member of staff is not mandatory or automatic and is done without prejudice to the outcome of any inquiry.
- p. Possible suspension of the member of staff, against whom an allegation has been made, will be carefully considered usually after consultation with the LADO but not always after consultation with LADO. Careful consideration will be given to safeguard the children.
- q. If appropriate, Resident members of staff who have been suspended pending investigation of an allegation will be accommodated off-site.
- r. Malicious, unsubstantiated, and unfounded allegations will be removed from staff personal records and will not be referred to in employer references.
- s. Any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or pupil) who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child and who has been removed from working with children, or would have been removed had they not left earlier, will be reported promptly to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- t. Consideration will be given to referring a member of staff to the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) if they have been dismissed or would have been dismissed had they remained in employment, for misconduct.

10. PROCEDURE FOR WHEN AN ALLEGATION IS MADE AGAINST THE DEPUTY MANAGER, NURSERY MANAGER, REGIONAL MANAGER, GROUP OPERATIONS MANAGER, RESPONSIBLE PERSON, WARDEN OR TRUSTEES.

- a. Concerns can be raised by email to safeguarding@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
- b. Allegations against the Deputy Manager/ Nursery Manager must be reported to the Regional Manager who reports it to the LADO within one working day.
- c. Allegations against the Regional Manager must be reported to the Group Operations Manager who reports it to the LADO within one working day.
- d. Allegations against the Group Operations Manager/ Responsible Person or Warden will be reported to the Trustees who will report it to the LADO within one working day.
- e. The Deputy Manager, Nursery Manager, Regional Manager, Group Operations Manager Responsible Person, or Warden of whom an allegation has been made against, will not be informed until advice has been sought from the LADO.
- f. Allegations against the Chair of Trustees must be reported to the LADO within one working day.

11. SIGNS OF ABUSE

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by knowingly not preventing harm. Children may be abused in a family, the community, an institutional setting, or more rarely by a stranger (e.g., via the Internet). Most young people who are abused know their abuser. They may be abused by an adult or adults, child or children.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

- **Physical abuse:** This 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.
- Children regularly collect bumps and bruises, but it does not mean they are being abused. Injuries need to be considered in the light of the age of the child, their stage of development, where injuries are on the body and any explanation given.
- Indicators of physical abuse include bruises, grip marks, cigarette burns, bite marks, swelling, fractures, injuries in an area of the body that is unlikely to be harmed in everyday activity, and injury with no explanation or conflicting explanation.
- **Fabricated illness:** This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g., through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.
- **Emotional abuse:** This is persistent emotional maltreatment which is likely to cause serious harm to the child's health and emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate and cause the child to feel frightened, in danger, be exploited or corrupted. It also includes rejecting or ignoring a child completely, using degrading language or behaviour towards them, rejecting social interaction with them, threatening them, encouraging self-destructive behaviours and allowing a child to witness mistreatment of another.
- Indicators of emotional abuse can be difficult to identify but include developmental lags, acceptance of excessive punishment, over-reaction to mistakes, self-deprecation, fear of new situations, inappropriate emotional response, neurotic behaviour, self-harm or substance abuse. Children suffering emotional abuse may have difficulty forming relationships, seek attention inappropriately, be withdrawn, underachieve or show other signs of disturbed behaviour.
- **Sexual abuse:** This is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, penetrative or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It can also include involving children looking at or watching pornographic material or watching sexual acts and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women and other children can also commit acts of sexual abuse.
- Indicators of sexual abuse include damage to or soreness in genitalia, anus or mouth, sexually transmitted disease, pregnancy, urinary tract infection, inappropriate sexual knowledge, sexually provocative behaviour, personality or character change, poor trust in significant adults, insecure or regressive behaviour or self-harm. Many children who are sexually abused will have no visible signs due to the attacker not wanting to leave evidence.
- **Neglect:** This is persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs which is likely to result in serious impairment to their health and development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide food, shelter, clothing or a failure to protect from physical or emotional harm or danger, not ensuring adequate supervision, or not allow access to medical care or treatment. It may also include the neglect of a child's basic emotional needs. Where it is deemed appropriate, the DSL may undertake a Neglect toolkit assessment/ Quality of Care Profile.
- Neglect may also result in a child being diagnosed as suffering from 'faltering growth' also known as 'failure to thrive'. This would usually be diagnosed in a young child by a medical practitioner.
- Indicators of neglect include constant hunger or tiredness, frequent lateness or non-attendance, destructive tendencies, poor social relationships, poor personal hygiene, poor general health or untreated medical problems.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

Staff also need to be aware of other specific forms of abuse:

- **Children absent from nursery:** A child absent from nursery education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. A record of children absent from nursery education should be kept, particularly if absence is repeated, unknown, unexplained and for long periods of time, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of them being absent in the future. All staff should be alert to signs to look out for and for the individual triggers to be aware of (as detailed in this policy) when considering the potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones (radicalisation) and FGM.
- The DSL should follow procedures as set out above in terms of investigation and referral within 24 hours.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** This involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious consequences for physical and mental health. FGM is illegal in the UK.
- Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practice FGM. Specific risk indicators include:
 - a. Poor integration of the family into UK society
 - b. The daughter of a woman who has undergone FGM or where another close family member such as a sister has undergone FGM
 - c. Any girl withdrawn from PSHE lessons particularly if from a high-risk group and specially in the lesson is about sex or FGM
 - d. The visit of a family elder from the country of origin to a family where a daughter is of FGM age (typically 5 -8 although not always)
 - e. A girl talking about FGM; reference by a girl to a special procedure; a girl going on a long or unexpected holiday to the country of origin or where FGM is practiced
 - f. Changes in behaviour, medical issues unspecified requested for help from an adult particularly if medically orientated
- It is a mandatory requirement to report FGM in a girl under the age of 18. The report should be made to a healthcare professional or the police without delay. If a girl has been recently cut or is at imminent risk 999 should be called. Safeguarding procedures should be followed if FGM is reported or suspected, and specific guidance sought from the police and social care.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** This involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simple affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. This can include seemingly consensual relationships or sexual activity in exchange for attention, accommodation, gifts or illegal substances, to serious organised crime by gangs or groups. It is the imbalance of power which makes the relationship exploitative. Child Sexual Exploitation is illegal in the UK.
- In CSE the perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. Some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.
- **Domestic violence:** This is underestimated in the UK. Even if a child does not suffer physical violence in the home, the emotional effect of witnessing violence is significant in children. Children may be hurt by trying to prevent violence. There is a proven link between domestic violence and the abuse of children.
- **Operation Encompass, in Gloucestershire,** is an innovative project in which schools and nurseries are participating and aims to support children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse. Witnessing or experiencing domestic abuse is really distressing for a child or young person, who often

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

see the abuse, hear it from another room, see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards, or can be physically hurt by trying to stop the abuse.

As a result, following any domestic abuse incident being reported to the police, the police may make contact with the setting to share relevant, necessary and proportionate information to nominated nursery staff. This will ensure that the setting is made aware at the earliest possible opportunity and can subsequently provide support to children in a way that means they feel safe and listened to.

Each setting has members of staff who have been fully trained in liaising with police and Children's Social Care when required and will ensure that the necessary support is made available to the child or young person following the notification of a domestic abuse incident.

12. PREVENT DUTY

Radicalisation: The nursery is aware of its responsibilities to safeguard children from the risk of radicalisation. The nursery does this by:

- Providing a safe environment for children to talk about issues that may concern them, including sensitive topics such as terrorism and extremist ideology appropriate to the age and stage of development
- Identifying children/ individuals who may be susceptible to terrorism, violent or non-violent extremism.
- Knowing how to complete a Channel referral and how to seek support for the child/ individual as appropriate
- Ensuring all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and have the knowledge and confidence to identify children/ individuals susceptible of being drawn into terrorism and extremism and challenge extremist ideas.
- Ensuring children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in nursery, including having in place appropriate levels of filtering.

13. Other Safeguarding and Child Protection issues that staff need to be aware of include:

- a. Bullying including cyber-bullying
- b. Illegal substances including drugs
- c. Faith abuse
- d. Gender-based violence and violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- e. Mental health
- f. Child missing from home or care
- g. Fabricated or induced illness

14. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING– in conjunction with Confidentiality policy NL022

Safeguarding and Child Protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved, but also to ensure that evidence is not compromised by being released into the public domain.

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the LSCB.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

Safeguarding issues should be discussed with the minimum number of people and usually only with the DSL in the first instance.

Safeguarding records should be carefully kept in a secure facility with limited access. Child Protection records are kept in a secure facility by the DSL separate from other child records, utilising a digital system called CPOMS. CPOMS requires two-step authentication to access for DSLs only.

When a child leaves our setting, we have a duty to share any safeguarding concerns and records with the child's new setting/ school. Little Trees will seek any safeguarding records from a child's previous setting when they join our setting.

15. INFORMING PARENTS

We understand that safeguarding children is of utmost priority to both the nursery and parents and understand that notifications of a safeguarding nature can be emotionally distressing and concerning. Parents are normally the first point of contact when a concern has been raised, and we will do our utmost to support parents where appropriate through any safeguarding processes.

If a suspicion of abuse or concern is recorded, parents are usually informed and may be asked for further information to gain a better understanding, being clearly notified that the call/ meeting is being held in the context of safeguarding, if deemed appropriate. There may be occasions in which the concern that has been raised, deems that a notification to the parent is not suitable or we have been advised against doing so by Social Care. Every effort will be made, to seek parental consent to make a referral to Social Care, unless by doing so, could put the child at further risk of harm.

This will usually be the case where the parent and or family member is the likely suspected abuser, or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers/ Social Care will inform parents.

Support to families

The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships among families, staff, students and volunteers within the nursery.

The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to possible abuse in the home environment. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child. In the cases of any potential domestic abuse in the home environment, the nursery will support families where possible.

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate in line with guidance of the LSCB with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

16. STAFF TRAINING AND INFORMATION

All staff and designated Trustees will be regularly trained, relevant to their job roles and responsibilities, in Child Protection and Safeguarding every 3 years where a record will be kept. This training will be approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and may consist of completing an online module, training delivered by the DSL or training delivered by Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

The DSL (who are usually the Nursery Manager) is responsible for the organisation, along with the Regional Manager, and the standard of training within their nursery. Temporary, voluntary and visiting staff will be given a copy of this policy for their information, including a brief induction so that they too know how to report concerns appropriately.

Volunteers, students and apprentices working with children at any of the Little Trees are always supervised by a qualified and experienced member of staff.

17. Other DCNL policies to work in conjunction with Safeguarding:

- Safer recruitment including Disqualification by Association, please refer to Dean Close Nurseries Ltd, 'Staff and Employment' policy NL025.
- Students and Visitors, please refer to Dean Close Nurseries Ltd, Student Placement policy NL026.
- Health & Safety including accident reporting.
- Medication Policy
- DCF Transport policy
- Outings Policy
- Positive Behaviour Management policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Lost Child Policy on an Outing
- Lost Child Policy in the Nursery
- Supporting Children with Additional Learning Needs/ SENco

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

APPENDIX A - TERMINOLOGY

1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.
2. Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being 'at risk' or 'in need'.
3. The Foundation refers to Dean Close School, Dean Close Preparatory School and Dean Close Pre-Preparatory School, Dean Close St. John's School and Little Trees Day Nurseries, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd. It includes all policies, procedures and personnel attached to all schools and nurseries.
4. Little Trees Day Nursery, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd refers to Little Trees Celtic Springs, Little Trees St Arvans, Little Trees Tutshill, Little Tress Hucclecote, Little Trees Christchurch and Little Trees Lansdown. It includes all policies, procedures and personnel attached to our nurseries.
5. Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of Little Trees Day Nurseries, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd, including full-time, part-time and regular visiting staff, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes Trustees and members of Dean Close Foundation as defined above.
6. Children refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday, and all children on the role of Little Trees Day Nursery, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd.
7. Safeguarding Lead refers to the person responsible for coordinating Safeguarding policy and practice throughout Little Trees Day Nursery, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd
8. Nursery Manager refers to the manager of the appropriate nursery in Little Trees Day Nursery, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd.
9. Warden refers to the CEO of the Dean Close Foundation, Mrs Emma Taylor
10. Group Operations Manager for Little Trees Day Nursery, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd, Mrs Charlene Burgess
11. Regional Manager for Little Trees Day Nursery, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd, refers to Mrs Karen Green for the Cheltenham/ Gloucester nurseries, and Mrs Marisa Blundell for the Chepstow/ Newport nurseries.
12. Responsible Person's refers to the Director of Little Trees Day Nursery, Dean Close Nurseries Ltd, Mr. Adrian P. Bowcher, and the Warden Mrs Emma Taylor.
13. The Learning & Development Manager for the Dean Close Foundation, Mrs Samantha Marshall-Keith
14. The relevant inspectorate for Little Trees St Arvans and Little Trees Celtic Springs nurseries is Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) who is the inspecting body. ESTYN is the education inspecting body.
15. The relevant inspectorate for Little Trees Tutshill, Little Trees Hucclecote and Little Trees Lansdown Nurseries is Ofsted who is the inspecting body.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

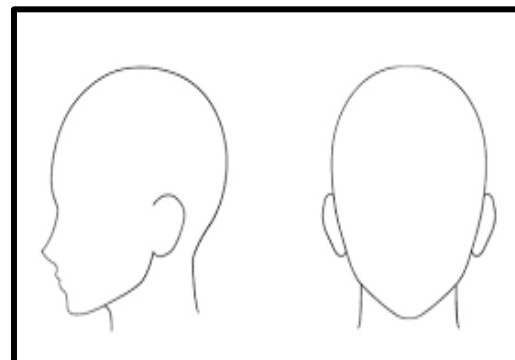
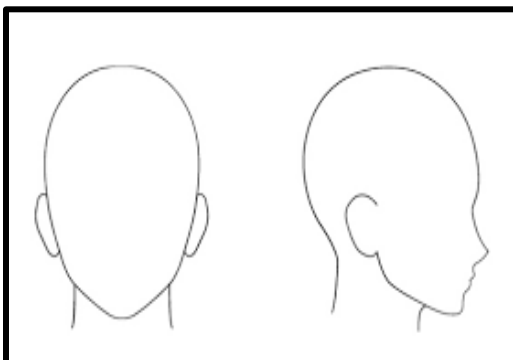
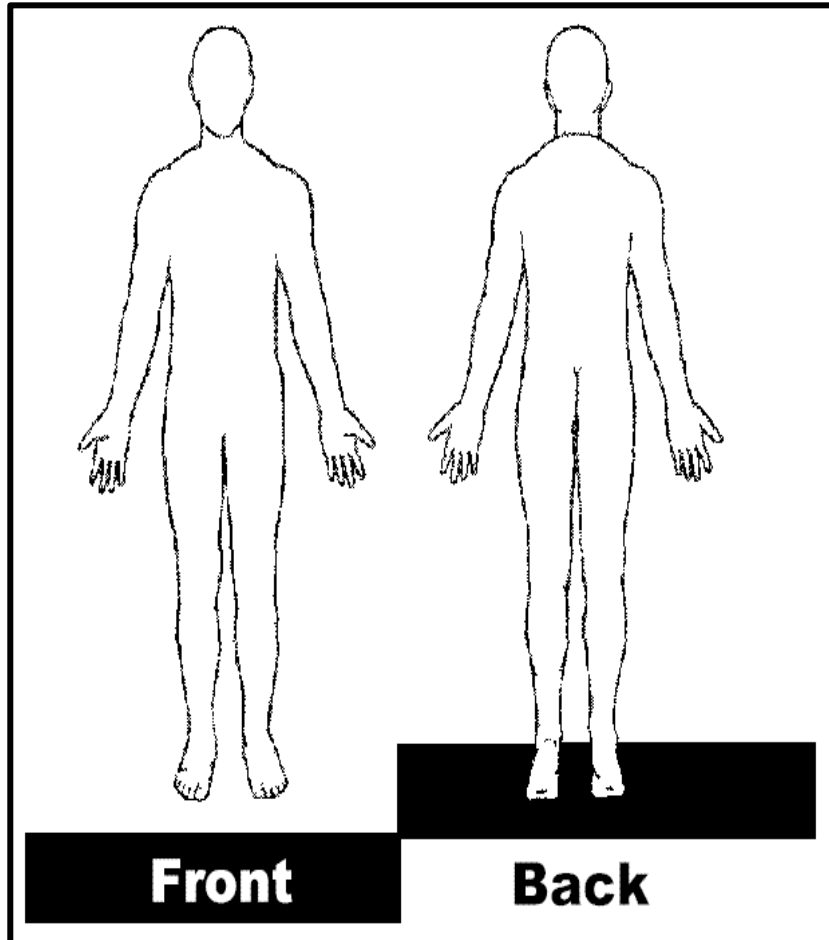
Owner: Group Operations Manager

16. LADO refers to the Local Authority Designated Officer within the Children's Duty team for the authority that the nursery resides in, and or where the child resides.

APPENDIX B – SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM

Date:	Person Raising Concern:	
Name of Child:		
Details of concern raised (who/what/when/where, names of witnesses, include documentation)		
Details of conversation (use children's and adults' actual words)		
Other people who witnessed the conversation		
Further information and details		
Name of DSL receiving concern		
Action taken by DSL:		
Documents relating to concern.		
Name	Date	Location

**Use and complete the body map if appropriate to record
Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns.
DO NOT REMOVE CLOTHING**



APPENDIX C – NURSERIES CONTACT INFORMATION FOR REFERRAL

Little Trees Tutshill		
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Hayley Downing, Nursery Manager	07471 350713 or 01291 628344 hdowning@deanclosenurseries.co.uk tutshill@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Vicki Bennetto, Deputy Manager	01291 628344 vlbennetto@deanclosenurseries.co.uk tutshill@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
DCNL Regional Manager	Marisa Blundell	07586 640215 mcblundell@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
DCNL Group Operations Manager	Charlene Burgess	07884 666191 cburgess@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	Nigel Hatten	gscb@gloucestershire.gov.uk 01452 426994
Gloucestershire Children & Families Helpdesk		01452 426565 childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Gloucestershire Emergency Duty Team		01242 614194
Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board		01452 583636 www.gscb.org.uk
Ofsted		0845 640 4040
Police Control Room		101
Anti-Terrorism Hotline		0800 789 321
DofE Counter Extremism Helpline		02073 407 264 (Office Hours) Counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

Little Trees St Arvans		
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Nicola Morgan, Nursery Manager	07471 350715 or 01291 624893 nmorgan@deanclosenurseries.co.uk starvans@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Until vacancy filled...	MB & CB fulfill role to support DSL.
DCNL Regional Manager	Marisa Blundell	07586 640215 mclundell@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
DCNL Group Operations Manager	Charlene Burgess	07884 666191 cburgess@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	Heather Heaney	01633 644392 heatherheaney@monmouthshire.gov.uk
Monmouthshire Children & Families Services		01291 635669 childduty@monmouthshire.gcsx.gov.uk
Southeast Wales Emergency Duty Team	(After 5PM & Bank Holidays)	08003284432
CIW		0300 790 0126
Police Control Room		101
Prevent Duty Lead for Monmouthshire (SPOC)	Heather Powell	07980 907 720, Heather.powell@newport.gov.uk
Anti-Terrorism Hotline		0800 789 321
DofE Counter Extremism Helpline		02073 407 264 (Office Hours) Counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Little Trees Celtic Springs		
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jessica Tate, Nursery Manager	07471 350 714 or 01633 81675 jtate@deanclosenurseries.co.uk celticsprings@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Rebecca Gray Deputy Manager Francesca Hughes , Third in Charge	01633 816 751 rgray@deanclosenurseries.co.uk fmhughes@deanclosenurseries.co.uk celticsprings@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
DCNL Regional Manager	Marisa Blundell	07586 640215 mcblundell@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
DCNL Group Operations Manager	Charlene Burgess	07884 666191 cburgess@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
Local Authority Education Safeguarding Care & Support Officer for Newport (LADO)	Mike Sloan	01633 235664 or 07817106758 Mike.sloan@newport.gov.uk
Newport Children & Families Services		01633 656656 Children.duty@newport.gov.uk
Gwent Safeguarding Board		https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx
Southeast Wales Emergency Duty Team	(After 5PM & Bank Holidays)	08003284432
CIW		0300 790 0126
Police Control Room		101
Prevent Duty Lead for Newport	Heather Powell	heather.powell@newport.gov.uk 01633 210446
Anti-Terrorism Hotline		0800 789 321
DofE Counter Extremism Helpline		02073 407 264 (Office Hours) Counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

Little Trees Lansdown		
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Victoria Gunn, Nursery Manager	07442 431016 or 01242 241349 vgunn@deanclosenurseries.co.uk lansdown@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Alice Hastings, Deputy Manager Charlie Summons, Third in Charge	01242 241349 akhastings@deanclosenurseries.co.uk cmsummons@deanclosenurseries.co.uk lansdown@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
DCNL Regional Manager	Karen Green	07867 382556 kjgreen@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
DCNL Group Operations Manager	Charlene Burgess	07884 666191 cburgess@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	Nigel Hatten	gscb@gloucestershire.gov.uk 01452 426994
Gloucestershire Children & Families Helpdesk		01452 426565 childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Gloucestershire Emergency Duty Team		01242 614194
Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board		01452 583636 www.gscb.org.uk
Ofsted		0845 640 4040
Police Control Room		101
Anti-Terrorism Hotline		0800 789 321
DofE Counter Extremism Helpline		02073 407 264 (Office Hours) Counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Little Trees Hucclecote		
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Cannings, Nursery Manager	smcannings@deanclosenurseries.co.uk hucclecote@deancloselittletrees.co.uk 01452 613 674
Deputy DSL	Marie Collorick, Deputy Manager	mlmarden@deanclosenurseries.co.uk hucclecote@deancloselittletrees.co.uk 01452 613 674
DCNL Regional Manager	Karen Green	07867 382556 kjgreen@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
DCNL Group Operations Manager	Charlene Burgess	07884 666191 cburgess@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	Nigel Hatten	gscb@gloucestershire.gov.uk 01452 426994
Gloucestershire Children & Families Helpdesk		01452 426565 childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Gloucestershire Emergency Duty Team		01242 614194
Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board		01452 583636 www.gscb.org.uk
Ofsted		0845 640 4040
Police Control Room		101
Anti-Terrorism Hotline		0800 789 321
DofE Counter Extremism Helpline		02073 407 264 (Office Hours) Counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Little Trees Christ Church		
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Ellie Simpson, Nursery Manager	07867 382556 or 01242 512837 esimpson@deanclosenurseries.co.uk christchurch@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Beth Keen, Deputy Manager	01242 512837 bmkeen@deanclosenurseries.co.uk christchurch@deancloselittletrees.co.uk
DCNL Regional Manager	Karen Green	07867 382556 kjgreen@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
DCNL Group Operations Manager	Charlene Burgess	07884 666191 cburgess@deanclosenurseries.co.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer	Nigel Hatten	gscb@gloucestershire.gov.uk 01452 426994
Gloucestershire Children & Families Helpdesk		01452 426565 childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Gloucestershire Emergency Duty Team		01242 614194
Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board		01452 583636 www.gscb.org.uk
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Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

Appendix D Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Job Description

1. To lead in facilitating the development of Safeguarding and Child Protection policies, training and procedures and guidance for each nursery within the Foundation, ensuring that the Safeguarding and The Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.
2. To ensure that the Nursery Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed at least annually by the Group Operations Manager DSL and that the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
3. To ensure that robust online safety procedures are in place and are followed that are appropriate to the age of the pupils. To make sure that internet use via the nursery network is both monitored and filtered.
4. To undertake appropriate Child Protection Training at least every 2 years in order to:
 - a) Understand the assessment process for providing Early Help and intervention, e.g., through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as Early Help assessments.
 - b) Understand how the local safeguarding board conducts Child Protection Case Conferences and be able to attend these effectively when required to do so.
 - c) Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the Nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures.
5. To undertake appropriate Prevent Training:
 - a) To ensure staff are able to identify children at risk from being drawn into terrorism.
 - b) Ensure that staff are aware of the DfE Prevent Duty documentation.
 - c) Ensure that all staff receive appropriate Prevent Duty training.
6. To ensure that all staff are provided with induction training, are aware of the identity of their DSL and Deputy DSL and have signed to say they have read:
 - a) The Nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - b) The staff Codes of Conduct
 - c) Part One and Annex B of KCSIE
 - d) The Nursery Whistleblowing policy
 - e) Are aware of all other school and Foundation policies concerned with child welfare.
7. To provide training and support, on a regular basis, and in accordance with the requirements of the local authority to all staff (including newly appointed) and volunteers who work with children so that they are aware of the Nursery Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements. To also ensure that all new staff are aware of the Whistleblowing policy.
8. To ensure that all staff are aware of the risks of radicalisation in young people; how to identify signs of radicalisation and how to recognise those children most susceptible to radicalisation.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

9. To keep staff aware of Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.
10. To have an understanding of the Local Authority procedures.
11. To refer allegations of cases of suspected abuse to Children's Social Care or Police as appropriate, making contact with either of them within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, in writing or with written confirmation of a telephone referral.
12. To make prompt contact with the LADO in relation to allegations made against someone working at the nursery and/or with the police if a criminal offence is suspected.
13. To receive and coordinate referrals, arranging action and reviewing services for children and families.
14. To maintain accurate, confidential and up-to-date documentation (written or online) on all cases of Safeguarding and Child Protection, ensuring that all records are forwarded to any new setting the child may attend and the appropriate request made of the previous setting for the Safeguarding and Child Protection records.
15. To work directly with children 'in need' and their families in order to promote, strengthen and develop the potential of parents/carers and their children in order to prevent children becoming looked after and/or suffering significant harm.
16. To support the care of children where their living arrangements are at risk of breakdown (including Local Authority placements).
17. To ensure that children who have suffered or are at risk of suffering serious harm are reported to Social Care immediately and that a multi-agency assessment is requested using the Local Authority Multi Agency Service Request Form (MARF)/ Duty to Report Form (DTRF)
18. To ensure that children who are victims of abuse are supported appropriately and sensitively and that all actions assigned from planning and intervention meetings are successfully carried out and monitored.
19. To have a knowledge of multi-agency working in the local area.
20. To inform the Regional Manager and or Group Operations Manager of Safeguarding issues especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and Police investigations, including Safeguarding Review meetings on the Monthly Management Meeting.
21. To act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of Safeguarding and Child Protection and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
22. To ensure that the Nursery is always presented positively within and beyond the setting and to encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings on any measure the Nursery might have taken to protect them.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

23. To ensure that staff are aware of training opportunities and the Local Authority guidance.
24. To develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies.
25. To ensure that the Local Authority/ Relevant Inspectorate has access to the Nursery Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and that the policy is published on the Nursery's website.
26. Attend and participate in Child Protection Conferences and planning and review meetings whilst working closely with colleagues in Children's Services and meetings with other Agencies, as required.
27. To maintain confidentiality at all times.
28. To identify vulnerable children within the Nursery and ensure that all staff are made aware of who these children are.
29. To ensure a record is kept of staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training.
30. To ensure that Safeguarding and Child Protection is included in the Nursery curriculum, appropriate to child age.
31. To undertake other duties that relate to Safeguarding and Child Protection matters.

APPENDIX E

Staff Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Dean Close Foundation takes pride in the friendly and supportive atmosphere that exists between members of staff and children. The lack of barriers between children and staff creates a happy and productive working atmosphere but all colleagues must be aware that they have a professional relationship with children and that discretion must be exercised at all times. There is a difference between being friendly towards children/ parents and behaving as their friend.

Allegations of unprofessional or improper conduct can arise and it is the duty of all members of staff to behave professionally at all times. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that colleagues know what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is in order to maintain the safety of the pupils and guard against allegations of impropriety.

It is important that all adults working with children understand the nature of their work and their responsibilities relating to it, places them in a position of trust. At Dean Close, the welfare of children is paramount, so it is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Members of staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct, which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions. This guidance is not exhaustive and is designed to set out principles rather than to give detailed and specific advice as the circumstances in which staff work vary.

Key documents which inform this policy include:

- a. Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings 2009
- b. Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021.

Other Dean Close policies which relate to this guidance include:

- a. Safeguarding and Child Protection policy (NL001)
- b. Confidentiality policy
- c. Safety of the Children Policy (NL002)
- f. Staff Social Media policy (W057)
- g. Positive Behaviour Management policy
- h. First aid policy (S111)
- i. Acceptable use of ICT
- j. Guidance on Acceptance of Gifts (W001)
- m. Data Protection policy (W008)
- o. Whistleblowing policy (W035)

Duty of care

This is the duty, which rests upon each Nursery, and the staff within it to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard the safety of children involved in any activity for which the nursery is.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

responsible. All staff have a duty to keep children safe and protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have the right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity.

Members of staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and protect children from discrimination and avoidable harm. The duty of care is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and children and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

The Nursery has a duty of care towards employees, which requires the provision of a safe working environment for staff and guidance about safe working practices. Staff who are subject to an allegation will be supported and the principles of natural justice applied.

Staff should not engage in any discriminatory behaviour towards children or colleagues of either a positive or negative nature.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

Appendix F

Low Level Concerns

The Dean Close Foundation has processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concerns about a staff member (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Paragraph 22 of this policy details the procedures that should be followed if an allegation of abuse by a member of staff is made.

It is also the duty of the Foundation to ensure that low level concerns, which don't meet the allegation thresholds outlined in paragraph 22-b, about a member of staff are also recorded so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult may have acted in a way which.

- a. Is not consistent with the Foundation Code of Conduct found in appendix E of this policy.
- b. Related to their conduct outside of work that has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children.

Staff do not need to determine whether the actions of an adult can be defined as a low-level concern or whether they reach the allegation threshold they just need to make a report. It is the role of the Area Manager, in conjunction with the DSL, if necessary, to make this decision.

Any member of staff can report a low-level concern about themselves or a colleague to their line manager, the DSL of the nursery, or alternatively, the Regional Manager, the Group Operations Manager, the Warden or the Director of HR.

Staff should feel confident that they can self-refer when for example they have found themselves in a position which could be misinterpreted, which might appear compromising to others and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing as part of a professional interview or by email.

The record should include:

- a. The details of the concern
- b. The context in which the concern arose.
- c. The names of the individuals (children and staff) involved.
- d. The name of the reporting member of staff, if anonymity is not wanted.

Records of low-level concerns will be kept confidentially and securely and comply with GDPR legislation. In most cases, records will be destroyed 7 years after the employee leaves the Foundation.

Records will be regularly reviewed in order to:

- a. Identify patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour.
- b. Aid decisions on the appropriate course of action to be taken.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager

- c. Provide evidence if the records meet an allegation threshold and a referral to the LADO is made.
- d. Help in the identification of possible wider cultural issues within the nursery or Foundation that enabled the concerned behaviour to occur and decide on a course of action to minimise the risk of repeated low-level concerns.

Spectrum of behaviour

Allegation.

Behaviour which indicates that an adult who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

Low-Level Concern

Any concern – no matter how small, even if no more than a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with an organisation’s Code of Conduct, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult’s suitability to work with children.

Appropriate Conduct

Behaviour which is entirely consistent with the organisation’s Code of Conduct, and the law.

Date of issue: January 2024

Review Date: September 2024

Owner: Group Operations Manager