

1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

Policy statement

Checkendon Pre School C.I.O setting will work with children, families and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Procedures

Checkendon Pre School C.I.O carry out the following procedures to ensure Checkendon Pre School C.I.O meet the three key commitments of the Early Years Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Key commitment 1

Checkendon Pre School C.I.O are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

- Group provision: Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is, and is always available:

Designated Safeguarding officer: Kelly Mullins

Deputy Designating Safeguarding officer: Liz Chandler

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- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
 - All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding concerns are reported to the local authority, Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub [MASH].
 - All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.
 - Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.
 - Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
 - Enhanced DBS checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
 - Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
 - Enhanced DBS checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.

- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- Information is recorded in the Central Record about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the DBS reference number;
 - the DBS issue date; and
 - details of who obtained it.
- All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- All staff and volunteers are required to notify us if anyone in their household (including family members, lodgers, partners etc.) has any relevant convictions, court orders, reprimands and warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision (see above questions), or have had orders made in relation to care of their children.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
- Security steps are taken to ensure that Checkendon Pre School C.I.O have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO
- The designated person in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate e-safety policy in place.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The [LADO] Local Authority Designated Officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
- The designated person will inform [MASH] Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to the children's social worker services, the LADO, Ofsted or Riddor.

Key commitment 2

Checkendon Pre School C.I.O are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;
 - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O consider factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of disabled children; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; and Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation; that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and follow the LSCB procedures.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O refer concerns to MASH and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O take care not to influence the outcome either through the way Checkendon Pre School speak to children or by asking questions of children, listening to the voice of the child.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected Checkendon Pre School C.I.O follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent

harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

- We have a whistle blowing policy in place.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity, and within 1 working day.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Children and Social Work Act (2017)

Making a referral to MASH

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has been set up to enable the sharing of information between services so risks to children can be identified at an early stage.

It is a link between schools, GPs, the police, ambulance service and social care.

Before making a children's social care referral

Before you complete a MASH referral form you must have read the [Threshold of need matrix \(pdf format\)](#) in reference to the case.

You will need to have:

- decided the level of risk related to the case
- determined it to be level 3 or 4
- inform the parents or carers using the [MASH leaflet \(pdf format, 154Kb\)](#) (unless informing parents/carers may increase the risk).
- consider if the child or young person's needs can be met by services from within your own agency, or by other professionals involved with the family already

How to make a referral

Use the [online form](#) to make a referral to the team. If your concerns are urgent and are a level 4 please call 0345 050 7666 **after** you've complete the form. This call will be taken in our Customer Service Centre who will direct your call.

- The Early Years Alliance's publication Safeguarding Children contains procedures for making a referral

to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral.

- Checkendon Pre School keep a copy of this document alongside the procedures for recording and reporting set down by our Local Safeguarding Children Board, which Checkendon Pre School follow where local procedures differ from those of the Early Years Alliance.

Escalation process

- If Checkendon Pre School feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCB escalation process.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child in greater danger.

- Parents are informed when Checkendon Pre School C.I.O make a record of concerns in their child's file and that Checkendon Pre School C.I.O also make a note of any discussion Checkendon Pre School have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk the designated person should seek advice from children's social work services, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Liaison with other agencies

- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O work within the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and children's social care to work well together.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Allegations against staff

- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person living or working on the premises, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments;
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O ensure that all staff or volunteer know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting. Checkendon Pre School C.I.O respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with my/our response

- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
 - Checkendon Pre School C.I.O refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate: *This information can be found on the Staff Information board.*
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- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
 - Checkendon Pre School C.I.O co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
 - Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, Checkendon Pre School C.I.O will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Key commitment 3

Checkendon Pre School C.I.O are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O ensure that all staff are trained in Safeguarding children and know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- Checkendon Pre School C.I.O follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Working Together to Safeguard children 2018 – Updated 2019
- Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation 2018
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act 2006

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015

Further guidance

- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (DfE 2015))
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2015)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf
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- Good Practice by Local Safeguarding Boards - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419150/Good_practice_by_Local_Safeguarding_Children_Boards.pdf
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

This policy was adopted by

Checkendon Pre-School C.I.O

On _____ (date)

Date to be reviewed _____ (date)

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Safeguarding Children (2013)
- Safeguarding through Effective Supervision (2013)