

Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy

At Trinity TreeTots Nursery we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of our children and to give them the very best start in life. All children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form. We protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of their health and development. We also strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures (please refer to our inclusion and equality policy for further information). Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the nursery's other policies and procedures.

This policy works alongside these other specific policies to cover all aspects of child protection:

- Early Help Assessment
- Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery
- Domestic Violence (Including coercive control), Honour Based Violence (HBV) and Forced Marriages
- Looked After Children
- Alcohol and Substance Misuse
- Prevent Duty and Radicalisation
- Recruitment Procedure
- Reporting Serious Incidents
- Whistle Blowing

Legal framework and definition of safeguarding

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (Amended 2018)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017 (Update due Sept 2021)
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Data Protection Act 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015 (Safeguarding children file)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The Serious Crime Act 2015 section 76 coercive behaviour
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 amended by sections 70-75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015

Links to other documentation – Roles and Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Leads
Herefordshire Right Help Right Time Levels of Need Framework (Nov 2020)
Signs of Safety
Employee handbook – making a protected disclosure disciplinary procedures and code of conduct.

Resolution of Professional Disagreement about a Safeguarding
Children Response 2018.
Data Protection Certificate
Insurance Certificate
Staff DBS Checks

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2018).

TRAINING

We have named persons within our setting who take lead responsibility for Safeguarding and coordinate Child Protection and Welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL). These persons receive comprehensive training at least every three years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year. They also support the ongoing development and knowledge of all staff within the team.

Our safeguarding officers are Mrs J Bowen and Mrs J Lilley.

All staff members are required to complete annual safeguarding training which includes Prevent and Channel training.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is our priority to ensure all children are protected from harm and neglect. We aim to promote a child's right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Any suspicion of abuse will be promptly and appropriately responded to.

SHOULD ANYONE BELIEVE THAT THIS POLICY IS NOT BEING UPHELD, IT IS THEIR DUTY TO REPORT THE MATTER TO THE NURSERY MANAGER/SAFEGUARDING LEAD AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY OR TO IMPLEMENT OUR WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY.

POLICY INTENTION

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image.
- Develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct.
- Ensure all staff are able to identify the signs and indicators of abuse, including the softer signs of abuse, and know what action to take.
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children.
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities.
- Help children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion and role modelling.
- Always listen to children.
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need.
- Ensure safe recruitment procedures are followed.

- Share information with other agencies as appropriate.
- Help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships with their families, with other children and other adults through staff being good role models and teaching children positive values through activities and discussions.
- Ensure staff understand how to recognise early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures.
- Make any referrals relating to extremism to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate.

We are aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Due to the nature of our work, we may be the first people to identify that there could be a concern, spot changes in a child's behaviour (which may indicate abuse) or be the first people in whom a child confides information that may suggest abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care MASH, health professionals or the police. All staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed.

AIMS

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do.
- Ensure staff are trained right from induction to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour. The Manager monitors this regularly to ensure understanding; compliance and training are up to date.
- Keep up to date with new legislation and training to continue good practice. Training is planned in advance where possible to support staff members in implementing their roles or to improve or update current practice.
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures, including through annual safeguarding updates.
- Ensure all staff members are made aware of the Reporting Serious Incident Policy with regards to Safeguarding and reporting incidents to OFSTED.
- Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable or isolated families and children.
- Ensure that all staff members feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child, share information and seek the help that the child may need.
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest.
- Keep the setting safe online using appropriate filters, checks and safeguards, monitoring access at all times.

- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff which is supported by our open layout which allows constant supervision of both the children and adults.
- Encourage our children to be as independent as possible with toileting.
- Identify changes in staff behaviour and act on these as per the Staff Behaviour Policy.
- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children or working on the nursery premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Work in partnership with parents to enable them to understand their responsibility and commitment to the welfare of their children through regular contact and key person meetings where information is shared to meet their child's individual needs.
- Make staff are aware that the Safeguarding Lead's are also responsible for monitoring the EHA (Early Help Assessment) arrangements and have attended appropriate training.
- Any marks/injuries a child already has upon arrival at nursery are recorded by a member of staff. The incident will then be discussed with the parent/carer at the earliest opportunity and such discussions will be recorded, the parent/carer will have access to such records. If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury the Early Help Assessment team and/or safeguarding team will be contacted.
- Staff members are given regular opportunities to declare changes which may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes disclosing information about their health or any medication.
- To regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Herefordshire authority.

We support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. We devise activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group and support them to learn how to keep themselves safe.

Child protection refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm and is an integral part of safeguarding children and promoting their overall welfare.

Types of abuse and particular procedures followed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (Advice for practitioners 2015)

The signs and indicators listed may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

Indicators of child abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies

- Aggressive behaviour
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns
- Absences from the setting

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

- Low self-esteem
- Wetting and soiling
- Recurrent nightmares
- Aggressive behaviour
- Withdrawing communication
- Habitual body rocking
- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness towards strangers
- Excessive clinginess
- Persistently seeking attention.

Peer on peer abuse

We are aware that peer on peer abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way as we do for adults abusing children, and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area; to support for both the victim and the perpetrator, as they could also be a victim of abuse. We know that children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves.

Physical abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Many children have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries. These are recorded and discussed with the Nursery Manager or Deputy.

Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and must always be logged and discussed with the Nursery Manager or DSL.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

What is FGM?

FGM is a collective term for procedures which include the removal or partial removal of the external female genitalia for **non-medical** purposes, it has no health benefits. It is sometimes referred to as 'cutting,' 'initiation' or 'female circumcision' and is usually carried out by a female member of the girl's family/extended family using a sharp implement such as glass, a knife or scissors.

It is a culture specific practice deeply rooted in certain Asian, African and Middle Eastern countries. The procedure is an embedded cultural social norm.

Although respecting culture and tradition is important, cultural considerations and sensitivities **MUST NOT** override our professional need to protect a child.

Concerns that FGM has been carried out or where a girl is at risk of having the procedure carried out should always trigger child protection concerns.

Legislation

FGM is illegal in the UK as defined in the Female Genitalia Act 2003 amended by sections 70-75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015. The Children's Acts of 1989 and 2004 define a child as being under 18 regardless of the possibility of 16 and 17 year olds living alone or being married. In addition to protecting the young female children we care for our safeguarding responsibilities extend to protecting young students.

Who is at risk?

Usually young girls from birth, during childhood, adolescence (usually up to 15 years old).

The signs and symptoms of FGM:-

- Difficulty walking/sitting/standing
- Urination problems – wetting/not being able to urinate
- Pain/soreness
- Bleeding
- Exhibiting unusual behaviour
- Displaying symptoms of infection – fever/chills/sweating
- Displaying symptoms of shock – pale, cold, clammy skin, anxiety, shallow rapid breathing, rapid heart beat

Warning signs we should look for:-

- Family planning to take a child out of the country to take on a long holiday.
- Child talking about a special celebration.
- Family is a member of a community that is less integrated into UK society and whose country of origin practices FGM.

Children share lots of information with us if they say something to you that makes alarm bells ring you MUST take action.

Mandatory Reporting

If you suspect a child may have FGM or is at serious or imminent risk of FGM having considered relevant factors it **MUST** be reported immediately to the Police including dialling **999** if appropriate.

FGM Helpline (for further advice or support): 0800 028 3550

Breast Ironing/Flattening

Breast Ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. Although this is unlikely to happen to children in the nursery due to their age, we will ensure any signs of this in young adults or older children are followed up using the usual safeguarding referral process.

Breast Ironing/Flattening is a form of physical abuse and can cause serious health issues such as:

- Abscesses
- Cysts
- Itching
- Tissue damage
- Infection
- Discharge of milk
- Dissymmetry of the breasts
- Severe fever

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.

Sexual abuse

Action will be taken if a staff member has witnessed an occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes.

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing our reporting procedure (next page) must be followed.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) describes CSE as: CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

Signs and indicators may include:

- Physical injuries such as bruising or bleeding
- Sudden changes in their appearance
- Becoming emotionally volatile
- Using sexual language that you wouldn't expect them to know
- Changes in eating habits

We will be aware of the possibility of CSE and the signs and symptoms this may manifest as. If we have concerns we will follow the same procedures as for other concerns and we will record and refer as appropriate.

Emotional abuse

Action will be taken if a staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection.

This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Signs and indicators may include:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Appear unconfident or lack self-assurance.

Neglect

Action will be taken if a staff member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold, starvation or failure to seek medical treatment, when required, on behalf of the child), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at nursery. They may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Domestic Abuse / Honour Based Violence / Forced Marriages

We look at these areas as a child protection concern. Please refer to the separate policy for further details on this.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Extremism – the Prevent Duty

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to safeguard at risk or vulnerable children under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and refer any concerns of extremism to the police” (In Prevent priority areas the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support).

This may be a cause for concern relating to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team (or other persons in the setting) or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child in their care. We have a Prevent Duty and Radicalisation policy in place. Please refer to this for specific details.

Human Trafficking and Slavery

Please refer to our Human Trafficking and Slavery policy for detail on how we keep children safe in this area.

County Lines

County lines is a term used when drug gangs expand their operations to smaller towns, using children and vulnerable people to transport and sell drugs. In some cases the drug dealers will take over a local property, normally belonging to a vulnerable person, and use it to operate their criminal activity from. This is known as ‘Cuckooing.’

Children being used like this often do not see themselves as victims or even realise that they have been groomed to get involved with criminal activity. So it is important that we all play our part to understand county lines and speak out if we have concerns.

Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes and care homes.

Reporting Procedures

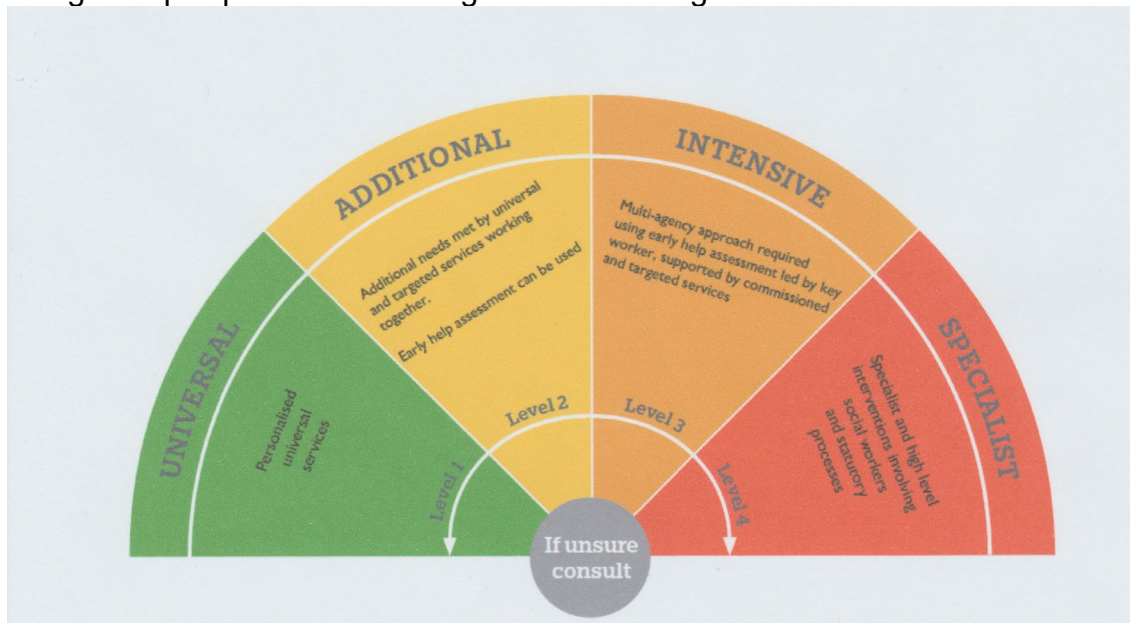
‘Right Help Right Time Levels of Need Framework’

The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership have developed this document to support practitioners at all levels working in statutory, public, voluntary and independent sectors in Herefordshire.

This document is intended to enable us as practitioners:

- To make decisions about how best to respond to the needs of children, young people and their families
- To give families access to the right help at the right time
- To provide children and families with access to the most appropriate services for their needs

The continuum of need in the diagram below sets out the 4 levels of need which we use in our setting to ensure the right help is provided at the right time to the right children and their families.



Level 1

A child who is having their needs met by their families and/or their own community.

Level 2

A child or their family has emerging problems or additional needs which require targeted support.

Action – it may be helpful to complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) but it is not essential at level 2.

Level 3

A child who requires additional or intensive help and support.

Action EHA to be completed with consent.

Contact the Early Help Hub if consent is NOT given or if in doubt about whether the child’s circumstances are at level 3 or 4 for advice and support.

Level 4

A child or their family are experiencing very serious or complex needs that are having a major impact on their expected outcomes or there is a concern for their safety.

An immediate referral multi agency referral form (MARF) to MASH.

This referral does not require consent but it is good practice to inform an adult who has parental responsibility if a referral is being made **UNLESS** doing so would place the child at risk of significant harm or may lead to loss of evidence.

If there is any doubt about the most appropriate action to be taken the DSL will contact MASH for advice.

MASH Team:	01432 260800
Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours contact):	01905 768020
Early Help Hub:	01432 260261

At TreeTots it is usually one of the DSL's who makes a referral, however in our setting all staff members are able to follow the reporting procedure and would be expected to do so if the DSL's do not take appropriate action.

Appendix 1 of the levels of need document provides further guidance and criteria to support making professional judgements and next steps. This information is neither exhaustive nor weighted for further support use the contact numbers above.

The Early Help Hub in Herefordshire has been developed to promote children and their families to get the right help at the right time. The Early Help Hub sits alongside the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and is responsible for contacts which come into the local authority at Level 3 or below and for contacts MASH have addressed as not needing Level 4 intervention.

The Early Help Hub works proactively with us to ensure the right support is being given to families, this includes sign posting, offering advice and guidance and facilitating the completion of an EHA for families whose needs meet Level 3 or higher Level 2.

<https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/media/8668/right-help-right-time-levels-of-need-framework-2020.pdf>

Consultation with Children's Social Care

If we have concerns about a child and want an opportunity to talk through the best course of action we will contact MASH and ask for a consultation with a social worker in the MASH team. If following the consultation a decision to make a referral is made this will be done separately after the conversation has taken place.

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns and suspicions of abuse. These concerns will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible.

- Staff will report their concerns to the DSL (in the absence of the DSL they will be reported to the Deputy DSL)
- Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded and stored securely
- If appropriate, the incident will be discussed with the parent/carer, such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to these records on request
- If there are queries/concerns regarding the injury/information given then the following procedures will take place:

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- Contact our local authority children's social care team (MASH) to seek advice, report concerns and complete referral paperwork (if it is believed a child is in immediate danger we will contact the police)
- Record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised
- Speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by our LA children's social care team)
- Details of the incident and those involved.
- The DSL will follow up with the Local Authority children's social care team if they have not contacted the setting within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018) one working day. We will never assume that action has been taken.
- Inform OFSTED as soon as possible (within 14 days of occurrence)

Report online <https://www.report-childcare-incident.service.gov.uk/>

To complete this the following information will be required:

Our reference number **EY415870**
Our address **Trinity TreeTots Nursery,
Trinity Primary School,
Barricombe Drive,
Hereford,
HR4 0NU**

Keeping children safe is our highest priority and if, for whatever reason, staff do not feel able to report concerns to either of the DSL's they have been informed that they must call the Local Authority children's social care team (MASH) and report their concerns. They have the option to do this anonymously.

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

MASH (Multi agency Safeguarding Hub):	01432 260800
Emergency Duty Team (out of hours):	01905 768020
Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:	01432 260100
The Early Help Hub:	01432 260261
LADO:	01432 261739
Police:	999 (in an emergency) 101 (Non emergency)
Government Helpline for Extremism Concerns:	020 7340 7264
Anti-Terrorist Hotline:	0800 789321
OFSTED:	0300 123 1231
Child Line:	0800 1111
NSPCC:	0808 800 5000
FGM Helpline:	0800 028 3550

Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the nursery manager or DSL. This record should include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen

- Exact observation of any incident including any concern reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records will be signed by the person reporting this, the manager and the DSL, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately.

It may be necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the local authority children's social care team MASH and Ofsted. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with the local authority children's social care, police, and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent or member of staff.

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the local authority children's social care team/police does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

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 local authority.

Support to families

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

The nursery will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child.

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 local authority 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.

Support for Staff Members

Through our insurance company Morton Michel, we are able to access professional counselling services using a confidential help line to support any of our employees suffering stress or anxiety which has occurred due to work related situations or personal circumstances. This service can be contacted by calling 0333 000 2082. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In our office

we also display helpline numbers for services including metal health support, bereavement care, Samaritans and our local Herefordshire Educational Physiologist.
Having two DSL's allows us in our setting to offer supervision to one another, to provide emotional support for one another and develop and review our current practice.

Allegations against adults working or volunteering with children

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who works on the nursery premises regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below.

The allegation will be reported to the Senior DSL on duty. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this will be reported to the Deputy DSL instead.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Ofsted will then be informed immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

- The LADO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
- If as an individual you feel this will not be taken seriously or are worried about the allegation getting back to the person in question then it is your duty to inform the LADO yourself directly
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LADO, Ofsted) to determine how this will be handled
- The nursery will follow all instructions from the LADO and Ofsted and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police, and will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. The nursery will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated
- All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
- The nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- Counselling will be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the nursery and the parents.

LADO Number: 01432 261739

Monitoring children's attendance

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework and guidance documents we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern. Parents should please inform the nursery prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be called into the nursery on the day so that we are able to account for a child's absence.

If a child has not arrived at nursery within one hour of their normal start time the parents will be called to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then further emergency contacts will be used to ensure all parties are safe.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any unauthorised absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safeguarded.

This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children, but enables children's attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe and well.

Looked after children

Our nominated person for looked after children is Mrs Julie Lilley. She has attended training 'Improving Education Outcomes for looked after children' to support her in carrying out her role. As part of our safeguarding practice we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this we ask that we are informed of:

- The legal status of the child (e.g. whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order)
- Contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those with parental responsibility)
- The child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her
- The details of the child's social worker and any other support agencies involved
- Any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question.

Please refer to our Looked After Children Policy for further details.

Staffing

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery. During induction staff will be given contact details for the LADO (local authority designated officer), the local authority children's social care team and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

Although, under the EYFS requirements we are only required to have one DSL, for best practice and to ensure cover at all times, we have two DSL's in place. There is always at least one DSL on duty at all times when the nursery is open, this will ensure that prompt action can be taken if concerns are raised.

The DSL's will receive comprehensive training at least every three years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year.

The nursery DSL's liaise with the local authority children's social care team, undertake specific training, including child protection training courses, and receive regular updates relating to developments within this field. They in turn support the ongoing development of all staff within the team.

Safer Working practices:-

- We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006 in respect of any person who is disqualified from providing childcare, is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We abide by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and carrying out suitability checks for staff and students, to ensure that all staff and students working in the setting are suitable to do so.
- We require all staff to be registered on the DBS update service. With staff consent we check on a monthly basis staff's criminal history and suitability to work with children.
- We give staff members and student's regular opportunities to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life such as child protection plans for their own children. This information is also stated within every member of staff's contract.
- All students will have enhanced DBS checks conducted on them before their placement starts.
- Students **do not work** unsupervised.
- All staff have access to and comply with the Whistleblowing Policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner.
- Our children's toileting and changing area is situated in between both classrooms. This ensures maximum supervision by staff members of one-another when taking children into the bathroom or changing nappies/wet or soiled clothing.
- Staff when dealing with intimate care will ensure all children are safe and are treated with dignity in an age appropriate manner. Where ever possible children will be encouraged to be independent in their self-care.
- The deployment of staff within the nursery allows for constant supervision and support.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the nursery and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the nursery so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- All visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use.
- As a staff team we are fully aware of how to safeguard the whole nursery environment and be aware of potential dangers on the nursery boundaries such as strangers lingering. We will ensure the children remain safe at all times.
- All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any need for further support.
- We use peer on peer and manager observations in the setting to ensure that the care we provide for children is at the highest level and any areas for staff development are quickly highlighted. Peer observations allow us to share constructive feedback, develop practice and build trust so that staff are able to share any concerns they may have. Any concerns are raised with the DSL's and dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner.
- All staff members will ensure they dress appropriately for their roles and responsibilities.
- They will accept no gift without consulting the Manager as it may be deemed inappropriate.
- Staff members will use their professional judgement about social contact with families and children within the setting and will not 'befriend' them on social networking sites.
- Staff members maintain appropriate boundaries in their contact with children and are professional at all times. When children need comfort and reassurance staff will respond: - age appropriately according to stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background of the child.

- Staff members will not take children into the office unless another member of staff is able to supervise.
- All staff are accountable for their actions and will not abuse their professional status.
- The Manager will treat all staff, children and parents fairly and will not abuse their position of trust and authority.
- Staff members will not have favourites and will not single any child out for special attention.
- When dealing with unacceptable behaviour staff members take into consideration the age, development and personal needs of each individual child. No form of physical punishment is ever acceptable or given.
- Adults will not use any form of degrading treatment (see Behaviour Policy).

We also operate a Mobile Phones Policy, Photographic and Camera Policy and Social Networking policy which states how we will keep children safe from these devices whilst at nursery.

Our nursery has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the Nursery Manager at the earliest opportunity or to report it to one of the numbers listed in this policy.

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

MASH (Multi agency Safeguarding Hub):	01432 260800
Emergency Duty Team (out of hours):	01905 768020
Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:	01432 260100
The Early Help Hub:	01432 260261
LADO:	01432 261739
Police:	999 (in an emergency) 101 (Non emergency)
Government Helpline for Extremism Concerns:	020 7340 7264
Anti-Terrorist Hotline:	0800 789321
OFSTED:	0300 123 1231
Child Line:	0800 1111
NSPCC:	0808 800 5000
FGM Helpline:	0800 028 3550

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/MASH

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
25 th May 2021		May 2022