

Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns

The following procedures will be followed when there are any safeguarding or child protection concerns at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit.

Safeguarding is our responsibility and always our priority.

The designated safeguarding lead is Lisa Bigg

The back-up designated safeguarding lead is Mer Thompson

The designated safeguarding officer is Georgina Klinkenberg

Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit recognise and know how to respond to signs and symptoms that indicate that a child might be suffering from or is likely to be suffering from harm. All staff Understand that they have a responsibility to act immediately by discussing any concerns that they have with the designated **safeguarding lead (Lisa Bigg)**, or a named **back-up designated safeguarding lead (Mer Thompson)**.
- The manager and deputy in the Pre-School Unit are the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead, they are responsible for co-ordinating any action taken by St Joseph's Pre-School Unit to safeguard vulnerable children or adults. The designated safeguarding lead and deputy are also responsible for liaising with local statutory children's services and with the Local Safeguarding Partnership
- Any concerns regarding the welfare of children in the Pre-School Unit, at home, or elsewhere are reported to the designated safeguarding lead or the back-up designated safeguarding lead.
- The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all staff in the Pre-School Unit can recognise and identify the indicators of abuse and neglect.
- The designated safeguarding lead or the deputy safeguarding lead will always be on the premises. In the unlikely event that there is an emergency preventing this the designated officer will make themselves available.

- The line manager of the designated safeguarding lead Lisa Bigg is the designated officer Georgina Klinkenberg.
- The designated safeguarding lead will inform the designated officer about serious concerns as soon as they arise and the actions to be taken will be agreed if any. Where it is felt required or there are any doubts that it is a safeguarding issue further clarification will be sought through the MASH helpline.
- If it is not possible to contact the designated officer when there is a serious concern, action to safeguard the child will be taken first and the designated officer will be informed later.
- Concerns which may require notifying to Ofsted are notified to the designated officer to decide regarding notification. The designated safeguarding lead and the designated officer keep themselves up to date with Ofsted reporting and notification requirements and seek support and guidance from the early years and childcare adviser where appropriate.
- If there is an incident, which may require reporting to RIDDOR the designated safeguarding lead will immediately seek guidance from early years and childcare adviser and report back to the designated safeguarding officer. The designated safeguarding lead follows legislative requirements in relation to reporting to RIDDOR.
- In St Joseph's Pre-School Unit, we follow the procedures of our Local Safeguarding Partnership and any specific safeguarding procedures such as responding to radicalisation/extremism concerns. The procedures are followed for managing allegations against staff, as well as for responding to concerns and complaints raised about quality or practice issues, whistleblowing and escalation.

Responding to marks or injuries

- If a member of staff at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit observes or is informed by a parent/carer of a mark or injury to a child that happened at home or elsewhere, the member of staff makes a record of the information given to them by the parent/carer on a prior injuries form which will be kept in the child's personal file. The form is signed by the parent/carer and the DSL is informed as soon as possible.
- The member of staff advises the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible if there are safeguarding concerns about the circumstance of the injury.

- If there are concerns about the circumstances or information which is given by a parent/carer and/or child, the designated safeguarding lead will decide the course of action to be taken after reviewing all the available details.
- If a mark or injury is noticed later in the day and the parent is not present this will be raised with the designated safeguarding lead or the deputy designated safeguarding lead.
- If there are concerns about the nature of an injury and it is unlikely to have occurred at the setting the designated safeguarding lead decides the course of action required and a safeguarding concerns incident reporting form is completed. taking into consideration any explanation given by the child.
- If there is a likelihood that the injury is recent and occurred at the setting this will be raised with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy.
- If there is no cause for further concern, a record is made in the child's Accident Record, with a note that the circumstances of the injury are not known.
- If the injury is unlikely to have occurred at the setting, this is initially raised with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy safeguarding lead.
- The parent/carer will be spoken to at the earliest opportunity.
- If the parent responds believing that the injury was caused in the setting this will then still recorded in the Accident Record and an accurate record of the discussion with the parent is made and kept in the child's personal file.
- Issues which may require notifying to Ofsted are notified to the designated officer to decide regarding notification. The designated safeguarding lead and designated officer must remain up to date with Ofsted reporting and notification requirements.

If there is an incident, which may require reporting to RIDDOR the designated officer immediately seeks guidance from the Committee. There continues to be a requirement that the designated officer follows legislative requirements in relation to reporting to RIDDOR.

- St Joseph's Pre-School Unit follows the procedures set out by the Devon County Council Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) for safeguarding and any specific safeguarding procedures such as responding to radicalisation/extremism concerns. Procedures are followed for managing allegations against staff, as well as for responding to concerns and complaints raised about quality or practice issues, through whistleblowing and escalation.

Responding to the signs and symptoms of abuse

- Concerns about the welfare of a child will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy safeguarding lead without delay.
- A written record of all concerns will be kept.
- Concerns that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm are responded to immediately and where agreed a referral to the MASH 'open door' service will be made on the same working day.

Responding to a disclosure

- When responding to a disclosure from a child, the aim will be to get just enough information to take appropriate action.
- The member of staff, student or volunteer at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit will listen carefully and calmly, allowing the child time plenty of time to say what they want without distraction.
- Staff will not attempt to ask questions but if they are not sure what the child said, or what they meant, they may prompt the child further by saying '*tell me more about that*' or '*show me again*'.
- After the initial disclosure, staff at Pre-School will inform the designated safeguarding lead or deputy. They will not ask the child any further questions.
- If a child shows visible signs of abuse such as bruising or injury to any part of the body and it is age appropriate to do so, a member of staff that the child feels comfortable with will ask the child how it happened.
- When recording a child's disclosure, the child's exact words will be written as well as the exact words with which the member of staff might have responded.
- If staff observe any marks or injuries these will be recorded on a body diagram at the same time.

Decision making (all categories of abuse)

The designated safeguarding lead or deputy in their absence will make a professional judgement about referring to other agencies, including Social Care using the most recent Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) threshold document:

- Level 1: This will be where a child's needs can be met with some universal support.
 - Level 2: Universal Plus. This will be where additional professional support might be needed to meet the child's needs.
 - Level 3: Universal Partnership Plus. This will be when a coordinated response is needed to address multiple or complex problems, this is known as 'early help'.
 - Level 4: Specialist/Statutory intervention. This is where children are in acute need, likely to be experiencing, or at risk of experiencing significant harm, a referral through the 'open door' Mash service will be made in this instance.
- Staff at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit are alert to indicators that a family may benefit from early help services at all times and will discuss these with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy, the staff member will then complete a safeguarding concerns incident form if they have not already done so.

Seeking consent from parents/carers to share information before making a referral for early help

(Level 2/3) Parents will be made aware of the St Joseph's Pre-School Unit Privacy Notice which explains the circumstances under which information about their child will be shared with other agencies.

When a referral for early help is necessary the designated safeguarding lead will always seek consent from the child's parents to share information with relevant agencies.

- If consent is sought and withheld and there are concerns that a child may become at risk of significant harm without early intervention the designated safeguarding lead or deputy will over-ride a parental decision to withhold consent.
- If a parent withholds consent this is included on any referrals made through the 'open door' MASH service. In these circumstances a parent will still be told that the referral is being made, the exception to this is unless to do so may place a child at significant risk of harm.
- This can include; *Where children with additional needs, who may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect; their needs are not clear, not known or not being met.*

- *Children with complex multiple needs, requiring specialist services to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of health or development, or disabled*

Informing parents when making a child protection referral

In most circumstances consent will not be required to make a child protection referral, because even if consent is refused, there is still a professional duty for all staff in St Joseph's Pre-School Unit to act upon concerns and make a referral. When a child protection referral is made the designated safeguarding lead will contact the parents inform them that the referral has been made. Parents will be informed about the concerns that have been raised unless advised otherwise through the 'open door' MASH service. This might be where investigation, or the police investigation is not concluded.

Parents will not be informed prior to making a referral if:

- there is a possibility that a child may be put at risk of harm by discussion with a parent/carer, or if a serious offence may have been committed, as it is important that any potential police investigation is not jeopardised
- there are potential concerns about sexual abuse, fabricated illness, FGM or forced marriage
- contacting the parent puts another person at risk; situations where one parent may be at risk of harm, e.g. abuse; situations where it has not been possible to contact parents to seek their consent may cause delay to the referral being made.

The designated safeguarding lead makes a professional judgment regarding whether consent (from a parent) should be sought before making a child protection referral as described above. They record their decision about informing or not informing parents along with an explanation for this decision. Advice will be sought through the MASH advise line if there is any doubt.

Referring

- The designated safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead will follow the most recent local safeguarding procedures for making a referral.

- If the designated safeguarding lead or deputy safeguarding lead is not on site, the most senior member of staff present will take responsibility for making a referral through the 'open door' MASH service.
- If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, or an incident occurs at the end of the session and staff are concerned about the child going home that day the Police and/or MASH will be contacted immediately.
- If the child is 'safe' because they are still in the setting, and there is time to do so, the senior member of staff will contact the Committee designated safeguarding officer for support.
- Arrangements for cover (as above) when the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead will not on-site will be agreed in advance and clearly communicated to all staff.

Further recording

- Information will be recorded on a safeguarding incident reporting form; this will include a short summary.
- All discussions with parents and or further discussions with social care will be recorded.
- When recording a significant conversation with parents regarding an incident or a related issue, parents will be asked to sign and date the record of the conversation. The record will include what actions were or will be taken, and the outcome and any follow-up planned.
- If a referral is made copies of all the documents will be kept and stored securely and confidentially in accordance with our record keeping procedures and GDPR, these will be stored in the child's safeguarding file.
- Each member of staff/volunteer who has witnessed an incident or disclosure will make a written statement on a safeguarding incident reporting form.
- The referral is recorded in the child's safeguarding file.
- Follow up phone calls to or from social care are recorded in the child's safeguarding file; including the date, time, the name of person and details of the information exchanged.
- Safeguarding records are kept up to date and made available for confidential access by the Committee designated officer to allow continuity of support during closures or holiday periods.

Reporting a serious child protection incident

- The designated safeguarding lead will be responsible for reporting to the designated officer and seeking advice where required prior to making a referral.
- For child protection concerns at level 3 and 4 the designated safeguarding lead will complete a confidential safeguarding incident report form and share it with the Committee designated safeguarding officer.
- Further updates will be shared with the designated officer.

Professional disagreement/escalation process

- If a member of staff disagrees with a decision made by the designated safeguarding lead not to make a referral through the 'open door' MASH service they can initially discuss and try to resolve this with them.
- If the disagreement cannot be resolved with the designated safeguarding lead and the member of staff continues to feel a safeguarding referral is required they will then discuss this with the Committee designated safeguarding officer.
- If issues cannot be resolved the whistle-blowing policy will be used, as set out below.
- Supervision sessions are also used as an opportunity to discuss concerns, but this must not delay making safeguarding referrals.

Whistleblowing

St Josephs Pre-School Unit will ensure that all staff are familiar with the whistleblowing procedure

The whistle blowing procedure will be followed in the first instance if:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject. This includes non-compliance with policies and procedures, breaches of EYFS and/or registration requirements
- a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur

- the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered
- the working environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged.
- that information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding clauses has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed

There are 3 stages to raising concerns as follows:

1. If staff wish to raise or discuss any issues which might fall into the above categories, they will normally raise this issue with their manager/designated safeguarding lead.
2. Staff who are unable to raise the issue with their manager/designated safeguarding lead will raise the issue with their line manager's manager/ Committee designated officer.
3. If staff are still concerned after the investigation, or the matter is so serious that they cannot discuss it with a line manager, they should raise the matter with the Pre-School Chairperson.
4. After a concern has been raised, the manager and deputy will decide how to respond in a reasonable and appropriate manner. Normally this will involve making internal enquires first, but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation.

Whilst it is hoped that such disclosures will never be necessary, the setting management recognises that it may find itself in circumstances which are new to it. Each case will be treated on its own merits.

Managers' responsibilities

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit if the manager or deputy are notified of concerns under this policy, they will:

- ensure that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the policy
- ensure that concerns raised are taken seriously;
- treat the matter in confidence, within the parameters of the case;
- where appropriate, investigate properly and make an objective assessment of the concern;
- keep the person raising the concern updated with progress, without breaching confidentiality;
- ensure that the action necessary to resolve a concern is taken;
- take appropriate steps to ensure that the employee's working environment and/or working relationship is/are not prejudiced by the fact of disclosure.

Ultimately, if an issue cannot be resolved and the member of staff believes a child remains at risk because the setting or the local authority have not responded appropriately, the NSPCC have introduced a whistle-blowing helpline 0800 028 0285 for professionals who believe that:

- their own or another employer will cover up the concern
- they will be treated unfairly by their own employer for complaining
- if they have already told their own employer and they have not responded

St Joseph's Pre-School Unit will ensure that all staff are aware of the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Staff should be alert to symptoms that would indicate that FGM has occurred, or may be about to occur, and take appropriate safeguarding action. The designated safeguarding lead or deputy safeguarding lead will contact the police immediately as well as making a referral through the 'open door' MASH service.

We recognize that It is illegal to undertake FGM or to assist anyone to enable them to practice FGM under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, and that it is an offence for a UK national or permanent UK resident to perform FGM in the UK or overseas.

All staff are training to recognise the signs of FGM and will remain vigilant.

We recognise that the practice is medically unnecessary and poses serious health risks to girls.

We recognise that FGM is mostly carried out on girls between the ages of 0-15, statistics indicate that in half of countries who practise FGM girls were cut before the age of 5.

Local safeguarding procedures will be followed in relation to FGM, and the designated safeguarding person will be informed of specific risks relating to the culture and ethnicity of children who may be attending the Pre-School Unit, and this knowledge will be shared with staff.

Symptoms of FGM in very young girls may include difficulty walking, sitting or standing; painful urination and/or urinary tract infection; urinary retention; evidence of surgery; changes to nappy changing or toileting routines; injury to adjacent tissues; spends longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet; unusual and /or changed behaviour after an absence from the setting (including increased anxiety around adults or unwillingness to talk about home experiences or family holidays); parents are reluctant to allow child to undergo normal

medical examinations; if an older sibling has undergone the procedure a younger sibling may be at risk; discussion about plans for an extended family holiday

Further FGM guidance

NSPCC 24-hour FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Government help and advice: www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation

Children and young people vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation

St Joseph's Pre-School Unit has a duty to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of any child or adult at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Local Safeguarding Partners have procedures which cover how professionals should respond to concerns that children or young people may be at risk of being influenced by or being made vulnerable by the risks of extremism.

There are potential safeguarding implications for children and young people who have close or extended family or friendship networks linked to involvement in extremism or terrorism.

- The designated safeguarding lead and the deputy safeguarding lead at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit will familiarise themselves with LSP procedures, as well as keeping up to date with changes.
- The designated safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding lead will develop a knowledge of the following online publications.
 - Channel Duty guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance
 - Prevent Strategy (HMG 2011) www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011
- The prevent duty: for schools and childcare providers www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty
- The designated safeguarding lead and the deputy safeguarding lead will follow the local safeguarding partnership guidance in relation to how to respond to concerns regarding

extremism and will ensure that staff know how to identify and raise any concerns in relation to this with them.

- The designated safeguarding lead and the deputy safeguarding lead will ensure that they keep up to date with how to refer concerns about risks of extremism/radicalisation through the local safeguarding partnership and the Channel panel, as appropriate.
- The designated safeguarding lead will also ensure that they and all other staff working with children and young people understand how to recognise that someone may be at risk of violent extremism.
- The designated safeguarding lead will ensure that all staff complete training to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities regarding equality and inclusion and children's *rights*.
- The designated safeguarding lead will complete WRAP (or equivalent) training.
- The designated safeguarding lead will develop an awareness of perceived terrorism risks the area local to the Pre-School Unit.

Parental consent for radicalisation referrals

Local safeguarding partnership procedures are followed in relation to whether parental consent is necessary prior to making a referral about a concern that a child or adult may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise that It is good practice to seek the consent of the person, or for very young children, the consent of their parent/carer prior to making a referral, but it is not a requirement to seek consent before referring a concern regarding possible involvement in extremism or terrorism if it may put a child at risk, or if an offence may have been or may be committed.

Advice will be sought from local agencies responsible for safeguarding, as to whether or not consent should be sought on a case-by-case basis.

The designated safeguarding lead at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit will be mindful that discussion regarding a potential referral due to concerns may be upsetting for the subject of the referral and their family.

Initial advice regarding whether an incident meets a threshold for referral will be sought from the relevant local agency without specific details such as names of the family being given in certain circumstances.

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise that consent is required prior to any individual engaging with a Channel intervention. Consent will usually be sought by Channel partners, but local safeguarding partnership procedures will be followed regarding this.

When there is a concern that a person is already involved in terrorist activity it will be reported to the Anti-Terrorist Hot Line 0800 789 321-Text/phone 0800 0324 539.

Police will be contacted on 101.

Concerns about children affected by gang activity/serious youth violence

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we are aware that children can be put at risk by gang activity, both through participation in and as victims of gang violence.

All staff at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit recognise that whilst very young children will be very unlikely to become involved in gang activity they may potentially be put at risk by the involvement of others in their household in gangs, such as an adult sibling or a parent/carer.

The designated safeguarding lead at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit will be familiar with the local safeguarding partnership guidance and procedures in relation to safeguarding children affected by gang activity and ensure this is followed where relevant.

Forced marriage/Honour based violence

All staff at St Joseph's Pre-School Unit recognise that forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are forced into it and will act accordingly as detailed below. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise that in the cases for some vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise that a forced marriage is distinct from an arranged marriage. An arranged marriage may have family involvement in arranging the marriages, but crucially the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise that forced marriage became criminalised in 2014 and that there are also civil powers for example a Forced Marriage Protection Order to

protect both children and adults who are at risk of forced marriage, and offering protection for those who have already been forced into marriage.

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise that risks in relation to forced marriage are high and it is important to ensure that anyone at risk of forced marriage is not put in further danger. If someone is believed to be at risk we will seek to get as much practical information as possible, bearing in mind the need for absolute discretion, this information will include things like, names, addresses, passport numbers, national insurance numbers, details of travel arrangements, dates and location of any proposed wedding, names and dates of birth of prospective spouses, details of where and with whom they may be staying etc.

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise that forced marriage can also be linked to honour-based violence, which includes assault, imprisonment and murder.

At St Joseph's Pre-School Unit we recognise that honour-based violence can be used to punish an individual for undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour.

In an emergency police will be contacted on 999.

The Forced Marriage Unit can be contacted either by the safeguarding lead, officer or the potential victim seeking advice in relation to their concerns. The contact details are below;

- Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151
- Email: fmufco.gov.uk
- Email for outreach work: fmufcooutreach.gov.uk

Further guidance

[Accident Record](#) (Alliance Publication)

Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage (HMG 2014)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/

[HMG MULTI AGENCY PRACTICE GUIDELINES v1 180614 FINAL.pdf](#)

[Creating a culture of safeguarding](#) (Alliance Publication)