

Acorns Preschool



Kington St Michael

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Acorns Preschool fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.

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Appendix 1: Flowchart 'Allegations against adults'

Appendix 2: Definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect

Appendix 3: Flowchart 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused/neglected'

This policy should be read alongside the following other policies:

- Employment Policy Document
 - Employment
 - Whistleblowing
 - Induction of Staff and Volunteers
 - Complaints Procedure Staff
 - Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol
 - Arriving Late or Non Attendance

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Code of Conduct
Confidentiality
Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure

- Procedural Policy Document

This document also reference the following documents from the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board:

- *Revised Multi-Agency Thresholds for Safeguarding Children (December 2014)*
- *Escalation Policy for Dispute Resolution (October 2014)*

Acorns Preschool staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' as far as safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interest of the child.

Settings do not operate in isolation. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working or volunteering with children. The setting aims to help protect the children in its care by working consistently and appropriately with all agencies to reduce risk and promote the welfare of children. All professionals work within the same safeguarding procedures.

1. Purpose of the policy

- To raise the awareness of all staff of the importance of safeguarding children and of their responsibilities for identifying and reporting actual or suspected abuse
- To ensure children and parents are aware that the setting takes the safeguarding agenda seriously and will follow the appropriate procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and for dealing with allegations against staff
- To promote effective liaison with other agencies in order to work together for the protection of all children
- To support children's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence
- To integrate a safeguarding curriculum within the existing activities allowing for continuity and progress through all developmental stages
- To take account of and inform policy in related areas such as bullying and e-safety

There are three main elements to the safeguarding policy:

1. PREVENTION (positive and safe environment, careful and vigilant teaching, accessible support to pupils, good adult role models).

2. PROTECTION (agreed procedures are followed, staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns).

3. SUPPORT (to children, who may have been at risk of significant harm and the way staff respond to their concerns and any work that may be required).

- **2. Child Protection procedures and guidelines**

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What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm. Safeguarding, in addition to child protection, encompasses issues such as pupil health and safety, bullying/cyber-bullying, appropriate medical provision. These areas have specific policies and guidance which should be read in conjunction with this document.

What is significant harm?

The Children's Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and require discussion with the statutory agencies.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for child safeguarding falls on everybody who is employed at the setting. All adults who work at Acorns Preschool are expected to support the Child Protection Policy, with overall responsibility falling upon the Chair of the Committee. All staff, including volunteers, have a statutory obligation to report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if there is suspicion of abuse/neglect of a child or if a child discloses abuse or allegations of abuse.

We will follow the child protection procedures set out by the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board and will have regard to statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2014*.

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** is a senior member of staff designated to take lead responsibility for:

- Managing all child protection issues (Chair of Committee leads on allegations against staff)
- Keep secure child protection plans, write records and reports
- Child protection policy and procedures: lead in evaluation, review and revision, ensure available to staff and parents
- Induction of staff and volunteers/staff training/ensure staff are aware of safeguarding policy and procedure
- Providing advice, information and support to other staff/adults in the setting on safeguarding issues
- Understand (and participate in) early help assessments and process for early help
- a. Liaising with the local authority and local safeguarding children board
- Working in partnership with other agencies; referrals and support; information sharing
- Ensure a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Lee Churchill

The deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Andrea Jaggard

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Statement

Our Preschool will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Acorns Preschool key commitments for safeguarding children.

- We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.
- We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (Dfe March 2015).
- We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Aims

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our Preschool that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background;
- promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;
- helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults; and
- working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.
- promoting awareness of the forms abuse can take through information sharing with parents and carers. These may include:
 - Physical
 - Sexual
 - Emotional
 - Neglect

The legal framework for this work is:

Primary legislation

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- The Children Act 1989 - s 47
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Secondary Legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2015)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the Area Safeguarding Children Committee guidelines.

Methods

Staffing and volunteering

- Our designated person who co-ordinates child protection issues is Lee Churchill, in his absence Andrea Jaggard the deputy manager will be the designated person.
- Our designated officer who oversees this work is the Chair of the Committee.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- Applicants for posts within the Preschool are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Disclosure and Barring service checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the Preschool or has access to the children.
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - The criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - The date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - Details of who obtained it.

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- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We inform all staff that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We abide by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their children. (please see ICT policy)
- We take steps to ensure parent helpers and visitors understand our procedures regarding mobile phones with the Preschool (see mobile phone policy)
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Preschool so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Collection of Children

Staff have a duty of care for your child/children whilst on Acorns premises. Staff have to ensure that the authorised adult collecting the child/children are of a competent and able disposition.

If a member of staff suspects that the authorised collecting adult is under the influence of alcohol or mind altering substances it is their responsibility to ensure that the child/children welfare is not compromised.

In such a case:

- Staff will inform the authorised adult of their concern.
- Staff will attempt to arrange a mutually agreed alternative way home for the relevant child/children if we feel that the parent/carer is not capable of looking after the child then we will look for an alternative.

In the event that the mutually agreed alternative is not followed once leaving Acorns we will follow the steps below:

- Check the registration details file and contact persons that have permission to pick up child/children, phone them.
- If we have no response from these persons then we will take advice from the Social services team.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through significant changes in their behaviour, deterioration in their general well-being, their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure), changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible

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abuse or neglect and any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting,

- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parents drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parents learning disability.

We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as abuse of disabled children, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse, that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.

We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people whose families may come into contact with these issues.

- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases this may mean the policy or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcomes either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

Radicalisation of Young People

In line with new guidance from HM Government (Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales) which relates to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, we risk assess the setting and identify those children most at risk from possible radicalisation from outside sources.

We are aware that terrorism can be violent and non-violent and can take several forms, including Islamist and far-right extremism.

Unexpected Visitors to the Preschool Premises

- Unexpected visitors not related to the preschool and who are not known to the Manager or Chair of the committee may not be allowed entry.
- Any visitors will be asked to provide identification which will be authenticated.

Auditing of Procedures

- The Preschool audits the Policies and Procedures every year at the end of the term. This

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process is carried out by the Manager and Chair.

- We are required to complete an online Audit of our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures by the local authority, a copy of which can be found in the Safeguarding Folder.

3. Safer Recruitment

This policy has been developed to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures throughout Acorns Preschool and to support the creation of a safer culture by reinforcing the safeguarding and well-being of children in our care. This policy reinforces the expected conduct outlined in the Code of Conduct for Staff as well as the Preschools Whistle Blowing Policy with which all staff are expected to be familiar with. All successful candidates in paid or volunteer employment will be made aware of these documents.

Acorns Preschool will comply with and follow the guidelines laid out by Wiltshire Council on the employment of staff;

- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All staff have job descriptions, which set out their staff roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, regardless of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex, age, marriage or civil partnership. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- We use Ofsted guidance on obtaining references and enhanced criminal record checks through the Disclosing and Barring Service (formally Criminal Records Bureau) for staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children. This is in accordance with requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) for the vetting and barring scheme.
- We keep all records relating to employment of staff and volunteers, in particular those demonstrating that checks have been done, including the date and number of the enhanced DBS (formally CRB) check.
- Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children – whether received before, or at any time during, their employment with us.
- We will ask for a minimum of two references which will be followed up with verbal confirmation by the Manager or Chair of the Committee.

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At least one member of the interviewing will have undertaken the Safer Recruitment training and will implement this training in the selection of suitable candidates.

Checks will be made on all staff, Committee members and volunteers to verify their identity. This information will be checked by the Manager of the setting and held securely in a Single Central Record.

4. Staff training and induction

We provide an induction for all staff, volunteers and managers in order to fully brief them about the setting, the families we serve, our policies and procedures, curriculum and daily practice.

- The DSL will attend safeguarding training at least once every three years, attend safeguarding forums and keep up to date with recommendations from serious case reviews, changes to national and WSCB policy and guidance.
- The whole-setting staff group will receive safeguarding training at least every three years with annual up-dates and notifications of any necessary changes, reminders being made available as required.
- All new staff, volunteers and Committee members will receive Safeguarding induction to ensure understanding of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Code of Conduct will be provided to all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers on induction.

5. Safer working practice

Acorns Preschool staff have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of young people, they have a unique opportunity to interact with children in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments. The aims are to safeguard young people and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

Safe working practice ensures that children are safe and that all staff, volunteers and committee members:

- Are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Work in an open and transparent way

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- Work with other colleagues where possible in situations open to question
- Discuss and/or take advice from management over any incident which may give rise to concern
- Record any incident of decisions made
- Apply the same professional standards regardless of gender, race, disability or sexuality
- Be aware of confidentiality policy
- Are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

Please also refer to the *WSCB Social Networking policy, 2015*.

6. Staff behaviour

All members of staff and Committee are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a professional, courteous, helpful, warm and consistent manner.

Members of staff are expected to display both knowledge and understanding of child protection/safeguarding policies and issues, multi-cultural issues and a commitment to treating all children as individuals and with equal concern and respect.

Members of staff will have regard for wearing appropriate clothes and shoes when working with children and have awareness of health and safety issues. Uniform will be provided in the form of a branded polo shirt and hooded top, staff are expected to wear black trousers or similar to complement this. Footwear should be appropriate and comfortable.

All personal mobile phones must be kept in the plastic box on the kitchen counter and the Managers permission has to be sought if staff need to make or receive a call.

Under no circumstances should any arguments or disagreements between members of staff or Committee occur in the presence of children or parent/carers.

No smoking, alcohol or drug use is allowed on the Preschool premises.

No bullying, swearing, harassment or victimisation will be tolerated on the Preschool premises.

All staff, committee members and volunteers are expected to;

- Treat all children with respect
- Set a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately

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- Involve children in decision-making which affects them
- Encourage positive and safe behaviour among children
- Be a good listener
- Be alert to changes in child's behaviour
- Recognise that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- Read and understand all of the setting's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information sharing
- Ask the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE, music or administering first aid
- Maintain appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- Maintain professional standards and boundaries at all times on and off the site
- Be aware that the personal and family circumstance and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse

7. Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

The Allegation Management WSCB flowchart has been included in Appendix 1.

Any report of concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer, or allegation of abuse against a member of staff must immediately be reported to the Manager who will refer to the appropriate designated officer(s) from the local authority:

Wiltshire Designated Officer:	01225 718079 or 01225 71394!
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Any concern or allegation against the Manager will be reported to the Chair of Committee without informing the Manager.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

In some circumstances the member of staff will, without prejudice, be asked to take a period of paid leave pending the results of the investigation.

Acorns Preschool will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against

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unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Malicious allegations against staff will be investigated and dealt with by the Manager and, if appropriate, the chair of the committee.

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.

We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or any other person working with the children, which includes;

- Inappropriate sexual comments.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Designated Officer for Allegations to investigate: Designated Officer (direct Line) 01225 718079 or 01225 713945. The out of hours Emergency duty team can be contacted on 0300 4560100.
- We also report any such alleged incident to OFSTED, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by the children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chair will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

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

If you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague may worry that they have misunderstood

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the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of a child is paramount. The setting's whistle blowing code enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

Protection

Acorns Preschool is committed to delivering a high quality Preschool service, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence.

The policy provides the individual in the workplace with protection from victimisation or punishment where they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the organisation. The policy is underpinned by Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. The Act covers behaviour, which amounts to –

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- Miscarriage of justice
- Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- Deliberate concealment of any information about any of the above

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for , or an alternative to the formal Grievance Procedure, but is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the organisation, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise, in good faith, a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such concerns should normally report the matter to the Manager who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed. Concerns should be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the Manager, he or she should contact the Chair of the Committee, the Child Development Officer, Ofsted's Whistleblowing hotline or write to or email them.

A disclosure in good faith to the Preschool Manager or Chairperson will be protected. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the organisation.

8. What constitutes child abuse and neglect?

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All adults who work or volunteer with children should be able to identify concerns about child abuse. The four types of abuse, described in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015* are:

Physical
Emotional
Sexual
Neglect
Specific safeguarding issues

Acorns Preschool recognises other safeguarding issues:

Child Sexual Exploitation
Female Genital Mutilation
Bullying (including cyber-bullying)
Domestic violence
Drugs
Fabricated or induced illnesses
Faith abuse
Forced marriage
Gangs and youth violence
Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
Mental health
Radicalisation
Sexting
Teenage relationship abuse
Trafficking.

The setting will endeavour to identify and act upon any forms of abuse according to our procedures.

For more information, including definitions, indicators and other safeguarding issues, please refer to Appendix 2.

9. Early Help

Statement

The *Revised Multi-Agency Thresholds for Safeguarding Children (December 2014)* document aims to inform settings and other agencies about the suitable action to take when a child has been identified as making inadequate progress or having an unmet need. At Acorns Preschool, whenever possible, we will ensure that early intervention is actioned via a referral to Early Help as soon as the criteria are met, to prevent situations to escalate into larger problems. The document can be found on the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) website.

Early Help Single Point of Entry: 01225 718230

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Therefore the setting will consider the following:

- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- Provide early help services e.g. Children's Centre, family outreach worker, breakfast club
- Refer to appropriate services e.g. CAMHS etc.

10. Responding to disclosures: guidance for staff

Statement

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well-being (such as unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect) that member of staff will offer reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action but makes sure not to question the child.

If a child wishes to confide in you the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- **Create a safe environment**

- Take the child to a private and safe place if possible
- Stay calm
- Reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame
- Tell the child that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you
- Listen to the child and tell them that you believe them and are taking what is being said seriously
- Tell the child what you are going to do next after the disclosure

- **Be honest**

- Do not make promises that you cannot keep
- Explain that you are likely to have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening

- 0. **Record on the appropriate form exactly what the child has said to you as soon as possible and include the following into the form:**

- Child's name, address, date of birth
- Date and time of any incident
- What the child said and what you said
- Your observations e.g. child's behaviour and emotional state

The Child Welfare and Child Protection Concern Sheet is included in Appendix 3a. An overview sheet is also available for quick reference, refer to Appendix 3b for further details.

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- **Be clear about what the child says and what you say**

Do not interview the child and keep questions to a minimum.

Encourage the child to use his/her own words and do not try to lead them into giving particular answers

- **Maintain confidentiality**

Only tell those people that it is necessary to inform

- **Do not take sole responsibility**

Immediately consult your Designated Safeguarding Lead so that any appropriate action can be taken to protect the pupil if necessary

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the information and decide on the next steps.

- **Add the expectations of your setting** once a child has disclosed (ie. return to class/take time out, support offered etc.).

11. Reporting concerns

The 'What to do' WSCB flowchart has been included in Appendix 4.

Where any adult in the setting has concerns about a child they should discuss these in the first instance with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence, the deputy. In exceptional circumstances, staff members can speak directly to Children's Social Care.

Children's Social Care referrals:

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): **0300 456 0108**

Out of hours: **0300 456 0100**

If you believe the child is at immediate risk of significant harm or injury, then you must call the police on **999**.

Sharing Concerns with Parents

Acorns Preschool has a commitment to working together with parents to ensure the safety and well being of the children in our care. Parents are normally the first point of contact to discuss concerns and to gain their view of events, unless we feel this may put the child in greater danger.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information until we have permission or it is necessary to do so to protect a child.

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We inform parents when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern. If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.

We make all our policies available to parents to enable them to be fully aware of what actions can be taken and how this information is recorded.

There is a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers and in most situations it may be appropriate to discuss initial concerns with them.

However there will be some circumstances where the Designated Safeguarding Lead will not seek consent from the individual or their family, or inform them that the information will be shared. For example, if doing so would:

- place a child at increased risk of significant harm;
- place an adult at increased risk of serious harm;
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime;
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

In some circumstances, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from Children's Social Care by ringing the MASH to obtain advice about the recommended course of action.

Recording concerns

When a concern about a child is raised by an adult in the setting, that person is responsible for making a written record of the disclosure as soon as possible after reporting it urgently to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their deputy.

Discussions should be recorded on the child welfare and CP record form (see Template in Appendix 3), with details of the concern and any agreed action that is to be taken. The records must be signed and dated.

Record keeping of child protection concerns

The setting will:

- Keep clear written records of all child welfare and child protection concerns using the standard recording form, with a body map where injuries need to be noted (see Template in Appendix 3a), including actions taken and outcomes as appropriate.
- Ensure all child welfare and child protection records are kept securely, and in a locked location. The record must be signed and dated and kept securely in a file under the child name, away from the other records (medical forms, academic records etc.) The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that concerns and discussions are written up properly and acted on appropriately.

Ensure that all child protection records relating to a child who moves to another setting or school

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are passed on to the new school securely, promptly and separate from the main pupil file, with a copy being kept in this setting. Confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Child welfare records below the child protection threshold but with continuing relevance to the child's wellbeing should also be transferred with parental consent.

Information sharing –internal process

Information concerning students at risk of harm will be shared with all members of staff on a 'need to know' basis. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a judgement in each individual case about who needs and has a right to access particular information.

12. Monitoring of children subjected to a CP Plan

Statement

Pupils who are the subject of a Child Protection Conference will have either an agreed multi-disciplinary action plan or child protection plan. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will attend planning meetings and core group specified in the plan and contribute to assessments and plans.

The setting recognises that children who are the subjects of abuse or who live in situations of domestic violence may exhibit distressed or challenging behaviour and may not be reaching their full academic potential. The setting will ensure that appropriate support is in place at the setting.

13. Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

Statement

For a variety of reasons, children with additional needs face an increased risk of abuse and neglect; therefore adults are expected to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. Indications of abuse will be reported as for other pupils.

We provide an environment in which all children, including those with special educational needs (SEN), are supported to reach their full potential.

- We have regard for the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2014).
- We ensure our provision is inclusive to all children with special educational needs.
- We support parents and children with special educational needs.
- We identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and meet those needs through a range of SEN strategies.
- We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
- We monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

Wiltshire Council provides targeted support services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability who need additional support with:

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- Communication
- Learning and processing information
- Experiencing the world around them, including sensory difficulties
- Physical or medical conditions that affect their life and learning
- Coping with social and emotional challenges

The SEND service can be contacted on 01225 757 985.

Procedures

- We designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and give his/her name to parents. Our SENCO is: Andrea Jaggard.
- We ensure that the provision for children with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
- We use the graduated response system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs.
- We work closely with the parents of children with special educational needs to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and their families, including in connection with transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children with special educational needs
- We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing individual educational plans (IEPs) for children with special educational needs.
- We ensure that children with special educational needs are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability.
- We have systems in place for supporting children during the Early Years Action process (stage 2 on Continuum of Needs).
- We have systems in place for working with other agencies through each stage of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Early Years Action Plus (stage 3 of Continuum of Need), Statutory Assessment and the Statement process (stage 4 of Continuum of Need).
- We use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with special educational needs.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy.
- We provide in-service training for parents, practitioners and volunteers.
- We raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. Individual Education Plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- We provide a complaints procedure.

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- We monitor and review our policy annually.

Further guidance

- Issues in Earlier Intervention: Identifying and Supporting Children with Additional Needs (DCSF 2010)
- Early Years Foundation Stage and the Disability Discrimination Act (DCSF 2010)
- The Team Around the Child (TAC) and the Lead Professional: A Guide for Managers (CWDC 2009)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Managers (CWDC 2009)
- Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfES 2001)

14. Follow-up support of vulnerable children

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The setting may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When attending the setting their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The setting will endeavour to support the children through:

- Key person
- The content of the activities
- The setting's ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives children a sense of being valued
- Liaison with other agencies supporting the child such as Children's Social Care, Children's Centres, the SEND team, etc. and where appropriate initiate and/or contribute to a CAF and Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings.

In order to create a culture of safety in the setting, Acorns Preschool will ensure that safeguarding is a standing item on all meetings agendas.

15. Welcoming other professionals

Visitors with a professional role, such as social workers will have had the appropriate vetting checks undertaken by their own organisation. Any professionals visiting the setting should provide evidence of their professional role and employment details (an identity badge for example). If felt necessary, the setting will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity.

Professionals will complete signing in/out forms and wear an I.D. badge if required to do so.

16. Off-site visits

Statement

Acorns Preschool recognises the need for additional procedures to be in place whilst the children in

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our care take part in any off site activities or visits.

Parents are asked to sign a permission form to allow the children to take part in walks around the local area (village, allotments, church etc.) when the opportunity arises. These walks take place in areas that have been fully risk assessed prior to them taking place.

End of year visits to specific locations (Avon Valley, Cattle Country etc.) are organised by the Preschool and are attended by the children who are accompanied by their parents/carers at all times.

17. Photography, images and mobile phones

Statement

We take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting

In order to protect the children in our care we will:

- Seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- Only use the setting equipment
- Only take photos and videos of children to celebrate achievement
- Use only the child's first name with an image
- Ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- Encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

Procedures

Personal Mobile Phones

- Personal mobile phones belonging to members of staff are not used on the premises during working hours.
- At the beginning of each individual's shift, personal mobile phones are stored in a plastic box on the kitchen counter.
- In the event of an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used with permission from the manager.
- Members of staff ensure that the telephone number of the setting is known to immediate family and other people who need to contact them in an emergency.
- If members of staff take their own mobile phones on outings, for use in the case of an emergency, they must not make or receive personal calls as this will distract them.
- Members of staff will not use their personal mobile phones for taking photographs of children on outings.
- Parents and visitors are asked to put their mobile phones in the plastic box on the kitchen counter, they must get the managers permission if they want to use them. There is an

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exception if a visitor's company or organisation operates a lone working policy that requires contact with their office periodically throughout the day. Visitors will be advised of a quiet space where they can use their mobile phone, where there are no children present.

Cameras and videos

- Photographs of children will only be taken on Acorns camera or smart phone except when taken by a Professional Photographer for advertising or commercial purposes.
- Members of staff must not bring their own cameras or video recorders into the setting unless given specific permission by the Chair and Manager to record specific events. All files taken will only be stored on the Acorns Laptop and backup device.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, i.e. to record their learning and development, or for displays within the setting.
- Photographs or recordings of children are only taken on equipment belonging to the setting.
- Camera and video use is monitored by the setting manager.
- Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events, permission will first be gained from all parents for their children to be included.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken of children if there is written permission to do so (found on the individual child's Permission Form).

In situations where parents may be taking photographs of groups of children such as during Christmas Performances or End of Year Parties, the Manager will inform all those present that no such images should be used on Social Networking sites if they contain other people's children unless express permission has been sought by the parent.

Policy review

The Manager and Chair of Committee will undertake an annual review of the setting's Child Protection Policy and procedures and remedy any deficiencies and weakness found without delay.

Date of policy last review: September 2016

Date of next review: September 2017

This policy was adopted at a Committee meeting of Acorns Preschool, Kington St Michael

Signed:

Chair

Manager

Date:

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APPENDIX 1: 'Allegations against adults' flowchart

APPENDIX 2: Definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015 describes some of the signs that might be indicators of abuse or neglect.

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.*

Physical abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained:
 - bruises or cuts
 - burns or scalds
 - bite marks.

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.*

Although the effects of emotional abuse might take a long time to be recognisable, practitioners will be in a position to observe it, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and

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inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child; and
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

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.*

You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have;
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games; and
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Child sexual exploitation *is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some*

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cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- 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 don't take part in education.

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.

Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse. It is important that practitioners remain alert and do not miss opportunities to take timely action. However, while you may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify.

Neglect may occur if a parent becomes physically or mentally unable to care for a child. A parent may also have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, which could impair their ability to keep a child safe or result in them prioritising buying drugs, or alcohol, over food, clothing or warmth for the child. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal drug or alcohol abuse.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe;
- Children who are left hungry or dirty;
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat;
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence;
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm;
- Children who fail to receive basic health care; and

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- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

Other specific safeguarding issues

Female genital mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage

There are many different types of abuse but there are some that staff may be initially less aware of. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage fall into this category.

Professionals need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of **FGM**, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM:

- Knowing that the family belongs to a community in which FGM is practised and is making preparations for the child to take a holiday, arranging vaccinations or planning absence from school;
- The child may also talk about a special procedure/ceremony that is going to take place or a special occasion to 'become a woman'.

Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

Indicators that FGM may already have occurred:

- Prolonged absence from school or other activities with noticeable behaviour change on return, possibly with bladder or menstrual problems;
- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing, and look uncomfortable;
- Spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- May complain about pain between their legs, or talk of something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about.

Private fostering

Under certain conditions, a child might be cared for, as part of a private arrangement, by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This constitutes private fostering when the following conditions are met:

- a child is under 16 years of age – 18 if they have a disability
- the arrangement is for 28 days or longer
- the child's new carer does not have parental responsibility for the child and is not a close relative.

Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity).

By law parents and carers must notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements to safeguard and protect the child's welfare as well as ensuring the child, carer and parent are receiving appropriate support and help.

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As a setting, if we do become aware that a child or young person is being privately fostered, we will inform the carer/parent of their legal duty to notify Wiltshire Children's Social Care; we will follow this up by contacting Children's Social Care directly.

**APPENDIX 3: 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused or neglected'
flowchart**