

Child Protection Policy for Early Years Settings

September 2020

based on Early Years Foundation Stage 2017
and Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE
guidance, September 2020



THE EDUCATION
PEOPLE

Using the Child Protection Policy Template: Guidance Notes

Early Years Settings should ensure their policies and procedures are in line with statutory requirements as outlined in the welfare requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017.

This document will support Early Years Settings in creating a child protection policy that is relevant to their communities and reflects the needs and abilities of children.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), managers and owners should adapt the content to include specific local information such as named points of contact, as well as specific procedures and expectations. These decisions and details will vary from setting to setting, so this template should be used as a starting framework. It will not be appropriate for educational settings to adopt the templates in their entirety; DSLs and leaders should ensure unnecessary content is removed.

- **Blue font** indicates that the setting should insert relevant information
- **Pink font** highlights suggestions to assist DSLs, leaders and managers in amending sample statements and ensuring content is appropriate for their setting. This content is provided as guidance notes and should not be left in individual settings policies

Updated content for 2020

The core content for 2020 has been updated to reflect key requirements and principles outlined in EYFS 2017 and KCSIE 2020. Layout changes have been made and additional content has been included regarding the reopening of settings in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Disclaimer

The Education People make every effort to ensure that the information in this document is accurate and up to date. If errors are brought to our attention, we will correct them as soon as practicable.

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Mereworth Pre-School Child Protection Policy

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

Date written September 2020

Date agreed and ratified by Committee: September 2020

Date of next review: September 2021

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures

Key Contacts *Amend as appropriate*

	Name	Contact information <i>e.g. setting email/phone number</i>
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Jackie Moffat	mereworthpreschool@gmail.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jenny Thompson	mereworthpreschool@gmail.com
Manager/Proprietor	Jenny Thompson	mereworthpreschool@gmail.com

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What to do if you have a welfare concern in Mereworth Pre-School

Why are you concerned?

- For example
 - Something a child has said e.g. allegation of harm
 - Child's appearance – may include unexplained marks as well as dress
 - Behaviour change
 - Witnessed concerning behaviour

Act immediately and record your concerns. If urgent, speak to a DSL first.

- Follow the settings procedure
 - Reassure the child
 - Clarify concerns if necessary (**TED**: **T**ell, **E**xplain, **D**escribe)
 - Use child's own words
 - Sign and date your records
 - Seek support for yourself if required from DSL Jackie Moffat

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or refer if appropriate

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm e.g. unsafe to go home
- Access the Kent Safeguarding support level guidance and procedures: www.kscmp.org.uk
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate e.g. Internal or community services, early help open access, LADO, Police or Request for Support for integrated children's services
- If unsure, consult with Area Education Safeguarding Advisor **03000 412284** or Local Authority Social Worker at the Front Door.

If you are unhappy with the response

Staff:

- Seek advice from the Education Safeguarding Service
- Follow Whistleblowing Procedures

Children and Parents/Carers:

- Follow setting complaints procedures

Record decision making and action taken in the child's child protection/safeguarding file

Monitor

Be clear about:

- What you are monitoring e.g. behaviour trends, appearance etc.
- How long you will monitor
- Where, how and to whom you will feedback and how you will record

Review and Re-refer (if necessary)

At all stages, the child's circumstances will be kept under review
The DSL/Staff will re-refer if required to ensure the **child's safety is paramount**

1. Introduction and Ethos

- *Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.* (EYFS 2017)
- Staff working with children at Mereworth Pre-School are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- The committee of Mereworth Pre-School believe that all those directly involved with our setting have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. Our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and we take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.
- As part of the safeguarding ethos of the setting we are committed to:
 - Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
 - Providing an environment and culture in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
 - Developing appropriate and positive relationships between children and the adults that care for them
 - Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties
 - Using learning opportunities to increase self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making. This is so that young children develop a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others
 - Working with parents/carers to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations
 - Ensuring all staff have regular and appropriate training (including induction) to enable them to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and ensure they are aware of the setting's procedures and reporting mechanisms
 - Monitoring children who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection, keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
 - Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- Mereworth Pre-School adheres to the KSCMP Safeguarding Children Procedures. The full KSCMP procedures document and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the KSCMP website: www.kscmp.org.uk

2. Policy Context

- This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and has due regard to the related guidance. This includes:
 - DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (KCSIE)
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WTSC)
 - Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework' 2019
 - Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000
 - Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (Online)
 - Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework 2017 (EYFS)
- This policy has been implemented to ensure compliance with section 3, the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS.

- The way the setting is currently operating in response to coronavirus (Covid-19), however, our safeguarding principles in accordance with KCSIE 2020 and related government guidance, remain the same. We will continue to follow government guidance and will amend this policy, as necessary.
- We acknowledge that some children may return to the setting having been exposed to a range of adversity and trauma including bereavement, anxiety and in some cases increased welfare and safeguarding risks. We will work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure necessary services and support are in place to support children and their families.

3. Definition of Safeguarding

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) states that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
 - protecting children from maltreatment.
 - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- It also reminds us that safeguarding **“is everyone’s responsibility”** (WTSC). *Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.* Everyone should consider wider environmental factors in a child’s life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- The setting acknowledges that this policy will incorporate a range of specific safeguarding issues including (but not limited to):
 - Abuse and neglect
 - Bullying (including cyberbullying)
 - Children and the court system
 - Children Missing Education (CME)
 - Children with family members in prison
 - Child missing from home or care
 - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
 - Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
 - Contextual Safeguarding (Risks outside the family home)
 - County Lines
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Homelessness
 - Drugs and alcohol misuse
 - Fabricated or induced illness
 - Faith abuse
 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
 - Forced marriage
 - Gangs and youth violence
 - Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls
 - Hate
 - Honour based abuse
 - Mental health
 - Missing children and adults
 - Online safety
 - Peer on Peer Abuse
 - Prevent duty (radicalisation and extremism)
 - Private fostering
 - Relationship abuse
 - Serious Violence
 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children
 - Human trafficking and modern slavery
 - Serious Violence

- 'Upskirting'
- Youth produced sexual imagery or "Sexting"
- Annex A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. Staff at the setting who work directly with children will read this annex.
- If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow this child protection policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

4. Related Safeguarding Policies

- Mereworth Pre-School will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local child protection concerns and/or any changes to our procedures.
- We are aware that safeguarding is fundamental to the welfare of all children in our care. This policy is therefore one of a series in the setting's integrated safeguarding portfolio and should be read in conjunction with the policies as listed below:
 - Promoting Positive Behaviour
 - Online Safety: Mobile Technology and Social Media
 - Anti-Bullying
 - Data Protection and Information Sharing
 - Image Use
 - Drugs
 - Personal and Intimate Care
 - Health and Safety
 - Risk Assessments (e.g. trips, use of technology, setting reopening)
 - First Aid and Accidents (including medicines)
 - Managing Allegations Against Staff
 - Code of Conduct for Staff, including Acceptable Use of Technology (AUP)
 - Safer Recruitment
 - Whistleblowing

Supporting Guidance (to be read and followed alongside this document)

- "Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings" - Safer Recruitment Consortium, May 2019.
- "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused" – DfE, March 2015
- Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 Welfare Requirements
- These documents can be found in the office area in the yellow Safeguarding folder.

5. Policy Compliance, Monitoring and Review

- Mereworth Pre-School will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local child protection concerns and/or any changes to our procedures.
- All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy and part one of KCSIE.
- Parents/carers can obtain a copy of the Child Protection Policy and other related policies on request. Additionally, our policies can be viewed via our website www.mereworthpreschool.co.uk

- The policy forms part of our development plan and will be reviewed annually by the committee which has responsibility for oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems.
 - The Designated Safeguarding Lead and manager will ensure the committee regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems. They will not receive details of individual children's situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. All staff

- The EYFS 2017 requires providers *'to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well'* and accordingly, everyone involved in the care of young children has a role to play in their protection. All members of staff in the setting are part of the wider safeguarding system for children and are in a unique position to observe any changes in a child's behaviour or appearance.
- All members of staff have a responsibility to identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All members of staff have a duty of care to take appropriate action and work with other services as needed.

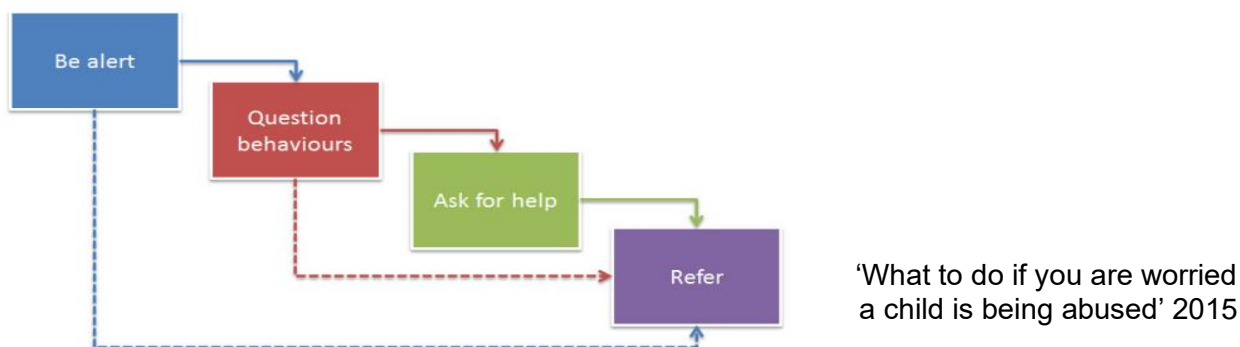
6.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The EYFS 2017 states; *'a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in every setting'*. The committee of Mereworth Pre-School, whose responsibility it is to ensure all legal requirements are met, have appointed an appropriately qualified and experienced Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to fulfil this role in our setting.
- Jackie Moffat is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Additionally, Mereworth Pre-School have appointed Deputy DSLs Jenny Thompson who have delegated responsibilities and will act in the DSLs absence.
- Mereworth Pre-School is committed to ensuring that the DSL is properly supported in being able to carry out this role fully, including providing them with appropriate time and resources away from other job commitments.
- The DSL has overall responsibility for the day to day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in Mereworth Pre-School Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.
- The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSL and any deputy DSLs training will be updated formally every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.
- The manager will be kept informed of any significant issues by the DSL.
- The DSL (and deputies) will be provided with sufficient time so they can provide appropriate support to staff and children regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns following Covid-19. This may include handling of referrals to integrated social care and working with other agencies where appropriate.
- **It is the role of the DSL to:**
 - Act as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns

- Maintain a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns
- Coordinate safeguarding action for individual children
 - When supporting children with a social worker or looked after children the DSL should have the details of the child's social worker.
- Liaise with other agencies and professionals in line with WTSC 2018 and KCSIE 2020.
- Ensure that locally established procedures as put in place by the three safeguarding partners (KSCMP), including referrals, are followed, as necessary.
- Represent, or ensure the setting is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including Child Protection conferences)
- Manage and monitor the settings role in any multi-agency plan for a child.
- Ensure adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and out of hours and/or out of term activities.
- Ensure all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within EYFS 2017 and KCSIE (2020)

7. Recognising Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

- All staff in Mereworth Pre-School are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), EYFS 2017 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. This is outlined locally within the [Kent Support Levels Guidance](#).
- Mereworth Pre-School recognises that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse:
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Neglect
 - For further information see Appendix 1.
- All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow this approach if they are concerned about a child:



- Members of staff are aware that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child.
- It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused however all concerns should be taken seriously and explored by the DSL on a case by case basis.
- Parental behaviour's may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff should also be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.

- Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the Mereworth Pre-School and/or can occur between children offsite or involve children's family members.
- Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.
- By understanding the indicators of abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.

8. Child Protection Procedures

- Mereworth Pre-School recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.
- Mereworth Pre-School adheres to the Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership procedures (KSCMP). The full KSCMP procedures and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on their website: www.kscmp.org.uk/
- All staff are aware of the process for making request for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- Mereworth Pre-School recognises that in situations where there are immediate child protection concerns identified in line with Support Level Guidance, it is NOT to investigate as a single agency but to act in line with KSCMP guidance which may involve multi-agency decision making.
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a request for support should be made immediately to Integrated Children's Services (Front Door) and/or the police in line with KSCMP procedures.
- The DSL may seek advice or guidance from their Area Education Safeguarding Advisor from the Education Safeguarding Service before deciding next steps. They may also seek advice or guidance from a social worker at the Front Door service who are the first point of contact for Integrated Children's Services (ICS).
- In the event of a request for support to the Front Door being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by KSCMP.
 - Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a valid reason not to do so, for example, if to do so would put a child at risk of harm or would undermine a criminal investigation.
- If the DSL is not immediately available to discuss an urgent concern, staff can seek advice from the Deputy DSL. They may also seek advice from the Education Safeguarding Service or via consultation with a social worker from the Front Door. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- The DSL will keep all early help cases under constant review and consideration will be given to a request for support to the Front Door if the situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.
- If, after a request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will consider following [KSCMP escalation procedures](#) to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. DSLs may request support with this via the Education Safeguarding Service.

9. Record Keeping

- All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions, and reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing on the settings safeguarding record sheet and pass them without delay to the DSL. A body map will be completed if injuries have been observed.
 - If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.
- Incident/Welfare concern forms are kept in the office area in the yellow Safeguarding folder.
- Records will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child's words, and will be signed and dated by the member of staff. If there is an immediate concern the member of staff should consult with a DSL before completing the form as reporting urgent concerns takes priority.
- Safeguarding records are kept for individual children and are maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the setting. Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained centrally and securely by the DSL. Safeguarding records are shared with staff on a 'need to know' basis only.
- All safeguarding records will be transferred in accordance with data protection legislation to the child's subsequent setting, under confidential and separate cover. These will be given to the new DSL and a receipt of delivery will be obtained.
- In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue to provide support

10. Multi-Agency Working

- Mereworth Pre-School recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work within the KSCMP multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The leadership team and DSL will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in other agencies in line with statutory guidance.
- Mereworth Pre-School recognises the importance of multi-agency working and is committed to working alongside partner agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to KSCMP processes as required. Such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings.

11. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Mereworth Pre-School recognises our duty to share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise confidentiality in situations which might compromise a child's safety or wellbeing.
- The manager or DSL will disclose information about a learner on a 'need to know' basis.
- All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep any information confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.

- Mereworth Pre-School has an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to ensure that we are compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements. Jackie Moffat and Jenny Thompson
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.
- DfE Guidance on Information Sharing (July 2018) provides further detail. This can be found in the office area in the yellow Safeguarding Context Policy folder.

12. Complaints

- The setting has a complaints procedure available to parents/carers, children and members of staff who wish to report concerns. This can be found on our website at www.mereworthpreschool.co.uk and in the office area in the yellow Policy folder.
- All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific procedures for managing allegations against staff policy. This can be found on our website at www.mereworthpreschool.co.uk and in the office area in the yellow Policy folder.

13. Staff Induction and Training

- All members of staff are aware to read part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2020) which covers safeguarding information for all staff.
 - The manager and the DSLs will have regard for the entire document.
- The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) receive child protection training to ensure they are aware of the settings internal safeguarding policy and procedures as part of their induction.
- All staff members (including agency and third-party staff) will receive appropriate child protection training to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues. This training will take place at least annually and will include online safety.
- In addition to specific child protection training, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates via e-bulletins, in the staff room and staff meetings at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- All staff members (including agency and third-party staff) will be made aware of the settings expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).
- Staff will be encouraged to contribute to and shape the settings safeguarding arrangements and child protection policies inviting input at staff meetings.

14. Safer Working Practice

- All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in the settings behaviour policy/code of conduct.

- Staff will be made aware of the behaviour management and physical intervention policies, and any physical interventions/use of reasonable force must be in line with agreed policy and procedures and national guidance.
- All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking). Staff will adhere to relevant setting policies including staff behaviour policy and Acceptable internet use and social networking policy.
- All staff will be made aware of the expectations relating to use of mobile technology within the setting, including mobile phones and cameras. Staff will adhere to relevant setting policies including staff behaviour policy and Acceptable internet use and social networking policy

15. Supervision and Support

- The setting will ensure that members of staff are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.
- The Managers of Mereworth Pre-School recognise regular, planned, and accountable supervision, which is a two-way process, offers support and develops the knowledge, skills, and values of an individual, group or team. We see its purpose is to monitor the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children as well as achieving agreed objectives. Supervision also provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any concerns raised about an individual or colleague's practice.
- All staff and volunteers will receive regular and planned supervision sessions. Uninterrupted time will be set aside to ensure any supervision sessions effective for both practitioner and management. Further guidance on supervision can be found on [Kelsi](#).

16. Safer Recruitment, Suitable People and Disqualification

- Mereworth Pre-School is committed to ensure that develop a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with children and staff.
- The committee of Mereworth Pre-School are responsible for ensuring that the setting follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance, including accurate maintenance of the staff records/Single Central Record (SCR). The SCR is a list of staff, volunteers and proprietor/trustees/committee members and includes appropriate information which may include:
 - Dates of recruitment
 - References
 - Identity checks
 - Criminal records check reference number, including date and details of person who completed it
 - Eligibility to work in the UK checks
 - Other essential key data.
- The setting will obtain an enhanced check by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of every person aged 16 and over (including for unsupervised volunteers, and supervised volunteers who provide personal care) who:
 - works directly with children
 - lives on the premises on which the childcare is provided and/or
 - works on the premises on which the childcare is provided (unless they do not work on the part of the premises where the childcare takes place, or do not work there at times when children are present).

- An additional check by the DBS (or checks if more than one country) will also be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.
- The committee of Mereworth Pre-School is responsible for ensuring that the setting adopts an application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its centre, regardless of employee or voluntary role.
- The committee of Mereworth Pre-School is responsible for ensuring that Mereworth Pre-School follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance. At least one member of the interview panel must have completed safer recruitment training. Jenny Thompson and Annabel Smithies
- The committee of Mereworth Pre-School is aware of the requirements to make appropriate checks regarding the disqualification status of all staff, including volunteers and temporary staff.
- We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, cautions and warnings.
- We will ensure that all staff and volunteers have read the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and understand that their behaviour and practice must be in line with it.

17. Allegations Against Members of Staff and Volunteers

- Mereworth Pre-School recognises that it is possible for any member of staff, including volunteers, contractors, agency, and third-party staff (including supply staff) and visitors to behave in a way that:
 - Indicates they have harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - Means they have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Mereworth Pre-School has an Allegations against staff policy which can be found on our website at: www.mereworthpreschool.co.uk and in the office area in the yellow Policy folder

- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the setting safeguarding regime. The leadership team at Mereworth Pre-School will takes all concerns or allegations received seriously.
- Allegations should be referred immediately to the managers who will contact the [Local Authority Designated Officer](#) (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member.
- In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the SLT, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the next senior management who will contact the LADO.
- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns will always be taken seriously by the leadership team.
- All members of staff are made aware of the settings Whistleblowing Policy which can be found on our website at www.mereworthpreschool.co.uk and in the office area in the yellow Policy folder. It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.

- Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.
 - Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- Mereworth Pre-School has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.
- Mereworth Pre-School have a duty to inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). We will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations. Notifications will be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made and are aware that to not do so would be an offence.

18. Peer on Peer Abuse

- All members of staff at Mereworth Pre-School recognise that children can abuse their peers. Mereworth Pre-School believes that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated. All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.
- Mereworth Pre-School recognises that peer on peer abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:
 - bullying (including cyberbullying)
 - physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
 - sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - 'upskirting', which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
 - sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
 - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Mereworth Pre-School recognises youth produced sexual imagery (also known as "sexting") as a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).
 - We will follow the advice as set out in the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: '[Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people](#)' and the local [KSCMP](#) guidance: "Responding to youth produced sexual imagery".
- Staff and leadership are mindful that some peer on peer abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.
- All allegations of peer on peer abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with in line with the settings associated policies, including child protection, anti-bullying and behaviour.
- Alleged victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by peer on peer abuse will be supported by:
 - **informing the police and/or Front Door.**

19. Mental Health

- All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are aware of how children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

20. Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- Mereworth Pre-School acknowledges that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges as they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. The DSL will work closely with the SENCO Claire Dolley and Cristina Brown to plan support as required.
- Mereworth Pre-School will ensure that children with SEN and disabilities, specifically those with communication difficulties will be supported to ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.
- All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability and be aware that children with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse. To address these additional challenges, our setting will always consider extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

21. Online safety

Our E-Safety policy can be found on our website at www.mereworthpreschool.co.uk and in the office area in the yellow Policy folder.

- It is recognised by Mereworth Pre-School that the use of technology presents challenges and risks to children and adults both inside and outside of the setting.
- Mereworth Pre-School identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:
 - content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views
 - contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults
 - conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying
- Mereworth Pre-School will empower, protect, and educate the whole community in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.
- The DSL has overall responsibility for online safeguarding within the setting but will liaise as necessary with other members of staff or support.

- Mereworth Pre-School uses a wide range of technology. This includes computers, laptops, tablets and other digital devices, the internet, 2 build a profile our online learning journal and email systems.
 - All setting owned devices and systems will be used in accordance with our acceptable use policies and with appropriate safety and security measures in place.
- Mereworth Pre-School recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile technology, including mobile phones and cameras. In accordance with EYFS 2017, Mereworth Pre-School has appropriate policies in place that are shared and understood by all members of staff.
 - Further information reading the specific approaches relating to this can be found in our Mobile Technology, Online Safety, Acceptable Use and Image Use Policies) which can be found on our website at www.mereworthpreschool.co.uk and in the office area in the yellow Policy folder
 - All users will be informed that use of our systems can be monitored, and that monitoring will be in line with data protection, human rights, and privacy legislation.
 - Filtering breaches or concerns identified through our monitoring approaches will be record and reported to the DSL (or deputy), Manager and technical staff as appropriate.
 - Any access to material believed to be illegal will be reported immediately to the appropriate agencies, such as the [Internet Watch Foundation](#) and the police.
- Mereworth Pre-School acknowledges that whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of our online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our approach to online safety.
- Mereworth Pre-School will ensure provide age appropriate online safety education to children to as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum via posters and information on digital safety.
- Mereworth Pre-School will build a partnership approach to support parents/carers to become aware and alert to the need to keep early years children safe online by:
 - providing information on our website and through official social media and newsletters etc. highlighting online safety at existing parent events.
- Mereworth Pre-School will ensure that online safety training for staff is integrated, aligned, and considered as part of our overarching safeguarding approach.
- The DSL will respond to online safety concerns in line with the child protection and other associated policies.
 - Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate.
 - Where necessary concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with local policies and procedures.

22. Educational Programmes and Staying Safe

- Mereworth Pre-School recognises that children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Our setting will provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.
- We recognise that early years settings play an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.
- Mereworth Pre-School will provide age appropriate educational programmes and opportunities to enable early years children to develop self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that they have a range of contacts and

strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, including online.

- Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff. Children at Mereworth Pre-School will be listened to and heard, and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

23. Security

- All members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. Staff will be expected to adhere to any safety arrangements implemented because of Covid-19.
- Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into the setting as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to, sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on site. Visitors will be expected to adhere to any safety arrangements implemented because of Covid-19.
- Any individual who is not known or identifiable on site should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.
- The setting will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens the settings security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the setting site.

24. Local Support

- All members of staff in [\[Name of setting\]](#) are made aware of local support available.
 - **Contact details for Area Safeguarding Advisor (Education Safeguarding Service)**
 - [Insert local details here: www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/child-protection-and-safeguarding/safeguarding-contacts](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/child-protection-and-safeguarding/safeguarding-contacts)

Gemma Willson 03000 412284 Mob: 07540 677200

Email: gemma.willson@kent.gov.uk

West Kent – Tonbridge & Malling

Worrall House
30 Kings Hill Avenue
West Malling
ME19 4AE

- **Contact details for Online Safety within the Education Safeguarding Service**
 - Rebecca Avery, Education Safeguarding Advisor (Online Protection):
 - Ashley Assiter, e-Safety Development Officer
 - 03000 415797
 - esafetyofficer@kent.gov.uk (non-urgent issues only)
- **Contact details for the LADO**
 - Telephone: 03000 410888
 - Email: kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk
- **Children's Specialist Services**

- Integrated Front Door: 03000 411111
- Out of Hours Number: 03000 419191
- **Early Help and Preventative Services**
 - earlyhelp@kent.gov.uk
 - 03000 419222
- **Integrated Children's Services**
 - Front door: 03000 411111
 - Out of Hours Number: 03000 419191
- **Kent Police**
 - 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm
- **Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP)**
 - kscmp@kent.gov.uk
 - 03000 421126
- **Adult Safeguarding**
 - Adult Social Care via 03000 41 61 61 (text relay 18001 03000 41 61 61) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk

The setting may wish to include other local points of contact such as local Kent Police contacts, voluntary organisations, Early Help units etc.

Appendix 1: Categories of Abuse

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women and children.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour and school performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Distrust of familiar adults e.g. anxiety of being left with relatives, a child minder or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Fear of undressing for PE
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fire setting

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs that MAY INDICATE physical abuse

- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs even when hot
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Signs that MAY INDICATE emotional abuse

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harming
- Eating Disorders
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Excessive need for approval, attention and affection

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs that MAY INDICATE neglect.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at School
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Low self esteem

Appendix 2: National Support Organisations

The following links may help DSLs provide further advice and support to their learners, staff and parents/carers. Additional links can be found in KCSIE 2020 in Annex A and C.

Support for staff

- Education Support Partnership: www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk
- Professional Online Safety Helpline: www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline

Support for Learners

- ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk
- Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org
- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org
- Fearless: www.fearless.org

Support for adults

- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
- NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): www.napac.org.uk
- MOSAC: www.mosac.org.uk
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk
- Shout: www.giveusashout.org

Support for Learning Disabilities

- Respond: www.respond.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic abuse services: www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk
- Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk
- Women's Aid: www.womensaid.org.uk
- Men's Advice Line: www.mensadvice.org.uk
- Mankind: www.mankindcounselling.org.uk
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- Respect Phoneline: <https://respectphoneline.org.uk>

Honour Based Abuse

- Forced Marriage Unit: www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage
- FGM Factsheet:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf
- Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information

Contextual Safeguarding, Peer on Peer abuse, Sexual Exploitation and Criminal Exploitation:

- Contextual Safeguarding Network: <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk>
- National Crime Agency: www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are
- Rape Crisis: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk>
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk
- Brook: www.brook.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Disrespect Nobody: www.disrespectnobody.co.uk
- Upskirting – know your rights: www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights

Substance Misuse

- We are with you (formerly Addaction): www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/
- Talk to Frank: www.talktofrank.com

Mental Health

- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- Moodspark: <https://moodspark.org.uk>
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- We are with you (formerly Addaction): www.wearewithyou.org.uk/services/kent-for-young-people/

Online Safety

- CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com>
- Parents Info: www.parentinfo.org
- Marie Collins Foundation: www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org
- NSPCC/ Net Aware: www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety and www.net-aware.org.uk
- Get safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org
- Stop it Now!: www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk

Radicalisation and hate

- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism
- True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk