

Child Protection and Safeguarding – Information Sheet

What is child protection and safeguarding?

Child protection is the process of protecting a child identified as suffering from, or potentially suffering from, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

The term safeguarding is used more broadly and according to the latest government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), it means:

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

What are the key principles of safeguarding?

Several key principles underpin safeguarding to ensure the welfare and happiness of children, mainly:

- A child's needs should be put first — always.
- It's important to help and support children as early as possible before issues escalate and become more damaging.
- Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and everyone at the setting should act in a timely and coordinated manner to respond to any concerns about the welfare of a child.

The Early Years Foundation Stage sets the foundation of safeguarding measures for early years providers to follow. They are based on four overarching principles, including:

- Children learn and develop best in an enabling environment
- Children are unique, learn constantly and can become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn and develop best in different ways and at different rates
- Children learn strength and independence from positive relationships.

How do we protect children in our care?

Everyone who works with the children understands how to recognise the signs and symptoms that could indicate a child is being abused and how to respond and make child protection referrals.

The government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015) provides a national framework for all agencies working with children to join in partnership to safeguard our children effectively.

We consider this guidance and implement robust safeguarding policies and procedures for our setting, which outline how to respond to and record concerns about children and ensure our policies align with the safeguarding policies of our local children's safeguarding board.

If you are a manager or a trustee of an organisation, you should make sure all staff and volunteers understand and can implement their policies and procedures.

We are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse; know how to report safeguarding concerns, and how to escalate concerns if necessary.

It is our responsibility to ensure concerns are raised and responded to appropriately. We are not afraid to ask questions if we are concerned and endeavour to ask for clarification or query an explanation if it doesn't seem very credible. If a case review does not appear reliable, we will ask critical questions like: What is this child's life like? Is this child safe? Is this a credible explanation?

How do we promote health and well being?

An important component of safeguarding children is promoting good health and wellbeing. High standards of hygiene and cleanliness will help prevent the spread of infections and illnesses in our setting.

We have procedures for administering medication and supporting children with medical needs or who appear unwell during the day.

When identifying any allergies when children first start or during their time with us, practitioners prevent contact with allergenic substances.

Other important factors include hygiene and healthy eating, ensuring fresh drinking water is accessible at all times and meeting first aid requirements.

Why are risk assessments important?

Regular risk assessments help to identify aspects of the early years environment that need to be checked regularly, decide what should be done to prevent harm and make sure the relevant actions are taken and updated when necessary.

They cover areas of work such as arrivals and departures, any hazards in the building or outdoor play area, how outings will be safely managed or how children with challenging or distressed behaviour will be managed.

A risk assessment is dynamic and continuous, and is not a one-off event. They are clear, well thought out, realistic and shared with everyone relevant in the organisation.

Providers are not expected to eliminate all risk — children should be given the opportunity to take appropriate risks in fact— but we take ‘reasonable precautions’ and ensure that staff are trained and aware of their responsibilities.

What are...?

Local Safeguarding Partners (LSPs)

LSPs (formerly Local Safeguarding Children's Boards) were established by the [Children Act 2004](#) and assign statutory responsibility to each locality to have a mechanism in place.

They bring every locality across the country together to agree on how they will cooperate with one another to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The purpose of this working partnership is to hold each other accountable and to ensure safeguarding children remains high on the agenda across their region.

They have a nominated Local Authority Designated Officer or team in place to offer support and advice to deal with allegations of serious harm in relation to staff members or volunteers. They publish their safeguarding procedures online and offer training to organisations as well.